

pioneering

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A NOTE FROM EDUCATION REIMAGINED

Kelly Young, Executive Director

MINNESOTA NEW COUNTRY SCHOOL

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LEARNER VOICE

Because Mom Said So (And Why I'm Glad She Did)
by Jack Anderson

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education 
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connect. share. discover. lead.

pioneering

Dear Pioneers,

We have been incredibly saddened by the horrific events at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, FL. As the **97th mass shooting** in the past 36 years, this isn't the first moment a group of young people have made the courageous attempt to be heard. However, in this particular moment, there seems to be an unexpected power rising out of the MSDHS learners and others from across the country who have collectively found a way to be heard far and wide. We are inspired by the support and amplification these young people have received from their communities and each other. We stand with the young people who are exemplifying amazing leadership across the country—on this issue and others—and who know they have the power to make a difference.

For the last century, we, as a society, have subscribed to the belief that adolescence is a time to prepare for life (a.k.a. adulthood). Acting accordingly, we created a new normal where we tucked kids away in middle and high schools, leaving them unexposed to any of the opportunities and experiences we aim to prepare them for. Rather than engage them in the realities of work, citizenship, and healing our communities, we say “you're not old enough yet.”

What these kids from MSDHS are showing the world (again) is that young people are living life now. They are not preparing for some future moment when the “real-world” becomes their world. They have something to say now that can make something happen tomorrow.

It has always been our wish for all young people to know they matter, their voices matter, and that they have the power to change the world. Living into this innate sense of self allows our youth to believe and own their ability to make the impossible possible.

In this issue, we have great stories about places committed to this very idea—empowering learner voice. Discover how learner voice is being amplified at Minnesota New Country School. Then, hear from an Iowa BIG learner who found his voice thanks to his mother's guidance. Finally, I strongly encourage you to read *The Self-Driven Child*, a book that was just published in February but is already influencing our work.

With peace in our hearts,

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.



SXSW EDU 2018

United in a Statewide Vision for Transformation

Join **Education Reimagined at SXSW EDU 2018** for a panel presented by the **Texas Association of School Administrators**. Learner-centered education is ready to go from localized experimentation to statewide implementation. In this effort, administrators need support to build on their own understandings and to launch innovative systemic changes. Texas has become an exemplar in how scaling learner-centered models can include unique visions from each community while staying true to guiding principles for effective implementation. Local and national leaders share the strategies that have made transformation take off.

PANEL DETAILS

WHEN

March 7, 2018
3:30 - 4:30 PM

WHERE

Hilton Austin Downtown
500 E 4th Street, Austin, TX
Room 400-402



KELLY YOUNG
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
EDUCATION REIMAGINED



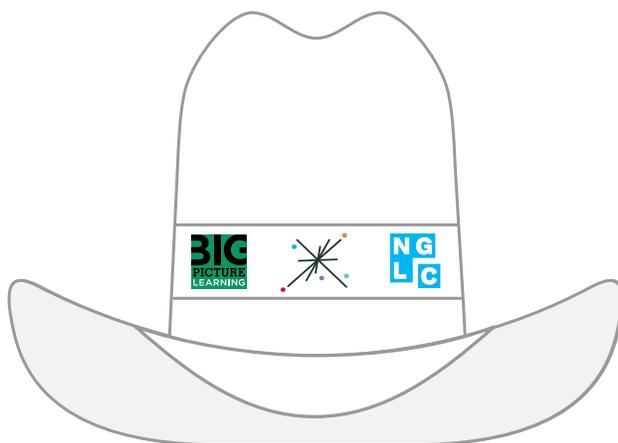
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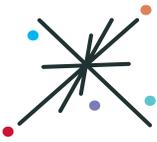
Big Picture Learning
Education Reimagined

**Next Generation
Learning Challenges**

MARCH 6TH
7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

CEDAR DOOR
201 Brazos Street

See y'all there!



MINNESOTA NEW COUNTRY SCHOOL

HENDERSON, MN

“MNCS has offered so much liberation and opportunity for our children and their education as it applies to real life. We feel so fortunate to be a part of this organization!” – MNCS PARENT

WHEN THE BRAIN TRUST BEHIND Minnesota New Country School (MNCS) got together in the early 90’s, they all knew **the bell system had to go**. But, more importantly, they wondered how they could design a learning environment that eliminated the primary feelings of frustration and annoyance their children so commonly associated with learning.

However, MNCS leaders didn’t find the feeling of frustration to be all negative. In fact, their senior project guidelines now state the project should “excite you a lot, and maybe scare you a little. If it does not, then you’re not choosing a great topic.” When a learner is challenged, frustrations are bound to show up—a gateway to the exceptional development of **learner agency**. However, when frustration was a result of limitation, they believed a new conversation was needed.

That new conversation led to the radical design of MNCS, which opened its doors in 1993. Without bells, hallways, classes, or academic grades, this learner-centered environment was ready to turn heads. **Personalized, relevant, and contextualized** learning was going to be the foundation of their new learner-centered model.

If a learner had a burning passion for the complexities of wartime strategy and creative writing, she would be invited to design a project that would take those passions to new heights. She could first explore the history of war and discover what time period or singular event is of greatest interest. In this discovery, she might craft a creative story where the great war generals of the past like Alexander the Great, George S. Patton, and Napoléon all attend a war strategy conference to talk shop and trade secrets.

Regardless of how the project shapes up, the learner owns it—and the entire discovery process—with guidance from an advisor. As the learner moves along her journey, the advisor back-maps her tasks to the state-required standards. And, if any boxes go unchecked, a minimal shift can be made without disrupting the motivation of the learner. Besides, the **knowledge, skills, and dispositions** cultivated through this design go above and beyond anything the state determines as “proficient.”

MNCS has 25 years of experience leading learner-centered design and is accelerating ever-more to ensure their young people are ready to live into a future as lifelong learners.

LEARN MORE

[Experimental School Gets Rid of Classes, Teachers](#)

FACTS & FIGURES

Public

Established in 1993

The first **Teacher-Powered School** in Minnesota

Employees average 8 years of service at MNCS, licensed staff 9.2 years

20% Special Education population (2016-17)

25% Free and Reduced Lunch (2016-17)

MNCS offers free transportation from 10+ surrounding communities (independently run)

97% of students strongly agreed or agreed that staff treat them with respect (per student year-end survey)

CONNECT

[Website](#)

[Facebook](#)



A Conversation with Aaron Grimm and Paul Jaeger



AARON GRIMM



PAUL JAEGER

Q. What is the role of the advisor at Minnesota New Country School (MNCS)? What do the relationships (and the building of them) between advisor and learner look like?

AARON: An advisor's goal is to build positive relationships and find out how to intrinsically motivate students. It's important to note, the advisor isn't alone in this endeavor. The advisor receives support in meeting their students' needs from many other positive adults in our buildings—School Social Worker, Behavior Interventionist, Special Education Staff, Paraprofessionals, and Administrative Support Staff. We have a collective goal of building positive relationships with “our students,” which has led us to using more inclusive language when we talk about them. Everyone is always saying “our kids” rather than Aaron's students or Paul's students. This work truly takes a village.

Moreover, advisors spend multiple years (looping) working with students. When it comes to building trust with students and their families, building these multi-year relationships is advantageous. Although I'm officially a grades 5/6 teacher, I know every single student by name before they get to that level. By the time I work with these students, I have a really good idea about the strengths and challenges of each. This knowledge allows me to issue growth challenges to students in bold ways, which ultimately leads to a feeling of mutual respect between teacher and student. I respect the students' determination to take on the challenges, and they respect my recognition of meeting them where they are and pushing them just beyond their comfort zones.

PAUL: Choice is a core value of our learning community. We believe young people are in the best position to choose the advisor they will work well with. We trust them with these important decisions, and our hope is they will move toward an advisor they think will draw the best out of them. In the elementary years, due to our small size, each grade has just one advisor. But, once they reach the secondary level, the choice comes into play. Naturally, many factors can influence their decision.

A student yearning for social connection could base their advisor decision on the advisory their friends are angling to be in. A student looking for romance might try to work their way into the same advisory as the apple of their eye. At the end of the year, each secondary student submits their top three picks for an advisor (to work with the following year), and we work collaboratively to make sure they end up with one of those options. Sometimes they choose well; sometimes it goes the other way. No matter which way it goes, there is power in being able to make that decision, and it is a decision our students weigh heavily throughout the year.

As an advisor in our secondary school, I occasionally visit the elementary school and hear 4th graders discussing the advisors they hope to work with at the secondary school (which begins in 7th grade). Many of our young people arrive at MNCS from places where decisions have always been made for them. Extending this choice to students is a way for us to communicate through practice that this will be a different place for learning.

“The advisor and advisee are co-workers in the field of learning. They are unafraid to test one another, and both are working with joy and intensity to best themselves.”

AARON GRIMM

The advisor and advisee are co-workers in the field of learning. They are unafraid to test one another, and both are working with joy and intensity to best themselves. The advisor serves as an ally to and for the advisee within the community. As an advisor, a line from Harvey Milk has become a mantra for me: “You gotta give ‘em hope.”

When a student joins our community, the first thing we do is set up an hour-long conference with them and their family. During this time, I’m interested in learning about their education story to date. What have they enjoyed about it? What has been difficult for them? What do they hope might be different here? I’m mostly curious to learn about the things they like doing outside of school, the things they pay attention to when they are free. (It is important this be done to better understand them as a person, not merely as a means of steering one of their passions into a first project.) After talking for a while, I like to ask what they would like to learn more about? Then, I listen very carefully. To me, an advisor is at their best when they are listening good ideas into existence.

Q. What difference does it make for the educators at MNCS to be part of a teacher-powered, learner-centered environment?

AARON: An advisor’s (teacher) role is different than a traditional teacher in that the foundational goals are to form personal relationships with all of their students and help run the school. They are part coach/advocate/mentor/encourager/planner...the list goes on. An advisor’s job is to help each student engage in their learning and with our school community. Our staff, including teachers, take on many other extra duties in order to make our school function at an optimal level.

We also serve on various administrative committees that help push action and decisions to help our school run. For example, I serve on the Building Committee, the Supporting Students and Teachers (Intervention) Team, and the Technology Team. I have my school bus license, and I’m the head toilet plunger for the boys bathroom! We all take on various duties based on our personal strengths and abilities to commit extra to our learning community.

Developing quality relationships with students is critical in any educational setting and paramount in a learner-centered environment. Without positive and professional relationships in place, nothing else matters. Advisors at MNCS are learners first and teachers second. The most crucial subject for us to learn about and understand is our students. What do they care about? How do they motivate themselves to get stuff done? If they need help, do they know how to ask for it?

Fortunately, our learner-centered environment affords us with opportunities to get to know our students and grow our community. We are not pouring energy into designing curriculum; we are guiding students through their project work. We do not spend precious time grading student work (*we do not have grades); we ascribe worth to the things they are doing well and, if given permission, offer them growth challenges in areas they can improve.

As an advisor at MNCS, one job I have is to help my advisees find their Yoda(s)—the people who can teach them the things they want to know. One of the great freedoms we all have is being able to decide who our teachers are. This might be an actual teacher, but for many, it is someone else entirely: a YouTuber, a blogger, a friend, a community elder. For instance, one of the students I am lucky to work with has an abiding interest in green architecture. I am out of my depth in that particular field, but one of our community members has been a practicing architect for two decades. Putting students in touch with the right teacher(s) is an important part of our work at

“Our learner-centered environment affords us with opportunities to get to know our students and grow our community. We are not pouring energy into designing curriculum; we are guiding students through their project work.”

AARON GRIMM

MNCS. Of greater import, in finding the right teachers, students are learning how to learn what they want to learn.

Q. We know the teacher-powered model is not a prerequisite for a successful learner-centered environment. But, do you believe a teacher-powered model alleviates barriers that often show up in a more traditional administrative structure?

PAUL: As teacher owners, we sink or swim together. The stakes are high and gone are the traditional scapegoats: the incompetent administrator, the madcap superintendent, the unhinged department chair. At MNCS, the strength of our community (colleagues, students, parents, community members) is positively dependent on our willingness to look to one another when the going gets tough to find the best way to do right by our kids.

I'm not sure this can play out well in a more traditional structure. There is room for experimentation in those places, but it is difficult to get everyone paddling in the same direction. If everyone is not paddling in the same direction, it is hard to get far from the place of origin. Of course, I do admire those individuals paddling hard for the other shore.

AARON: As a huge believer and practitioner in Teacher-Powered Schools, I know it helps our school do what is right for students in a less bureaucratic manner. Is it more work than a traditional teacher? I think it is just different. When it comes down to it, I understand that if I want this school to succeed, I need to do whatever I can to make this place successful. This environment was more what I was hoping for when I thought of a teaching career. I can have a direct impact—mentoring and helping students.

We still have to follow policies and procedures, but we are a small vessel versus an ocean liner when it comes to navigating 180 degree turns. There are many schools that use a more traditional structure that are still able to focus closely on students' needs, so I know it is possible.

Overall, we all **have** to start looking at measurements of student success outside of standardized test scores in order to start this revolution. One of our founders and long-time teachers Dee Thomas always said, "We need to do what is right for kids." I think the people at the top (Principals, Directors, etc.) should really work for the teachers and encourage ownership of decisions with school staff. If everyone has input and ownership (meaning you have to help implement) in decisions, there is no one to blame if it doesn't work besides the team. It gets rid of the scapegoat mentality. Here is a simple example: A school team decides that instead of having custodians and lunchroom/playground staff, you will split these duties up on a rotational basis amongst staff and students. This is a huge budget saver, and students learn the value of taking care of their community.

Q. You initially started 20 years ago with only a secondary level. What has adding the primary level allowed for?

AARON: Adding grades K-5 to our existing program was a huge lesson for our staff. We knew after almost 20 years that we needed to work with kids earlier. In year five of our elementary, we are still making tweaks to our program based on staff input, program focus, data, and parent feedback. At the primary level, we are focusing mainly on basic skills in reading, math, communication, being a curious learner, the student's role in the community, and developing a positive sense of self. We also begin to teach the project process (for project-based learning). In our grades 4-6 classroom (which is two classes of 36 kids total), we have been exploring mindfulness, authentic communication, and how to take care of ourselves physically and emotionally.

“Overall, we all **have** to start looking at measurements of student success outside of standardized test scores in order to start this revolution.”

AARON GRIMM

Q. What does mixed-age learning look like at MNCS? What are the benefits you've seen by mixing ages?

AARON: Our elementary building utilizes mainly multiage classrooms, as the Kindergarten classroom is the only room with one grade. After Kindergarten, we have 1-2, 2-3, 4-5, and 5-6 groupings. Mixing ages helps students understand their learning level is not grade-based. In this spirit, we are now moving to individualized Math and Language Arts instruction, thanks to mentoring from Impact Academy in the Lakeville School District. Helping students find the optimal level of challenge in their work seems to be the key to unlocking their intrinsic motivation. We push the idea of mentorship from our older students to our younger students, as we all know students determine the culture of the school much more than the adults do.

PAUL: As Aaron said, mixed-age learning binds our community together. Our upperclassmen serve as mentors to our younger students at the secondary school. This helps draw new students into the fold. Our veteran students benefit from this, too, as they get to experience the vim and vigor our new students bring to the table. For example, one student arrived to our advisory halfway through last year and quickly launched into an ambitious project: designing and constructing a giant sphinx-like sculpture in honor of their cat, made entirely of pennies. Veteran students marveled at the boldness of the project and were inspired as this student executed on their unique and beautiful creation. When the project was complete, the student had glued over one hundred dollars in pennies to their sculpture, and it now serves as an inanimate mascot for our advisory.

Q. What is one of your favorite learner stories?

AARON: All positive learner stories seem to start with a change in a kid as they start seeing worth in themselves. They stop believing the “I am not smart” narrative that may be stuck on repeat in their head. One of my sixth grade students used to struggle with confidence, focus, and comparing herself to others. When she reached 4th grade, I began noticing her confidence was growing. Fast forward to this year, she has completed two insightful projects—her last one on the Atomic Bomb in Hiroshima.

I work really hard to give her compliments and positivity, which always leads to her breaking into a huge, whole-face smile. I invited her to attend an education conference with me as I wanted her to know that I recognize her tremendous efforts and positive story. I could tell that she was extremely honored. She went from a student who chose to fly under the radar because of a lack of confidence to a student who has gained a sense of self that I hope will change her life forever. I hope she never forgets her abilities, drive, and sense of curiosity.

Q. What's on the horizon for MNCS? What's one thing you're hoping to achieve in the next five years?

AARON: Over the past few years, we have taken the leap (after many years of talking about it) and invested heavily in helping students with Mental Health needs and awareness. We are in year two of having a School Social Worker and Behavior Interventionist (I would never go back to our old model). We will continue investing in and being curious about our students' needs, rather than blaming them for struggles they may be having. Two huge things we hope to address based on student and parent surveys are establishing our own food program for breakfast and lunch and creating a physical activity space/gym for our students.

“Mixed-age learning binds our community together. Our upperclassmen serve as mentors to our younger students at the secondary school. This helps draw new students into the fold.”

PAUL JAEGER

Aaron Grimm has been working in education since 2004, including rolls at the nonprofit EdVisions and serving as Director of EdVisions Cooperative, a worker cooperative that began with Minnesota New Country School's inception. Aaron holds a Bachelor's in English/Speech Education (5-12) and a Master's in Advocacy and Political Leadership. Aaron's passions include: mindfulness, politics, education policy, music/concerts, and gardening.

Paul Jaeger is a self-defined country boy and lover of wild places and anything with soul. He is proud to call the Minnesota River Valley home and glad to be an advisor at the Minnesota New Country School.



Because Mom Said So (And Why I'm Glad She Did)

by Jack Anderson



JACK ANDERSON

My story is familiar to the eyes of learner-centered educators. I was relatively happy attending my traditional school. Then, I was involuntarily exposed to an unfamiliar (it was learner-centered) educational opportunity. I started out nervous and unconfident. Now, I'm independent and taking strong ownership of my education. My story is familiar to the eyes of learner-centered educators, but they are not my audience. My audience is any type of student who is on the fence about trying something new for their education—or is, in general, scared of a new experience.

Let me go back to the beginning. Before I got to high school, I was moving in and out of new schools every few years. Eventually, between 7th and 10th grade, I finally hit a four-year stretch where nothing changed. I had the opportunity to build a great community of friends and mentors. I was happy.

Throughout those four years, I met so many people, peers and teachers alike. Being in one place for a sustained period of time allowed me to get the hang of traditional schooling. This was a good foundation for me before I went into this new learner-centered environment, as I got to really experience how traditional schools work.

However, my 4-year stint was all coming to an end. And, of all people, my mom was the one putting an end to it. During my sophomore year, she began telling me about this place called Iowa BIG. She sent me a link to an Iowa BIG video and said, "I want you to watch this and tell me what you think. I think you should try this next year." After I watched it, I thought about the possibilities that would be available to me if I gave it a try, but I quickly retreated into my comfort zone and told myself I wanted to stay where I was. Once I explained to my mom how I felt, she reemphasized she just wanted me to try it. All I kept thinking was how can I be educated through projects—Iowa BIG's model?

While I was initially wary, I eventually decided if my mom thought this was going to be best for me in the long term, why not consider it? I thought about it for a couple of weeks—weighing the pros and cons of this big decision. Honestly, I really didn't know what the best option would be.

My mom persisted. She kept going on and on about how great of an opportunity Iowa BIG would be. And, guess what? Her nagging worked. I started getting curious about it. She would say, "Look up the website and research what they are about." And, I did. She would say, "Jack, you will not regret this. I promise I wouldn't tell you about this if I didn't think it was going to be good for you." I thought, "Maybe she's right. Why would she sabotage me? She must be doing what is right for me." I eventually took it upon myself to look at what this crazy program was all about. I did a little research and became very intrigued. I remember thinking, "Maybe this isn't as bad as I thought it was."

However, my mom decided my initiative wasn't enough. While I was still mulling things over, enjoying my school life, my mom told me, "Jack, I signed you up, and you have to go on a field trip to visit the place. Just give it a chance." Even though I was growing curious, I was upset. It was moving too fast. I hardly knew anybody who attended Iowa BIG. I was nervous about what the future would bring and not having the time to weigh all of the options. Luckily, my girlfriend decided she wanted to see what Iowa BIG was about and went with me.

The field trip to Iowa BIG was amazing. We collaborated with other students on potential projects that business people wanted us to work on. We created new ideas for projects in small groups that we thought would be important. And, the coolest part of it all was that it was so diverse. There were so many different people from all over the community that I had never met before. My girlfriend was as amazed and excited as I was. The whole day I just kept thinking about my mom. She said this would be a great opportunity for me, and she was right. I could easily see myself at Iowa BIG doing great things.

After the field trip, even though I was excited, I told my mom I would think about it. I wasn't ready to say yes. I couldn't look over the fact I would be leaving my friends behind. How could I do that? Ultimately, that was the only argument that mattered to me. I didn't think about Iowa BIG much after the field trip. I almost completely forgot about it.

About three weeks later, class registration for my junior year rolled around. I had to register for classes for my current school and Iowa BIG just in case I changed my mind and decided to go. I was scared to take that leap of faith.

Summer rolled around, and I could finally relax. Towards the end of summer, I had totally forgotten about the whole situation and wasn't even picturing myself going to a different school. My mom had different plans.

One month before school was going to start, my mom told me I was going to do Iowa BIG whether I liked it or not. I was devastated. I wasn't going to see my friends this coming year. It was hard imagining what it was going to be like without them.

Eventually, school started, and I was terrified. I didn't know what to do. I had to switch traditional schools because my old traditional school didn't offer the opportunity of Iowa BIG. I would be spending half my day at my new traditional school and the other half at Iowa BIG. Luckily, I ended up adjusting very well after that first day. My transition from traditional school to non-traditional school was very smooth.

Throughout my first year at Iowa BIG, I have grown as a leader and a learner. My work ethic has soared, and I have learned so many different skills I never knew I could learn in school. This year has been an incredible one. Through the projects, I am able to practice setting up meetings and talking to business professionals in the right tone. I can easily take leadership of a meeting now. I am adapting to new situations because of what and how I've learned. I completely changed my mindset from being closed to completely open.

If there are any students out there reading this and debating whether or not to partake in a non-traditional school, I honestly say go for it. It is the best decision I (or my mom) ever made. I go home after BIG and tell my mom all about my day and all of the great opportunities that are coming before me. And, all she says is "I told you so." I know, mom, I know.

"My work ethic has soared, and I have learned so many different skills I never knew I could learn in school."

JACK ANDERSON

Jack Anderson is currently a learner at Iowa BIG—a learner-centered environment in Cedar Rapids, IA. In his free time, Jack enjoys longboarding and hanging out with friends and family.



iThrive Games

Games are an incredibly powerful means of keeping our imaginations alive and exploring the emotional complexity of the human mind. **iThrive Games** believes in the possibility that we can live into a new age of game design that is as fun as it is instructive. So, they partner with scientists, teens, and game developers in pursuit of that future. Rather than shaming children's love for video games, they embrace it and "explore how great games can empower teens to discover and use their unique strengths, unlock their potential, and take charge of their well-being." Their research starts with consulting experts in social-emotional learning and positive psychology and flows to the expected users (kids) for a robust feedback loop that leads to games that "support teen flourishing." The best part? Young learners can participate in their Game Design Studios to experience the ins-and-outs of game design. Explore all they have to offer below.

Game Design Studio ([link](#))

Habits for Teen Thriving ([link](#))

Game Design Tools ([link](#))

EdTogether

Learner-centered education, at its core, hones in on the unique needs of the individual child. When those needs require a greater degree of specialty on the part of the educator, it helps to know where to find the resources online and in our communities to provide the appropriate support. **EdTogether**, a non-profit "empowering youth with disabilities to thrive in learning and in life," is one of those resources. With 15% of young learners going through their learning journey with a developmental disability, their needs deserve a learning design that empowers and engages their interests and passions. EdTogether acts this vision out by exploring and sharing how emotion plays an integral role in children's learning. They also support the implementation of this research by engaging youth to "personalize [their] learning, foster empathy, and strengthen relationships between [them] and [their] educators." Dig into their resources below, and imagine how such intention could be expanded to every child in your community.

Designing for Emotion ([link](#))

The UDL Science Notebook ([link](#))

Empowering Learners Through Emotional Engagement ([link](#))

UPCOMING EVENTS

SXSW EDU
Austin, TX
Mar. 5-8, 2018

[Register](#)

NEA LEADERSHIP SUMMIT
Chicago, IL
Mar. 16-18, 2018

[Register](#)

ASU + GSV SUMMIT
San Diego, CA
Apr. 16-18

[Register](#)

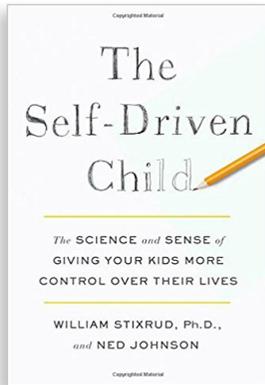
OPPORTUNITY BOARD

Making Community Connections Charter School (MC²)

is hiring for a School Leader who will collaboratively implement and monitor programs and initiatives on campus to positively impact school culture through relationship building and effective trauma-sensitive and restorative practices. Learn more [here](#).

Teton Science Schools is seeking a Vice President of Educator Development. In this role, you will lead the team to develop place-based educators, increasing student engagement, learner outcomes, and community impact. Find out more about this position [here](#).

Eagle Rock School and Professional Development Center is looking for two learner-centered pioneers to join their ranks as a Director of Curriculum and a Language & Literacy Instructional Specialist (English). Read more about the positions [here](#).



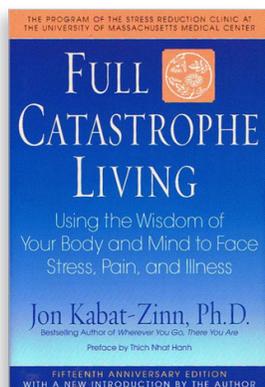
The Self-Driven Child by William Stixrud and Ned Johnson

The Information Age has brought about a dramatically different approach to parenting than what was practiced less than two generations ago. In response, William Stixrud and Ned Johnson, authors of *The Self-Driven Child*, want to raise a red flag—too much information can lead to too much control. Just as an adult would feel handcuffed working under a micromanager, their child will feel just the same if every action they take must be approved or decided by their parent. With expertise in neuropsychology (Stixrud) and motivational coaching (Johnson), the two authors offer an intriguing look at how parents can rightfully sustain their stature while providing their children with autonomy and an acute sense of self.



Give and Take: Why Helping Others Drives Our Success by Adam Grant

As we prepare young learners for a world hyper-focused on collaboration and the sharing of ideas, it seems worthy to explore what it takes to successfully operate in such a future. Adam Grant, author of *Give and Take*, has developed a set of profiles that can help identify how we and others currently operate within a collaborative setting and how we can improve. Grant describes three profiles—the Giver, the Taker, and the Matcher. Within each, there are positives and negatives in the short term, but one wins the day again and again over the long haul—you might be surprised who it is.



Full Catastrophe Living: Using the Wisdom of Your Body and Mind to Face Stress, Pain, and Illness by Jon Kabat-Zinn

As an educator, it can seem downright impossible to press pause and check in with yourself. Your engine is fueled by the opportunity to serve others and between work life and home life, there are plenty of services to deliver. But, as with any machine, your mind and body need consistent maintenance to operate at maximum efficiency. Consider allowing someone like Jon Kabat-Zinn, author of *Full Catastrophe Living*, to serve you so that you can continue serving others. Kabat-Zinn's work gave rise to an entirely new medical field studying stress-reduction and mindful living—two things we could all use a little help with.

Engaging All Learners in Physical Tinkering

Physical tinkering is often only assigned to engineering or computer science courses, even though research tells us hands-on activities are beneficial to all learners in a variety of focus areas. What if we expanded our learners' opportunities to tinker?

[Read here](#)

OPINION: Here's an economic engine that powers communities: School

What would it look like if a learning environment brought opportunities that are customarily exclusive to college campuses (career pathways, field work, etc.) to their young learners? How might that affect positive change within a community's economic engine?

[Read here](#)

How a P.E. Department Designed a Compassion-Based Curriculum

It's no mystery that traditional physical education classes often creates a dichotomy between the "haves" and "have-nots" of athletic ability. One learning environment decided to challenge the norms and create an experience all learners could enjoy and engage with. [Read here](#)

“You see things; and you say
‘Why?’ But I dream things that
never were; and I say ‘Why
not?’” – **GEORGE BERNARD SHAW**

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