

# pioneering

ISSUE 12 • MAY 5, 2016 • EDUCATION REIMAGINED

## A NOTE FROM EDUCATION REIMAGINED

Kelly Young, Director

## RSU 2 MAINE

Profile of their Learning Environment

Excerpt from *Learners Rule!*

## A VOICE FROM THE FIELD

Mark Hennes,  
Leading Regional Change  
by Planting Seeds of Innovation

## LEARNER VOICES

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to say about their education

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education   
reimagined

• connect. share. discover. lead. •

# pioneering

Dear Pioneers,

We continue to be grateful for the incredible courage, generosity of spirit, and boldness of the pioneers around the country creating incredible places where learners thrive and love learning. At the forefront of creating what learning can look like are not individual leaders but incredible teams and networks of people contributing to and co-creating the pathway forward together.

This week, I had a great opportunity to sit down in Pittsburgh with a handful of amazing leaders of pioneering networks. True to form, each is leading by empowering others and building teams and networks of pioneers doing amazing work together to support learner-centered environments grow and deepen their impact. It is one of the many conversations popping up around the country about how to make sure that networks are collaborating and making individual efforts add up to more than the sum of their parts.

Despite the fact that my work is dedicated to creating the conditions for pioneers to effectively collaborate, share, and learn from each other, I sometimes find it challenging myself. In the meeting yesterday—one that I was so honored to have been invited to—I found myself feeling defensive at times. Someone would say that we need to create something that I felt Education Reimagined is already doing. My immediate impulse was to want to say, “Wait, don’t do that—we are doing that.”

It took a moment...well, maybe the whole day to switch my context from one of scarcity to one of abundance, from being territorial to realizing that we need hundreds of spaces for pioneers to come together—not just a handful. The context is so important. In those moments when the work becomes about the leader, the work becomes small and weak. When the context is bringing learner-centered education to life for more and more kids, there is space for all of us to be powerful contributors and collaborators, inviting more and more people to join the field.

It is always an on-going process of learning and growing and that’s the most important characteristic of a pioneer—someone who has the courage to continue to fail and mess up and then learn and grow from that experience. I, too, am a pioneer—humanly failing forward.

Warm wishes,  
**Kelly Young**



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**Connect. Share. Discover. Lead.**  
We seek to accelerate the growth of the movement dedicated to transforming education in America. We invite those excited and interested by the possibility of learner-centered education to discover more, join a growing movement, and begin a journey to make this a reality in diverse communities across the country.





## Our job is not to teach our students everything but to prepare them for anything. —Bill Zima, Superintendent

**IN 2009, THE SCHOOLS OF FIVE MAINE TOWNS** had their worlds turned upside down. They were being consolidated into one district. But, instead of seeing this as a problem, the newly constituted Regional School Unit 2 (RSU 2) community saw an opportunity. Choosing to be allies (rather than adversaries), they took up a bold, ambitious goal: the creation of a single, unifying vision for education.

To kick off this visioning journey, they created the Ad Hoc Committee for Shared Vision in 2010. Knowing that the entire RSU 2 community had to own this vision, this committee didn't just sit together in a boardroom. Over the next year, they gathered community members in different combinations to explore together what they wanted for their kids. Four seemingly straightforward, yet deceptively complex, questions guided their way:

- What is our ultimate commitment to each child?
- What are we preparing our children for?
- How may each community member be a part of the solution?
- How will the support of our learning community accelerate the growth of our children and our five towns?

They came out of this year of inquiry with a simple, but incredibly powerful, statement: *The vision of RSU 2 is to be a system of student-centered learning.* The key word here is system. It isn't about making shifts or adjustments at RSU 2; it's about fundamentally rethinking how education happens with the learner at the center and the community as the playground for learning.

Since then, this vision has come alive for RSU 2 in a big way. They see learning as a continuum that kids (and adults) can move along. With targets and benchmarks to guide their paths, kids progress in RSU 2's **competency-based** (proficiency-based) system in the ways that work best for them. They dig deep on the inquiries that excite them most and explore the topics that are most **relevant** to their day-to-day lives. **Personalizing** the what and how of learning, RSU 2 turns their focus to developing learners' skills and habits of mind—equipping all kids with what they need to be self-directed, joyful, lifelong learners.

And, six years later, the RSU 2 community at-large is still as invested as ever. Learning doesn't begin and end inside the walls of the school buildings. Everyone, from business owners to librarians to garbage collectors, sees themselves as playing a part in educating the kids in these five Central Maine towns.

It began as a forced experiment—thrust upon the kids and community by the passage of a law. Now, RSU 2 stands as a testament to what is possible when an entire community takes on the challenge of education transformation.

### LEARN MORE

[Learner Centered Tips of the Week](#)

[RSU 2: Entering a New Stage in Building a High Quality Proficiency-Based District](#)

[The Long Conversation, or, "It's hard, but worth it. Did I mention that it's hard?"](#)

[RSU 2 Student-Centered Learning Implementation Case Study](#)

### FACTS & FIGURES

Public (4-20 years old)

2,100 learners served

10 schools

ELL or Primary Language

Other Than English: 2%

Students with Disabilities: 13.6%

Free or Reduced Lunch: 38.14%

Graduation rates: 89%

College enrollment upon  
graduation: 52%

### CONNECT

Video Channel

[Vimeo page](#)

RSU 2 Blog

[kidsrsu.weebly.com](#)

Website

[kidsrsu.org](#)

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EXCERPT FROM

# Learners Rule! Giving them a Voice Improves the Culture of their Classroom

To give you a deeper dive into what RSU 2 is all about, we're excited to share an excerpt from RSU 2 Superintendent Bill Zima's book of "tactical fiction." Showcased below is the Introduction from *Learners Rule!* Read about the moment that opened Bill up to the possibility of learner-centered education and be inspired by his commitment that each learner (and educator) understand WHY they are learning what they are learning. If you like what you read, pick up a copy of *Learners Rule!*

**The fall of 2007 started like any other school year.** Students and teachers entered the building tanned, light in spirit, all while carrying a sense of anticipation for what the year had in store. The only difference was that the administration decided to focus on the number of students who were failing math. I was part of that administrative team.

Over the summer, I reviewed the previous three year's math grades. We had nearly a third of our students failing 7th grade math. This was unacceptable, to say the least. When I asked the math team at our opening meetings why this was happening, the response was clear; the students did not know their basic facts. They were coming to us underprepared to handle the requirements of middle school math. After blaming this program or that one, we were not even sure which program was being used in the 7 elementary schools that fed our middle school. We decided we needed to do something about it. So we researched, found, and purchased skill remediation software. We were going to fix it.

At the first quarter marking period, we actually had a slight increase in the number of students failing. We were using the programs correctly and at a time in the schedule that did not affect their class instruction. Why were we still seeing increases in the number of failing students?

When the math team was asked this question again, the answer became that the students were not doing their homework. If only they did it we would not have this issue. I asked if it was the work completion or loss of skills from not having appropriate practice that was making the difference. They felt it was both. "I have students who do well on the tests but won't do a bit of homework. We can't pass those students without doing any work. Where would they learn responsibility?"

So, we created The Homework Cafe. Students lost socialization time during lunch and instead had to eat their food while completing their homework in a different room. We had a staff member monitor the cafe. We did not need a teacher as the work was expected to be done independently. If our Cafe Monitor noticed that students struggled with understanding, she sent a note to the teacher informing him or her of the need for extra support with the content.



Bill Zima

“We wait for the struggle, encourage them to try harder, but continue moving through the book. We never stop to patch the hole.”

**Bill Zima**  
**EXCERPT FROM *LEARNERS***  
***RULE!***

As we reached the end of the second quarter, hopes were high that more students would pass their math class. When grades were calculated and posted, we once again experienced a slight uptick in the number of failures. Needless to say we were all very disappointed.

At the next math department meeting, I announced that if anyone knew why students are failing, please let me know so I can get some donuts and coffee and we can find a solution. As one of the teachers left the meeting he paused to say, "I like Boston Cream donuts."

"What?" I asked with a surprised tone. I was not expecting such a quick response to my offer.

"I know why we have issues," he said in a casual tone. "I will tell you tomorrow morning."

So the next morning, in the dark of a cold January morning in Maine, we met in my office. The little conference table was snuggled into one of the corners in an attempt to maximize the room to move. This arrangement made it possible for only two chairs to be placed at the table. We each took a chair, I handed him a Boston Cream donut and coffee and got right to the point. I was not interested in small talk since I had not been able to stop thinking about what he could have possibly figured out so quickly. "So, what's up?"

"Well. It's actually quite simple," he said in a tone that made it hard to tell if he was serious or sarcastic. If it was so simple, how have we not seen it before? He continued, "We do not know why students are failing."

"WHAT," I heard myself respond in a tone just below a shout. Was he kidding? I lost sleep last night pondering what he was going to say and this is what I get. I stopped for donuts and coffee and got excited just to hear we don't know why students are failing. He is now on my short list of people I tune out when they share their thoughts. Collecting my nerves so I did not seem out of control I said, "Thanks. I appreciate your perspective. Enjoy the donut."

As I got up to leave he chuckled and said, "You are not hearing what I am saying." He paused for dramatic effect. "We do not know why students are failing." He said it slower and more deliberate. This time, his words leapt right into my ears and kick-started my brain. Slowly my face shifted from disappointment to a smile of understanding. He was right. We had no idea.

"Yes," I finally said. "We are teaching textbooks, chapters, and courses. We are not teaching kids. We wait for the struggle, encourage them to try harder, but continue moving through the book. We never stop to patch the hole. We never give it another thought."

He had hit a nerve. As educators we never spent time talking about what we actually hoped kids learned from the textbook. When kids struggled, we hoped they would have more success on the next chapter or unit so their average grade would increase. As I reflect on my career, I can see myself telling parents, "Well its okay. He hated physics but we just started ecology and I think his work on this unit will bring his overall grade up." What was our focus? The grade or the bit of knowledge making the grade? I finally saw the answer.

The problem with the current plan of addressing curriculum was we had no idea how deep the hole in their learning went. Was it a superficial wound that would scab over and eventually be undetectable? Or was it deep and festering? An injury to learning that is so deep it never quite heals correctly only to come back later in life as either a deep infection causing future learning to be slowed or an unknown pain whose origins are a mystery.

Thanks to the effective strategies supported in the research of Response to Intervention (RTI), we were able to find some of the "infections" in their learning early, and with intense support,

"We now knew that without clear targets of learning, we had no idea what we were aiming for."

**Bill Zima**  
**EXCERPT FROM *LEARNERS***  
**RULE!**

could cure them. It was the missed learning due to unknown issues that arose a few years down the learning path that caused the most headaches. Something needed to be done.

We ended the year creating a plan to help us begin to shift our system away from textbook chapters and unit tests to one that had the students meet standards. We were hoping to create a system that communicates to students, parents, and the student's future teachers exactly what the student knows and can do while also identifying what learning still presents challenges. Instead of moving an entire group forward and creating a single learning opportunity regardless of what the individual student entered the grade-level with, there was hope that we could differentiate instruction and truly give the student what he or she needs. We now knew that without clear targets of learning, we had no idea what we were aiming for.

We spent the 2008-2009 school year unpacking the Maine Learning Results to get at what students should know and be able to do in all content areas. Teachers were given time to meet as grade level, content area specialists and define their learning targets. Other researchers have called them Enduring Understandings. We simply said, "What are the things you want students to know when you bump into them on the street in 10 years? If you won't care then, don't care now." In April, we had the document ready to go. The Framework of Skills articulated to us, our parents, and of course our students, what we wanted students to know and be able to do in each year and in each content area while they were in our middle school.

In early May, a group of teachers approached the administration and asked if they could pilot being fully standards-based during the next school year. They were a group of elite runners, not afraid to be out in front of the crowd. They embraced ambiguity and loved creating a path. We happily supported their request.

In late May, I met with Rick Schreiber from Reinventing Schools Coalition (RISC). The State of Maine was looking for districts to pilot moving to a personal-mastery system. Rick explained what RISC had done in Alaska, Colorado and California and what was the hope for Maine. That began a very important relationship for our school.

As the 2009-2010 school year began, the pilot team faced early challenges as managing a classroom of independent learners was not the same as the traditional classroom. The core of personal mastery was that students worked at their readiness level and moved forward only when they had demonstrated mastery of a particular learning goal. Trying to manage this innovative approach to learning while maintaining a traditional classroom was awkward. Something needed to change. But what?

In November of 2009, two of the teachers from the pilot team went to a Classroom Design and Delivery (CDD) training with RISC. When they returned to their classrooms, they began implementing some of the strategies they learned. The class was magically transformed. Once the teachers stopped managing a traditional classroom and instead began overseeing the culture, students began to take off.

We stumbled across one of the important lessons of implementing any reform in education whether it is a full scale system shift like moving to personal mastery learning or adding writer's workshop to your English classes: culture is the lynchpin.

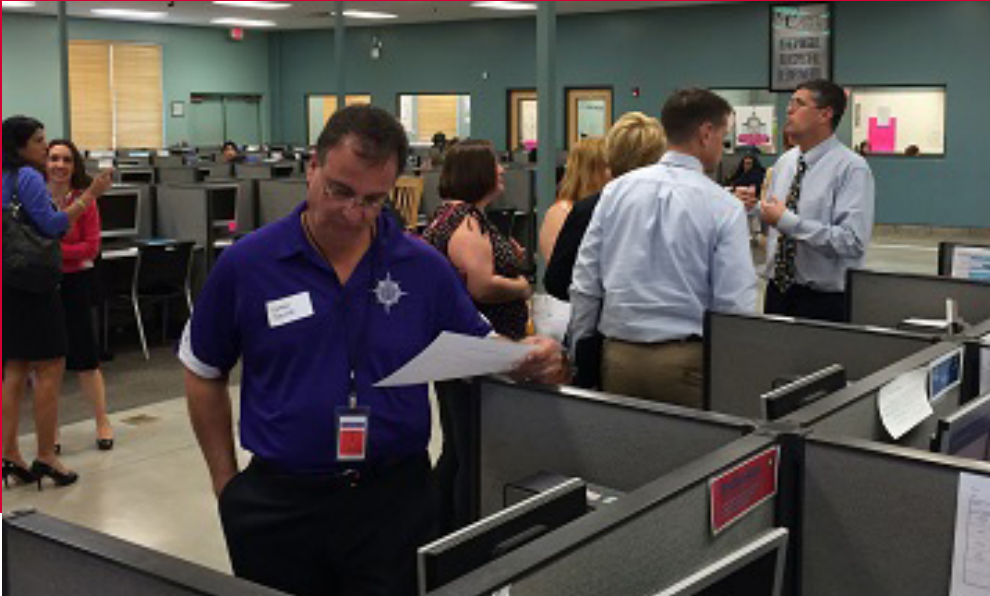
Thanks.

Bill Zima is currently Superintendent of RSU 2 in Central Maine. He most recently served as the principal of Mt. Ararat Middle School in Topsham, Maine. They are currently creating a system where students work their way through a well-defined continuum of learning using their passions to create a path and choose how they will demonstrate their understanding of the learning. Prior to joining the team, he worked as a teacher and then assistant principal at Massabesic Middle School in Waterboro, Maine. Before moving to Maine, Bill worked for the Orange County Public School system in Orlando, Florida. Whether he was acting as a teacher, an administrator or a coach, Bill has always been fascinated with how the mind makes sense of information to build a deeper awareness of how things work and more importantly, why. His philosophy stems from the Socrates quote, "Wisdom begins in wonder." It is this inherent wonder in the human spirit that allows all people to learn at different rates and in different ways.

## CONNECT

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# Leading Regional Change by Planting Seeds of Innovation

by Mark Hennes, Special Projects Supervisor, Capital Area Intermediate Unit

**"WHY DON'T WE DO THIS OURSELVES?"** The question hung in the air as each of us looked up from our reading. It was May 2014, and we were gathered in a conference room poring over the proposal requirements for the Next Generation Learning Challenge's (NGLC) Regional Funds for Breakthrough Schools competition. This was a national competition to fund up to seven regional entities focused on supporting educational innovation.

We met a lot of the requirements: Public school, K-12 focus—check; willing to incubate new school models—check; able to conduct planning and launch grant competitions—check.

But, there were some requirements that didn't fit us. We are a regional **Educational Service Agency (ESA)** in southcentral Pennsylvania. Our focus is on supporting our local schools, but most of the previous regional fund winners were large, metropolitan school districts. As an ESA, we could point our local schools towards educational transformation, but we have no authority to force funding or policy changes to support innovation. Further, we had some of our own funds available, but we had nowhere near the \$1.2 million in matching funds required for the competition.

So, why don't we do this ourselves? We knew that the educational climate of our local area was ripe for such an initiative. Through our training, technology, and consultation missions, we knew that classroom practices were already becoming more technology-based. We also knew that grant competitions were voluntary—so rather than using a "stick" approach, we could instead offer a "carrot" to encourage voluntary transformation. Lastly, we knew that we had to offer grants that were large enough to encourage teachers and administrators to



Mark Hennes

"We knew that changing nearly every aspect of an existing environment had to be a bottom-up approach..."

Mark Hennes

shoulder the burden and the risk. We had some of our own funds available, but we knew we didn't have enough. However, we knew we could solicit our various vendor partners to cobble together the funds to support a round of grant making.

## DOING IT OURSELVES

Over the next few weeks, our thinking began to crystallize around three objectives. First, we wanted our grant making to encourage models that personalized learning for all students. We adopted the design attributes espoused by the NGLC regional fund competition. So, rather than imposing a specific, personalized learning model on the grantees, grantees would design their own model with the following guiding principles in mind:

- **Learning experiences for all students tailored to their individual developmental needs, skills, and interests;**
- **Teaching practices that empower students, utilize continually refreshed performance data, and integrate technology as a method of teaching; and**
- **Leadership and management practices that inspire, motivate, and support transformation.**

Second, we wanted our grant making to benefit all of the schools in our region, not just the winning ones. As an ESA, our fundamental mission is to work for the betterment of all of our local districts and schools, not just some. So, whichever school was selected to receive a grant would be required to share their progress and experiences with others.

Our third objective would be for our grant making process to build our own capacity in blended and personalized learning. We have a very experienced and talented coaching and consultative staff, but we knew that we weren't adept at every innovative instructional practice and classroom design option in use across the country.

## PLANTING THE "SEEDS"

In the fall of 2014, we kicked off our first regional grant competition. This first round was open to public middle and high school building teams from school districts within our catchment area. We believe that in order for transformation to be successful, it must happen at the school building level—led by a building principal with the buy-in and support of their teachers. We had seen too many top-down initiatives fall apart after a year or two, so we knew that changing nearly every aspect of an existing teaching and learning environment had to be a bottom-up approach, led by a building principal with the support of teacher leaders.

Another feature of our first round was that the planning and implementation must result in a systemic, building-wide change in three years. We would be able to provide some of the financial resources to make this happen but not all. Therefore, by committing to support this change, the district's leaders were committing their resources to ensure completion. Building-wide change also means that we would not consider grant applications for a "pilot," "school-within-a-school," or other limited implementation. Intuitively, we knew that, in order for personalized learning to be successful, it must happen every day, in all classrooms, and in all content areas. If the entire building wasn't involved, any changes just starting to show success might falter due to misaligned bell schedules, uneven infrastructure, staff jealousies, etc.

“A successful, building-wide implementation would create its own momentum for change across the district.”

**Mark Hennes**



We also knew that a successful, building-wide implementation would create its own momentum for change across the district. Middle schoolers leaving the 8th grade would arrive at their high schools expecting to exercise the “voice” and “choice” inherent in their middle school experience. Parents, and even staff, of the “non-personalized learning” schools would begin to demand that their schools transform. Thus, by planting these “seeds,” we would be growing innovation across the district.

In September 2014, we received sixteen building team applications from eleven different school districts for our first planning grant. We awarded \$50,000 grants to three schools (one high school and two middle schools). Over the next five months, these three teams attended national conferences, visited innovative schools, and met to plan and design their new teaching and learning environments. These teams told us that the two most valuable aspects of the planning phase were travel and time. Travelling to see innovative classrooms in action and to engage with the teachers and students allowed them to fully comprehend how the different models operated. Similarly, having time to talk, think, discuss, and argue allowed the teams to coalesce around a model that would work for their school. Additionally, this contributed to the team gelling and to gaining buy-in for the new model.

## LAUNCHING INTO ACTION

In March 2015, we received seven building team applications from six different school districts for our first launch grant. Three of these applications were from planning grant awardees, but we were delighted to receive applications from four other buildings that had not been awarded the initial grant but had continued with their own research and planning efforts. We awarded one \$400,000 launch grant to one of these teams. We time-phased the grant funds so we could have accountability for achieving annual transformation goals. We also provided ¼ of the grant as in-kind support from a new blended learning coach, who will now embed 50% of his time with the grantee over the first two award years. His increased expertise will be shared with our other coaches, which will in turn be shared with other schools we support.

As I write this article, we have just announced the winners of our second round of planning grants. This round focused on upper elementary schools in order to plant these proof points in our region and to expand our capacity at the elementary level. This time, we awarded lower dollar amounts (\$20,000 each), so more schools could benefit from the planning experience. We look forward to accompanying them along this journey and to replicating our model across Pennsylvania.

**Mark Hennes** is the Special Projects Supervisor at the Capital Area Intermediate Unit (CAIU). He joined the CAIU in 2007 after 26 years of service in the US Army. He focuses on developing new initiatives and innovative services, especially those leveraging technology, that provide highly effective and efficient solutions to teachers and students. He also leads and manages a variety of projects for the Pennsylvania Department of Education and for local school districts. Mark has a BS from the US Military Academy, an MA from Georgetown University, and an MSS from the US Army War College.



## LEARNER VOICES

**Check out the articles and videos below.** They might just challenge your assumptions of what kids are capable of creating and doing if we let go of the current Industrial-era paradigm and move towards learner-centered education.



Photo credit: Flickr

### FROM EDUTOPIA

#### A Student's Perspective on Place-Based Learning

Many adults couldn't tell you who they are or what they wanted out of life. That couldn't be less true for Grace Whitmore, now a sophomore in Oregon. Read her reflections on how her place-based, hands-on middle school experience at Hood River Middle School led her to discover her own "sense of individuality."

[Read here](#)

### FROM MEDIUM

#### What is School?

Education leaders have been exchanging letters through Bright in an ongoing dialogue about transforming education called "Build on This." Originally meant to be a five-part series, this special sixth letter is penned by 41 Houston learners. Hear their call for more voice and choice in their own education and their determination that cultural competency be at the heart of their learning.

[Read here](#)

### FROM THE TEACHING CHANNEL

#### Student Profile: A Personalized Experience

Savannah has wanted to be a geologist since she was 9 years old. Normally, she wouldn't get the chance to follow her passion, but, at EdVisions Schools, she has the autonomy to work and learn about geology on a daily basis. Now, six years later, Savannah has grown into an adult who knows what she wants in the world and is armed with the tools to go get it.

[Watch here](#)

## CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

**The most powerful advocates for learner-centered education are the learners themselves!**

So, we'd like your help in sharing learners' stories. We want to expand this section of *Pioneering* to provide a space for learners to speak their minds, showcase their projects, and be active participants in the process of education transformation.

Please contact us for learner submission guidelines. [\(email\)](#)

*It's really simple, we promise!*

"A 21st-century education should prepare students for the future while also allowing students to focus on the present."

**Students from THE POST OAK MIDDLE SCHOOL**



## 2Revolutions

Guided by the mantra, “TRANSFORM, don’t tinker,” **2Revolutions** ([link](#)) is a national education design lab that employs a user-centered design approach to give “education leaders and practitioners permission and support to innovate.” Seeing themselves as partners in transformation, they design, build, and implement new learning models and help catalyze the enabling systems that prepare students for success in the future. But, they are not looking to pass along a 2Revs model or silver-bullet solution. All of their work is built upon the principles of “integrative design.” They see the design process as a cycle through which they can work with their partners to “identify root causes, design solutions at the right scale, clarify testable hypotheses, and become empowered to successfully implement their ideas.” With partners all over the country, they’ve worked with the likes of CityBridge Foundation in DC, Next Generation Learning Challenges, Dallas Independent Schools, and the states of Colorado and New Hampshire. Over the years, 2Revolutions has captured their experience, expertise, and insights in videos, reports, and frameworks. For example, in partnership with The Learning Accelerator, they developed a toolkit for state and district leaders looking to build a culture of innovation—“So You Think You Want to Innovate?” And, just recently, they’ve launched a social learning platform—InspirED—where educators will be able to connect, learn, and share about their own journeys to transform education.

**So You Think You Want to Innovate?** [link](#)

**2Revs Future of Learning Framework** [link](#)

## Institute of Play

**Institute of Play** ([link](#)) creates learning experiences that are rooted in the principles of game design and that require dynamic, well-rounded solutions to real-world problems. With their “Quest School” model—operating at environments in NYC and Chicago—learning is a game and is based around semester-long learning units called “challenges.” These challenges draw upon game-based learning’s inherent ability to engage, contain relevance, and deliver mastery as a learning outcome. As well as operating their own environments, Institute of Play is also serving as a catalyst for a nationwide game-based learning movement and has created an impressive collection of public-access materials for both learners and educators. Two examples are “Mission Packs,” real full-length sample challenges designed for a multitude of subjects and age ranges, and “Design Packs,” a comprehensive set of tools and resources educators can use to design their own challenges. Institute of Play’s GameKit guides learners and educators through experiences that sharpen their design skills and teach the basics of game design. Visit their site and get a head start in gamifying your own learning environment!

**GameKit** [link](#)

**Design Pack Curriculum** [link](#)

**Mission Pack: I Spy Greece** [link](#)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Mark your calendars! We will be speaking at some and hosting workshops at others. In all cases, pioneers will be front and center! Join us.

### Remake Learning Days

**Pittsburgh, PA**

**May 9-15**

[Conference Website](#)

### Global MindED Conference

**Denver, CO**

**June 9-10**

[Conference Website](#)

### Big Picture’s Big Bang

**Orlando, FL**

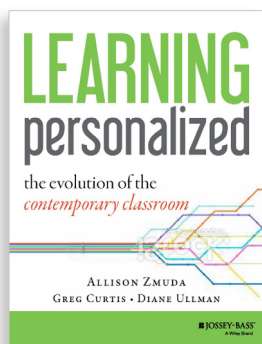
**July 26-29**

[Conference Website](#)



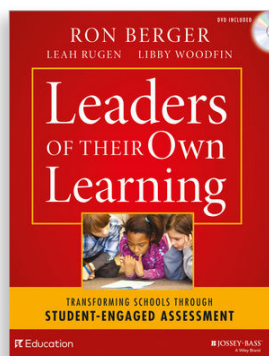
## ON OUR BOOKSHELF

**We sent out a call for great books on education, systems change, and leadership. And, you answered!** This week, we are highlighting three books recommended by pioneers just like you. A big thank you to [@sjennINSPIRE](#) and [@Mohhsa1](#)! To all of you, keep the suggestions coming.



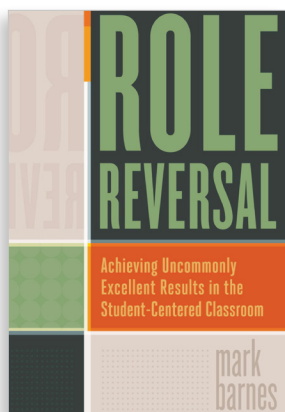
### **Learning Personalized: The Evolution of the Contemporary Classroom** by Allison Zmuda, Greg Curtis, and Diane Ullman

*Learning Personalized* explores what it means to transition to a personalized learning mindset. Educators and authors Allison Zmuda, Greg Curtis, and Diane Ullman created an instructive “action plan” for educators ready to dive into the what, when, where, and how of making this pedagogical shift. Leaning into the idea of “learning by doing,” Zmuda, Curtis, and Ullman see the learner in an apprenticeship role that embraces play, problem solving, creativity, and growth. Serving as a framework and guide, *Learning Personalized* is chock-full of useful resources and valuable insights.



### **Leaders of their Own Learning** by Ron Berger, Leah Rugen, and Libby Wooden

*Leaders of their Own Learning*, based on the work of EL Education, imagines a new approach to learning assessment, led and driven by learners. Their Student-Engaged Assessment method is designed learners to create goals and take ownership. The book offers plenty of tips on how to take the practices from the page to the real world. Berger, Rugen, and Wooden have also included 27 videos that cover everything from implementation strategies to what it means to create a whole-school learner-centered culture. Be sure not to miss this rich resource!



### **Role Reversal: Achieving Uncommonly Excellent Results in the Student-Centered Classroom** by Mark Barnes

In life, we are almost always judged by the end results of what we do. Why isn't it the same in education? In *Role Reversal*, author Mark Barnes shares his “Results Only Learning Environment” model, which emphasizes the final result of learning above all else. In practice, this means utilizing project-based learning as the main mechanism for assessment. In this way, learners have the freedom to manage themselves, make mistakes, and gain their own insights on their road to mastery. Intrigued? Then, check out how a “Results Only” system that is breaking the mold and delivering incredible results.

## WORTH YOUR TIME

### **How Giving Students Choice During the Day Can Create Unstoppable Learning**

What if we gave learners the same autonomy we expect of adults? What would that mean for the role of the educator? Hear what a master teacher at Aspire Public Schools has learned from “running” with those questions. [Read here](#)

### **Kids, take charge**

Kiran Bir Sethi views education as contagious—like a common cold, laughter, or inspiration. At Sethi's Riverside School in Ahmedabad, India, learners are infected with an empowering “I can” attitude and are making real, positive changes in their community and country—spreading the infection as they go. [Watch here](#)

### **The Difference between Blended Learning and Personalized Learning, and why it matters**

Terms like “competency-based learning” and “personalized learning”—do we even know what they mean anymore? See how LEAP Innovations' Phyllis Lockett has answered this question and how she sees systems change happening for our education system. [Read here](#)

“You cannot discover new oceans unless you have the courage to lose sight of the shore.” —**ANDRÉ GIDE**

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