Helping hands? Exploring “policy retailers” in an unruly and unruled educational landscape.

Anna Jobér, Malin Ideland, Thom Axelsson & Margareta Serder
Assemblages of the public and the private

The underperformance discourse opens up spaces for involvement of actors outside the formal educational system.

Ball: “... policies are mobile not in distinct and compact forms or ‘bundles’ but rather in a piecemeal fashion. They are (re)assembled in particular ways, in particular places and for particular purposes”.
Illustration 1: How actors involve in different kind of helping schools.

A multilayered, unruly network
Evidence-based teaching: Making up the good teacher
Digitalization: Branding education
Illustration 5: Companies and organizations offering free teaching material through Utbudet.se

Entrepreneurial learning: Inviting business logics
Increasing knowledge: Stabilizing epistemology

Illustration 4: Companies and organization offering tutoring
Unruly landscape

The conclusions are among other things that policy workers and a market live in symbiosis.

1) Firstly, the discourse of a school in crisis asks for a modern, up-to date, accountable education, a school that needs measurable, technical and evidence-based solutions. However, what is obvious when cracking up the assemblages is the lack of accountability and the presence/production of unruliness. The educational landscape is unruly and un-ruled where narrative moves, flows and translates throughout actors not being accountable for what is happening and what students learn.

2) Secondly, and immersed with the above issue, what looks like a united voice of a school in crisis and how to solve this is rather an assemblage of voices, practices and discourses.
Unruly landscape

The described business sector(s) are actually dependent on a crisis. Without a problem to solve, the market would collapse. We need to ask questions about how these companies contribute to a hegemonic deficit discourse. We need to further scrutinize the power production in the external network and investigate their roles in the production of a grand narrative about school. Such a scrutiny and analysis would also put the light on unholy and or unintentional symbiotic relationships.