

THE LONG NOW *of education* NOW

DET 02025



THE RECAP

JULY 31-AUGUST 1, 2025

Convened by REDI Lab - Colorado Academy
and
Henry Ford Learning Institute

OVERVIEW OF GOALS

Building on its 02024 Denver Long Now of Education convening, REDI Lab collaborated with Henry Ford Learning Institute to develop and host a two-day invitation-only convening, appropriately located on the campus of the Henry Ford Museum of American Innovation in Dearborn, Michigan.

The overarching goal of the 02025 Long Now of Education centered on refocusing our attention with a reimagined purpose to drive transformative, not incremental, change in education.

Together, an intentionally diverse group of 17 education leaders put aside titles, paused immediate tasks, and set out to seize the power of the location and each other to develop durable relationships and accomplish 3 major goals together:

- Envision desired futures in education.
- Identify innovative projects to advance toward those futures.
- Nurture this community of practice.



OVERVIEW OF AGENDA

Day 1 9:30am-4:14pm	
9:30 - 10:10	Welcome, Warm Up, Connections, Future Orientation
10:10 - 10:40	Getting to Today - Tracking Path and Progress
10:40 - 11:45	Past Forward Storytelling (Museum floor)
11:45 - 12:15	Storytelling Debrief and Reflection
12:15 - 1:45	Walk + Talk, Lunch in the Village
1:45 - 3:30	Ideation for Possible Futures (Futures Cones)
3:30 - 4:00	Analysis, Discussion to Narrow Focus
4:00 - 4:15	Circle Up, Close
5:30 / 7:00	Social Hour + Dinner
Day 2 9:30am-1:30pm	
9:30 - 10:00	Welcome Back, Warm Up
10:00 - 10:45	Drafts of Responsible Innovation Ideas
10:45 - 11:30	Review of Innovation Ideas for Feedback
11:30 - 12:00	Iterate on Working Ideas
12:00- 12:45	Lunch
12:30 - 1:00	Full Group Review of Ideas (World Cafe)
1:00 - 1:15	Looking Ahead to 02026
1:15 - 1:30	Circle Up, Close

THE LONG NOW OF EDUCATION 02025 EXPERIENCE

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Through this collaboration we are choosing something different.

To prepare ourselves to engage in futures thinking more effectively, we introduced several activities that supported critical and creative thinking:

- Futures Four Square
- Past Forward
Storytelling with
artifacts from the
museum
- Signals, drivers and
trends analysis
- Futures Cone ideation
- Quick Dive Design

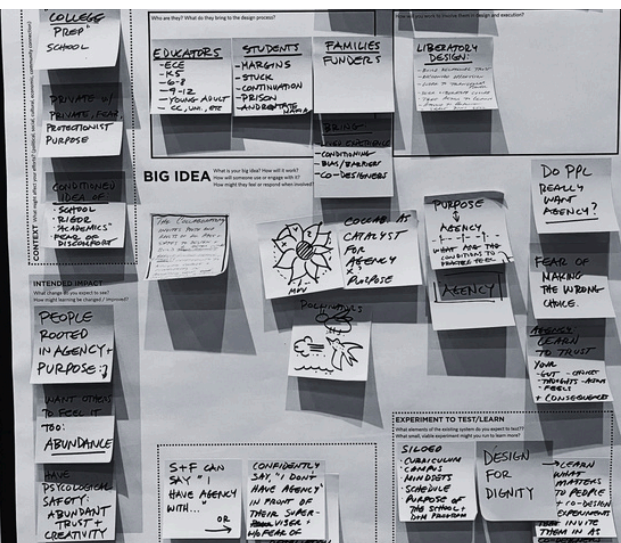
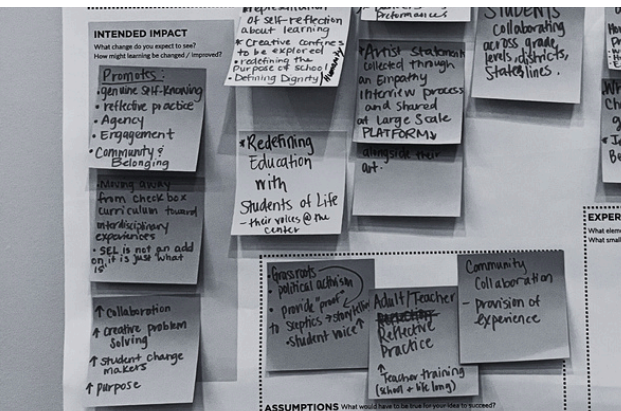
Through these, we generated greater capacity to imagine, then develop scenarios that let go of what we “know” about learning in order to envision meaningful change.



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The optimism coming out of this session is a testament to how successful it was.

EMERGING IDEAS AND SMALL EXPERIMENTS



Through structured discussions, the LN 02025 cohort identified two optimistic scenarios that, if achieved in intentional learning organizations, would ensure meaningful, human-centered learning experiences for young people:

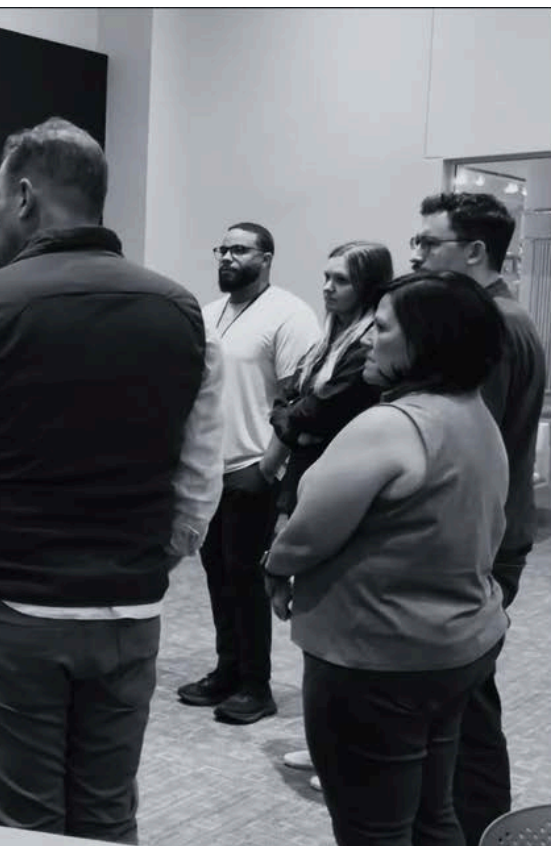
- Dignity is at the center of the overall design and every decision.
- Learning is supported through natural human-development and individual agency.

Individuals then worked through a guided design process to envision, develop, peer-critique and prepare to try out ideas to move learning, teaching and leading toward one of those desired future states.

Some of the ideas under development include:

- Develop Dignity Jenga, an empathy-based, hyperlocal project that engages people around the question “What does dignity mean here, in this place?”
- Design an Empathy Interview-focused professional development for educators, conduct interviews with students, and co-design change
- Adopt a Design for Dignity approach that invites others in as co-designers of meaningful experiments and new approaches

RECOMMENDED AND POSSIBLE NEXT STEPS FOR PARTICIPANTS



Leverage the initial experience to nurture our emerging professional learning community through ongoing communication and idea sharing sessions.

Put your Long Now innovative idea into practice. Modify it based on feedback and share your journey with us and others.

Use or adapt some of our activities to support futures thinking within your organization.

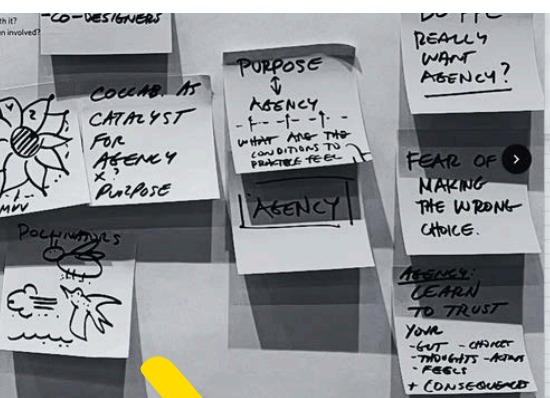
Collaborate with one of us to design and facilitate a futures workshop for your organization or community.

Host a Long Now of Education gathering to help build the larger movement and drive powerful change.

Make your learning and work public - gather feedback to keep your learning and practice human-centered.

Seek out and exchange new resources - books, articles, websites, podcasts, gatherings from which we can all learn.

Nurture your own futures orientation with community-connected practice and continued learning.



The future cannot be controlled or predicted, but it can be envisioned and brought lovingly into being.

Donella Meadows

SUPPLEMENTAL RESOURCES

Expert Source:

The Institute for the Future (iftf.org) provides a wide array of practical tools and resources to support effective futures thinking.

Expert Source:

Envisioning Futures workshop plan developed by Peter Horvath for Miro, provides a structured way to lead groups through envisioning possible scenarios.



Aligned Reading:

Assembling Tomorrow, by Scott Doorley and Carissa Carter, explores how to utilize readily accessible design tools to address current challenges and build toward a better future for all.

Implementation Tools:

All session materials are available on the Long Now of Education website (longnowedu.org).



THE LONG Now of education UW OAK 02026

June 25-26, 2026
Oakland, CA
hosted by



HEAD-ROYCE SCHOOL

ABOUT THE 02025 LONG NOW HOSTS

Tom Thorpe, REDI Lab: Tom brings expertise in design thinking, agency, and futures thinking. With degrees in Anthropology, Religious Studies, and Teaching, Tom's commitment to education and civic responsibility extends through his board service with organizations including the Rose Community Foundation and Facing History and Ourselves, while pursuing passions in the outdoors with his family. An accomplished facilitator who uses storytelling to unlock new possibilities, Tom approaches challenges with optimism and a firm belief that creativity can solve most problems.

Paul Kim, REDI Lab: During his career, Paul has taught everything from kindergarten to college, receiving both teaching and coaching honors along the way. A dozen years ago, Paul used design thinking to transform his teaching practice around inquiry, agency, and creativity and start various education initiatives, including the REDI Lab. Paul currently works as a researcher, writer, facilitator, and coach. In his free time, Paul and his wife, Tami, enjoy exploring cities and entertain at their home in Denver, Colorado.

Deborah Parizek, HFLI: An experienced nonprofit leader and educator, Deborah is known widely for cultivating the conversations, empathy, and capacity critical to addressing complex challenges. She leads HFLI's vision, strategy, and work to advance excellence in education for all by developing dynamic learning environments; new models for teaching, learning and leading, all with HFLI's signature Deeper Learning by Doing(R) engagement framework; and attention to participants' wellness through an intentional focus on Shared Purpose, Shared Work and Shared Joy.



COLLABORATION FOR EDUCATION INNOVATION



HENRY
FORD
LEARNING
INSTITUTE

HFLI is advancing excellence in education for all by developing dynamic learning environments; new models for teaching, learning and leading; and attention to participants' wellness through an intentional focus on Shared Purpose, Shared Work and Shared Joy.

Largely serving educators and nonprofit leaders, our main beneficiaries are students and their communities.

HFLI's core engagement framework, Deeper Learning by Doing®, brings together a culturally responsive and restorative approach; design thinking tools, methods and mindsets; and research-based instructional practices.



At the REDI LAB, students and teachers use a proven inquiry model that builds the confidence needed to think innovatively and design solutions for meaningful community change. In the process, students use design thinking to complete self-chosen projects.

We believe that every person has ideas that add value to the world. We help students refine and share their unique contributions in a space of design, self-discovery, and self-direction. This requires challenging established narratives while exercising the agency to explore human potential.

