

pioneering

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A NOTE FROM EDUCATION REIMAGINED

Kelly Young, Executive Director

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Dear Pioneers,

Curriculum. That's what I've been spending a lot of my time thinking about lately. Not about how to make it better but rather about how we can come up with another name for the content and learning pathways for learners. Curriculum is the "what" of learning in a traditional system. Curriculum—if aligned to the state standards and delivered well—is supposed to have learners capable of demonstrating their proficiency with state standards on the state test. It is standardized by design and is teacher-created and -led.

There may be other definitions of curriculum, but without doing gymnastics with the word, most people would relate to it as the subject matter, lesson plan, and specific content of a course. What almost never comes up in a curriculum conversation are the student's unique interests or the idea of multiple or unique pathways. How could they when these conversations begin with how to deliver standardized content to a large group of learners?

Apropos to this question, I was just sent a link to Pioneer Lab community member [Joanne McEachen's](#) organization, [The Learner First](#)—a great resource for transformers. One [video](#) stood out in particular. Watch to see how the notions of what, how, and with whom learning happens transforms for this reluctant teacher when she starts with the learner in front of her, rather than a pre-designed curriculum. Starting by discovering what, how, when, where, and with whom learners learn best and want to learn is a radical notion, and one that unleashes the most underutilized resource in education: the learner. There still have to be plans and pathways, but they need to be freed from one-size-fits-all notions of content, pace, and place. What are the learner-centered words that replace the notion of curriculum? Tweet your answer with the hashtag [#replacecurriculum](#).

You can keep exploring this idea with this week's issue of *Pioneering*. Hear from an Alabama learner whose reluctance to join in the "chaos" of her learner-centered environment transformed to passion, joy, and leadership. In this issue, we also invite you to get a taste of the great work one micro-school in New York City is taking on, as well as a number of books, resources, and exciting upcoming events. Enjoy!

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.





PORTFOLIO SCHOOL

NEW YORK CITY, NY

“By creating an environment emphasizing what students know and what they can do with what they know, Portfolio School is preparing its students to succeed and create a positive impact in this rapidly changing world.” — TONY WAGNER, HARVARD UNIVERSITY

AT PORTFOLIO SCHOOL—A MICRO-SCHOOL IN NEW YORK CITY—grades, tests, and homework are relics of the past that have no place in today’s learning environments. Instead, as their name suggests, learners build portfolios of project-based work that are assessed based on peer, educator, and community feedback. The idea of “testing” is replaced with public exhibitions and professionally drafted publications. These young learners are building proof of learning through **competency-based** projects that ignore the traditional restrictions of one-hour schedule blocks, age cohorts, and seat time.

The leaders and learners at Portfolio School have a library of incredible stories they can share about their learning experience. Take, for instance, a fun project everyone participated in called **Learning is Delicious**. The overall objective was for each learner to build their own ice cream machine—but on their way there, they unearthed learning and discoveries about temperature, states of matter, the history of innovation, and the commercialization of ice. Through projects like these, learners develop the **knowledge, skills, and dispositions** to take complete **agency** in their learning. And, this all begins as early as the age of five.

Within every project exists a limitless opportunity to bring the knowledge, ideas, and history of the world into the learning experience. When a learner happens upon a problem, they are encouraged to ask questions and explore how to find the answer. These questions develop from **personalized, relevant, and contextualized** interests only the learner can wholeheartedly relate to. With each question, learners are able to use the **socially embedded** nature of their environment to ask any learner, educator, or parent (regardless of age or title) to assist them along their path of inquiry. This completely transforms not only the community dynamics of how learning connects between the school, home, and world, but it more specifically redefines the role of the educator.

Given the wide array of interests the learners express, the adults have to take on the role of learner just as much as the kids. At every turn, new research is being conducted to find out how the multi-faceted projects can all connect as one beautiful story of learning. Showcasing their authentic motivation to learn, educators act as role models for the kids to take on the same veracity in their learning. And, equally so, through the learners’ playful nature and eagerness to learn, they reaffirm why the educators have chosen to reimagine the idea of “teaching” altogether. At Portfolio School, the mission to transform education aspires to go beyond their small cohort of learners and reach every kid in New York City and beyond.

LEARN MORE

[What is Portfolio School](#)

[How a NYC Micro-School Is Rethinking Classrooms and Tests—and Using Projects to Inspire Learning](#)
[Parents Reflection](#)

FACTS & FIGURES

Independent

A network of micro-schools — first school in TriBeCa currently serving ages 5-10

Hands-on, “makerspace” environment

Mixed Ages

Interdisciplinary Project-based learning curriculum and approach

Partnering with professors and researchers from Stanford University, Columbia University, MIT, NYU

Advisors include education thought leaders like Tony Wagner, Thom Markham, and Paulo Blikstein

CONNECT

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A Conversation with Dr. Shira Leibowitz



DR. SHIRA LEIBOWITZ

Q. What path led you to your current role at Portfolio School?

A. I have led independent schools for 20 years, and during that time, I was expected to know the most current educational research and innovative best practices. Over time, I became somewhat disillusioned. What we could do for our learners, and what our learners deserved, was impossible to implement in traditional schools given their current structures, cultures, and expectations. I wanted to create something new. It was then that I found Portfolio School. It was an ideal match for me given our visions are so aligned; that is, being radically responsive to children and their families and applying actionable research in a school setting.

Q. What do you see as the possibility for the Portfolio model to translate to learning environments that reach all kids?

A. We are reimagining education, creating an environment that is highly interdisciplinary and where students of different ages work together. We engage learners in many creative experiences, incorporating making within our FabLab [Fabrication Laboratory]—which is open and accessible all the time—creative writing, and a wide range of design challenges and projects. We seek deep learning and organize our schedules to allow for long periods of time in which children can immerse themselves in our learning units and creative projects.

We've broken down walls between classrooms, disciplines, and ages, creating a unique learning environment in which students can achieve enormous intellectual and creative depth—with social-emotional learning embedded—in a way that's impossible given the structures, cultures, and traditions of many schools. And, we feel the Portfolio approach has much to offer other types of learning environments that reach all kids. We believe that implementing pieces of our approach will help schools to achieve the type of higher levels of learning, understanding, and creativity we all seek, and we are committed to creating opportunities to share our curriculum with schools, after-school and informal education programs, and families. We are also committed to offering professional development to share ways of adapting our approaches to a variety of settings.

Q. How variable are the learning opportunities for your learners? What's an example of a project that has been taken on?

A. We aim for deep learning through a variety of learning experiences, so our program includes personal projects, as well as in-depth collaborative projects. The collaborative projects are connected to an immersive unit of study around a single overarching theme. Last year, we ran three units—each with a substantial collaborative project that culminated in a public exhibition where our students presented their work to families, friends, and members of our community.

The three units last year focused on:

- 1. Temperature and Cold:** “Learning is Delicious” was a unit in which students created their own ice cream machines and learned (among other things) how the commercialization of ice changed the world.
- 2. Color:** This unit stemmed from student interest, as we observed our kids often making rainbows and, on a class trip to the Met, being most interested in Joseph Albers’ colorful *Homage to the Square* paintings. In this unit, students learned about the creation of pigments in ancient caves, how leaves change color, and the mythology and science of rainbows, among other explorations about color. Learners read rainbow myths from around the world and then wrote their own. They transformed an area of our school into a cave. They designed their own lightbox projector and laser-cut three scenes from their myths to project on the cave wall. They programmed an LED bonfire, designed masks of the main characters of their myths, and at our public exhibition, brought our guests through an immersive storytelling experience about rainbows.
- 3. The Domestication of Animals:** This unit was driven by the students’ interest in adopting a class pet. This offered us an opportunity to engage them in learning about what is considered to be the most significant event in the past 15,000 years of human history: the Neolithic Revolution, or the period in which people domesticated plants and animals. Students learned not only about the domestication of guinea pigs (the animals our kids chose to adopt) but also about how humans domesticated plants and a wide range of animals, changing the course of human history. Considering what it means to live with animals today, students designed and built a multi-story home for guinea pigs, with ramps that allowed our two guinea pigs to move between levels and a rooftop farm that grows the plants to feed the guinea pigs. Learning that when the humidity gets too high the home needs to be cleaned, the kids designed and built sensors to measure the home’s internal humidity. This included a user interface that lights up when it was time to clean the guinea pig home. They also began experimenting with Artificial Intelligence to train a neural network to identify each of the two guinea pigs, so we could check in on them even when we weren’t at school. All of this work was presented at a public exhibition at which the students presented their guinea pig house and brought guests on a journey through history via the lense of the domestication of animals.

We’ve been amazed by what young children can accomplish when they are given a challenging task that’s interesting to them and are supported with the right scaffolding to accomplish their goals.

Q. What allows projects to turn so many different directions along the way, while still working toward the overall objective (like having a class pet)?

A. Learning and creating at Portfolio is an organic process, in which the adults are immersing ourselves in the learning alongside our students. There are so many different projects coming up that we certainly can’t be experts in all of them, so the students know we’re researching and learning about the topic and thinking through ideas that we believe are important and relevant. (When the work requires a professional with a certain area of expertise, we also bring in those professionals.) A core

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DR. SHIRA LEIBOWITZ

goal is we want the students to take ownership in their own learning. Over time, we support them to acquire the skills they need to become co-designers, and eventually the primary creators, of their learning experiences and projects. For the youngest students, introduction to research takes place through read-alouds, documentaries that are made for their level of learning, and exploration and experimentation. Older students take on increasingly more sophisticated research and learning.

For everyone, questions begin arising, and these questions lead to design challenges. The role of the teacher is radically redefined here. We're learners and creators with the students, and we're guiding and scaffolding for them. We want all of the students to build on areas of great interest. The coding and computational thinking example from *The Domestication of Animals* project was born from the students' interest in going deeper in those areas. The Artificial Intelligence work came about because we think it's important for this generation to understand this technology, and the older students (ages 9 and 10) were expressing interest in it, as well. When the students reflected at the end of the year on what was important to them about what they'd learned, they spoke as much about the things they loved as they did about the things they initially found difficult.

For example, one of the students who joined us with a particular passion for math and coding initially found writing to be very challenging. Through the projects, we began discussing how Stanford engineering students document their work so others can repeat it, and we expressed the importance of our students doing the same. When this student was able to produce this style of writing, we gave encouragement and celebrated his progress.

Then, during our Color unit, he had the opportunity to grow as a writer. The students learned about the symbolic use of color in literature and investigated different versions of the Snow White story. Discovering these different variations from around the world, they were then asked to write their own Snow White story set in 2016 New York City. This all happened right after the election, so they transformed that project based on current events. With main characters like Trump, Clinton, and Obama, it was awesome political satire. The stories were all smart, funny, and engaging—including the one by the student who had initially struggled with writing.

His following unit, a rainbow myth, flowed much more easily, and he demonstrated that he viewed himself as a writer. By building on skills he was already confident in and engaging him in writing in a more fun way, the student was able to create a story he was really proud of—giving him a new sense of himself as someone good at math, coding, and now, writing.

That's important to us—setting the bar high in many different areas we believe are important for success in the future. This allows the students to see themselves as capable, growing humans able to stretch both in areas they love and in areas that don't come as easily to them.

Q. What do you think is the biggest difference for learners in an environment like Portfolio School compared to other environments you've previously been a part of?

A. The biggest difference, which was a really wonderful surprise for us, is the way students crave feedback to make their work better. They're driven to produce quality work. I believe that comes from a couple of components.

“The role of the teacher is radically redefined here. We're learners and creators with the students, and we're guiding and scaffolding for them.”

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We don't give grades, so it can never be "this is what I need to do to get an A" or "I'm happy with getting a B." What we do is get our work ready for public exhibition or publication. The questions are always, "Is it ready to publish?" and "Who can help me get it ready to publish?" This iterative type of feedback has a whole different tone than evaluation or grading. The students themselves are working really hard on learning how to both give and receive feedback. That's been the most significant difference.

Another important aspect is how much they view themselves as doing significant work now, rather than thinking they have to wait until they grow up. During our Learning is Delicious unit, there was one day when one of our learners was able to turn her ice cream maker on for the first time and actually saw the motor running; she looked at me with a big smile and said, "This is the most important day of my career." She could see it was something that worked and this feeling of accomplishment was something she wanted.

Another example was when one of our five-year-olds was learning to read and write, she asked me, "When you were my age, did you want to be a teacher?" I told her, "No. I love teaching, but what I really wanted to do at your age was be an author." Her immediate reply: "Oh don't worry, we'll teach you how." They view themselves as professionals, artists, creators—doing stuff that matters in the world right now.

The last area of difference is in how kind they are to each other. Ours is an environment of dramatic collaboration and cooperation, supported by the mixed-age setting. The older students view it as their responsibility to support the learning of the younger students. That changes the social dynamic in so many ways. They aspire to be someone knowledgeable enough to be the mentor or coach and who does so in a kind and encouraging way. Similarly, the younger students bring a playful spirit for the older students, always reminding us the importance of having fun and playing as we work.

"Ours is an environment of dramatic collaboration and cooperation, supported by the mixed-age setting."

DR. SHIRA LEIBOWITZ

A dynamic, innovative educator and author, **Dr. Shira Leibowitz** is the Founding Lower School Director at Portfolio School. She led independent schools in the greater New York City area for 20 years prior to joining Portfolio, serving as Department Head and Curriculum Coordinator, Lower School Principal, and Head of School. A recognized leader in project-based learning, educational innovation, and instructional coaching, Shira has coached teachers throughout the country in implementing project-based learning in their classrooms and has led online communities of practice for educators focused on educational innovation, teaching and learning, and instructional coaching.



The Astonishing Power in Learning How to Learn

by Victoria Tidwell

For 12 years, I lived in the same house and attended the same magnet program. My peers and I were more academically challenged than learners attending other public schools in our area, but our teachers still utilized traditional methods. We did worksheets, took tests, and worked either alone or in the occasional group setting. In the magnet program, my work was vigorous, and the teachers were strict. At the time, I was quite content with this style of learning because I knew exactly how my academic world would operate—arrive at school on time, sit at my desk, and quietly do my work with no questions asked.

DESPERATELY SEARCHING FOR FAMILIARITY

At 13-years-old, things rapidly changed. I moved into a new house, transferred to a new school, and transitioned into a new way of learning. Completely closing myself off from all the change, I was convinced of one thing: I was going to be miserable at this new school. Soon enough, I had to say goodbye to my old friends and say hello to the one place I had no interest in being: Pike Road School.

Over the summer, there were a few people who tried to convince me something good was going to come of this school—it wouldn't be all bad. I didn't know it then, but their message planted a seed of hope and open-mindedness in me, which would later sprout into a beautiful tree of pride and love for my school.

The first day of school came quickly, and when it did, we were all confused—teachers, students, and faculty alike. The chaos that ensued was overwhelming. There were no grades, no worksheets, and no order. I went home exhausted and skeptical about it all, but I decided to give Pike Road a fair chance. I supposed they were trying to make it work, and so would I. But, my leniency quickly faded.

On more than one occasion, the disarray of the first semester brought me home in tears. There was no structure whatsoever, and I refused to believe there could be learning without structure. I was unwilling to find the good in my situation. My traditionally-wired brain was not impressed. I desperately wanted to go back to my old school with my old friends, but that was clearly not what God had in store for me. As the semester came to a close, I knew I would have to relinquish a part of my stubborn self to openly explore the idea of rethinking learning.



VICTORIA TIDWELL

A NEW UNDERSTANDING OF ORGANIZED CHAOS

The beginning of a new semester brought about many changes, including my new-found willingness to grow. My superintendent and principal instituted a new group of leaders for the school: the Trailblazers—20 learners who were tasked with expressing how learning worked best for them and how they thought PRS should operate in years to come. I was chosen to be one of them. As the oldest learners in the school, we were supposed to take initiative in designing what our learning should look like. We were tasked with blazing a trail for younger Patriots (something we call learners at PRS) and be examples for them to follow in years to come.

It was at one of the first Trailblazers meetings that everything finally clicked. I realized these people—the administration, the teachers, and all of the faculty—actually cared about us. They wanted to help us learn. They wanted to help us grow into the leaders they knew we were. Suddenly, it was like I had found the missing piece of the puzzle.

The faculty wanted us to retain and apply the information we were acquiring, not just memorize dates and names for a test. The project-based learning, the profusion of collaboration, and the extended use of technology had seemed so odd before. Then, I finally saw it was all for the betterment of ourselves. The PRS leaders knew the limitations of traditional schooling and wanted to see to it that our education prepared us for the real world—a world where you don't do worksheets, receive grades, or work in isolation.

This world can seem disordered, but that's the beauty of it. We get to create the order, or lack thereof, to subsequently make things better for those around us. We are the ones who get to blaze the trail and lay the groundwork for generations to come.

The Trailblazers opened my mind to a new way of learning, and I was ready to internalize the Pike Road mission—"to create a culture of intellectual curiosity where all students have ownership over their learning and are inspired to think, innovate, and create." I was taking ownership of my learning, and I was eager to learn. I was no longer studying because I had a test. Rather, I was studying because I knew the material would be relevant in the real world, and because I genuinely wanted to know more. It's a different way of thinking, and it works. By the end of the semester, I had fully immersed myself in learning how to learn.

When it became time to go back to Pike Road the following August, I was ecstatic. In previous years, I had always dreaded going back to school after the summer months off, but at Pike Road, learning is fun. I started to become more and more of a leader in my school, church, and community. I was stepping into the person God called me to be.

COMBINING PERSONAL PASSION WITH HIGH-LEVEL LEARNING

Once everything finally came together in my mind, I realized that, as students, we could incorporate our passions and interests into our learning. For me, that meant music. Singing has always come naturally to me, and I pick up on instruments faster than my music teachers can keep up with. In the last year and a half, I have learned (for the most part) to play piano, guitar, and ukulele, and I want to keep learning as much as I can to prepare myself for a career as a musician—specifically writing worship music. Right now, I'm a worship leader in my youth group's worship team, and I absolutely love it. I've also performed some of my original works at school events.

I find confidence in my music, and it is how I best express myself. History, on the other hand, has never been one of my strong points. I'm by no means bad at history, but

"I knew I would have to relinquish a part of my stubborn self to openly explore the idea of rethinking learning."

VICTORIA TIDWELL

I'm not particularly good. My humanities teacher, Ms. Austin, assigned us a project at the beginning of this year that was designed for us to assess ourselves on our knowledge of the Renaissance. We were supposed to come up with our own way to prove that we knew the information. So, having realized my passions could be used to learn, I wrote a song.



Listen to Victoria's Renaissance Song [here](#).

Writing this song was very different from most of my songwriting experiences, which usually start with an event in my life that has provoked a strong feeling that I want to express through the melody. This time, there was factual information that had to be incorporated into the lyrics, not just a feeling. I studied the information long and hard and began to formulate a song I knew needed to both get the information across clearly and appeal to the listener's ears.

Turning the events of the Renaissance Era into a song transformed the learning experience from being boring and tedious to being fun, exciting, and interesting. The material I learned had never stuck in my head more than it did with this project.

At Pike Road, we are assessed based on whether we meet learning expectations, instead of receiving a letter or number grade. On this project, I was given an "exceeding learning expectations," and I was elated.

Not everyone thinks they can handle the type of learning happening at PRS, but once you get a hang of it, it will bless you with so much more than just knowing numbers, names, and dates. It taught me how to think and how to learn, and it taught me more about myself than I knew would be possible. If it weren't for Pike Road, I don't think I would've become anywhere near the leader I am today. I know for a fact that it has shaped my life for the better.

“...once you get a hang of it, it will bless you with so much more than just knowing numbers, names, and dates. It taught me how to think and how to learn, and it taught me more about myself than I knew would be possible.”

VICTORIA TIDWELL

Victoria Tidwell is in Community 9 at Pike Road High School. Victoria's interests include writing music, playing softball, running cross country, singing, and playing guitar, piano, and ukulele. She is very involved in her church and enjoys leading worship with her youth group. Victoria's wish for the future is to become a worship leader in full-time ministry.



A promotional poster for the Big Bang conference. The background is a night photograph of the St. Louis skyline, featuring the Gateway Arch and the city lights reflected in the Mississippi River. Overlaid on the Arch is a green graphic of a stylized face with radiating lines, resembling a starburst or a brain. The text is in white, providing the conference name, theme, location, and dates. A logo for 'BIG PICTURE LEARNING' is in the bottom right corner.

Big Bang

The International Conference
on Student-Centered Learning

St. Louis, MO | July 25-28, 2017

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LEAP Innovations

Learner connected, learner focused, learner demonstrated, and learner led. These are the core components of the LEAP Innovations Learning Framework—a tool that was launched in 2016 as a result of national conversations with educators, practitioners, and national experts. The main question explored: What is personalized learning?—hammered out the details of what makes learning truly learner-centered. Out of this conversation came the core components above and viable strategies educators can take in transforming their environments to provide agency and relevancy in every learner’s daily work. The strategies connect learning to more than the traditional time children spend in a single building. Rather, they integrate families, educators, community leaders, and other networks to show how learning opportunities can be available 24 hours a day. The LEAP Learning Framework is the foundation on which the rest of their local work is being built, which includes the LEAP Pilot Network, LEAP Collaboratory, and Breakthrough Schools Chicago. See what LEAP’s compiled resources and tools have to offer your environment and, if you are located in Chicago, see how you might join in on transforming your city’s learning ecosystem through LEAP’s various initiatives.

LEAP Innovations Website ([link](#))

LEAP Pilot Network ([link](#))

LEAP Collaboratory ([link](#))

LEAP Learning Framework ([link](#))

Navigating Social and Emotional Learning from the Inside Out

As the phrase “social and emotional learning” begins finding its way into nearly every public-facing material in the world of education, educators wanting to explore exactly what this phrase means find themselves at a loss for a consistent definition. Some focus “on character traits such as honesty, while others focus on skills like understanding emotions and solving problems.” The inconsistency in interpretation leads to an immediate case of “paralysis by analysis” for any educator looking to intentionally incorporate this style of learning in their respective environment. Researchers at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, with generous support from the Wallace Foundation, wanted to create a one stop shop for educators hoping to find a model that best fits their community of learners. In their recent publication, *Navigating Social and Emotional Learning from the Inside Out*, the Harvard research team provides a general background on SEL, recommendations for adopting SEL practices, and detailed profiles of 25 programs implementing various SEL strategies.

Navigating Social and Emotional Learning from the Inside Out ([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

Chanhassen, MN

Jul 31-Aug 1

[Summit Website](#)

ELEVATE! BY MESA COUNTY VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT 51

Grand Junction, CO

July 31-Aug 1

[Event Info](#)

25TH ANNUAL MEETING: THE STATE POLICY NETWORK

San Antonio, TX

Aug 29-Sep 1

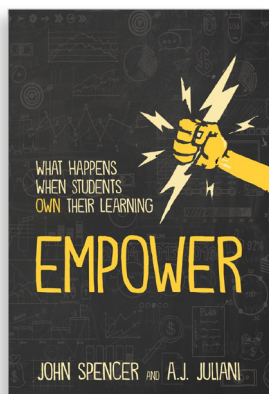
[Meeting Website](#)

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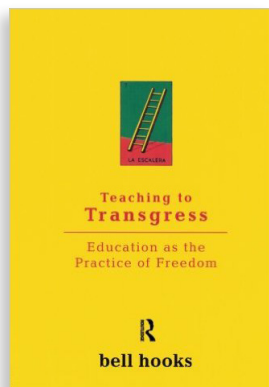
Springpoint is seeking a **Manager of Instruction & School Design** to support design team leaders and practitioners to design, launch, and grow new high schools. Learn more [here!](#)

Nellie Mae Education Foundation is accepting nominations for **New England public high school educators** who have worked to advance and advocate for learner-centered approaches not only in their own classrooms, but at scale. All nominations due July 14th. Learn more [here!](#)

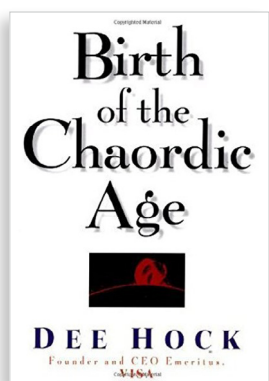
Transcend is hiring for a Research and Development Specialist. Learn more [here!](#)

**Empower: What Happens When Students Own Their Learning?** by John Spencer and A.J. Juliani

You know the story. When learners enter Kindergarten, their engagement and joy for learning are at an all-time high. But, as their learning journey moves forward into traditional middle and high school settings, these attributes drop off steeply. How can we—as educators, parents, community leaders, and learners—transform this all but accepted trend? John Spencer and A.J. Juliani, authors of *Empower*, want to explore this question with you. They invite the possibility of empowering the individual learner to discover the unique path that is only a fit for their interests and passions.

**Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom** by bell hooks

Transforming the traditional education system into one that puts the learner at the center requires action-takers to remove the guard rails in their thinking and explore completely uncharted territory. Along the way, many difficult questions must and will be addressed. In *Teaching to Transgress*, bell hooks provides an opportunity for all educators to view these difficult questions from the lens of providing all learners with freedom. Discover what that lens looks like and how it might help transform your community.

**Birth of the Chaordic Age** by Dee Hock

A complex world with complex problems deserves well-thought, complex solutions that don't seek to oversimplify the issues being resolved. In Dee Hock's book *Birth of the Chaordic Age*, he requests that we lean into the idea of working with (not against) life's natural tendency toward chaos. More specifically, he invites leaders in all sectors of society to adapt their system's operations to reflect a strategy of "organized chaos" that leaves room for adaptability as the future becomes harder and harder to predict.

Social-Emotional Learning is Important for Teachers, Too

With a strong focus being placed on integrating social-emotional learning into young learners' academic experiences, educators might consider how they can bring in similar strategies to their professional development. [Read here](#)

Why Unlearning Old Habits is an Essential Step for Innovation

To reimagine a brand new education system, we have to intentionally set aside our preconceived, traditional notions of what education "must" do. Explore effective strategies in unlearning old habits of mind. [Read here](#)

Shift Your Paradigm—Episode 007

Listen in on the 7th episode of the **Shift Your Paradigm** podcast in which leaders from Minnesota's Avalon School discuss what it means to have everyone in a learning environment be recognized as a learner and a leader. [Listen here](#)

“We keep moving forward, opening new doors, and doing new things, because we're curious and curiosity keeps leading us down new paths.” — **WALT DISNEY**

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