

# • connect. share. discover. lead. • DIONEELING

# Dear Pioneers,

A few weeks ago, Education Reimagined's staff and Advisory Board had the pleasure of visiting Avalon School in St. Paul, Minnesota. Because of the generosity of the Avalon educators and learners, we experienced a full-day at Avalon through the eyes of learners. This shared experience provided many insights for us individually and collectively.

Avalon is a learner-centered environment founded by teachers 16 years ago. It was a gift to see a site where learner-centeredness is the prevailing context for everyone in the community. They are truly a community of learners who are humble in the challenges they face, persistent in their stand for each learner, and courageous in their trust of learners' capacity to own their own learning.

During the visit, I was struck by each learner's description of their learning experience. Over and over again, I heard the words freedom, responsibility, and relationship. These are the same words we've heard again and again from learners in learner-centered environments all across the country.

Reflecting on these words, I recognized how they so clearly framed what learner-centered education means and feels like from a learner's perspective. Freedom is felt when young people know they are trusted by their mentors. Responsibility is learned and internalized when agency is supported. And, real relationship is cultivated when learners are surrounded by adults who believe and know that learning happens by and with a learner, not to them.

From an outside observer's perspective, those three words might not always shine through. When learners are still discovering how to take responsibility for their own learning, at any given moment, an observer might see them missing goals, giving up, or checking out. But, if you check back in at another point, those same learners could be celebrating success after failure, getting back on the horse, or being deeply inspired to move forward with velocity. The path in learner-centered environments is not linear, nor one of uninterrupted success, but it is one where learners are fully in the game. Kids are seen and known as the humans they are, discovering how to be creative, resilient, collaborative, lifelong learners.

Here's to the courage of learner-centered educators to trust learners, laying the groundwork for them to become courageous, joyful learners in the midst of success and failure.

Enjoy the issue!

Warm wishes,

**Kelly Young** 



### **CREDITS**

### **Executive Editor:**

Kelly Young

# **Creative Director:**

Monica Snellings

### **Senior Editor:**

Demi Edwards

### Senior Writer:

Paul Haluszczak

# Senior Designer:

Jillian Kornsweig

Published by Education Reimagined, an initiative of **Convergence,** 1133 19th Street NW, Suite 410 Washington, DC 20036 (202) 830-2310

### 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.











"We are constantly iterating our work based on the needs of our students and the needs of the world. We see ourselves 'forging an army of good for good.' Our 'small' vision is to change the world."

- TERESA POPPEN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND CO-FOUNDER

BACK IN 2008, TERESA AND JOEL POPPEN wanted to deeply connect learners to their Boise community. On the surface, their plan looked simple—introduce kids to service-oriented work and help them develop some skills along the way. But, there was one component that would push this One Stone project into a new age of youth engagement: let the learners choose the work they wanted to pursue.

One Stone's original initiative, Project Good, is now only one of several platforms of what has become a dynamic entity on a mission to "make students better leaders and the world a better place."

One Stone High School came onto the scene in 2016. Given the fertile ground they were starting with, the five elements showed up naturally in the design of this new learning environment. One Stone's "Big Idea" boiled down to creating an environment that looked nothing like the traditional system—"No teachers. No classrooms. No grades. No excuses."

On their first day of learning, **open-walled** took on a comical meaning as their permanent home was still under construction. But, once they moved into their new space, it still only acted as a launching pad for learners to get out and connect with their community in an enriching, socially-embedded way. Learners at One Stone are consistently paired up with local businesses and organizations to collaborate on high-priority problems in need of creative solutions.

Once again, this is a natural extension of One Stone's internal operations. One Stone's board is two-thirds learners and one-third adults. With this structure, **learner agency** stretches beyond the notion of owning one's learning path. Rather, learners are called upon to own the future of their community.

When One Stone promotes their **competency-based**, no classrooms, no grades model, they aren't overstating the actual learning experience. The structure is so radical that many learners aren't sure what to think of this unfamiliar learning structure at first. But, as a second year learner reflects, "I'm a little surprised that having no grades is a system that works. [But,] it works because I'm not only being [assessed] by the quality and amount of my work, but by the process I go through."

Entering a system that is **personalized, relevant, and contextualized** would be overwhelming to any learner who has solely experienced rigid structures and schedules. But, once they gain traction and own the fact they deserve to be the captains of their learning, the sky's the limit. With so much to explore at One Stone, our conversation with their leaders is a must read to understand the full scope of their current and future work.

# **LEARN MORE**

Designed for Learning: At School and At Home

How to "Pick the Lock": The Five Secrets to One Stone's Success

No textbooks, no grades at One Stone School in Boise

## **FACTS & FIGURES**

Independent

**Tuition-Free** 

4 platforms: One Stone High School, Project Good, Solution Lab, Two Birds

Board of Directors: % learners, % adults

70 learners in Years 1 and 2 at One Stone High School

120 learners participating in community-based programs

17 coaches (7 master's degrees and 4 doctoral degrees)

14,987 people inspired and impacted404 projects finished

## CONNECT

Website
Twitter
Facebook







# A Conversation with One Stone Leaders

Education Reimagined caught up with One Stone leaders to discuss how their community based non-profit has evolved into a multi-platform entity focused on keeping learners at the center of everything they do. Dive right in and see what it looks like when an organization is "forging an army of good for good."

# Q. How did you come to lead transformational work at One Stone?

**TERESA:** I spent 25 years in High Tech Marketing. I have no prior knowledge of the education space nor do I have any expertise in education. At one point, my husband and I started One Stone as a community based non-profit. It originated as a way to work with students to make them better leaders, so they can make the world a better place. This is still our mission today.

After starting as a non-profit, we realized a lot of the skills the students were developing and the transformations that were happening were resulting in the creation of young leaders. We knew we were great at delivering power skills—so building the knowledge component of high school on top of that just made sense.

We performed a lot of research on what could work within the student-driven culture that was present at One Stone. The five elements of Education Reimagined are exactly what we came up with to build this school, which is now just one of the programs we offer.

In addition to the high school, we offer Project Good—our service arm. We offer Two Birds, which is a student-led ad agency that is its own LLC. We have Solution Lab, where students can incubate their business ideas and launch them as young entrepreneurs. I came at all of this from a background that has nothing to do with education, but I think we have had a lot of success building from the ground up with students at the helm.

**NEVA:** I'm a fifth-generation Idahoan and Boise native with 20 years of experience working in the non-profit space, including some work at the higher education level. But, I also have no experience working in education. I came at all of this with a passion for community building and community development. I believe kids have a marginalized voice in many aspects of society, and I wanted them to have a seat at the table in building their community. Otherwise, I feel like we are ignoring and failing to harness this creativity and power that should be a part of the conversation.

**CHAD:** I've been in education for 20 years, primarily with high school and middle school students in independent schools. But, I also have some experience working at the higher education level. About two years ago, just before joining One Stone, I started getting really frustrated with education and how it was working. I had great relationships with students and great experiences in the classroom, but outside of that, I could see kids getting more and more frustrated and feeling more and more pressure. They lacked agency. All of the schools I worked for claimed to focus on student-centered learning but not necessarily student-driven learning.



TERESA POPPEN



ASHLEE GREENWOOD



CHAD CARLSON



**NEVA GEISLER** 

Learning about One Stone, it seemed like a great opportunity to reimagine education. To reimagine both how I *and* the students see education, so that it becomes recognized as a viable vehicle for growth, rather than something they just had to do.

**ASHLEE:** I also don't have an education background. I have a degree in Business Management and Marketing. I never saw my path leading me to working with students. I started working with One Stone as the first official hire and immediately bought into the idea of student-driven learning and empowering students to follow their passions.

The reason I do this is the satisfaction I find in seeing students go through the discovery process of finding what they're interested in tackling. Helping students go out into the world, do good, and see the transformative impact it has on them and the people they served—to change their perception of service forever—is super gratifying for me.

# Q. What is One Stone's hiring philosophy?

**TERESA:** It's our collective mission to find staff who believe in students' power and ability to create big change. As Neva expressed, we believe students are an under-heard voice, and we are all here to help them raise their voices.

We have a rigorous hiring practice that starts with the question, "Do you fit our culture?" If you don't, the skills don't matter. Student-driven doesn't mean we listen to students and then do whatever it was we already planned on doing. Everyone in our building has equal voice. Not only do we want everyone to have equal voice, but we want everyone to feel comfortable and safe to use that voice and weigh in on anything.

It's hard to find adults who can relate to kids as coach-to-student, as opposed to teacher-to-student. We don't have teachers here. We're all coaches—we are side-by-side with students, rather than in front of them.

When we're looking for people, a number of us—including students—will interview them to evaluate fit-to-culture. We do everything leading with empathy. Are these potential hires empathetic—able to put themselves in the shoes of others?

Once we find people who are a fit-to-culture, we begin evaluating the skills they bring. It's interesting, and I don't know how it's developed this way, but we have collected a staff who have a broad variety of skills, interests, and talents. We call it our mosaic of talent. People have brought in so many different pieces. Everyone's encouraged to develop and share that.

Finally, the prospective applicants speak with our board and interview to determine the same elements of fit-to-culture, skills, and the individual's multi-faceted nature.

**ASHLEE:** The board plays an important part in being less emotionally attached to the process and person. We become so attached to these prospects. They can approach the conversation from an objective place, since it's a first impression for them.

**NEVA:** I think we've been able to attract outstanding talent in part because adults can show up to work as our authentic selves. Students talk about how it's safe for them to be themselves, and as adults, we strive to model that behavior. I think people are dying for that in the professional world.

**TERESA:** To reflect on another question that comes to mind, I want to reiterate the level to which students are engaged here. Coming up with what this school was going to look like was driven by the students. That's the level of involvement they have in everything we do.

"I believe kids have a marginalized voice in many aspects of society, and I wanted them to have a seat at the table in building their community."

**NEVA GEISLER** 

Those initial students were creating for the students who would be coming in after them, even though they weren't going to experience what they were creating. They were doing it for the benefit of others.

Q. Given the important role learners play in all the work at One Stone, could you speak to their specific role in the hiring process and and how much guidance they receive to perform that role well?

**TERESA:** Our students are very empowered and protective of the culture they've developed here. I think they're surprisingly mature and have a lot of ownership in the process of talking to adults who come in. We don't have to do much coaching on that. It's an organic thing where students understand what they're looking for in people who interact with them on a daily basis. What we find is they eventually no longer view us as adults. We become another person in the building. And, that's what we want to happen—we want our hierarchical status as adults to disappear.

**CHAD:** The way they approach adults who are already here is very natural, so it's no different with new adults coming in. It's also not a formal sit-down interview. It's a discussion. And, sometimes the interview gets reversed where the adult begins asking the students questions and learning about their work at One Stone. The students learn whether or not they can relate with the person they're speaking with and if the candidate has expressed genuine interest in them.

Q. With One Stone's initial identity as a community service non-profit, it seems natural that the high school would continue to build on this open-walled approach. How are these community connections formed?

**CHAD:** As far as community partnerships, it really comes down to identifying the student's interests and passions and matching those up to organizations in the community. Last winter, we had 36 students looking for internships and job-shadowing opportunities for the summer, and we took five months matching them up with relevant organizations in the community.

We also have something called the Transformation Popper, or TPOP for short, where students start by identifying their interests and passions if pressure, money, and grades didn't matter. If they could simply "do," what would they do? We ask them to come up with 51 ideas, so they can get outside of what is obvious and break into what they really love to do. Then, we attempt to identify what they can get involved in or the experiences that would put those interests and passions into play, so they can discover what really drives that interest.

We have a student who's really interested in joining the Air Force. And, I believe that indicates a broader interest in being a part of community, having a focus, and being a leader. With that, we're trying to identify other careers that incorporate those interests, so he isn't focused on only one path. We challenged him to explore Outdoor Leadership and work in the medical field, as well as to experience things like the Civil Air Patrol. Giving students experiences based on their passions and interests helps us identify potential partnerships out in the community.

**TERESA:** Chad mentioned the number 51. We developed a One Stone concept called "51 it." When you're coming up with ideas, generally, your first 50 ideas are things everyone would come up with, and it's not until you get to 51 that the innovative ideas start. Of course, it's not the number of ideas that is important, it's getting past the ideas everyone has already come up with and moving toward the crazy and uncomfortable.

"We have a rigorous hiring practice that starts with the question, 'Do you fit our culture?'
If you don't, the skills don't matter."

TERESA POPPEN

The TPOP program helps students build a funnel for their passions and interests that allows them to, over time, say it is something they actually want to pursue or something that no longer holds their interest. Our goal, after three years of this, is for something to pop out at the bottom of the funnel that shows them a curation of their focused interests and lets them identify their passions in life. We know this is a powerful addition to their toolbox for life.

**NEVA:** In another way, sometimes students know what they want, but they're unfamiliar with the community. We can then help them identify a partner. If the partner is new to One Stone, we set up time to share more about what we do. Sometimes, the involvement of an adult is really helpful in getting a foot in the door.

We work with many people and organizations. And, given this work has been going on since 2008, we have a strong track record of success. If a partner has never worked with us before, our reputation, more often than not, allows a partnership to form quickly.

**CHAD:** We have people who just walk in off the street and want to learn about the school. For example, the professors I work with at Boise State are very interested and want to get involved. They know this is where the future of education is headed.

**TERESA:** We also have companies that will come to us and our students with a problem. Our students set up design thinking workshops to help those companies solve the problem. We do a lot of that. We've been doing design thinking since the beginning of One Stone—it just didn't have a name. As we converged with the work happening at Stanford, we noticed that was exactly what we were doing. We've done a lot of work with the Stanford d.school and other high schools pursuing similar work.

# Q. From all your years with One Stone, what is your favorite learner story?

**NEVA:** When the school first opened, we had talked about being a radically different school with no textbooks, no grades, and no classes. And, when we first opened, we also had no building. We were really fortunate to be hosted by the community for the first couple of months.

Five of those weeks were spent at the College of Innovation and Design at Boise State University. We had one student, Jared, who was singularly interested in music at the time. He spent most of the day walking around playing air guitar, wearing sunglasses (indoors), and wearing his Metallica shirt. He was totally pushing my buttons. Here we were trying to develop this relationship with the college, and I was getting really frustrated with this kid, who I didn't think was putting his best foot forward.

When we moved into our space, the facility wasn't entirely finished. We have a really rich maker-space that we call The Foundry, but when we moved in, none of the machines were put together. One of our coaches asked the kids to help and teach each other how to use the equipment. During this phase, Jared discovered coding.

I have never seen someone fall in love with coding the way that Jared did. I've come to learn that coding and music have a lot of overlap. And, it felt as though once he fell in love with coding, he kind of took his sunglasses off and said, "What else is out there that I could learn?" He just caught fire. He was hungry to learn everything. He went from this student who was playing air guitar—totally disengaged—to this learner wanting to dive into the academics and understand how One Stone operated at a bigger level.

"Of course, it's not the number of ideas that is important, it's getting past the ideas everyone has already come up with and moving toward the crazy and uncomfortable."

TERESA POPPEN

He wanted to learn how to write a grant and understand how we were funded. He developed a proposal for One Stone to buy some guitars, so that kids who didn't own them could learn how to play. He was already teaching classes before that point. Then, he developed a proposal to have a student-led and directed recording studio. We had a room that was previously a music room, but he convinced us to transform it into Ripple Studios (for all your sound recording needs).

Over time, he asked how he could become a member of the board, and this summer, he was elected to be a board member. In just one year, he went from a student who would have probably fallen through the cracks at the large high school he would have attended to someone who is engaged and using real-world application in his work.

**CHAD:** I have many stories, but one of them is about my daughter. She's in her second year at One Stone. Before coming, she was muddling through school, and while still successful, she wasn't happy. Her experience at One Stone has transformed her outlook on education and what she is capable of. She has found control and direction in her life. She's found reason in what she's doing.

My wife and I have seen a huge change in her disposition—how she is at home and how she relates to her sisters. She'll be at home on Sundays, excited to go back to school on Monday. In late August, she'll talk about how she can't wait for school to start. She loves to be here; she loves learning; she loves the relationships she has with her coaches. It's been really cool.

Her sisters see it, too. They give her a hard time about how much time she spends here. Now my other daughter is starting to get involved and my eight-year-old is like, "Oh great, another one is going."

Another quick story: Last year, one student got involved in a couple of different independent learning projects we were doing. And, his big ah-ha moment was: "I never saw myself as a creative person, and now I see that in myself." There is this change in outlook of who they are and what they can do. To me, that's been so profound. That's the key to agency, when they see themselves as drivers of their vehicle and can discover skills they never knew they had because they weren't previously allowed to express them, articulate them, or build on them in a standardized experience.

**ASHLEE:** Working on admissions with these kids, I see them come in uncertain about what this new thing is and why they want to be here. And, two years later, we joke around about how it's not the same 30 kids we interviewed. It's crazy to see their shift in mindset when they are provided with opportunities they never knew existed before.

# Q. What does One Stone hope to accomplish in the next five years?

**TERESA:** We focus on knowledge, creativity, skills, and mindsets in order to deliver to students the whole toolkit they need to take out and use for life. It isn't about a bunch of facts and figures stuffed in their heads. We realize, and I have seen it in our research, that the changes in the way the world works are going to require students to have a lot more skills.. We didn't need these skills as much in the past, but we need them now. That's what we hope to accomplish in the future.

The next time you talk to us, we won't look the same. We are constantly iterating our work based on the needs of our students and the needs of the world. We see ourselves "forging an army of good for good." Our "small" vision is to change the world. That's what we're here to do.

**Teresa Poppen** is the Executive Director at One Stone. Teresa, together with her husband Joel, co-founded One Stone in 2008. Prior to this, she worked for more than 20 years in the high-tech industry. During that time, she served as strategic marketing director at Compaq and vice president of marketing at Tangram and Microtest. She has served as a board member for Riverstone International School and Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southwest Idaho, and as a "Make A Wish" grantor for multiple children with life-threatening illnesses.

**Ashlee Greenwood** is Chief of Staff at One Stone. Ashlee was One Stone's first paid employee and prior to that, served as a committed volunteer. She brings logistics wizardry to One Stone in operations and programs. Prior to One Stone, Ashlee applied these skills as a Hazard Mitigation Advisor S pecialist and a Community Education and Outreach Specialist for FEMA.

**Chad Carlson** is the Humanities Academic Coach/School Director at One Stone. He has been in the field of independent education for more than 18 years working with both middle and high school students in the areas of humanities, language arts, and Spanish. He recently returned to Boise after several years at an International Baccalaureate School in Bogotá, Colombia and at an independent school in Sun Valley, Idaho.

**Neva Geisler** is the Community Engagement Director at One Stone. She brings 20+ years of experience in nonprofit and higher education to the One Stone team. As a fifth generation Idahoan, she is passionate about engaging all people in community building and future shaping.



For over 30 years, professional development in education has seen little change. Before standardization came into vogue in the 90's, many learning environments were provided a small pot of funds from which individual educators could subsidize their independent PD—attending a local conference, seminar, or course or simply purchasing relevant reading material. Although this system allowed for a more personalized approach to professional development, it lacked funding and intentionality, not to mention any kind of community-wide growth and development.

Once the standards movement came into focus, a parallel, standardized system of professional development followed as the most logical and worthwhile avenue. Personalized professional development failed the logic test in this new scenario. If learners were going to experience a standardized curriculum, the educators leading its implementation should be supported to do so in a standardized fashion. Every educator should know the step-by-step approach to take their learners from point A to point B.

If the longstanding goal of educational efficiency had its way, we just might see the day where anyone could be handed a "Teacher's Playbook" and provide a "quality" education for most, if not all, learners.

# CLIMBING OUT OF THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT HOLE WE'VE DUG OURSELVES INTO

How did we end up so far down the rabbit hole before realizing we left our humanity at the surface? The standards movement initiated a significant systems change. It launched us down this particular rabbit hole and set the education space on a journey to design within the standards context. So, at the time, standardized PD made sense.

The challenge, including when we work within the learner-centered paradigm (link), is to remain present to the the background context driving our decisions and to keep checking if that context is still relevant for the change happening in the world around us.

As we lift ourselves back above ground and get reacquainted with the beautiful complexity of each young mind we influence, we are all slowly rediscovering our own sense of self. Through this reorientation of how educators relate to their profession, they are discovering entirely new ways to better their practice and improve the value they bring to our teams.

Tools like Chats (<u>link</u>) by Participate are connecting us with educators from across the United States (and world) for 24/7 access to a dynamic professional learning network. In one day, you can wear your Ed Tech (#edtechchat), Leadership (#suptchat), and Hip Hop (#HipHopEd) hats without looking up from your phone. It's free, it's personalized, and it opens educators' minds to unexplored possibilities in their local learning environments.

Instantly connecting with millions of educators, asking questions, providing answers, and exploring futuristic ideas was nothing but a fantasy a short time ago. Before 2006, a tweet was nothing but an onomatopoeia for our feathered friends in the local park. And, living "off-the-grid" wasn't an overstated identity for simply deleting our social media accounts.

Our virtual connections, of course, can't replace the high-value impact of in-person gatherings and PD opportunities. But, they have offered new avenues for learning and discovery and provided significant relief from the professional learning experiences tailored to the average educator (link).

# HOW CULTURE IS DRIVING CHANGE IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DELIVERY

Social media (Twitter chats, Facebook groups, Quora forums, etc.) has proven itself to be a game changer in how educators connect to their personalized professional learning networks. And, at a higher level, it represents a new age of professional development. Rather than designing from scratch and creating brand new spaces for educators to learn in, the most successful tools are meeting educators where they already are.

What's the easiest way to find people where they already are? Outside of simply asking them, one can look at cultural trends. Twenty years ago, blogging, vlogging, and podcasting were all terms that meant little to nothing to most of society. Now, everyday educators like Lisa Nielsen (link), George Cuoros (link), and Will Richardson (link) are building massive followings through these low-cost mediums that have elevated their career paths to unexpected heights.

People are online. And, education leaders who want to reach their peers efficiently and effectively, are joining them there.

# WAIT, CAN WE GO BACK TO PODCASTING?

If you were to search the term "podcast" in 2004, you would have found a measly 24 results on Google. Today, you'll find over 300 million results in less than two seconds. There are now over 115,000 English speaking podcasts available for free listening through iTunes, Patreon, Overcast, Spotify, Deezer, and the list goes on. The topics range from politics to business to true crime to anything, really.

But, we're here to talk about education. In particular, we're here to talk about professional development in education. So, where's the connection?

"Instantly connecting with millions of educators, asking questions, providing answers, and exploring futuristic ideas was nothing but a fantasy a short time ago."

### EDUCATION REIMAGINED DISCOVERS THE POWER OF PODCASTING

Remember how we talked about professional development meeting educators where they are? The same percentage (21%) of Americans (link) who use Twitter on a monthly basis, also listen to podcasts. And, the average listener digests five episodes per week, which not so coincidentally correlates with the five-day work week.

If this is true, testing out how to expand the education professional development network to an audio format seems like a worthy venture.

Education Reimagined had this exact thought, which is why we jumped at the opportunity to team up with Randy Ziegenfuss and Lynn Fuini-Hetten, hosts of TLTalkRadio (link) and leaders at Salisbury Township School District in Pennsylvania.

Two years ago, Randy and Lynn were ready to begin a transformational journey in leading their district toward a learner-centered future. And, unbeknownst to Education Reimagined, they used *A Transformational Vision for Education in the U.S.* (link) as their inspiration and guide. Over time, Randy and Lynn cultivated a working relationship with Education Reimagined, which has led to the sharing of many resources back and forth.

All of this sharing ultimately culminated in the creation of the Shift Your Paradigm (link) podcast—a first-of-its-kind podcast focused on learner-centered learning and leadership. Randy and Lynn host young and adult leaders from across the country to explore the ins and outs of their local, learner-centered transformational journeys. The voices of young learners and their mentors are given equal chance to vocalize the challenges they've experienced along the way, how they've overcome those challenges, and why they will never go back to the school-centered system.

SHIFT YOUR PARADIGM

....from school-centered to learner-centered

PODCAST

randy ziegenfuss

lynn fuini-hetten

"...the most successful tools are meeting educators where they already are." After the first 11 episodes, Randy; Lynn; Education Reimagined's Executive Director, Kelly Young; and Quakertown Community School District's Curriculum Supervisor, Chad Evans had an open conversation (link) about what insights they have gathered thus far by listening to so many pioneers effecting change in their learning communities. This episode is a great way to catch up on what has already been explored and where the podcast looks to go in the future.

### WHO ELSE IS PODCASTING?

The Shift Your Paradigm podcast is unique to the learner-centered conversation for its focus on learner-centered leadership. But, Randy and Lynn aren't the only learner-centered minds exploring the podcast medium.

Pioneers, Matt Shea (link) and Courtney Belolan (link) from the RSU 2 district in Hallowell, Maine have been "talking through the Do-Dos and Don't-Dos of learner-centered proficiency based education" since April 2016 on their podcast, Personalized Learning with Matt and Courtney (link).

If you want to join folks right from the beginning, Lindsay Unified School District has just launched a more localized podcast, Lindsay Live (link), whose target audience is local leaders. But, the learner-centered lessons explored can be translated and uniquely applied in your local community, even if you find yourself closer to the Atlantic Ocean (or no ocean at all) than the Pacific.

Podcasting is only the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the innovative developments coming out of the professional development sector for educators. With so much new content showing up on and offline on a weekly basis, we'll be sure to continue exploring this exciting shift in what it means to grow as an educator. With pioneers willing to separate themselves from the traditional standardized system in all respects, a national, learner-centered future comes closer and closer to being realized. Let us know if you've listened to any of the podcasts above or if you have other professional development tools you think we should know about.

"...testing out how to expand the education professional development network to an audio format seems like a worthy venture."



Education Reimagined and the community of learner-centered pioneers are making a big splash at this year's iNACOL Symposium! At one of the largest gatherings of learner-centered minds in the country, Education Reimagined invites you to join us for three sessions, including the conference closing keynote on Wednesday, October 25. Thanks to iNACOL for this incredible opportunity to bring learners front and center.

# FOCUS ON THE LEARNING: SIMPLE IDEAS THAT CAN CHANGE EVERYTHING

Tuesday, October 24 • 2:15-3:15 PM

Join Kelly Young, Executive Director of Education Reimagined; Connie Yowell, CEO of Collective Shift; and Virgel Hammonds, Chief Learning Officer at KnowledgeWorks, as they explore the simplicity on the other side of complexity that results in large scale transformation.

# LISTENING TO LEARNERS: UNLOCKING LEARNER-CENTERED EDUCATION

Tuesday, October 24 • 4:00-5:00 PM

Discover what one learner most wants educators to know about him and other learners. Join Kelly Young, Executive Director of Education Reimagined, and Jemar Lee, a passionate learner from Iowa BIG, to discover and practice the art of deeply listening. Leave inspired and ready to know your learners on a deeper level than ever before.

# Featured Keynote Luncheon

# UNLEASHING THE MOST UNDERUTILIZED RESOURCE IN EDUCATION: THE LEARNER

Wednesday, October 25 • 12:15-2:00 PM

Join Ulcca Joshi Hansen, Associate Director of Education Reimagined, and five inspiring learners from across the country to hear their insights on creating learner-centered environments that unleash their full potential. In a provocative, unfiltered, and honest conversation, they will provide first-hand accounts of what it's like to experience powerful learning opportunities that prepare them for lifelong success.

### You're Invited!

Join Education Reimagined, KnowledgeWorks, and Next Generation Learning Challenges for a cocktail party following the iNACOL Welcome Reception.

# AFTER HOURS

The Adventure Continues...

Immediately following iNACOL Welcome Reception Monday, October 23, 2017

### Il Mulino

Swan Resort 1200 Epcot Resorts Blvd 7:30 PM – 9:30 PM

Hosted by

Education Reimagined KnowledgeWorks

Next Generation Learning Challenges



# Start Empathy

**Start Empathy** (link) is calling all community stakeholders to recognize the shifting paradigms in the education world. As hardwired as we've become to value the skill of reading comprehension, Start Empathy, an initiative of Ashoka, believes we need to become just as prudent in how we value the disposition of empathy. We've gone "from the old paradigm of literacy of the elite to the new paradigm of literacy for all." Now we must look at "the new paradigm of education for changemaking in fluid environments." Soft skills are taking the stage in the modern era. Leaders across a variety of industries are now looking for creativity, emotional intelligence, and adaptability, just as much as the ability to problem solve, think critically, and negotiate. As the world readies for change in myriad ways, we need to ready our learners to make a positive impact in the changemaking they embark on. That changemaking journey must be "rooted in awareness of self and others." Explore Start Empathy, and imagine how you might integrate empathy into your learners' everyday learning.

Start Empathy 5-Year Plan (link)
Empathy Library (link)
Why Empathy? (link)

# Real World Scholars

At the heart of **Real World Scholars'** (link) work is a provocative question—"How different would your life be after years immersed in learning that excited you?" With a focus on entrepreneurship, Real World Scholars invites educators to blow the top off their learning design and engage learners in real-world application that drives curiosity, self-expression, and the discovery of individual interests and passions. Real World Scholars provides an e-commerce platform called Education Corporation (EdCorp). Through the platform, learners are able to embark on an entrepreneurial adventure. From identifying a problem to raising awareness and enrolling others to launching a sustainable social enterprise, the EdCorps experience allows learners to dive deep into a topic of interest and make a real-world impact with their academic work. Not every learner is an entrepreneur, but every learner wants to see their learning have real application and meaning in the world they live in. Learn more about Real World Scholars below.

EdCorps (link)
Blog (link)

The RWS Twitter Tribe (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.

LIVE WEBINAR: HOW TO PERSONALIZE LEARNING AND MAXIMIZE ACHIEVEMENT FOR ALL STUDENTS

Oct 11 11AM-12PM EST

Register here
INACOL SYMPOSIUM—

PERSONALIZING LEARNING: EQUITY, ACCESS, QUALITY

Orlando, FL Oct 23-25

**Symposium Website** 

8TH ANNUAL NATIONAL CONVENING ON PERSONALIZED LEARNING

Milwaukee, WI Oct 31-Nov 1

**Convening Website** 

# OPPORTUNITY BOARD

**Trailblazers**, a learner-driven publication created by three SparkHouse participants from Mount Vernon Presbyterian School, is calling all learners interested in having their voices heard to contribute to its second issue. Learners, email Abigail Emerson here

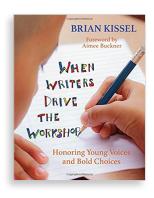
**Summit Public Schools** is looking for a **Director of Marketing**. Find out more and apply here.

**The Nellie Mae Education Foundation** released a request for proposals to support a 12-18 month grant for state education agencies and public school districts. Learn more here.



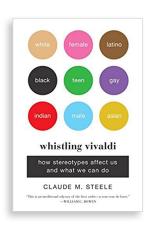
# The Hungry Mind: The Origins of Curiosity in Childhood by Susan Engel

The learner-centered movement has a tall order in front of it when it comes to assessing the qualitative metrics so vital to a holistic learning experience. One of those metrics will need to capture the value in cultivating a curious mind. In Susan Engel's work, *The Hungry Mind*, readers are taken down the rabbit hole of all things related to curiosity. But, once they come back up for air, they will find themselves holding a well-organized playbook showcasing the abstract components of curiosity in a digestible, action-oriented format that can be put into their learner-centered practice.



# When Writers Drive the Workshop: Honoring Young Voices and Bold Choices by Brian Kissel

Recognizing the lived and living experiences of learners from day one is a vital component to meeting learners where they are. In the traditional system, the standardized curriculum often gets in the way of this self-expression, resulting in learner voices going unheard. Brian Kissel challenges educators, through a redesign of how learners should learn to write, to put the writer's workshop back in the hands of the writer. In his book, *When Writers Drive the Workshop*, Kissel provides guiding questions on how educators can engage learners in writing and their overall learning journey.



# Whistling Vivaldi: How Stereotypes Affect Us and What We Can Do by Claude M. Steele

Society, on an endless mission to bring order to the chaos of the natural world, can't help but label everything in its purview. Educators know this reality all too well. But, we can often miss the true impact these labels carry. Claude M. Steele eloquently presents this theme and the negative effects it has on building thriving communities. In his work, *Whistling Vivaldi*, Steele reminds readers, through hard facts and personal stories, what happens to individuals when we remind them of the labels they carry.

# The Purpose of Education— According to Students

Oftentimes, we run endless circles around the most pressing issues in today's education system. We ask political leaders, educators, and parents for guidance. But, what if we started asking kids? **Read here** 

# When to Solve Your Team's Problems, and When to Let Them Sort It Out

When you first enter the working world, there are clear goals that will show your worth to a company, organization, or learning environment. But, as you step into a leadership position where your peers are looking for your guidance, a new mentality is required.

Read here

# Scientists to Schools: Social, Emotional Development Crucial for Learning

The Council of Distinguished Scientists, organized by the Aspen Institute's National Commission on Social, Emotional, and Academic Development, has released a report on the importance of integrating social emotional learning into a child's educational experience.

**Read here** 

"Don't be afraid of your fears.
They're not there to scare you.
They're there to let you know
that something is worth it."

- C. JOYBELL C.

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





### AN INITIATIVE OF CONVERGENCE

1133 19th Street NW, Suite 410 Washington, DC 20036 (202) 830-2310