

# 10-Year Review



10 YEARS OF FUTURES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

# Foreword

## 10 years of futures for young people

This Report has been a long time coming. Since we have not done a report like this before, it's really a history of Teach the Future, even from before it was formally named and founded on January 15, 2015.

We were planting the seeds at the University of Houston even before that by preparing graduate students for careers as professionals in this new field. So we have been at this for quite some time.

As a result, the report is mostly an historical document that shares the many ways that we have brought futures literacy to young people, both in and out of school. The accomplishments include teacher workshops, summer camps, magazine and journal articles, conference presentations and webinars, an awards competition, and materials for teaching about the future in school. We have worked with global NGOs, schools and school districts, colleges and universities, state and national agencies, and museums and libraries. In the process, we have also built a network of Hubs that promotes the mission in more than 30 countries around the world.



Of course, the future is before us, and we include our future in the report as well. Our vision and aspiration is that every young person has the ability to navigate an uncertain future and the creativity and agency to identify and work for their preferred future. We are releasing instructional videos as easier ways to bring futures to the classroom. We will establish communities of practice for schools and teachers who have already adopted futures as part of their curriculum. And we will engage in more explicit revenue streams so we can grow and continue to make our contribution in the growing ecosystem of organizations that are promoting futures literacy in education.

Quite a list of accomplishments and aspirations for a small, dedicated group working with little funding. But, as Margaret Mead said:

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed individuals can change the world. In fact, it's the only thing that ever has”.

We have not changed the world (yet), but we have introduced a new and useful approach to the future for hundreds, if not thousands of young people.



This report is a product of this small, dedicated team, most of whom are volunteers:

- Lourdes Rodriguez, Director of the Hubs Network and organizational relations
- Lisa Giuliani, Director of the Young Voices Network and youth programming
- Rosa Alegria, Coordinator of the most successful Hub in Brazil
- Pamela Biery, Communications Manager
- Amna Habiba, Director of Technology and YVN
- Alethia Montero, Coordinator of the Hub in Mexico

They have followed in the footsteps of the original Core Team that included Erica Bol (Netherlands), Els Dragt (Netherlands), Janine Nel (South Africa) and Willem Overbosch (Australia), also described in the report.

If life has meaning, it is captured in what I call legacy, the positive, lasting change that a group or a generation leaves for future groups and generations. The legacy of Teach the Future, at least so far, has been to put futures literacy onto the global agenda for education . We are not there yet, by any means, but at least we have started.

**Peter Bishop**

Sacramento CA  
January 15, 2024

Prepare students for tomorrow  
Teach the future today!

**And Donate**  
**to Teach the Future!**



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# Executive Summary

## 10 years of futures for young people

Teach the Future is a global movement to introduce young people to futures literacy, both in and out of school. Our vision is that every young person can navigate the uncertain future and has the agency to create and work for their preferred future. In order to move toward that vision, Teach the Future advocates for including futures literacy in the school curriculum and offers training and materials for doing that.

Teach the Future is staffed by a small group of volunteers and is supported by colleagues in over 30 countries. It was officially incorporated in January 2015, 18 months after Peter Bishop retired from directing the Master's degree in Foresight at the University of Houston.

Since and even before then, Teach the Future has accomplished:

2009	Assisted the Mendoza College of Business at the University of Notre Dame to introduce a course in <u>Foresight</u> for 600 Juniors in the College.
2010 - 2011	Began workshops in the Houston area on teaching the future.
2010	Conducted a week-long summer camp for middle school students at the University of Houston.
2011	Took that workshop to the International Competition of the Future Problem Solving Program in La Crosse, Wisconsin.
2014	Taught the first 3-day Foresight Workshop at the Conference Board of Canada in Ottawa which ran until 2022.
2015	Incorporated as a U.S. non-profit organization and receives over \$16,000 from 80 donors to fund the Library and the Futures Thinking Playbook.

2016	Built the <u>Teach the Future Library</u> with over 60 activities, syllabi and other resources to teach futures literacy, available free of charge, resulting in more than 2,000 products downloaded.
2017	Published the <u>Futures Thinking Playbook</u> and conducted two summer camps and a number of teacher workshops using the Playbook.
2019	Redesigned the Library to be more user-friendly.
2020	Integrated IT around Google Workspace and the Wix website platform.
2021	Launched World Futures Day – Young Voices (WFD-YV) on March 1 and Next Generational Foresight Practitioners – Young Voices (NGFP-YV) competition with the School of International Futures in the summer.
2023	Held discussions for WFD-YV in all 24 time zones for the first time, and received over 100 projects for the NGFP-YV competition, four times more than any previous year.

Beginning in 2024, Teach the Future intends to...

- Launch 10 instructional videos so teachers can introduce futures literacy in their classes easily and effectively and produce additional videos for teachers and students.
- Add to the library of resources and organize the video collection for easier use.
- Build an active CRM database and survey members on their use of Teach the Future materials and services.
- Implement multiple fundraising campaigns to eventually create a financially sustainable organization.

# A History of the Future

Teach the Future is part of a long-running movement to develop an academic discipline and a professional practice dealing with the future. Teach the Future's role in that movement is to introduce futures literacy to young people, both in and out of school.

## The eras of thinking about the future

While people have been interested in the future for centuries, they did not think of it as we do today. In fact, the concept of change resulting in a different future didn't even exist before the industrial revolution. The literate elite in ancient societies knew enough history to know that their world was not the same as those that had lived centuries before, but the pace of change was so slow that it was essentially imperceptible. Indeed, all lived and died in essentially the same static world they were born into.

The industrial revolution changed that when people realized that the world was changing from one generation to the next. Their lives were different from their parents and grandparents and, by extrapolation, their children's and grandchildren's lives would be different from theirs. That insight opened the first era of seeing a different future compared to the past and the present. Sebastien Mercier put his utopia in the future for the first time (L'An 2440) in 1770. Thomas Malthus criticized that view in An Essay on the Principle of Population in 1798. (Optimists and pessimists disagreed even back then!) Jules Verne, H. G. Wells and others wrote stories of advanced technology throughout the 19th century.





That era gave way to the second era of future thinking in the early 20th century when the tools of mathematical extrapolation and planning were applied to the future. Harvard published the first model of strategic planning in the early 1920s, and William Ogburn published the first collection of trends in the early 1930s. Mathematical modeling and strategic planning have become the default methods for forecasting and planning the future ever since.

Those methods are still dominant today, even in the face of a more turbulent and uncertain future. As a result, a new way of thinking about the future emerged after World War II that took the inherent uncertainty of the future seriously. In forecasting, the products of extrapolation and modeling were fine, but the single, predicted future is now considered only one future in a set of futures described in separate scenarios. In planning, linear thinking applied to strategic planning was also useful, but the increasing risk of events disrupting those plans called for a more organic, flexible and resilient method. Those insights gave rise to the new discipline of futures studies in the 1960s and 1970s, and its practical application known as foresight or strategic foresight in the 1990s and 2000s.

That is when Teach the Future enters to teach young people the same thing, namely to see the future as a set of alternatives rather than as one official, predictable future and to take the responsibility to influence the future by using their creativity and energy rather than simply accepting the inevitable future.



## The future in school

Students do learn the 20th century approach to the future in school today despite having no formal instruction about the future. They learn that the future is predictable in science class; they get an A when their experiments turn out as the textbook predicted.

They learn that historic events are caused by previous events in history class; they get an A when they learn that sequence and repeat it on tests. But they also learn in their college social science classes that no one agrees about what the future will be or how it will come about, that everyone's view of the future is conditioned by their assumptions based on their demography, their nationality, their culture and their social class.

So they are confused about the future in school. Is it predictable or not? Can we influence it or is it already determined? And they are still confused when some of them become teachers.

The result is that they don't even bring up the future in their classes because they do not know what to say. So the young adults of each generation enter a world of rapid change and massive transformation without an understanding of what is going on or what to do about it. The parlous state of society today is the result of not teaching how to understand and influence change and the future.

Our vision is that schools include the future as a regular part of their curriculum, just as they include the past.

Students learn that there are many plausible futures, not just one. They understand that some are more likely than others, rather than one being right and the rest wrong.

They learn that some futures are more preferable, and some are less, but all have some value. They learn that they can influence which future becomes the present, if only in small ways. They learn that influencing change is an uncertain, organic process that requires awareness, continuous learning and redirection, and almost always in collaboration with others.

Teach the Future and its volunteers around the world believe that the world would be a better place today if the current generation of adults had learned these lessons while they were in school. But that's the past. We must begin to embed these lessons into the schools today so that the next generation can understand and influence the future in productive and useful ways when they are adults running the world.



# The History of Teach the Future

## The Texas Association of Gifted and Talented (TAGT), 2010–2011

Texas is not known for regulations, but one regulation they have is that every teacher of gifted and talented (GT) students is required to take six hours of training in GT education. Peter Bishop and Kay Strong, who were then at the University of Houston, applied for and received certification that their one-day course on Teaching the Future would count for that regulation. They recruited secondary school teachers from local school districts and, in the end, taught classes to a total of more than 200 teachers.

Those workshops were the beginning of Teach the Future even before the organization was founded. Teach the Future continued to offer these workshops in the Houston and Dallas areas after the organization was founded in 2015.

## Summer Camps 2010, 2011, 2017

Teach the Future focuses on including futures literacy in the school curriculum because that is where most young people spend most of their time. But the curriculum is already crowded, and educators are reluctant to add more.

Another way to introduce futures literacy is to attract young people outside of school, after hours or in the summer. We chose summer, and ran three years of summer camps –



2010 – The UH Summer Futurists Camp was a one-week, half-day experience for middle school students. The focus of the camp was to facilitate the development of the young person’s preferred future for Houston in 2025-2030.

The camp had two primary objectives: provide children in Houston a first exposure to “future-based” literacy and a public forum for presenting their visions. In other words, “What do you believe the future of Houston could be in 2025-2030?”

The camp proceeded through three phase –

1. Assessing the students’ images of the future and learning how to use futures literacy
2. Building a vision for the future of Houston in 2025-2030
3. Expressing that vision in a public showcase to the other students and to the parents who attended.

In the end, 25 students enrolled and 24 of them attended every session.



2011 – Peter Bishop and Kay Strong took the summer camp program to the annual International Competition of the Future Problem Solving Program, held that year at the University of Wisconsin campus in La Crosse WI. Future Problem Solving is an international competition in which students receive a description of a plausible future from which they identify challenges in that future, pick one to work on, brainstorm strategies for

solving or mitigating that challenge and ultimately recommending a strategy based on criteria that they select.

The program attracted 18 high school competitors and some of their coaches for the two and a half-day program.

2017 – Teach the Future was established in 2015, and Katie King and Julia Rose West designed and wrote the Futures Thinking Playbook in 2016. Two school districts agreed to host summer camps for their teachers and students the next summer in 2017 using the Playbook as the curriculum.

- Spring Branch ISD recruited two teachers who selected a group of rising 6th graders to attend the camp.
- Fort Bend ISD opened registrations to all middle school students in the district. The camp attracted 80 students in the first four hours of enrollment, and five teachers were trained in using the Playbook and ran sessions of approximately 25 students each.



# Major Accomplishments

## BOOKS

The fundamental objective was to have teachers introduce the future in their classes. That could be done by discussing the future in the other subjects or teaching a course devoted to futures thinking. In either case, the first programs were designed to collect and develop materials that teachers could use in teaching about the future.



## The Teach the Future Library

The first materials were contained in the Teach the Future Library, a set of more than 60 teaching materials divided into the following categories –

- Teach the Future materials (produced by Teach the Future)
- Methods and Tools
- Games and Simulations
- Links to other collections of materials
- Additional resources, like books, articles, etc.

The materials were also tagged with type (activity, assessment, book, etc.), subject, grade level, and a few other languages. More than 1,000 users set up a free account and downloaded over 2,000 items since 2017. The most popular are

- The [Supplementary Materials](#) for the Futures Thinking Playbook
- The [Shaping Our Future](#) high school workshop by graduates of the Univ of Houston
- [An Introduction to Strategic Foresight](#), an e-book on the field from Freija van Duijne, former President of the Dutch Futures Society
- [Game the Future](#), activities to explore the future from CiRLE Labs
- The [Personal Futures Workbook](#), from Verne Wheelwright
- The [College Foundation Set](#), one of three Foundation sets of a half-dozen activities for different levels of education



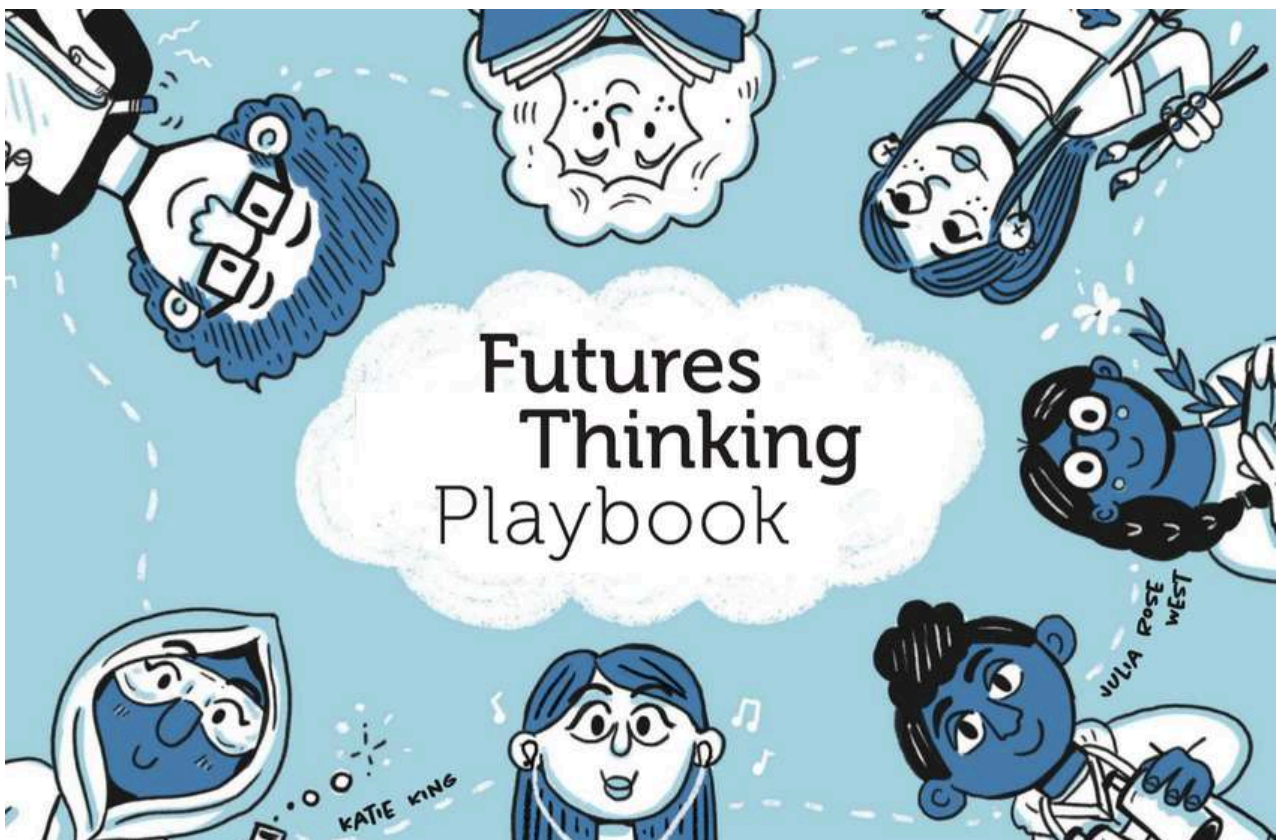
The Library has since migrated to the integrated Wix platform in two parts – [actual materials](#) and [links to other materials](#). The new Library accounts for another 550 downloads since 2022 resulting in a total of almost 3,000 items downloaded altogether.

A goal over the next few years is to find out what those teachers have done with these materials through some type of survey.



## The Futures Thinking Playbook

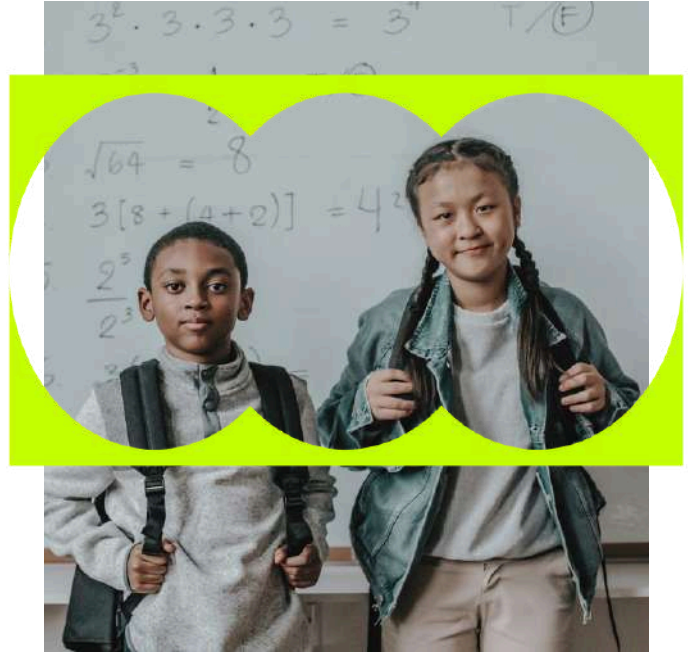
The single most important product in the first 10 years of Teach the Future was the Futures Thinking Playbook. The Playbook was inspired by another playbook published in 2016, the Wagilabs Playbook: An Idea Incubator for Kids' Ideas That Will Change the World! Katie King, now a foresight professional at KnowledgeWorks, an educational think tank and consultancy, took on the task of writing the Playbook.



The book is based on the well-known Framework Foresight process developed at the University of Houston. Given her experience as a middle school teacher in English Language Arts, she wrote it as a middle school version of that process.

Julia Rose West, a designer with foresight experience from the California College of the Arts, designed the book. They were assisted by Sandy Damashek, an experienced consultant on children's media, and a talented graphic artist who designed the characters in the book.

The book introduces futures literacy in the form of “plays” that lead students from reflecting on their perspectives about the future, picking a topic to work on, looking for trends and weak signals about the future of that topic and developing two scenarios about its future – the Expected Future (where the future is headed) and an Alternative Future (what might happen instead). The book ends by adding the Preferable Future to the first two futures and asking students to write a story about how they create change in that domain.



The book uses futures literacy skills even though it is mostly activities with little formal instruction. Though not explicitly designed to include skills other than futures literacy, the book also includes general social and cognitive skills required to learn about the future because there are no facts to be memorized and reproduced on tests in futures studies.

As a result, the Playbook has been translated into 10 languages and sold over 800 copies since 2017.

As before, our goal is to find out where and how teachers are using the Playbook in class.

## Playbook Skills

### **Futures Thinking Playbook**

### **21st century skills**

Build a team	➤	Collaboration
Select a topic	➤	Decision-making
Gather information	➤	Research
Identify the expected future	➤	Cause-effect reasoning
Challenge assumptions	➤	Critical thinking
Develop alternative futures	➤	Contingency thinking
Write scenarios	➤	Creativity
Present scenarios	➤	Communication
Reflect on the process	➤	Reflection

## Shaping Our Future

In 2001, long before Teach the Future, Sandra Burchsted, a former high school teacher and UH graduate, and Jack Byrne, now a professor at Middlebury College, developed a Facilitator's Guide for a high school workshop called Shaping Our Future based on the UH Framework Foresight process. They worked with Christian Crews, also a UH graduate and a program director at the Gateway Foundation, to fund the development and a video of the pilot.



The basic process in Shaping Our Future is the same as the Playbook, but it is intended for somewhat older students. It is available free of charge as part of a Creative Commons BY-NC-SA license.

These products teach young people how to think about the future through engaging and effective exercises.

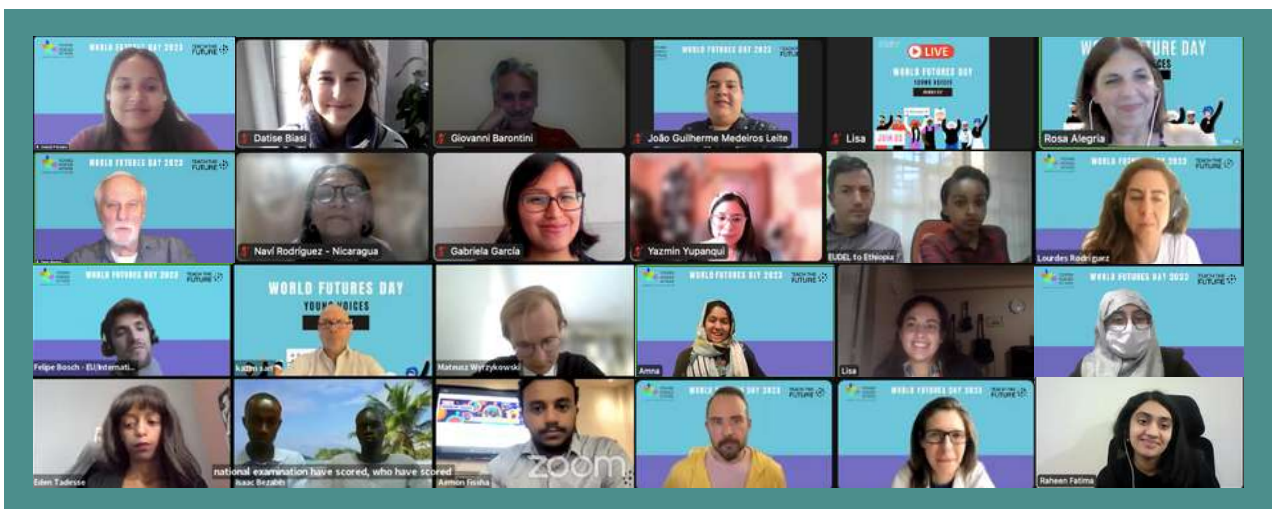
In fact, activities are the only way to teach skills – a little bit of instruction followed by a lot of practice and feedback. That's the way young people learn a sport or a musical instrument. In fact, it's the way we should be teaching all skills to young people while they are still in school. Futures literacy is an excellent way to introduce skills acquisition in a school because the future has no facts and no textbook to memorize.

## YOUTH PROGRAMS

Teach the Future’s mission is to introduce futures literacy to young people, both in and out of school. Unlike the other organizations that do likewise, Teach the Future has uniquely focused on the most difficult job of all, including futures in the school curriculum. Nevertheless, we teach futures wherever we can so we have conducted two flagship programs over the last three years that encourage young people to think about the future.

### World Futures Day – Young Voices

The Millennium Project is a global network of research organizations and individuals interested in the future. In 2014, they began hosting one-hour discussions about the future at Noon in every time zone around the world after Humanity+ launched the Future Day celebration in 2003. Teach the Future created a parallel program, World Future Day – Young Voices, in 2021 to involve young people in similar discussions about the future.



Teach the Future has involved young people in online webinars and discussions for the Association of Professional Futurists, the Asia-Pacific Futures Network, and the Smithsonian Institution, to name just a few. But we noticed that young people typically deferred to the older members in these discussions. As a result, we recruited two facilitators for each time zone, of which one was 25 years old or younger. The outcome was much more participation by the younger participants who showed up for each discussion.

Another change made in 2023 to accommodate young people was to schedule the discussions in each time zone at 1700 (5 pm) so young people could participate after school. Again the result was terrific. We had lively discussions in every time zone for the first time that involved some 170 people of all ages.

Finally, World Futures Day - Young Voices was just recognized by the Association of Professional Futurists as a 2023 Most Significant Futures Work for including young people in discussions about the future.

1. Download the [full report](#) for more information.
2. See the recap slides [here](#).
3. View the recap video [here](#).



And we plan for another innovation in 2024. We will recruit sponsors for each time zone from individuals or organizations who support Teach the Future with financial or in-kind contributions. Each sponsor will work with Teach the Future to provide or recruit the facilitators, set the topic for discussion if they want to, and promote their involvement in their own network. In this way, we can also highlight those organizations who are working with us to include young voices in discussions about the future.

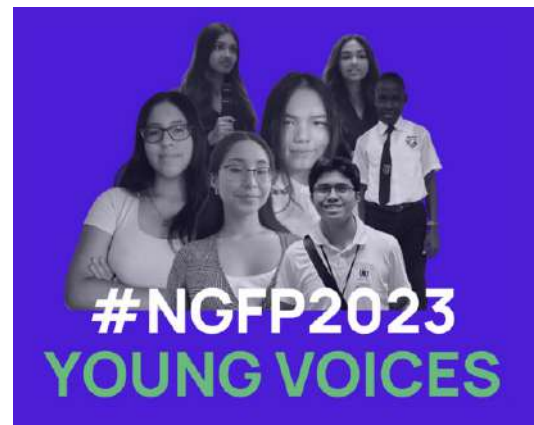
## Next Generation Foresight Practitioners – Young Voices

The School of International Futures (SOIF) is a UK organization that, among other things, advocates for and involves young people in policy development across the world. They instituted the Next Generational Foresight Practitioners awards in 2018 to recognize young people creating positive change around the world.

The awards were limited to foresight change agents 35 years old or younger or those who had been in the foresight field for less than 10 years. In fact, Erica Bol, the Deputy Executive Director of Teach the Future at the time, won the first Educator’s Award that year for her work with Teach the Future. The NGFP Network now numbers more than 600 young people creating change around the world.

SOIF approached Teach the Future in 2021 to develop a parallel Young Voices award for young people 12 to 17 years old. Teach the Future received about 25 completed applications for that award in 2021 and 2022 and awarded cash prizes to four of those and recognized six others in each of those years.

The visibility of the NGFP-YV awards has grown considerably since then. In 2023, Teach the Future reviewed almost 100 completed applications from a pool of 600 young people who registered to participate. As a result, the Young Voices Network includes more than 100 young members, many of whom have participated in Teach the Future programs over the years. Read the [full report](#) from 2023 for more information.



And innovations abound for the new year. Like WFD-YV, we will institute a program for NGFP-YV in which sponsors can make a financial or in-kind contribution for a specific Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) they would like to highlight. Applicants will be able to specify which SDG their project is about and compete for cash or other benefits associated with that SDG. The sponsor, of course, will be recognized in all NGFP-YV promotions and participate as judges in their category if they choose.

## Young Voices Network

WFD-YV and NGFP-YV are the flagship programs we do with youth, but that's not all. Lisa Giuliani and Amna Habiba have been working to create a network of young people, 12-18 years old, for a number of years now. The network currently includes 114 members across 43 countries. They involved young people in the following programs just in 2023 in addition to the two flagships –

- Online presentation in Spanish on strategic foresight at the Futures Festival in Medellin, Colombia.
- “The Power of Youth Foresight and How to Harness It,” a webinar sponsored by the APF Friends of Foresight and including members of the Young Voices Network.
- The Future Leaders Program, a series of webinars and follow-up activities open to members of the network in order to learn to create change.
- Online panels of YVN members at the 50th Anniversary World Futures Studies Federation (WFSF) Conference.



See the [Annual YVN Report](#) for details on all these events.



## FUTURES SCHOOLS

Teach the Future speaks with several teachers and schools just about every week of the year. All are interested in including futures in the classes and schools, but very few have been able to actually make it to the finish line.

Teach the Future is honoring those schools who have by creating a designation and perhaps even an accreditation for those schools. These are the ones that are actually reaching young people where they live and work, in school.

### Summit Micro School, Toronto

The Summit Micro School is a small elementary school in Toronto, Canada, founded and run by Amanda Dervaitis, a leader in Ontario's private school community. Summit Micro employs a unique pedagogy called Project Based Learning (PBL).



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Rather than divide the learning into six or seven classes each day, they divide the year into six projects, each one a deep dive into the world. Each project includes the traditional subjects, such as the history, mathematics, science and literature of that subject.

Introducing a new subject in any school is never easy, but Ms. Dervaitis told Teach the Future, "We introduce the future in every project, and students simply expect to cover the future of that project."

## GEN Koleji, Istanbul

GEN Koleji is a private network of three K-12 schools in Istanbul, Turkiye. Board members of the Turkish Futurists Association partnered with the school to offer futures classes to 5th and 9th grade students in 2020.

Peter Bishop trained the first cohort of teachers who have since gone on to train more of their fellow teachers so they can teach futures in 6th and 10th grade classes as well. To date, more than 300 students have taken these classes, by far the most in the world.



A survey at the end of the first semester in 2021 found that students really liked the class, but the teachers were uncomfortable with their teaching.

Dr. Bishop takes responsibility for their discomfort because he did not warn them during the training that they could not teach futures the way they taught other subjects.

History teachers can tell students what happened in the past; math teachers can tell them how to solve a problem; science teachers can tell them how chemicals bond together.

Futures teachers can't tell them what will happen in the future because they do not know. No one knows. So the appropriate answer to the question, "What is going to happen?" is to say, "I don't know, but let's see if we can figure it out together." That's teaching a skill, not content, one of the recurring themes of the training that Teach the Future offers.

## St. Peter's School, Barcelona



St. Peter's is a private International Baccalaureate (IB) school in Barcelona, Spain. St. Peter's had already chosen to include futures in their curriculum as a way to differentiate their curriculum before contacting Teach the Future. They asked Noelle Rocés, a business designer and innovator, to lead the initiative. She started by appearing in classes and demonstrating futures literacy and techniques to the teachers and students throughout the year.

She has now launched her own course on futures literacy in the 2023 Fall semester. And that class is now shortlisted for the Curriculum Innovation of the Year by the TES Institute.

## Baldwin Union Free School District, Baldwin NY

The school district in Baldwin is known for its innovation. Dr. Shari L. Camhi, the District Superintendent, is also the 2022-2023 President of the American Association of School Superintendents.

Dr. Camhi asked high school teachers to include a futures unit in a senior-level capstone course to meet the requirements of the New York State Learning Standard called the Civic Readiness Capstone Project. Peter Bishop briefed the teachers on the Teach the Future approach, and they took it from there.

## Estilo de Aprender School, Sao Paulo

The Estilo de Aprender School is a private school in Sao Paulo, Brazil that has been teaching futures to children 6 to 10 years old for the last year and a half. Marcelle Berton, founder of the school, explains: "In the same way that we work on the SDGs, climate emergency, identity issues, we understand that presenting the future to our children would be one more way of inserting them into the current context. Understanding that it is possible to anticipate and influence the future brings security and hope."

Aline Alegria, the lead teacher for futures in the school, said, "One of my missions is to introduce children to new ways of relating to the future, revealing to them the power of imagination in building the future(s) they desire and how they can give meaning to the present."

Read more about these schools on the Teach the Future [website](#) by putting the name of the school in the search bar at the top of the landing page.



## HUBS

The concept of a Hub appeared almost accidentally when it was mentioned in the quarterly newsletter. People immediately contacted Teach the Future saying, “How can we be a Hub?”

A Hub is an individual or a group in a country that actively promotes the vision and mission of Teach the Future. They are diverse so that each is unique. No pattern emerges except that all contain dedicated volunteers who believe that young people should be explicitly involved in learning about and influencing their future.

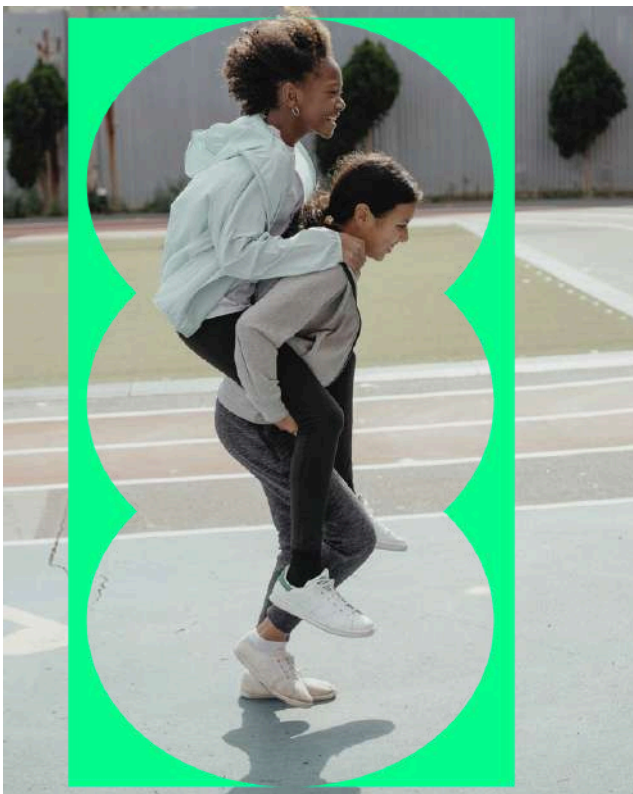
This map shows the distribution of established and developing Hubs around the world.

### HUBS – Who & Where?



For now, we acknowledge their many accomplishments that supplement what the Global Office and the Core Team have done.

- Not only does Brazil have the largest Hub, it is also the one with the most reach including more than 1,000 teachers in their courses, seminars and public presentations. Brazil also contains one of the Futures Schools listed above, the Estilo de Aprender School in Sao Paulo.
- The Belgian Hub has created a Museum of Futures on Minecraft, and they hosted a two and a half day Futures Festival in October 2023 involving a major public presentation and foresight workshops for civil servants, educational administrators and teachers.
- The Hub in Peru brought futures literacy to young people in two indigenous communities in the Amazon.
- The Hub in Romania produced two reports on the future – one is a set of scenarios on misinformation and discrimination and the other is a toolkit designed to teach the five dimensions of the Futures Consciousness Scale.



- The Hub in the Netherlands runs an annual event called Kindertrendrede (Children's Trend Speech) in which young people tell city officials about trends that they believe the city should be paying attention to.
- The Turkish Hub also contains a Futures School that has introduced futures literacy to over 500 students in the GEN Koleji secondary school in Istanbul.
- The Spanish Hub held a meeting on the Futures of Education at St. Peter's School in Barcelona.

## International Partners

In addition to the Hubs which are directly connected, Teach the Future maintains strong relations with and makes significant contributions to the work of other organizations with a similar mission.

- UNESCO has created the Futures Literacy Program to “help people understand why and how we use the future to prepare, plan, and interact with the complexity and novelty of our societies.” Teach the Future participated in Futures Literacy Summits in 2019 and 2020, in the UNESCO World Future Day in 2022 and 2023, and in UNESCO-PMU Symposium 2023: Towards Evaluation Framework for Future Literacy and Foresight.



- The United Nations has been incorporating futures literacy in its work with young people. UN SDG: Learn gathers educational material about the future and other subjects. The Futures Thinking Playbook is now included in that list. Teach the Future also participated in the UN SDG:Learn Retreat in 2023 that gathered material for the upcoming Summit of the Future in September 2024.

- Teach the Future participated in the Dubai Future Forum in 2022 where Peter Bishop shared the rationale for teaching the future in school in the final session, and many Core Team and Hub Coordinator attended the 2023 Forum.
- Teach the Future appeared in three sessions at the XXV Anniversary Conference for the World Futures Studies Federation: an in person speech by Rosa Alegria called From Fear to Hope presenting the contribution of futures thinking to expand imagination in the classrooms, and two online panels: one featured winners of the Next Generation Foresight Practitioner - Young Voices Award, and the second panel was an intergenerational exchange on how different generations approach the future.



- Teach the Future also collaborated with researchers at the University of Turku to adapt their Futures Consciousness Scale (FCS) for young people. The FCS-Young Voices version will be released in early 2024.



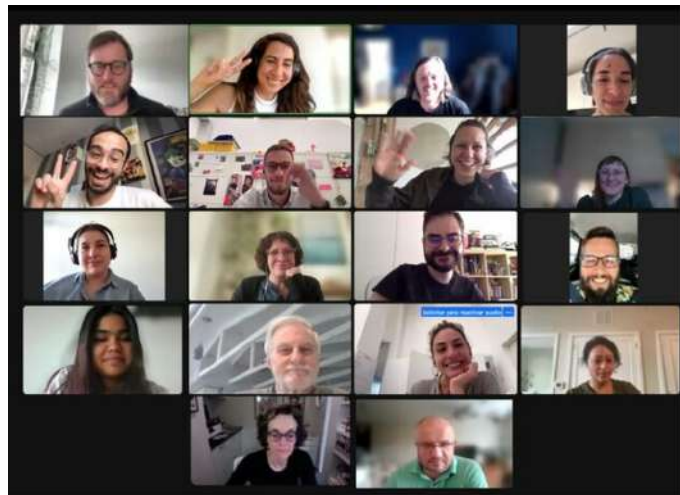
- Teach the Future collaborated with the European Commission to develop a lesson on the [Future Forward](#) TED-Ed project that included curated videos and developed content for a lesson called "Futures Mindset". A Teach the Future [video](#) and a [link](#) to the FCS-YV was included in the platform.



**What will the future look like?**

What role will you play in shaping the future? While we don't yet know what the future will look like, we can begin imagining the possibilities today to ensure we make better choices for tomorrow. In each of our lessons, you will explore how to see the world in a future and discover how each one of us has the capacity to create a more positive future. Complete any 10 lessons to earn a certificate. Feed your curiosity and your hope, and prepare yourself to make a difference.

Teachers, if you'd like to engage more deeply and gain an understanding of your students' "futures consciousness", start by taking this [test](#).



- The [Situation Lab](#) presented a [webinar](#) sponsored by Teach the Future on the [Futures Bazaar](#), their new group activity for creating images of the future out of found materials that teachers can adapt for classroom use.

See the [full report](#) for more information about all these accomplishments and relationships.

# The Organization of Teach the Future

Teach the Future is organized in three layers: the Board of Directors, the Core Team, and the Hubs, all mostly volunteers working for the same mission.

## Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is the governing authority for Teach the Future. It changed once in January of 2023 when some longtime members withdrew, and new members came on in orderly transition.

Previous and Current Board members in alphabetical order:

Name	Position
Alethia Montero Baena	Lecturer at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM)Coordinator of the Mexican Hub
Bryan Alexander*	Senior Scholar specializing in the future of higher education at Georgetown University
David Staley	Higher education philosopher, strategist and designer at The Ohio State University
Erica Bol	Conscious Futures Designer at the European Commission
James Lee	Founder of StratFi, a wealth management firmGraduate of the UH program in Foresight
Janine Nel	Futures Strategist, Branding and Communications
John Erickson*	Owner of I. C. System
Kay E. Strong*	Retired Professor of Economics at Baldwin Wallace University

\* Current Board member

Name	Position
Mike Courtney*	Researcher and Futurist at Aperio Insights, a market research firm
Pero Micic	CEO of FutureManagementGroup AG Professor of Foresight and Strategy at Steinbeis Hochschule
Rachel Francine	CEO of Singfit, a musical technology company Graduate of the UH program in Foresight
Roger Spitz*	Chair of the Disruptive Futures Institute, President of Techistential (Climate & Foresight Strategy)
Rosa Alegria	Professional Futurist and Foresight Consultant, Coordinator of the Brazilian Hub
Sam Miller	Teaching Professor at the University of Notre Dame
Stephen Dupont*	VP, Public Relations at Pocket Hercules
Zabrina Epps*	Leadership Development Coach & Advisor

\* Current Board member

## Core Team

As the name implies, the Core Team is the heart of Teach the Future. They are mostly volunteers who, along with the Hubs, are responsible for most of the accomplishments described above.



### **Peter Bishop**

Founder and Executive Director of Teach the Future who led the University of Houston Master's degree in Foresight for 30 years and co-wrote the textbook Teaching about the Future.



### **Lourdes Rodriguez**

Global Hub Coordinator who also maintains relations with other global organizations and manages the Hub in Spain.



### **Lisa Giuliani**

Global Youth Director who connects youth with internship and network opportunities using her experience in educational management, organizational development and building partnerships.



### **Rosa Alegria**

Coordinator of the Brazilian Hub and contributor to the marketing and fundraising operation.



### **Pamela Biery**

Global Social Media Manager for Teach the Future.



**Willem Overbosch**

Business Development explorer for Teach the Future with over 20 years' experience in entrepreneurship and business development and who writes the quarterly Teach the Future newsletter.



**Amna Habiba**

Youth Innovation & Technology Director who manages IT for Teach the Future and works with the Young Voices Network. Amna's project for the empowerment of women in Pakistan was recognized in the 2021 NGFP-YV competition.



**Alethia Montero Baena**

Lecturer at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), a member of the Board for the World Futures Studies Federation and the Coordinator of the Mexican Hub.

We also recognize former Core Team members who were so important in the early years --

<p><u>Katie King</u></p>	<p>A key member of Teach the Future before the Core Team was formed. Katie built the Teach the Future Library and the first usable website, and she wrote the Futures Thinking Playbook. Katie is now a foresight professional at KnowledgeWorks, an educational research organization.</p>
<p><u>Erica Bol</u></p>	<p>Former Deputy Director of Teach the Future and manager of the first Hub in the Netherlands. Erica is now promoting foresight education at the European Commission.</p>

<p><u>Els Dragt</u></p>	<p>Writer of the Teach the Future Newsletter and manager of the Dutch Hub for many years. Els is now a trend explorer and trainer at Studio Elsewhere in the Netherlands.</p>
<p><u>Janine Nel</u></p>	<p>Founder and manager of the South African Hub. Janine brought her business background to Teach the Future to help initiate marketing operations. Janine is now our representative in Africa.</p>

# Communications

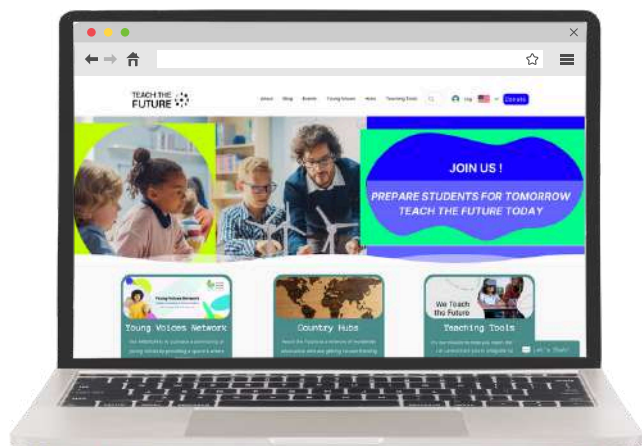
Teach the Future communicates with the outside world through the website and on social media, as most organizations do.

## Teach the Future Website

Teach the Future has had a number of websites over the last 10 years, but in 2020, we integrated all IT onto Google Workspace for internal communication and the Wix platform for the website. The move to Wix allowed Teach the Future to consolidate its Blogs, Events, Hubs, and Teaching Tools in one platform. Wix also has an e-commerce function which could be used to sell videos and other products in 2024.

The website consists of the following sections -

- About – the Team, the Partners, and Contact Us
- Blog, including newsletters
- Events
- Young Voices
- Hubs
- Teaching Tools



The website analytics are good, though hard to compare over time because 2023 was the first year that website contained all the material. Nevertheless, the highlights were –

- 17,500 unique visitors and 28,500 sessions, both up more than 60% from 2022.
- Peak traffic on the website during the lead-up to WFD-YV (February) and the announcement of NGFP-YV winners (September).
- More visitors from the U.S. and Brazil than from other countries, and the highest rate per population from Spain and Brazil.
- Most visited pages WFS-YV and NGFP-YV followed by Blogs and Resources.
- Most sessions from Direct links (57%) followed by Search (29%), Social media (12%), and Email/Newsletter (3%).

Read the full website [report](#).

Work will continue to improve the website performance.

## Social media

Teach the Future maintains social media accounts on four platforms. As the table shows, most accounts have shown a marked increase over the year.

Platform	Username	Followers Reach	Engagement
LinkedIn	@teachthefuture	6,449, +33%	8,600
Instagram	@teachfutures	2,400, +15% 7,388, +136%	5,900
Facebook	@teachthefuture	2,200, +10% 6,916, +184%	578
Twitter	@teachfutures	3,048, +20%	287
YouTube	@teachthefuture	520, +20%	5,100

Other than direct communication, the main purpose of social media here is to drive traffic to the website. These six blogs received the most traffic:

Title	Views
IMAGINE: the scenario game that helps kids think about the future	710
Libraries Importance to Future Studies	656
Unpacking the Futures Thinking Playbook	492
What's on Your Bookshelf? 9 Future & Foresight Books	375
St. Peters in Barcelona Adds Futures literacy in their school curriculum	335
Increase Your Futures Thinking Impact: Register & Vote SXSW EDU	325

Two of the posts (#1, #3) refer to the Playbook. Two are about engagements with Teach the Future – the Idaho State Library (#2) and St. Peter’s school in Barcelona (#5).

Read the full social media [report](#).



# Finance

Teach the Future is a small NGO, smaller than its global reach would suggest. But it has done what it has done because the small group of dedicated volunteers make more contribution than their modest compensation would suggest.

## Revenue

Beginning with its incorporation in 2015, Teach the Future has earned 75% of its income in teaching classes and other foresight engagements for adults.

The largest client has been the Conference Board of Canada which hosted two to four sessions serving 50-100 mostly civil servants each year beginning in 2014. Peter Bishop also teaches foresight in the California Command College which prepares managers in California law enforcement for executive positions. Since 2015, the average revenue has been \$70K per year with minimums around \$42K (2016 and 2020) and one maximum of \$110K (2017).



While Teach the Future has received some donations over the years, including the Kickstarter campaign in 2016, it has been reluctant to rely on donations as its main source of income. The Conference Board discontinued all regular training programs in 2022 so funding from earned income is less predictable than it has been.

That and the need to step up activities to participate as a full partner in the emerging global ecosystem of foresight education requires Teach the Future to mount a serious fundraising operation in 2024. That began with an appeal from Peter Bishop for end of the year contributions that raised a little over \$1,000.

But that is only the beginning. We plan to solicit sponsors for the two major programs (WFD-YV and NGFP-YV) and for the series of instructional and other videos to be released this Spring.

Even this year, Teach the Future requires significantly more revenue if it is to maintain its record of accomplishments serving young people and their schools.

You may contribute to Teach the Future at any time [here](#). Please help us write the 20-year report with even more accomplishments.

Teach the Future is a U.S. 501(c)3 corporation so donations are tax-deductible in the U.S. Residents from other countries may check with their tax advisors.

## Expenses

Unreimbursed expenses were primarily modest stipends and professional service fees which were about \$30K on average since 2015.

Travel expenses to sites for program delivery plus other expenses also averaged about \$30K, resulting in a net surplus of about \$10K per year which is currently in the bank.



# Conclusion

What else is there to say after all this? You have seen the many accomplishments of the last 15 years. You have met the people who made those accomplishments possible. And you have some idea of where we are headed, at least this year.

Perhaps the best thing to do, here at the end, is to return to the beginning, to the reason that Teach the Future exists in the first place.



The simplest way to express that reason might be what Dean Calvin Cannon said to Peter Bishop during an interview in the Atlanta airport in February 1976, “We teach about the past, don’t we? Why can’t we teach about the future?” Cal had established the first Master’s degree in Studies of the Future at the University of Houston-Clear Lake the year before. All this flows from that act. Thank you, Cal.

A more contextual reason is that the world has changed since public education was established in the 19th century. Really? Who doesn’t know that? Well, by the looks of it, much of education does not, yet. A famous quip is that John Dewey, an educational visionary in the early 20th century, could walk into a typical classroom a hundred years later and know exactly what was going on. Could you say the same about a farm, a factory, or an office today?

Among the many things that have changed is that we live in a super-abundant and easily accessible information environment -- first with broadcast radio and television, and then with computers, and now with the Internet. You can ask any factual question and get an answer in seconds from the device you are holding in your hand. Then why is education still focused on pounding those facts into kids’ heads? Yes, one has to know something to be able to do anything, but people used to have to carry all that information around in their heads, not in their pockets.

Therefore, the appropriate mission for education today is not to teach the information, but to teach what to do with the information – gathering, understanding, analyzing, synthesizing, applying, communicating, to name just a few. We must be teaching what to do with what we know rather than merely what to know.

Futures literacy is one of those skills. Skills should be paramount in every subject – mathematical thinking, historical thinking, scientific thinking, and critical and creative thinking. But futures literacy is a special skill because there are no future facts.

Every other subject has a textbook that contains the facts. Many teachers, though thankfully not all, base their classes on the text. Futures has no text to fall back on. So teachers are forced to teach skills if they teach about the future at all.

For that reason, we have found that teachers initially don't like to teach futures because they can't answer the question, "What do you think is going to happen?" They are used to teaching what has happened in history or what is happening in science, but they can't teach that way in futures studies.

But they soon learn that teaching is a partnership with their students who are also eager and engaged more than they have ever been. The correct answer to the question is, "I don't know. Let's try to figure it out together." Or "What do you think is going to happen?" Or "What could happen instead?" Or finally, "What do you want to happen?" There is no teacher in the world that can't engage in that discussion once they get over the need or once they are relieved of the burden to "cover the material."

In that sense, Teach the Future is in the vanguard for a wholesale transformation of education, one that should have happened at least 30, if not 50 years ago. I believe we can speak for those who have joined us in this journey. We are privileged to be part of this movement, shifting from facts to skills, particularly about the future. We will not see ultimate success, but this report details some of the things we have done to advance it.