

pioneering

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A NOTE FROM EDUCATION REIMAGINED

Kelly Young, Executive Director

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● connect. share. discover. lead. ●

pioneering

Dear Pioneers,

Last week, I was on the West Coast for the NewSchools Venture Fund Summit with education stakeholders from across the country. Out of everything I experienced during the day-long event, the final session brought about the deepest reflection.

The summit concluded with a refreshing plenary session called “Why Can’t We Be Friends?: Disagreements, Tradeoffs and Common Ground” ([link](#)) and took me back to the early days when Education Reimagined was an unnamed initiative still at work reimagining what education could be.

This final session—a four-way conversation between leaders from Education Leaders of Color, Democrats for Education Reform, The Koch Institute, and The American Enterprise Institute—showed the power in creating the space for insightful dialogue (not debate) where the common purpose for everyone is to provide an education system that benefits all children.

This idea of dialogue, rather than debate, is at the foundation of Convergence’s work (with education and otherwise) and has allowed Education Reimagined to blossom into the dynamic, multi-faceted initiative it is today. The possibilities that emerge when thought leaders come together to explore ideas that transcend political and ideological divides are consistently groundbreaking and awe-inspiring.

And, at Education Reimagined, we know even more becomes possible when the dialogue is about creating, rather than fixing, a system. In that spirit, we create spaces for pioneers to come together in dialogue that rises above the current debates and traditional silos of education. We are always staying tuned to the opinions and ideas of these leaders, so we don’t close ourselves off from valuable insights that will accelerate the learner-centered movement even faster.

Pioneering acts in a similar way. We invite and amplify the voices of pioneering leaders—young learners, educators, and the like—spanning the geographic and ideological landscape to share insights, learnings, challenges, and questions that arise when real transformation is underway. In this issue, we continue that amplification through various stories and conversations from Massachusetts, Georgia, and Alabama.

Warm wishes,
Kelly Young



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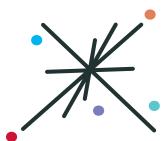
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Connect. Share. Discover. Lead.

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.





Tremont School

LEXINGTON, MA

“If you are a part of Tremont, you are part of a school that changes lives.” – TREMONT PARENT

IT ONLY TAKES A SMALL GROUP OF FOCUSED, driven individuals to make transformation possible. Such was the case in Lexington, Massachusetts where a group of families took collective action to rethink what learning could look like for their children.

These families believed the individual child should be the center of any educational design and that a strong focus on socio-emotional learning would organically create such a system. With this strong desire to see their children learning in an environment that truly sees the whole child, they stopped searching for a solution and started creating it themselves.

At Tremont, learners develop **knowledge, skills, and dispositions** through the dynamic combination and implementation of the state's general framework and Tremont's own 14 competencies. Within these competencies, learners are encouraged to “explore broadly and adventurously in pursuit of possibility” and are tasked with “appreciating the truth in others and their work.”

This type of introspective reflection creates a natural home for **socially embedded** learning, where weekly contracts are created between learners and educators to set mutually agreed upon learning targets. Through these contracts, learners create a **personalized, relevant, and contextualized** approach to their learning.

As an example, two learners in pursuit of similar **competency-based** goals in mathematics can arrive at the same checkpoints through drastically different means. One learner might find himself more adept at learning through traditional textbooks and lectures. He acquires knowledge in rigid, step-by-step systems and has little trouble applying his learning to less-structured projects. On the other hand, his peer, who finds herself completely disengaged when being lectured to, can take a hands-on approach to her learning. She can choose to customize her learning path—directly developing her learning through the execution of an engaging project.

Either path is welcome at Tremont, where the main focus is on ensuring learners know how to “think about their own thinking to co-design [their] best learning environment” and, just as importantly, “to use and embrace mistakes as part of learning.” At the end of each year, learners assess the competencies they have completed and, through their Celebration of Learning, have the opportunity to share their accomplishments with peers, family, and the community at-large.

Everything happening at Tremont was made possible by applying the innate characteristic—an intense love for one’s child—that exists in any parent to the world of education. Education transformation can come from any source in the community, and with the proper support and buy-in from just a few education stakeholders, the possibilities are endless.

LEARN MORE

[Tremont School Competencies](#)

[Individualized Instruction at Tremont](#)

[Tremont School Living Curriculum](#)

[Tremont in Action](#)

[VIDEO Tremont is...](#)

[VIDEO ASL Independent Study](#)

FACTS & FIGURES

Private

Opened in 2011

Started by parents, built by educators, learners, and parents

Ages 10-18

42 learners

Project-Based and Individualized Living Curriculum

Interdisciplinary competencies

CONNECT

Website

[Tremont School](#)

Social Media

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)



Conversation with Dr. Angél W. Kytle



DR. ANGÉL W. KYTLE

The Education Reimagined team caught up with Mount Vernon Presbyterian School's Chief Integration Officer, Dr. Angél Kytle for an in-depth conversation on how MVPS strives for an holistic approach to education by creating systems for dynamic community integration. From developing a sophisticated Collaborated Care and Wellness service for all learners to implementing a community supported Parent University, discover how MVPS keeps one foot grounded in the present and the other leaping to the edge of what's possible.

Q. What roles have you played in the education space, and what role do you currently play at Mount Vernon Presbyterian School (MVPS)?

A. Before joining MVPS three years ago, I worked in a number of learning environments as a teacher, Director of Admission, Director of Studies, Head of a Division, and Head of School. Serving as Chief Integration Officer at MVPS, my role is to assess internal progress, lead internal activity, engage with internal partners, realize the fulfillment of the blueprint the School has designed, and advise on the future.

More practically, I serve as a bridge for all divisions—Early Learning through grade 12—to ensure cohesion and flow in a learner's academic, social-emotional, co-curricular, and extracurricular life. In addition, I work with different team members to ensure the literal systems aren't working in silos and the experiences provided for the whole community make sense. Next year, I have been asked to move into the role of Head of Middle School, and I look forward to returning to a role where I can connect more deeply with students, teachers, and parents.

Q. What's important to you about connecting more deeply with those individuals—particularly the learners?

A. Education—correction, learning—has always been a part of my life. As a child, I remember setting my Raggedy Ann and Mrs. Beasley dolls down at my table and “teaching” them. At a very young age, I was taught that teachers are to be revered, yet when I looked around, society seemed to think differently—from both a respect and a compensation perspective. As a result, I was discouraged from entering the education industry. Still, I just couldn't get it out of my system. Whether it was the spark of light in a learner's eyes when a concept clicked or the deep relationships that are made with students, colleagues, and parents, participating within learning organizations is a part of my fabric.

The impact of specific connections with learners, parents, and teachers may be hard to quantify, yet I have found that through relationships, the learning amplifies. Emotional connections serve as conduits to curiosities and passions, as well as confidence and competence.

Q. In your third year at MVPS, what is different here compared to your previous professional experiences?

A. Every independent school is unique, yet there are so many aspects that look the same at first glance. What is most palpable here at MVPS is that we are truly mission-driven. We live out our mission every day through our language, interactions, experiences, plans, hopes, and dreams.

The Mount Vernon Continuum ([link](#)) is the strategic blueprint for the School and reflects the elements we feel a great school requires:

- a clear and compelling organization mission (purpose);
- cultural norms that invite people to step outside their comfort zone (culture);
- people-centered design principles that guide teaching and learning (design); and
- six relevant, applicable habits of mind (results).

We travel indefinitely along the Continuum, deliberately visiting the same spots time and time again, and each turn provides us a fresh outlook and perspective. When we place the learner at the center of the Continuum, we better understand the why behind our mission. Our norms establish ground rules, if you will, for our relationships with learners and offer frames in which our learners grow. Design principles reflect what learners need in their journey and hold us accountable to our approaches. Lastly, Mount Vernon Mindsets offer documentation of our teaching and learning and the foundation for the impact our students will have in designing a better world.

Q. MVPS supports learners as young as six-weeks-old. What systems have you and your team designed to enroll parents in their child's learning?

A. Valuing our partnership with families and recognizing the type of learning required for this generation of students, MVPS formalized and expanded education opportunities by establishing Parent University a few years ago.

In my first year as Chief Integration Officer, our Head of School asked me to refine and iterate the existing system of parent education to ensure its focus on mission, as well as its infusion throughout the entire community. One of our many goals is to offer parents the opportunity to learn from each other and partner together as they tackle the many challenges children face—challenges revealed in parent surveys, one-on-one discussions, and reflections on child development and parenting. We hold many events throughout the year from local and national educational experts, special guest speakers, as well as teachers and leaders within our Mount Vernon community. Topics include child development, digital citizenship, learning, and parenting. In 2016, the program went a step further, tying the School's cultural norms to specific topics for discussion.

- Sharing the Well—sessions on teaching and learning, including topics like how to navigate the School's learning management system and online grading platform, the how's and why's behind teaching and learning in the curriculum, and what parents need to understand their child's experience
- Assuming the Best and Failing Up!—presentations and dialogues centered on child development and parenting
- Starting with Questions—freer-in-form session conversations centered on specific Mount Vernon initiatives
- Having Fun—get-togethers to enjoy each other's company and celebrate the Mount Vernon community

“Emotional connections serve as conduits to curiosities and passions, as well as confidence and competence.”

DR. ANGÉL W. KYTLE

This school year we've held over 25 Parent University sessions, which were widely appreciated and applauded by our parent community. Responding to their desire to understand more about how we "do" learning at MVPS, we will continue to refine and grow the program.

Q. With this dynamic parental support structure in place, what types of services can learners themselves take advantage of?

A. During this school year, I had the distinct pleasure of guiding a team of MVPS student-support professionals through an audit and vision-casting of MVPS's student support services. Included on the team were personnel from academic resource, guidance counseling, college counseling, and the health clinics. This amazing team of experts engaged in a design-thinking process to prototype a comprehensive and balanced student support services system.

To assess our current student support services, we engaged in discovery and empathy experiences, which included journaling two different days (no day is ever the same) in each member's work life, studying a sample of local and national K-12 and college support services models, interviewing MVPS users (students, teachers, parents) of support services from each area, reviewing protocols and processes currently in place at MVPS, and examining exemplar health and wellness initiatives in independent schools. During the audit, the quality of services was recognized and applauded; we also discovered a need for greater connections among those who serve students in a myriad of ways. The experimenting and prototyping phases have included designs within each area of wellness, as well as visioning an overall system.

Our study led us to expand the idea of student support services to thinking about it as Collaborative Care and Wellness, which includes:

- Learning wellness
- Physical wellness
- Social-emotional wellness
- Spiritual wellness
- Life (beyond MVPS) wellness

Most schools' understanding and practice of health and wellness have been reactive and isolated. Our goal is to design a cohesive and multi-dimensional system that proactively frames a culture and climate of wellness. Components of this culture and climate include:

- Integration throughout the program (multi-disciplinary and interscholastic)
- Collaboration and coordination among team members
- Family engagement
- Academic balance
- Mindfulness and stress prevention
- Healthful living across the lifespan

Grounded in our new strategic plan, we have designed a systemic all-school and localized Collaborative Care and Wellness Team. They organize and oversee all aspects of collaborative care and wellness, engaging in Research, Design, and Iteration of programs (building capacity of all learners); processes (balancing access, confidentiality, and communication); and progress.

"One of our many goals is to offer parents the opportunity to learn from each other and partner together as they tackle the many challenges children face."

DR. ANGÉL W. KYTLE

Mount Vernon's design principles are focal points for this team in all its work. In addition, this team fosters and cultivates an external network of psychologists, learning specialists, doctors, and other community resources outside of MVPS to assist us in serving our children and families. Localized more closely to the child, the Collaborative Care and Wellness Team has satellite teams comprised of division-specific personnel who join with key all-school team members as appropriate. These teams focus not only on program and process but most heavily on individual learner progress in wellness. Next year will be our first round of implementation, and I am excited to see where this intentional work leads us.

Q. What has been your favorite story or stories since you've arrived at MVPS?

A. My favorite story is probably the one that has not been written, but I can see glimpses of it emerging in our work. Most gratifying are stories that describe learners—young and old—using their learning as an opportunity to make a difference in our community. They are not learning just to learn or, even, to be prepared to make a difference *after* they graduate. They are learning and growing for the betterment of themselves AND others now. We are truly on a journey, and everyone has a story to tell. Our next strategic plan provides focus in this area by challenging us to amplify and deepen mission, vision, and community by empowering voices, cultivating relationships and experiences, and personalizing the story for every learner at Mount Vernon. Stay tuned for what I am certain will be some amazing stories to come!

Q. Your passion and drive for this work is incredibly evident. How does the MVPS team ensure similarly driven individuals are hired? What training do they receive before and after they start working with learners?

A. Last year, the Executive Team of the School designed a comprehensive and intentional recruiting, interviewing, hiring, and onboarding (RIHO) process because, as a school of inquiry and impact, we move fast. It is not unusual for several initiatives to occur simultaneously. As a result, we recognize assumptions are sometimes made that things are in place that are not. Such gaps can be seen when hiring seasons don't go as well as we hoped.

Because of our growth, we wanted to ensure the people we were bringing on were mission-aligned and of the highest caliber. In addition, we planned for an ongoing system of building their capacity within our culture—capacity reflecting the Mount Vernon Continuum and the way we “do” school here, as well as capacity in best practices of teaching and learning.

The RIHO process was designed with the mission as the focus, then delineated on our website to show prospective team members exactly what we're looking for. The interview process, always including teams of people rather than an individual, fully focuses on mission, culture, norms, and our design elements. We recognize that Mount Vernon is selling itself to the candidate as much as the candidate is selling him/herself to Mount Vernon. The same protocol is now followed school-wide.

Onboarding avoids the assumption teachers should hit the ground running from day one and focuses on acclimation, enculturation, and empowerment; as soon as a contract is signed, we begin pre-boarding with our newest team members. New Faculty/Staff Orientation is considered the “on ramp” of a new team member’s experience with a high dose of mission and vision. The onboarding process continues throughout the entire first year at Mount Vernon and perhaps beyond.

“Most gratifying are stories that describe learners—young and old—using their learning as an opportunity to make a difference in our community.”

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Q. What big things are on the horizon for MVPS?

A. MVPS has just completed the next iteration of our strategic vision—MVx—which will be launched to the entire community in August. We have already begun to cascade the work internally with our faculty and staff. Recognizing we live in a world of exponential change, we choose to tackle that concept head on. Leaning into the future, we seek to multiply our influence, increase our value, deepen our impact, and drive design and innovation.

The National Association of Independent Schools most recently named MVPS as one of the top ten innovative schools in the nation, and we take that honor very seriously. Three essential, interconnected questions serve as design drivers of our future work.

- How might we make school more reflective of real life?
- How might we empower all learners to be seekers and explorers?
- How might we inspire one another—and the larger world—through the work we undertake together?

The past five years have been a time of transformation for MVPS, propelling us forward as a thought and innovation leader. The next five years will surely follow in like fashion.

“Leaning into the future, we seek to multiply our influence, increase our value, deepen our impact, and drive design and innovation.”

DR. ANGÉL W. KYTLE

Dr. Angél W. Kytle is the Chief Integration Officer at Mount Vernon Presbyterian School. Serving in a rich variety of leadership roles during her professional career, she is a mentor to many staff members and colleagues throughout the School and in the independent school community. A connector, Angél strives to partner with fellow learners to build capacity of self and team. Areas of expertise and passion include strategic visioning, systems perspectives and analysis, learner-centered school design, and cultural transformation.



The Unexpected Challenge and Reward of Owning My Learning

by Vanella Tadjuidje

My life so far has consisted of living in two different countries, three different houses, and going to three different schools. I was five years old when my family and I moved from Cameroon, Central Africa to Cincinnati, Ohio during the summer of 2007. For a while, culture shock was all I experienced. I didn't speak the language, and I didn't know the customs. I didn't even know how people greeted each other. I was a small fish lost in the depths of the blue sea.

Once the summer was over, I enrolled in a school focused on foreign languages. The first two years were the hardest two years of my educational life. I was learning English and trying to adjust to this new environment—this new country I would be living in for the next eight and a half years.

The second time I moved was during the summer before my second-grade year. Thankfully, by that time, I was already speaking fluent English. But, I still had an incomprehensible accent. From second through seventh grade, I lived in the same place and stayed in the same school system.

My seventh-grade year was my first year in a magnet high school, and, like many other schools, it was very "traditional." When I use the word traditional, I mean a school that teaches students by the book—literally each grade level has a different textbook for each core subject, and the students are expected to take notes based on what is written in the book.

After learning English, I actually looked forward to going to school. I loved learning, and I was not at all bothered by learning from the book. That was the norm for me for the last seven years.

Then, during Thanksgiving Break of my eighth grade year, I was on the move again. I was moving across the country to Pike Road, Alabama. The break gave me a chance to adjust to living in the South, but it did not prepare me for school.

BAM! As soon I walked into the building, I was met with the bustling of students and teachers, a stampede of what looked like "organized chaos." So much was going on all at once, but no one seemed to bat an eye—it was just the norm for them. For me, the



VANELLA TADJUIDJE

norm had been hallways with lockers and students racing to their classes, not students having class in hallways and racing balloon cars. I'm not necessarily resistant to change, but the move to Pike Road School was one that took some time to adapt to.

Everything about the school was almost the complete opposite of my old high school. Rather than textbooks, they had laptops. Rather than note taking and regurgitating information, they had a project for each lesson. Even after a month of attending Pike Road, I still could not fully accept their way of learning. It just seemed too strange to me. I kept thinking, "What school doesn't have textbooks? What school doesn't have letter grades or standardized tests?"

Like I said, I'm used to adapting (I've moved all over the place), but school was just one of those things I did not want to alter. That was my mindset for the first four months I was at Pike Road. In those four months, I kept myself shut out from what the school was trying to promote and just stuck to what I was used to doing. It didn't matter that the lead learners assigned us projects that involved group collaboration. It didn't matter that we were assessed, rather than tested, to see how well we understood the information.

For those four months, I was a goldfish circling my fishbowl, uninterested in the world of creativity and innovation beyond the glass that concealed me. How was Pike Road School, a school that was against everything I was accustomed to, supposed to change me? How was Pike Road School going to change this 14-year-old girl who had come to like traditional schools so much? She was unwilling to adjust.

EMBRACING POSSIBILITY

After my four-month resistance, I felt a drop of hope fall for the first time in a long time. It was April 2016 when the light drizzle of aspiration began. As they say, April showers bring May flowers, and in this example, the flowers were the end of my isolation and resistance.

During those two months, all of Community 8 was working on our end-of-the-year World's Fair project. The intent of the project was to show the hidden diversity within the Pike Road community and to inform/entertain the rest of the school about various countries and cultures around the world.

At first, I was planning on working by myself, but seeing how the majority of my peers were working collaboratively, I knew I had to find a group that would accept me. But, lucky for me, it was the group that found me. The group was made up of all girls, and they were planning on doing South Africa. While it was not Cameroon, it still made me excited to learn about another African culture. At first, the group had around nine girls, but as the process got harder and became a little less interesting to others, the number was downsized to five, which was okay because the smaller number of people was more efficient and easier to work with. The girls that left the group went to other countries like Canada and France, which our lead learner allowed because it brought more cultural diversity to the fair.

One aspect of our project that was different from others was that my group was going to perform a dance that fit the theme of the World's Fair—bringing an awareness to the different cultures represented at school and, in general, around the world. We decided to dance to "Mama Africa" by a Nigerian duo called Bracket. The song is about the diversity of Africa and how music is one thing that binds the continent together.

Our dance was a mix of Just Dance choreography and some dance moves shown in Bracket's music video. While the end product looked effortless and well blended, the process we had to go through to get there was not easy.

"When I use the word traditional, I mean a school that teaches students by the book—literally."

VANELLA TADJUIDJE

Failure was part of the process from the beginning. Originally, we attempted to memorize and match the choreography in one Just Dance song with the beat of “Mama Africa,” but we soon realized the moves were too hard to remember and often mismatched “Mama Africa’s” beat. We chose to include choreography from another song because the Bracket music video did not have enough choreography that we could use.

After a while, we decided to use a bit of the dance steps we saw in “Mama Africa” to help with the beat change. Once we settled on mixing the moves together, we had to create our own choreography, which I thought was the best part of the process because it showed how we were able to overcome a huge obstacle by working and cooperating with each other.

Once the dance was complete, we began researching more on South Africa so we could complete a digital presentation. We wanted to have a visual representation of some of the South African culture that could not be explained through dance. We researched traditional foods, popular national sports, the meaning of the flag’s design, and special holidays that were celebrated throughout the country.

Our extensive research led us to create more products to show-off at the fair, like bracelets and children’s games. I wanted to make bracelets because I thought it would be fun, and one of my friends in the group wanted to actually bring in a game that was similar to one that was played in South Africa, called mancala, so that the younger learners could play it when they came to our group.

The bracelets were fun to make because each bracelet I made represented a different country, and each country had a different story to tell. In the spirit of the World’s Fair, I thought it would be cool to make bracelets showing the flag colors of multiple African countries. My hope was to show the interconnection among African countries, regardless of the continent’s size, and how their cultures have many parallels. The bracelets were a little hard to make, but the beauty—physically and metaphorically—of the end product made it worth the effort.

Once the dance, bracelets, games, and costumes were complete, we were ready to take on the World’s Fair. The World’s Fair was fun for everyone who participated because we all put in so much effort and we were proud of our work. The South African booth was a success on many levels, but there was one common theme throughout the World’s Fair that teachers, attendees, and learners acknowledged together—the full embrace of celebrating the diversity at PRS and the learning everyone got to partake in. Personally, I enjoyed being able to embrace my own culture and showcase it to other people.

The World’s Fair helped me fully understand what the “Pike Road Way” was all about. Pike Road encourages students to take initiative towards their own learning—to not have to wait for someone to tell them to do something. In this system, I learned when I’m able to teach myself, it’s easier to understand what goes on in my mind, rather than trying to figure out what’s going on in the mind of my teacher.

DISCOVERING MY WHOLE SELF

Flash forward to the 2016-2017 school year, and you will discover a new Vanella, one who is involved in school and has grasped what the school is trying to accomplish.

I began the new school year with an open mind and an even more open personality. I decided I was going to fully break out of the box I made for myself during my four-month resistance. I joined the Student Government Association and did some community

“For me, the norm had been hallways with lockers and students racing to their classes, not students having class in hallways and racing balloon cars.”

VANELLA TADJUIDJE

service around the school, which was something I never saw myself doing in previous years since I was such a private person. But, I figured if I was going to embrace this new school, I should also embrace a new me to go with it.

Beyond involving myself in extracurriculars, I was really getting the hang of doing my work in a way that showed who I was and how I learned, while also meeting the criteria set for the assignment. Most of the assessments I turned in were in the form of poems. When I write poetry, I find I learn more about what I'm studying. Today, if someone were to ask me what I learned six months ago, I would be able to tell them pages worth of what I learned. But, ask me the same question at my previous school, and I would have drawn a blank. It just goes to show that students who are taught to actually understand the material and apply it to what they love—like poetry—learn better than those who are taught to memorize information and take a test on it.

I believe I have come a long way from who I was last year to who I am today. I now understand how I learn best, and I think every student should have that knowledge. But, I know not everyone is going to accept it. There are people who view Pike Road Schools as an ineffective school and blame it for not teaching their students "correctly." But, from my experience, I think for anyone to actually learn at PRS, they have to accept and fully grasp what the Pike Road Way is all about. People who disagree with the method do not understand that the students at PRS are actually learning, just not in the way traditional schools practice it.

I have come to embrace the fact Pike Road is not, and will never be, a traditional school. And, I find that to be a very good thing. The me that came from a traditional high school was good at regurgitating information for a grade, but the me today is good at learning and understanding information for my own progression, not a grade. I believe I learned more in these past few months than I ever did in the two years I spent at a traditional high school. I can't wait to see what I'll learn in the upcoming years, and I'm excited to see how Pike Road Schools will continue to shape me in preparation for the real world!

"Pike Road encourages students to take initiative towards their own learning —to not have to wait for someone to tell them to do something."

VANELLA TADJUIDJE

Vanella Tadjuidje is a Community 9 learner at Pike Road School. She was a part of a magnet program in Cincinnati, OH until the winter of 2015, when she moved to Pike Road, AL during her eighth-grade year. Her interests include reading, writing, playing the clarinet, and soccer. Following in her parents' footsteps, she wants to pursue a career in Health Science. Currently, she participates in the school's Biomedical Academy to help her get on track for her future.



10 Expectations by Big Picture Learning

When we decide test scores and graduation rates are no longer the best metrics for determining the success of a learning environment, we are invited to explore learner-centered assessment techniques that recognize the wholeness of each learner. As we explore the child behind the numbers, we will discover hidden insights about what makes each learner “tick.” Since 1995, the pioneers at **Big Picture Learning** have been digging into these characteristics and have developed a great resource for educators, parents, and learners to assess how the needs of each learner are being met. With over two decades of experience working in partnership with learners, BPL has determined “**10 Expectations All Students Should Have of Their Schools**” ([link](#)). Check out what these expectations are and how they might assist you in furthering learner and community engagement in your environment.

Student Expectations ([link](#))

Educator Rubric ([link](#))

Leaving to Learn: How Out-of-School Learning Increases Student Engagement and Reduces Dropout Rates ([book](#))

ESSA and Personalized Learning State by State by KnowledgeWorks

When big shifts occur in the education policy arena, it can be difficult to look beyond the adjustments being made in your region and compare your efforts with those in other states. The folks at **KnowledgeWorks** recognize this challenge and have developed a state-by-state tool ([link](#)) that looks at what kind of transformation is taking shape across the country. By providing brief overviews of each state’s proposed strategies—with a focus on Vision, Long-Term Goals, Academic Assessments, Supporting Excellent Educators, and Supporting All Students—KnowledgeWorks invites users to collect, iterate, and advance these ideas to explore how far they can go in reimagining their education systems under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). States that have realized the freedom this new act provides have been taking some encouraging steps forward in recognizing and celebrating the individuality of their learners. Discover for yourself what is happening across the country, and see how your ecosystem can take advantage of the proposed ideas.

Nationwide Summary and Interactive Map ([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.

PERSONALIZED LEARNING SUMMIT BY TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS

Campbellsville, KY

June 6

[Summit Website](#)

BIG PICTURE LEARNING’S BIG BANG CONFERENCE

St. Louis, MO

July 25-28

[Conference Website](#)

ELEVATE! BY MESA COUNTY VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT 51

Grand Junction, CO

July 31-Aug 1

[Event Info](#)

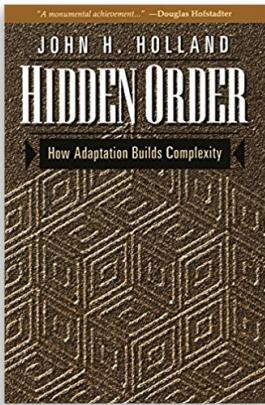
OPPORTUNITY BOARD

Education Reimagined is hiring for two dynamic, diverse team members! We’re seeking an **Associate Director of National Outreach & Community Building** and a **Communications Associate—Social Media**. Learn more [here!](#)

Springpoint is seeking a **Manager of Instruction & School Design** to support design team leaders and practitioners to design, launch, and grow new high schools. Learn more [here!](#)

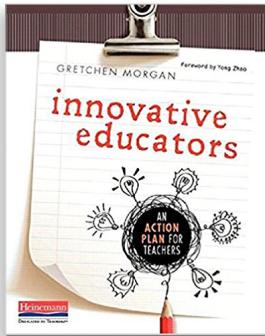
Transcend is hiring for a **Research and Development Specialist**. Learn more [here!](#)

LEAP Innovations is searching for a **Senior Director of Research & Evaluation**. Learn more [here!](#)



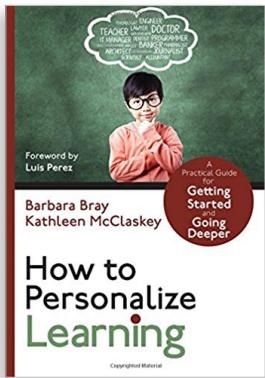
Hidden Order: How Adaptation Builds Complexity by John Holland

What is a complex adaptive system (CAS), and how does it relate to education? A CAS can never be fully understood if you only assess its properties piece by piece. Whenever changes are made to a single part, the consequences have a rippling effect on the system as a whole. This is exactly how changes to the education system work. To better understand the possible effects from future changes, it's beneficial to have a strong grasp of a CAS's general properties. A great place to start is with John Holland's *Hidden Order: How Adaptation Builds Complexity*.



Innovative Educators: An Action Plan for Teachers by Gretchen Morgan

With our focus on the bottom-up, top-enabled transformation of the education system, we believe empowering educators to explore the five elements with their cohort of learners is of great value and importance. Supporting this belief and wanting to take action on it, Gretchen Morgan provides great insight on how educators can invent new practices to guide learners in developing the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to succeed in an ever-changing world. Pick up *Innovative Educators*, and discover new possibilities in engaging every learner in your environment.



How to Personalize Learning: A Practical Guide for Getting Started and Going Deeper by Barbara Bray and Kathleen McClaskey

Taking the first step in any new endeavor takes great courage and will. But, when equipped with the right tools and support, a seemingly insurmountable task can become fantastically possible. Along those lines, some powerful tools for recognizing and acting on the unique needs of each learner can be found in Barbara Bray and Kathleen McClaskey's newest work, *How to Personalize Learning*. In their second book, you can explore multiple strategies for improving your learner-centered system and, if you're just getting started, ways to begin implementing these strategies as quickly as possible.

Exploring Learner-Centered Leadership at Alamo Heights ISD

Check out Episode 003 of the Shift Your Paradigm podcast, in which hosts Randy Ziegenfuss and Lynn Fuini-Hetten speak with Alamo Heights ISD leaders Kevin Brown and Frank Alfaro.

[Listen here](#)

Personalized Learning: What Every Student Deserves

When a young learner experienced learner-centered education at Lindsay USD, she couldn't help but direct her passion to providing others with the same opportunities afforded to her. Explore her story and why she's pursuing a Master's in Education Policy.

[Read here](#)

Empathy and Leadership

Principal Eric Sheninger reflects on the value of trust and empathy when leading his team to new horizons. Discover why he believes these two components are necessary for cultivating powerful, professional relationships. [Read here](#)

“Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future.” – **JOHN F. KENNEDY**

Read past issues of
PIONEERING : A LEARNER-CENTERED PUBLICATION
www.education-reimagined.org



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