

NEWS

# The local council on the initiative: "Vara will be the best in Sweden"

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Gabriela Bosnjakovic in front of the school building where Roger Akelius once attended.

**Six new teaching positions, several learning stations and a large Colloseum for mathematics that will become a destination for families from near and far.**

**These are the main parts of a letter of intent between Vara Municipality and the Akelius Foundation.**

**- Vara will become Sweden's best in maths, says Vara's municipal councilor Gabriela Bosnjakovic (M).**

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The Akelius Foundation wants to develop more effective methods and materials for teaching mathematics for use around the world. They have therefore started a collaboration with Chalmers University of Technology, which in turn wants to get more students interested in mathematics and technology.

Vara Municipality is now also on board. A letter of intent between the municipality and the Akelius Foundation is ready to be signed. It is expected to have great significance for all schools in the municipality.

– It is not a legally binding document, but it is an agreement on what we will work on together, explains Gabriela Bosnjakovic.

She explains that the letter of intent contains three parts. The first, which will be implemented in the fall, involves the municipality hiring six mathematics and language teachers. The services will be fully funded by the Akelius Foundation.

# mathematic box one

## learning by playing



- four board games
- one tear off block
- one unity circle
- thirty blocks
- measurement tools
- one exercise book

Examples of materials that can be used to make learning fun and effective.

Photo: Akelius Foundation

The second point means that the municipality must provide land for five or six outdoor math stations.

The third and final part is the most spectacular. It involves finding land where the foundation can build a large math hall. The area mentioned is 20 hectares.

## As Universeum

In an email exchange, Roger Akelius has expressed a vision of a Colloseum with an inner courtyard the size of a football field. The building will have several learning studios and other environments for learning and recreation. There will be overnight accommodation nearby. The idea is that the hall will become a major tourist attraction.

– The closest equivalent is perhaps Universeum in Gothenburg, but for mathematics. Roger has written that he wants Vara to become the place where the most selfies are taken in all of Sweden, says Gabriela Bosnjakovic.

She expects major effects from the establishment. The investment is expected to result in more visitors and the municipality becoming more attractive to attract new residents.

Above all, major effects are expected for schools and mathematics teaching.

– Vara is going to be the best in Sweden at math, says Gabriela.

Behind the agreement lies a long-term advocacy effort. It was in 2020 that Gabriela Bosnjakovic first contacted Roger Akelius. The contacts have continued over the years and the question “Wouldn’t it be fun to do a project in Vara?” has been repeated significantly more than once by Vara’s municipal councilor.

– I've actually been nagging, she admits.

## **Early Christmas present**

Last fall, there were signs that the Akelius Foundation had begun to take a serious interest.

“They wanted a lot of information, including about the schools in Vara. They also did their own research about the municipality,” says Gabriela.

A few days before Christmas, the news came. The Akelius Foundation had decided that it wanted to move forward with Vara as a collaboration partner.

– Absolutely unbelievable! It was like I didn't dare to fully believe it, I thought, "Are we really going to do this?" I am incredibly grateful, it's very fun that we can do this for the people of Vara, says Gabriela and continues:

– Something that means a lot to me is that I feel that we share the same fundamental values and view of humanity. It feels important to work in an environment where people are viewed with warmth, responsibility and consideration, and I really get that feeling with Roger.

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