Our vision calls for world-class schools that:

- Be the best in the world for each student
- Offer world-class education
- Prepare students to be citizens of the world

We help shape the future
Stockholm, a world-class city

The City of Stockholm and a number of other regional players have forged a common vision of Stockholm as a world-class city by 2030:

Stockholm will be a multifaceted and stimulating metropolis with a broad range of internationally oriented jobs, educational opportunities, services, cultural activities and entertainment offerings. The city will give everyone the chance to realise their dreams and fulfil their potential. The big-city rhythm, along with proximity to sea and nature, will attract visitors from around the world.

Stockholm will be the leading European growth region, offering goods and services that successfully compete in the global market. Its knowledge-based and highly innovative businesses will collaborate closely with educational and research institutions.

Stockholm will be the hub of a secure, accessible region free of social or physical barriers. The region will offer unlimited opportunities for travel, living and social encounters. High-class, cost-effective social services will enable Stockholmers to choose among various caregivers and schools.

Making the vision come true

The vision of Stockholm as a world-class city represents a strategic commitment. The city’s boards, committees and boards of directors focus on the vision as they engage in their various daily activities.

Providing citizens of the city with world-class schools is vital to realisation of the vision. This brochure describes the efforts of the Stockholm Education Administration to reach that goal.

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Number of copies printed: 1500

Stockholm City Hall
Lower edge: Axel Leafblad created an art installation that sets the tone at Sjöstadsskolan. The design, which combines art and function, is a good example of how design and function can unite to make schools more pleasant places to be.

Inside front cover: Olivier de Groote’s artwork called Chien Rouge is on the cover. Photo courtesy of the Stockholm City Museum.

We help shape the future

The schools bear a major responsibility. We want to make sure that all students, regardless of their social background or home situation, receive a good education. Students should be able to experience school as a joyful, rewarding workplace. The time they spend at school should be valuable, both in the present and as a stepping stone to the future.

Students are entitled to safety, security, peace and quiet, both in the classroom and during breaks. Instruction and teaching methods should be based on democratic values, and everyone should be treated with respect and trust.

Each school should stimulate the curiosity of its students, who should have the opportunity to assume a growing responsibility for their learning and personal development. All graduates should possess solid knowledge and strong self-esteem.

Schools should give all students the chance to build the future of their choice. Students should obtain a stable foundation regardless of their subsequent educational or career decisions.
A world class school system

Our vision of a world class school system can be summed up as follows:

Our schools will be the best in the world for each student
All students will have chance to choose a school that fulfills their individual interests and needs. Schools will adapt their orientation, subject matter, teaching methods, organisation, etc., to the needs and abilities of their particular students.

Our schools will offer world-class education
All students will be able to maximise their potential, and the education they receive will lead to further studies, business opportunities or employment.

Our schools will produce a well-educated citizenry. The ability to communicate in native and foreign languages, mathematical proficiency, technical and scientific knowledge, and computer skills are important ingredients of life in modern society.

Our schools will prepare students to be citizens of the world
The Education Act stresses democracy, citizenship, equal opportunity and tolerance – all of which are vital in today’s world. It is also essential that Stockholm students obtain the knowledge and tools they need to live in the era of globalisation. The schools serve as a powerful engine of community and regional growth and development.
The Stockholm City Council has charged the Board of Education with the mission of providing education to all children, young people and adults in the city, regardless of the responsible authority. The city is to offer its citizens high-quality education no matter who arranges it. Furthermore, citizens are to receive objective, independent information about the schools, their services, programmes and activities.
The Swedish education system consists of daycare centres, preschools, school childcare services, compulsory schools, upper secondary schools and adult education programmes. Instruction and teaching methods are regulated by the Government and Parliament at the national level, by municipalities and other authorities at the local level, and by the schools themselves at the institutional level, based on the goals and guidelines set by the Government and municipality.

The Government and Parliament set national goals and guidelines, including the Education Act, ordinances and curricula.

The National Agency for Education monitors, evaluates and reviews the various institutions, as well as putting together syllabi, assessment criteria and general recommendations.

Within the framework of the curriculum and national goals, the municipality determines how its institutions are to be run and its resources allocated. The municipality adopts school plans, along with other municipal goals and guidelines that govern educational institutions for which it is the responsible authority.

Independent schools run by other authorities are governed by national regulations but are not covered by the municipal school plan.

The municipality oversees privately run daycare centres.

The schools follow national and municipal goals and guidelines. The principal has overall responsibility, ensuring that a local working plan is drawn up and that the school’s goal fulfilment is monitored and evaluated by means of a quality assurance report.

City of Stockholm organisation

The City Council, which corresponds to the Parliament, is Stockholm’s highest decision-making body.

The City Executive Board, which corresponds to the Government, has overall responsibility for execution, monitoring and evaluation of City Council decisions.

The Stockholm City Council appoints eight governing Vice Mayors. Each Vice Mayor is the head of a division, including the Schools and Education Division. The Head of the Schools and Education Division is also the Chair of the Board of Education.

Board of Education and Education Administration

The Board of Education provides a school market while governing and running all municipal education services in the city. The Education Administration executes the decisions of the Board of Education.

The membership of the Board of Education is based on the political composition of the City Council. The activities of the Board follow the goals and guidelines adopted by the City Council.

How the schools are run

The City’s large organisation consists of 17 companies, 14 district councils that are in charge of most municipal services, and 15 specialist administrations, including the Education Administration.

Approximately 800,000 people live in the city of Stockholm and 1,950,000 in Stockholm County.
Daycare centres for young children

The City of Stockholm offers daycare services for all children age 1-5 while their parents are at work or pursuing their studies, at either a public or private daycare centre or in a family. Children age 4-5 are entitled to attend a free public daycare centre for three hours a day even if their parents are at home.

Daycare centres alternate free play with planned activities. Their purpose is to promote learning, growth and development. Among the emphases of daycare centres are language, culture, equality and the environment. The City invests in further education of childminders and daycare teachers to ensure that they employ sound teaching methods.

Municipal daycare services guarantee a place for every child.

The district councils are responsible for municipal daycare services, while the Board of Education is responsible for certification and oversight of privately run daycare centres.

Preschools for 6-year-olds

At the age of 6, children are offered the opportunity to attend Preschool class, which combines daycare and compulsory school teaching methods and serves as an introduction to their ongoing education. Children attend preschool class at least three hours a day; the programme is free and – as is the case with daycare services and compulsory schools – a free lunch is provided.

Preschool is a separate kind of school, voluntary for children but mandatory for municipalities to arrange.
Compulsory schools

Years 1–9 of compulsory school are to provide children with a broad, stable foundation of knowledge for ongoing studies and career endeavours. The schools are to stimulate the desire for learning, helping students absorb factual knowledge and more deeply understand interconnections. The goal is for all students to know how to read, write and perform arithmetic by the time they have completed year 3.

A broad offering

The Education Administration gives all students in the City of Stockholm the opportunity to attend a good school that suits their individual needs. Stockholm has a broad offering of more than 140 municipal schools and approximately 100 independent schools.

All children are guaranteed a place at a municipal school near where they live. They may also choose any other municipal or independent school that has room for them. Many schools offer specialisations, including math/science, culture, athletics, environmental protection and languages. Some schools employ alternative teaching methods. Regardless of the school that children choose, they are to receive an education that enables them to explore all conceivable avenues in life. Thus, schools must take a visionary approach while utilising and conveying traditional knowledge and skills.

Compulsory school learning goals

An overall curriculum and separate syllabi describe the learning goals to be achieved. Although assessments are not given until year 8, teachers conduct progress reviews with parents and students starting in year 1. The reviews generate an individual development plan for each student. Teachers also write a summary of the social development and knowledge level of each student.

Support for special-needs students

Special-needs students receive extra support. While they are generally given such support during ordinary classroom sessions, some children learn better in a special group. It is up to the principal to design the school’s instruction such that all children obtain the support they need.
Special compulsory schools for students with learning disabilities

Students with learning disabilities, such as development disorders, autism or acquired brain injury, may attend either compulsory or special schools. Special schools for students with learning disabilities have smaller classes and more teachers. Teaching and learning methods are adapted to students in the special schools. Students may also attend a special school and participate in compulsory school instruction on suitable occasions.

Compulsory special schools are normally for nine years, but students are entitled to attend a tenth year. Although the curriculum is the same as for regular compulsory schools, special syllabi adapt learning goals to the needs and abilities of individual students. Continued education, both special upper secondary education and special adult education, is available for students older than 20.

Schoolchildren’s programmes – after-school recreation centres

Both before and after the school day, as well as during holidays, students have the opportunity to participate in schoolchildren’s programmes, including after-school recreation centres or with childminders. Schoolchildren’s programmes are open to students from preschool class (age 6) until year 3. Intermediate level programmes are available for 10–12 year-olds.

Schoolchildren’s and intermediate level programmes charge a fee. Both public and private options are available.
Upper secondary schools

Stockholm has a broad offering of upper secondary programmes. Approximately 90 upper secondary schools, both municipal and independent, are found throughout the city. They offer both a number of national programmes with various specialisations and many specially designed programmes. The goal is to provide an option for everybody.

The national and specially designed programmes each last for three years and provide basic eligibility for higher education studies. The individual programme with its various options is available for students who are ineligible to apply for a national upper secondary programme.

Upper secondary schools are to respect and encourage the differences between, and varying abilities of, students while preparing them for working life or ongoing studies.

Many schools have exchange programmes with higher education institutions, organisations and businesses in Sweden and elsewhere.

The entire Stockholm area is a common upper secondary region. Based on various collaboration agreements, Stockholm students may apply to upper secondary schools in other municipalities, while students in neighbouring municipalities may apply to schools in the City of Stockholm.

Special upper secondary schools for students with learning disabilities

Special upper secondary schools serve students with permanent learning disabilities, such as development disorders, acquired brain injury or autism.

The schools provide instruction within the framework of national, specially designed
Adult education

The City of Stockholm provides adult education both under its own auspices and through outsourcing to other organisations. Basic and upper secondary adult education, special education for adults with learning disabilities, advanced vocational training and supplementary training are all offered. The Education Administration has procurement contracts with businesses that provide basic and upper secondary adult education.

**Basic adult education** is taught at the compulsory school level and is adapted to the needs of adults.

**Upper secondary adult education** is equivalent to the courses offered at upper secondary schools. Students are often required to have completed compulsory school or a basic education programme.

**Special adult education** is for students with permanent learning disabilities, such as development disorders, acquired brain injury or autism.

**Advanced vocational training** is a post-secondary programme based on close collaboration between the business community and the organisation that arranges the training. Since 1 July 2009, the programme has been run under the auspices of the University of Applied Sciences.

**Supplementary training** is a post-secondary programme conducted within the framework of municipal adult education. The purpose of the programme is to provide the student with broader or more in-depth vocational skills.
Globalisation

International perspectives are essential to preparing young people for the era of globalisation, which is characterised by frequent communication across national and cultural borders. International experiences provide people with social and cultural skills, fostering a greater understanding of human diversity.

For instance, a number of secondary schools in the City of Stockholm collaborate with businesses, schools and institutions of higher education in China and India. Such efforts offer additional exposure to cultures, languages, global conditions, entrepreneurship and the international labour market. Students who are particularly interested have the opportunity to spend time in China as part of an exchange or trainee programme.

Sharing experiences

The Stockholm Summit is an international conference arranged by the Stockholm Board of Education, National Agency for Education, Swedish Association of School Principals and Directors of Education, and others.

The conference offers principals, directors of education, researchers and educators around the world the opportunity to share their experiences of national education systems in a global context, leadership in a changing world, the challenges of globalisation, quality assessment, tools of change and cultural encounters.

Created by Olof Tällström for Frans Schartau Gymnasium, “Civilisation” is among the many works of art that make Stockholm schools more pleasant and inspiring places to be.
Research and development

To ensure systematic growth and development of the school system, the Education Administration promotes links between research and instruction. Relevant research findings are evaluated and utilized. The schools can propose specific areas and questions for further research.

An explicit goal of the Stockholm Education Administration is for a greater percentage of teachers to have Master’s or doctoral degrees. Their skills are to help the education system improve, grow and develop over the long term.

Workplace training, which takes place in the schools proper, is part of teacher’s training. Integral to the programme is a degree project, which is often linked to a research and development effort that seeks to improve the education system.

Among the strategic subject areas are language development, mathematics and science & technology. The Education Administration has now decided to add “development teachers” to its team of lecturers. Working with employees of the central administration, they will lead the attempt to obtain support for the development efforts of the schools in these areas. Other contacts among schools, as well as with institutions of higher learning, will contribute to the process.

Services that support students and schools

In order to best support Stockholm schools, Education Administration products and services are available for rent, purchase or subscription. The goal is to ensure that students receive a world-class education.

Among the areas of specialization are student health, meduIT, school libraries, native language and student counselling. Psychologists, counselors, school doctors and psychiatrists, study and vocational guidance officers, and remedial teachers are also available. All municipal and independent schools have access to the full range of services.

Teachers can take advantage of lecture series, periodicals, a website and a knowledge bank of written documentation.
Quality assurance

To ensure that Stockholm schools provide the inspiring, uplifting and secure environments that they should, they are all inspected on a regular basis.

The city’s local education inspectors are responsible for the effort. User and employee surveys are conducted on a regular basis. The results of the surveys are evaluated and followed up on. Generally speaking, the surveys give Stockholm schools excellent assessments.

Annual quality assessment reports by the schools describe their efforts to evaluate and monitor their activities. The reports are published on www.stockholm.se.
With approximately 16,000 employees, the City of Stockholm Education Administration is Sweden’s biggest provider of education services.

Teacher support
Well-educated, qualified and committed teachers are the basis of a stimulating study environment and good results. For that reason, the Education Administration is working on creating additional career opportunities for teachers.

The effort to elevate the status and attractiveness of the teaching profession is clearly linked to the world of research.

Leadership support
Leadership is integral to producing good results, as well as to the development of teaching methods.

The Education Administration managerial programme is designed for principals, directors of education and municipal managers. The programme outlines the Administration’s managerial and leadership strategy while recruiting administrators and monitoring their performance. Participants in the programme are also offered further training, development and support when it comes to leadership matters. The programme is one of several tools for principals and directors of education to improve what they do, as well as to better support their employees.

The heads of each type of school – preschool class, compulsory schools, compulsory special schools, upper secondary schools, special upper secondary schools, adult education and special adult education – are in charge of supervising and supporting principals, as well as monitoring goal fulfilment by the schools. Principals have the main responsibility for their particular schools.

Technical support and online services
That technical services work for both administrative and teaching activities at the city’s schools is of utmost importance. A joint, city-wide service ensures a standardised and unified IT infrastructure.

Online services facilitate communication among parents, students, schools and the central administration.

The Education Administration is introducing digital document management to the schools. From now on, all documents that are recorded are to be digitalised. That will make it easier to quickly locate a decision, answer or file.
All Stockholm parishes opened church schools in the 17th century. In the 1820s, they were turned into public institutions under the direction of Stockholms Stads Undervisningsverk.

The first discussions about how the city’s elementary school system should be introduced began in 1842.

A royal decree on popular education in the City of Stockholm was issued in 1861. The elementary school system was to be regarded as a common concern of the entire capital and a central administrative board was to be appointed. Pursuant to the decree, a local education inspector was hired to “diligently inspect the elementary schools and propose measures to improve instruction. Stockholms Folkskoledirektion, the first forerunner of the current Education Administration, operated from 1862 to 1958. The schools were subsequently administered in four different ways until the Stockholm Board of Education was formed in 1979. The Education Administration again took over compulsory schools, which had been under the aegis of Stockholm’s district councils since 1997, on 1 July 2007.