

YEAR IN REVIEW

2023



education 
reimagined

OUR VISION

To enable all children to fulfill their full potential as empowered individuals, constructive members of their communities, productive participants in the economy, and engaged citizens of the United States and the world.

OUR MISSION

To make learner-centered education available to each and every child in the United States, inclusive of race, background, and circumstance.

OUR ROLE

To be a catalyst for collective invention—fueling the confidence of those who want to invent a future where learning lives everywhere, and every child thrives.



LETTER FROM THE FOUNDER & PRESIDENT EMERITUS

Everyone knows the world is changing. But what does it mean for education, and what must the purpose of education be if we are to enable our youth to thrive in fast-changing, complex world?

Since Education Reimagined's founding, we have sought to answer this question with an unwavering focus: to support young people to thrive and lead lives of their own creation that contribute to our collective well-being. This is the promise of learner-centered education, and we are committed that every child in the United States has equitable, public access to this life-affirming, transformative approach.

Our journey has illuminated remarkable bright spots of learner-centered education, committed leaders (of all ages) active across the nation, and the pervasive challenges to transforming one of the country's most entrenched systems—and achieving Education Reimagined's founding purpose.

Encouragingly, 2023 marked a pivotal moment toward our ability to fulfill that vision.

We worked closely with learner-centered site leaders and young people across the country, in search of the shared language, frameworks, and connections that can advance our field farther, faster.

We partnered with communities across the country to explore what it would take to invent a true learner-centered ecosystem in their own backyards.

We launched a research and development acceleration initiative to catalyze the work of innovative sites and crystallize the requirements for developing a forward-thinking public education system via ecosystem design.

And we passed the baton of leadership toward a new shared structure—naming Demi Edwards as Chief Executive Officer, Emily Liebttag as Chief Innovation Officer, and Emily Bader as Chief Communications Officer. This team's strength in mobilizing talent, marshaling resources, and building teams to deliver on bold and ambitious results make them the right leaders for this next phase—a phase that will continue to depend on all of you.

Over these last ten years, it has been my honor and privilege to create a space for leaders who are bringing a new vision of education to life to collectively rise to the challenge of systemic change that enables every young person to be known, loved, understood, and prepared for the challenges and opportunities of the modern world. As I assume the role of Founder and President Emeritus, my commitment to our vision, mission, and ground-level work stands strong.

Together, we are demonstrating the incredible impact of learner-centered education, and lighting a way forward for systemic transformation in our country. And as we enter 2024, I'm pleased to report that our organization has never been stronger.

Our team has brightened and sharpened their work to galvanize the learner-centered community, sparked critical inventions and conversations, and engaged new audiences with our vision and progress. We've added deep expertise in the fields of research and communications to codify and articulate learner-centered education's impact, opportunities, and areas for growth.

Our network of learners and practitioners has grown, along with a deeper awareness of why this work is so vital.

And now, our original vision—a public education system that makes learning relevant and enlivening, supports learners to discover and pursue their passions and purpose, and leverages learning no matter where it happens—finally feels within reach.

Thank you for your support, your commitment, and your continued willingness to find ways to advance our shared vision. We look forward to finding ever more ways to partner together as we make learner-centered education the future for public education.

The time to bring this vision for education to life is now.

All my best,



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Run, don't walk, towards this vision.

I saw myself as more of an outlier beforehand.

I now see myself as a part of a whole.

A snowball growing in size and momentum.”

COI MORRISON

*Founder, The Lab School of Memphis
& New School Learning*

OUR IMPACT & INITIATIVES

Against the backdrop of a rapidly changing world, Education Reimagined has remained steadfast to our commitments, our values, and our mission. To bring the spirit of that work to life, we are driven by three goals: **Building the Field** of learner-centered leaders and communities; **Catalyzing Invention** to advance the growth of community-based, learner-centered ecosystems; and **Spreading the Vision** by engaging more and more people in the work.

Education Reimagined finds and connects learner-centered leaders across background, lived experience, sector, and geography. By providing the space to learn, collaborate, and work with those who share a common cause, we embolden all to imagine further than before.

In 2023, we grew both in numbers and our confidence to build and nurture a catalytic community of practice—resulting in new insights, new relationships, and new clarity around a shared language that can undergird the field and transform pockets of practice into a national movement.

Most importantly, we integrated young people more fully into all of our community-building efforts—elevating their voices about the future of learning, and enabling adults to more powerfully see, name, and understand the impact of placing learners at the center of their own education journeys.



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I love that the Learning Lab Orientation required me to hold space in my calendar for deep, curious, critical conversation.

I am a better educator and a better colleague because of it.”

KATIE DANNER

*Orientation Specialist & Librarian
Norris Academy*

The Learning Lab

The Learning Lab unites learner-centered practitioners committed to demonstrating that learner-centered education can address today's most pressing education challenges. Now made up of more than 600 professionals and young people, the Lab represents more than 230 different organizations, spanning eight countries, and 41 states.

In May 2023, on the Pueblo of Santa Ana – Tamaya in New Mexico, we held our first in-person Lab convening since 2019. Aimed at expanding the number of practitioners equipped with a shared learner-centered framework, the experience was greatly enriched by the opportunity to bear witness to and learn from the Indigenous culture and traditions of those who call the Pueblo home.

We also continued to offer virtual experiences for practitioners to find community and explore ways to advance their practice. And we facilitated two site visits—to The Met, a Big Picture Learning school in Providence, Rhode Island, and Iowa BIG in Cedar Rapids, Iowa—so that teams and practitioners could learn from one another, and see different sites of learner-centered education in action.

SparkHouse

SparkHouse is a national community of young leaders from learner-centered environments who advocate for all youth to have access to the kind of education they've experienced.

In 2023, Education Reimagined hosted both virtual and in-person convenings for 76 learners and 18 adults from 11 different learner-centered environments across eight states. Connected and emboldened by the experience, these young leaders have since created vibrant connections of their own, ones that are advancing each person's ability to illuminate their own power—and start to see themselves less as outliers, and more as educational innovators on the edge of a better future for us all.



Research to Build the Field

Insight and learning are key to our work to build the field and engage our community of practice. They are also core to enabling others outside of the field to understand the impact, promise, and power of learner-centered education. In this, we expanded our team to include a dedicated research capacity that will both curate the data and research already out there and instigate new efforts to build the evidence base for this approach.



To advance our vision of a vibrant learner-centered public education system, Education Reimagined partners with leaders and bold thinkers ready to imagine, invent, and build a better future—by design.

In 2023, we worked with champions and inventors across the United States to tangibly explore taking the “**Big Idea**” of community-based, learner-centered ecosystems—from vision to reality. And we laid the necessary groundwork to begin to identify pilot sites ripe for systems-level invention and partners with whom we can activate that work.



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Knowing that we are many, and that there is mutual aid in this work, **my commitment to creating learner-centered ecosystems is doubled.**”

JIM BAILEY

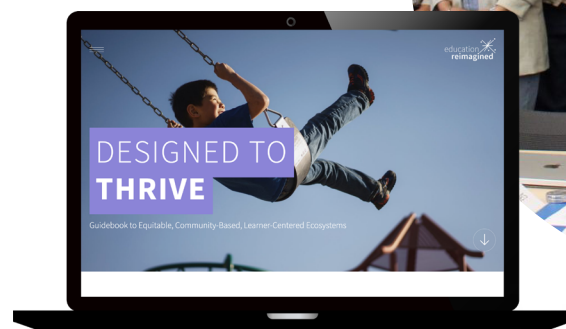
*Executive Director,
Rock Tree Sky*

Designed to Thrive

Over several months beginning in 2022, we brought together 40 diverse learner-centered practitioners, experts, systems thinkers, and young people to explore and imagine a future of thriving learner-centered ecosystems. From their expertise, experience, and creativity, **Designed to Thrive** emerged as a guidebook and accompanying microsite, with frameworks and insights to help leaders reconstruct the systems of public education to enable more meaningful, equitable, community-embedded learning.

Ecosystems for the Future of Learning

Commissioned by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and co-authored with History Co:Lab, **Ecosystems for the Future of Learning** presents a compelling case for reimagining public education, along with a landscape analysis of 13 learning communities exploring ecosystems, and an Ecosystem Readiness Framework designed for communities to advance their own efforts.



Ecosystem Exploration Cohort

Nine sites engaged in an eight-month deep-dive to explore, in their unique contexts, their community's readiness to ignite the development and growth of learner-centered ecosystems.

Each community explored initial infrastructure solutions, designed concept plans, and developed a shared language and set of meanings for the work, culminating in September with a final gathering in Dallas. The cohort enabled vibrant cross-community learning and the deepening of work in each cohort member's sphere—so much so that all members are now pushing their programs and schools to take on a more ecosystemic approach, with a handful now establishing the groundwork to launch their own pilots.



State-Level Policies & Conditions

To better understand the conditions that could best support lasting ecosystem design, we conducted a 50-state policy scan to assess and identify the contexts, legislation, and policy dynamics that are most favorable for learner-centered education and ecosystem invention. We then engaged partners, advisory council members, and learner-centered leaders and practitioners to understand and consider the implications of these findings for local work. These efforts deepened our relationships with policymakers across the country, and led to our inclusion in the Policy Innovators in Education (PIE) Network.

Research to Catalyze Invention

Our work to catalyze this invention is to unlock the theory, practice, and design needed to enable the spread of learner-centered education in community contexts. To ensure the learnings generated by community invention are leveraged, we have engaged a Research Fellow to study, document, and coalesce the evidence and insights that will enable other communities to go further, faster.

At Education Reimagined, we illuminate a bold, galvanizing vision of learner-centered ecosystems; amplify the work of trailblazing educators, families, and communities who are bringing pieces of this vision to life daily; and advocate for the conditions necessary to enable full-blown ecosystem invention.

In 2023, we assumed our role as a national leader more assertively, producing new media, mobilizing new voices, and creating new resources that can both push the thinking of established learner-centered leaders, and bring new people and communities into the conversation. Our work and message earned attention in the world, through critical media placement, as well as deep partner and social media sharing.



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Together we can reimagine how learning is **a shared responsibility** among multiple and complementary stakeholders in the community.”

FELICIA CUMINGS SMITH

President of the National Center for Families Learning (NCFL)

Engaging Diverse Sector Allies

We have begun a widespread initiative to amplify voices representing a variety of relevant sectors, including workforce development, youth development, early childhood, philanthropy, K-12 education, higher education-research, and education policy. Our intention is to help all these allies advocate more publicly—and effectively—for a community-based, learner-centered approach.

R&D Acceleration Initiative Announcement

To enact the design of a modern public education system that aligns directly with the needs of learners, their communities, and our democracy, we publicly announced our new efforts to spur concerted R&D into the future of learning and the creation of learner-centered ecosystems. Through the announcement, we articulated and shared our role as a catalyst for ecosystem invention, and we made a public commitment to rally support for the hard work ahead to pilot, learn from, and spread this invention.

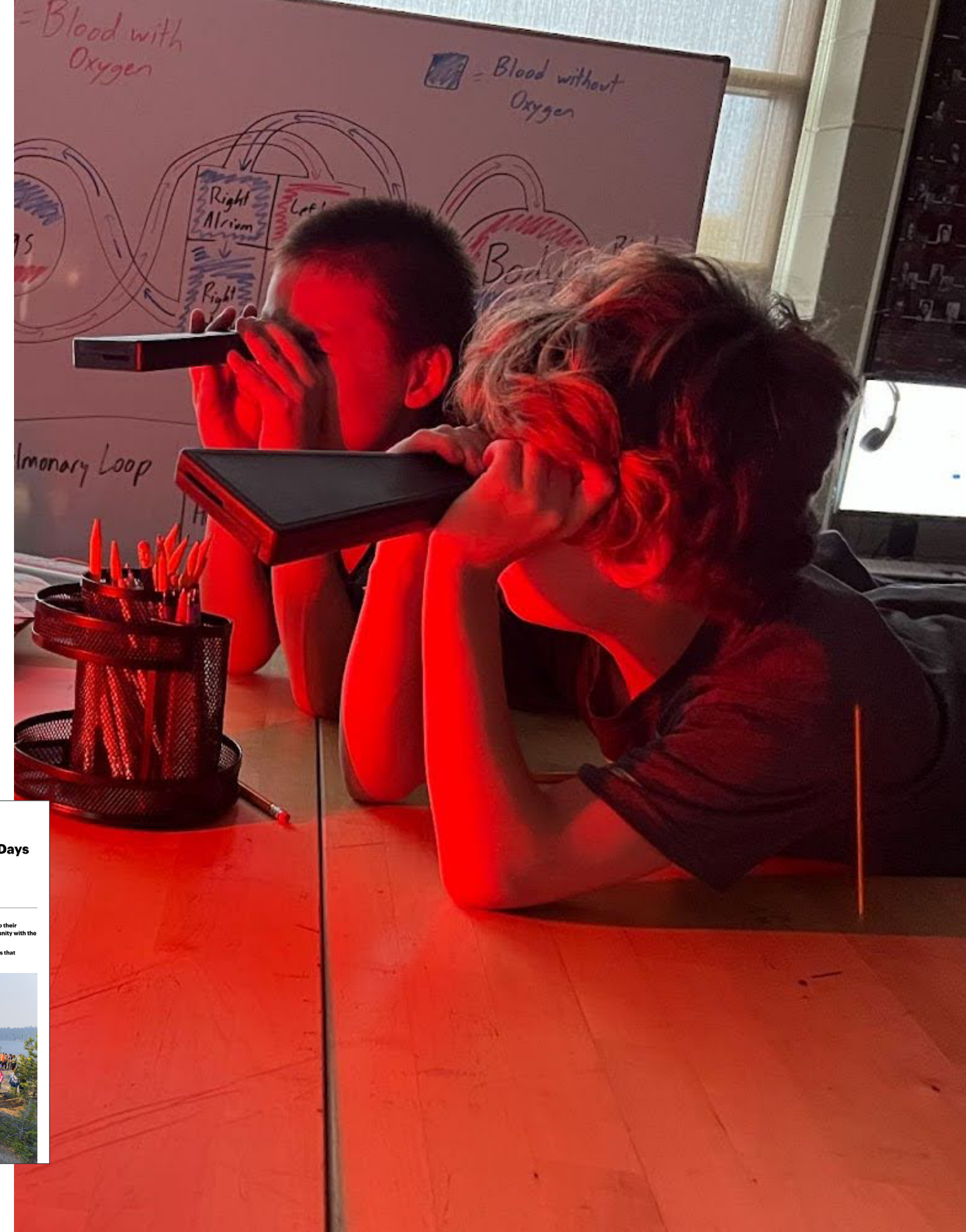
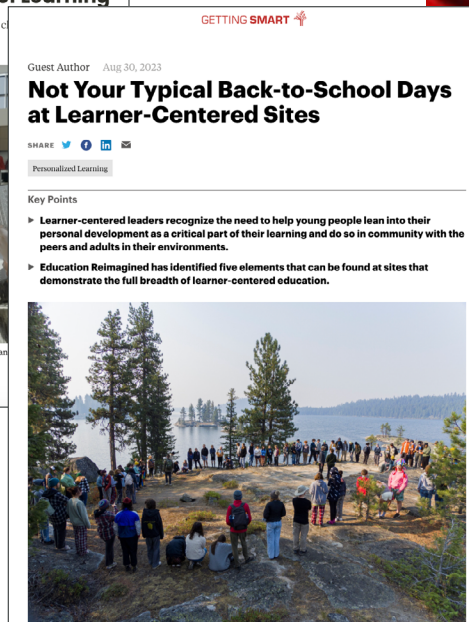
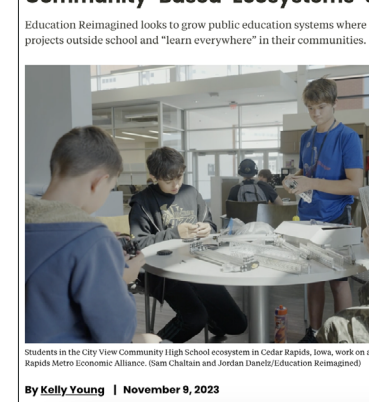
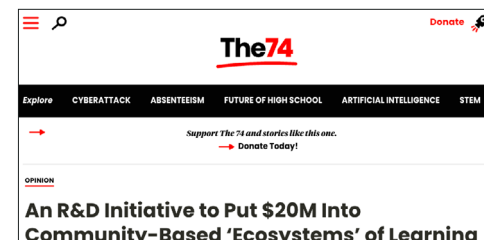
Conferences & Presentations

Education Reimagined shared insights with thousands of leaders throughout the year at in-person and virtual events. Audiences included educators, summer learning program leaders, charter school advocates, workforce development professionals, and futurists from varied sectors. Presentation highlights included

the Accenture Institute, SXSW EDU, Arizona State University, Carnegie Summit, Annie E. Casey Conference, Big Picture Learning's Big Bang, SparkNC, XQ + Rhode Island Department of Education, National Summer Learning Association, Aurora Institute, and the Expeditionary Learning National Conference.

Voyager

Education Reimagined's long-standing e-magazine, Voyager, stitches together the perspectives, stories, and people who comprise the learner-centered field. In 2023, 41 articles were published featuring authors with rich expertise and a diversity of perspectives, including youth voices. Topics ranged from radical trust and explorations of learning environments, to policy considerations and AI in education.





LOOKING FORWARD

Against the backdrop of a pivotal election, 2024 promises to be an equally pivotal year in the evolution of Education Reimagined.

Our work began with a bold vision for a transformed future of education. The steps we have taken together over the past decade have positioned us to pave the way for true systems change now, and a world in which learner-centered educational options will be equitably available to every child in the United States.

With a vibrant leadership team in place, and growth, momentum, and impact throughout our network of practitioners and allies, we'll use the coming year to advance ecosystems, nurture

and expand the field, and continue to drive active advocacy for the transformation we seek.

We'll accelerate our **R&D initiative**.

We'll **galvanize the learnings** from our research team to inform and ignite our work.

We'll **elevate stories and messages** that help bring new levels of awareness, understanding, and support to the field.

And, as always, we'll do this as a **team of learners**—from the young to the young-at-heart.

Thank you for your support, your partnership, and your shared commitment to a better future, for all of us.



We are grateful to these supporters for their partnership and investment in the transformation of education.

And thank you to all of the individual donors who have made the work possible.

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