Flip the System US

How Teachers Can Transform Education and Save Democracy

An **Eye On Education** Book

Edited by **Michael Soskil**

Flip the System US

This powerful and honest book uncovers how we can flip the system, building a more democratic, equitable, and cohesive society where teacher expertise drives solutions to education challenges. Editor Michael Soskil brings together a team of diverse voices to highlight solutions, spark positive change, and show us the path forward towards a more civil and more peaceful America. In each chapter, inspiring educators describe how we can create lasting and meaningful change by elevating teacher expertise; educating the whole child; increasing teacher morale; and fighting for all of our children to have equitable opportunity and quality schools.

Michael Soskil is an author, an international keynote speaker, and has spent the past 22 years in various teaching roles. He is a Pennsylvania Teacher of the Year, a recipient of the US Presidential Award for Excellence in Math and Science Teaching, and in 2016 was announced as one of the top ten teachers in the world and a finalist for the Global Teacher Prize.

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Flip the System US

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Chapter 1

An American Education System with Integrity

Dennis Shirley

This chapter provides a vision for American education in which evidence, teacher expertise, global context, and knowledge of the unique needs and situations of students fuel the system and coincide with a stronger teaching profession. The author asserts that an education system grounded in these new imperatives of educational change and renewed teacher professionalism is critical to transform education and improve democracy in the United States. By overturning an overly bureaucratic and unresponsive system that limits students' potential and replacing it with a system that is flexible and inclusive of diverse perspectives and opinions, we can shape a future of which we can be proud.

What would it mean to "flip" the American educational system, and to do so in a way that doesn't inadvertently exacerbate previously existing problems, but actually moves us forward in a fundamentally new and better direction? Looking back on decades of reform, it's hard not to conclude that in spite of honorable intentions and herculean efforts, at the ground level of our schools and classrooms many reforms have reinforced a traditional grammar of schooling in which emphasis has been placed upon teacher-centered instruction, rigorously sequenced curricula, and elaborate assessments. The effort to streamline teaching and learning and to guide the whole constellation of potential practices in the direction of tests has had many arguments on its behalf and is perfectly attuned for those who place a premium on accountability.

For those with other ends in mind however—such as the preparation of critical and self-directed thinkers who view the strengthening of democracy as not just one option among many, but as an essential task of public schools in an age of democratic decline—a different kind of education is needed. This would be a system designed from the ground up to prepare students to examine multiple perspectives on complex matters, to provide opportunities for spirited debate in the search of the unencumbered truth, and to be willing to do the hard work of compromise and negotiation in the interests of advancing the public good. Such an education cannot be achieved, however, when prominent advocacy groups like the National

Council on Education and the Economy (NCEE) use all of their considerable clout to try to get Americans to focus on "surpassing Shanghai" on international large-scale assessments (Tucker, 2011). The greatest value of such rhetoric is that it lays bare the authoritarian premises of so many recent reforms for all to see.

The odd paradox of our time is that at the very moment when so many of the world's peoples have been brought into continual contact with one another and when one technological breakthrough after another demonstrates the limitless potential of the human imagination, our schools appear on many levels to be entrenched in practices that have no foundation either in research or in demonstrable efficacy. Given the nature of contemporary political polarization, it is perhaps not surprising that when many reformers seek to improve education, they try to circumvent politics altogether—often by using new technologies in innovative ways. When I have discussed the "Flip the System" series with teachers in the U.S., for example, their immediate assumption has been that books such as this one address first and foremost the "flipped classroom," in which instruction is provided by online resources that students view at home, and in which they then work on problems or have their homework checked in class the next day.

The purpose of this volume, however, is not solely instructional in scope. We are serious about wanting to flip the entire school system. We are not only asking just what can be done at the micro-level of individual classrooms by teachers, but rather what also can be done at the meso-level of their schools or the macro-level of their districts or states to improve our schools and to strengthen our democracy. We know that without addressing the larger organizational framework of schools, practice will revert back to what is familiar. We need to have the courage to be honest and to admit that while there is a great deal of potential for democratic participation in American public education, there also have been powerful counteracting forces in place for many years now. These have steered our schools in other directions and away from their true moral purposes.

What would be necessary to "flip the system" in this more capacious sense? In what follows, I propose five different ways that we could envision the evolution of our schools in a way that could transform education and improve American democracy. The overall argument is that educators need a recovery of professional integrity, from the Latin *integritas* meaning "whole." When we let one part of a system grow to a disproportionate influence—be it an unwieldy bureaucracy, a testing apparatus, or a particularly popular classroom management system—it is easy for educators to lose sight of an overall focus on why schools actually exist. Schools have been created to promote students' *learning* and their overall personal and social development. This in turn requires their enculturation into norms of civic participation and joint problem-solving that give them the skills and the disposition to persist in tackling the epochal problems of our time. "Flipping

the system" here means getting back to that original definition of education—*educare* in Latin—meaning a "leading out of," in the sense of facilitating students to lead from a vantage point of their own emergent sense of agency and identity. It means overturning a bureaucratic and unresponsive system in which our students' potential is limited because our schools do not know how to build upon their interests or are not able to convey to them why the social issues characterizing our time require their engagement and assistance.

If education is to be for the practice of freedom in this broad sense, then the intention here cannot to provide a blueprint, but rather to open up new spaces for public and professional deliberation about a preferred future. These spaces have to be invitational and flexible, in which all of the opinions of all of the members of our diverse communities are welcomed. The following chapters of this book will explore in depth different facets of what such a flipped system could look like. For now, let us examine five concrete "imperatives," or actions we must undertake—to achieve such a transformation.[1]

From the Ideological to the Evidentiary Imperative

In retrospect, one of the great tragedies about the past decades of school reform in the U.S. has been that insistence about improving learning outcomes precluded a discussion about what outcomes we might most wish for our young people and why. It would be going too far to say that the rise of new accountability systems *caused* the dramatic increase in anxiety and depression among our young people in the past decades, but there is no question that it is *correlated* with it. An *ideology* of narrowed emphasis upon academic results has made it difficult for educators and the public to look at more holistic *evidence* of how our students are doing.

As research increasingly documents that not all is well with our young people, however, policy makers and school leaders at various levels have recognized that they need to respond. Even the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in Paris ultimately reversed its long-standing fixation on the tested achievement of 15-year-olds in mathematics, reading, and science to include well-being measures in 2016. Meanwhile, a tsunami of professional development offerings, individual classroom interventions, and curricular units have entered into the school improvement marketplace. The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) has been the hub for these activities in the U.S.

On the whole, the new emphasis on gathering all kinds of evidence about our students, including their personal and social well-being, should form a foundational component of "flipping the system" in the U.S. While there inevitably will be missteps here and there, we now have a wealth of evidence that those schools that are integrating meditation, yoga, and other exercises

to calm the body and quiet the mind are experiencing positive outcomes. Nor are these kinds of practices just for students; we are finding that teachers and administrators benefit from them also.

As we work to "flip the system" to accommodate the diverse needs of our students in response to evidence of their well-being, however, we should be cautious in two regards. First, if well-being solely is introduced into schools to pacify students and to improve classroom management approaches that deprive them of opportunities to exercise any agency, we will not be changing the system but rather reinforcing it. In some cases, meditation, for example, has become co-opted into the pre-existing practices in schools in ways that have no research base and raise ethical concerns. At Brooklyn Urban Garden School in New York, students are graded on how well they appear to meditate, and their grades are entered into their report cards (Kaleem, 2015). Class scorecards of meditation rankings are posted in the school's hallways, and those classes with the best results are given trophies that are placed in public display cases. Such practices appear to be implemented exclusively for purposes of satisfying a pre-existent ideology of social control rather than to promote student well-being. This is not integrity, but an abrogation of it.

Second, we should be cautious that the legitimate concern for student well-being does not turn into a stupefying quest to try to make our students happy all of the time. It's a good thing, not a bad one, when students express anger with respect to violations of social justice in our society. Righteous indignation about the inability of policy makers to cope with climate change has sparked a global movement of the young who are not satisfied with bland reassurances that everything will be taken care of in good time. When we say that we want integrity and know that integrity means "whole," we have to address those parts of education that are unpleasant, not just those that are agreeable and fun. This means that while we should gather evidence about our students' well-being, we should also study those pressing issues that students are upset about and that they are willing to work long and hard to address. Otherwise, we are not changing the system, but simply are replacing one kind of one-sided education with another.

From the Imperial to the Interpretive Imperative

In public schools in the U.S., a curious phenomenon has unfolded in the past 20 years. When the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 was legislated, teachers at the most heavily tested grades (3–8) began adjusting their instruction and their curricular units to those areas that were emphasized on their state examinations. When teachers struggled with lifting their students' results, school and district leaders responded pragmatically, cutting out recess and reducing time for the performing and visual arts that were not

tested. Third grade teachers didn't like carrying all of the weight for their students' outcomes, so backward planning was used to help to prepare students for the tests, first in second grade, then in first grade, and finally in kindergarten. The "academicization" of early childhood was complete.

Many of these curricular transformations were carried out quietly in schools, without much public deliberation or debate. Students had little opportunity to shape these reforms and simply had to adjust. Dissidents could be silenced with an equity argument that results were paramount in a dog-eat-dog society. There was an *imperial imperative*, it seemed, to push test preparation into every crevice of the school system. And I mean *every* crevice. When my colleagues at Boston College and I applied for a prestigious Teachers for a New Era grant from major foundations in the U.S. a decade and a half ago, our funders wanted to know how we were preparing to teach numeracy in *every* school discipline, as a precondition for funding.

There is another way to think about curriculum, however, which is that every discipline has its own internal integrity. Biology, history, foreign languages, music and art, all have content and sequences that are proper to their constitution of knowledge. While interdisciplinary learning is valuable, it should never be forced. When it is imposed, we usually are experiencing an imperial imposition of a "strong" discipline upon a relatively weaker, "colonized" subject.

What could be the resolution to such distortions, that rob our students of the rich intellectual adventure that could be in waiting for them if we were to give them a measure of choice to explore all kinds of heterodox subjects in school? At the very least, every school should provide students with opportunities to access a full range of disciplinary subjects. Arbitrarily deciding that the arts, or foreign languages, or physical education are expendable does symbolic violence to the growing child's curiosity and legitimate aspirations to excel across a range of disciplines. So too does every child have the right to play—which, incidentally, is identified as a fundamental human right in the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child (2009).

More fundamentally, however, schools need to provide settings in which students have opportunities to shape their reflective judgment on matters large and small so that this free exploration of their interests and talents becomes a foundational component of their everyday lives. One of the lost opportunities of recent decades has had to do with the blossoming research in the area of area of what is called "meaning and purpose" studies. Young people seek guidance in a quest for meaning and purpose in their lives, but they cannot find this in schools that are over-structured and that preclude rigorous inquiry into such matters. It does not help us in the U.S. that, unlike schools in many other countries, disciplines such as philosophy and religion form the "null" curriculum of content areas that by and large simply are not taught. Here is where our pragmatic orientation fails us, for

we know that young people who can acquire a sense of meaning and purpose in their lives experience a host of positive outcomes, on everything from academic achievement to prosocial attitudes to resiliency in the face of personal tragedy or other kinds of setbacks.

The *interpretive imperative* is of particular importance for education in times of democratic decline. One of the more horrific developments of the most recent years has had to do with skyrocketing rates of bullying among the young, which have ascribed by many to contemporary political polarization. When the highest political leaders in any country routinely demonize their opponents and reduce their positions to caricatures, one cannot anticipate our students to be immune to such developments. Democratic education, however, requires minimal thresholds of civility and the capacity to entertain another's point of view as part of a shared quest for the public good. These skills and aptitudes can and must be taught in public schools.

What is needed in order to do so? An emerging body of research literature (Jacobs, Lamb, & Philipp, 2010), primarily focused on elementary mathematics instruction, is documenting what teachers *notice* in their classrooms about their students' learning. This "noticing research" has found that while some teachers are able to interpret their students' mathematical problem-solving in robust ways that make sense of "strategy details in a variety of ways," most teachers provided only "limited evidence of interpretation of children's understandings" or a complete "lack of evidence of interpretation" (p. 171). What is most promising about this research, however, is not the problems identified, but rather the finding that teachers' noticing capacities and their skills at interpretation can be scaffolded provided they are given the proper professional development and support.

Whether we are dealing with social matters like bullying in our schools or the intricacies of teaching fractions in upper elementary school classrooms, imperial mandates from on high, either scolding bullies, or admonishing teachers do not get us very far. Instead, we need greater capacity and will in our busy schools and systems to be able to notice what is going on before our very eyes. We need scaffolded support to be able to interpret it accurately, in a community of like-minded educators, and then to take direct action to improve teaching and learning.

From Prescription to Professionalism

There is nothing inherently wrong with a fair amount of prescriptive activities for both students and teachers in schools. Even if it is unpleasant for students to learn about such matters as the Atlantic slave trade and the Holocaust, for example, we should require them to, simply because it is impossible to be an informed citizen without knowing what occurred in the past and how it could be prevented again in the future. Even if teachers would rather not deal with the additional burdens entailed in learning new

technological tools or updating their disciplinary knowledge base, so too, should it be required of all of us to keep up with the most recent developments in our disciplines.

There are some kinds of foundational knowledge for our students and professional responsibilities for educators that are required of everyone, then, no matter what their individual idiosyncratic preferences might be. Our understanding of participation in a shared destiny compels us to ascribe to one another certain minimal forms of behavior: We stop at red lights and drive through green ones. If all goes well, this task allocation allows our society, or any society, to minimize conflict and to maximize our collective well-being.

If prescription in our schools goes too far, however, it becomes impossible to attain the kinds of deeper learning that are characteristic of high-quality education. Research has documented that students who come from homes with low socio-economic status are subjected disproportionately to highly prescribed teaching strategies, often transmitted by beginning teachers. Yet virtually all of the exemplary teachers described by Jal Mehta and Sarah Fine in their study entitled *In Search of Deeper Learning* (Meh ta & Fine, 2019) had been teaching for at least ten years. These teachers gave their students complex cognitive challenges that catalyzed their engagement. They had a broad repertoire of strategies that they adapted to each class to facilitate their students' participation. They abstained from banter that took them away from the curricular demands that students needed to master. These teachers were consummate professionals, with the hard-won expertise to raise academic press while providing students with the support they needed to excel.

Understanding the *professional imperative* to uplift the learning of *all* of our students is essential for democratic education. It may surprise some that it is not just conservative autocrats who can fall prey to the lures of prescription. Seven schools recently studied by Edward Fergus, Pedro Noguera, and Margary Martin that focused on the education of Black and Latino boys placed so much emphasis on culturally responsive pedagogies that their teachers neglected high-impact strategies the students needed to overcome their difficulties with academic achievement, such as reading comprehension. The researchers questioned whether students' achievement "can be improved with this one-sided instructional program" (Fergus, Noguera, & Martin, 2014, p. 94). Teachers in these schools needed experience with a diverse repertoire of teaching approaches and the freedom to choose amongst them. Culturally responsive pedagogies were good, but incomplete. Students need their teachers to bring all of the resources of the profession together in the right way to flourish.

How can we do this? The first step is to strengthen the teaching profession in the U.S. We now have a large body of research on what an empowered teaching profession looks like in countries like Canada, Finland,

Germany, and Singapore (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Hargreaves & Shirley, 2012; Shirley, 2017). Educators in these systems have high levels of professional autonomy, but they understand this autonomy in a collective sense of responsibility to their peers and to the system. Precious little time is lost on infighting amongst teachers and administrators. While salaries might only be average by international comparisons, public confidence in the profession is high, and professional development support is generous. There is testing, but nothing like the levels of external intrusion and surveillance we experience in the U.S. These countries provide us with exemplars of the *professional imperative* in action.

From the Insular to the Global Imperative

In 1992 a hitherto obscure political scientist named Francis Fukuyama wrote what was to become a block-busting bestseller entitled *The End of History and the Last Man* (Fukuyama, 1992). Following the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and then the entire Iron Curtain, Fukuyuma argued that humanity was ending a long period of struggle with tyrannies of the fascist or communist bent, and all were gradually evolving towards liberal parliamentarian governments with market economies. At the time, as he freely admits today, he did not entertain "the possibility of a modern liberal democracy decaying or going backward" (Fukuyama, 2018, p. xiii).

It was a fatal mistake, as Fukuyama conceded in *Identity: The Demand for Dignity and the Politics of Resentment*. "A number of countries that had seemed to be successful liberal democracies during the 1990s slid backward toward more authoritarian government," he wrote (Fukuyama, 2018, p. 5). Instead, a new kind of nationalism, often directed against immigrants and refugees, surged to electoral success around the world. This can be understood as an *insular imperative* as native populations band together to protect their nation against what they perceive as dangerous outsiders who are conspiring not only against their well-being, but also against their very survival as a people.

Why is it that precisely at a time when our global economies and ecologies are more and more part of a shared system, that what appears to be a counter-intuitive movement towards building walls and erecting trade barriers is attractive for so many people in so many countries? Is it because of soaring income inequality? Or is the cause a mismatch between artificial intelligence destroying jobs for some kinds of workers while creating employment for others, with different skills? What role does racism play, or the apparent difficulties that liberal democracies have in defending their populations against random terrorist attacks?

Whatever the causes of our current "democratic recession" (Diamond, 2015, p. 141), educators have a role to play in responding to it. But how? From the U.S. to India to Brazil to Germany, we've entered a new age of

nationalism that is testing our abilities to collaborate across borders. Nationalism is working its way into school textbooks and the equivalence of McCarthy-era loyalty tests are being brought back with a vengeance. Since educational systems are beholden to individual nation-states, educators are finding themselves placed in vulnerable situations, in which their jobs and their very financial security is at stake.

How to respond, then? At least part of the answer involves understanding the hitherto underestimated threat of different aspects of globalization. Economic globalization has devastated local industries that have sustained families for generations and replaced a stable working class with a vulnerable "precariat" suffering from slashed wages and reduced buying power. Technological globalization means that while individual users of social media and the Internet can experience levels of instant access to information even the wealthiest plutocrats could only have dreamed of just thirty years ago, their private lives are subject to levels of surveillance previous generations were able to avoid. Finally, the shift of economic and technological modes of production and consumption means that we increasingly have "governance without governments" (Dale, 1999, p. 4). This means that local and national governments cannot keep up with the pace of change. They are considered inefficient, and potentially corrupt, by the very populations that should protect and serve. The consequence is a hollowing out of the political center and a shift of power to non-state actors like corporations on the one hand and their affiliated non-profit organizations on the other. In response, desperate populations register their protests at the ballot box or on the streets, often without clear solutions of their own to the problems that plague them, but have gone unaddressed for years.

What can schools do about all of these issues? "Flipping the system" would mean that educators would need to become far more attentive to students' perceptions of the world they are entering, and more proactive about providing curricula that address their concerns. A recent Gallup poll (Saad, 2019) showed a 20-point spread on climate change, with only 47% of Americans over 65 years old greatly concerned about it, and 67% of young Americans greatly worried. In September 2019 hundreds of thousands of U.S. students participated in an international strike for action on climate change. Nor were the students alone. An NPR/Ipsos poll (Kamenetz, 2019) earlier that year showed that even though 80% of parents want climate change to be taught as a school subject, and 86% of teachers would like to teach about it, less than half of teachers currently are doing so.

Grasping the need to develop a *global imperative* to flip school systems to address issues like climate change that their students view as urgent matters of public concern is an essential test of the integrity of our school systems. This is not a matter of party affiliation; two-thirds of Republicans surveyed in the U.S. agree that climate change should be taught in schools (among Democrats the percentage is 90%). It is rather an issue of having a flexible

professional culture that can adapt rapidly to deal with topics that must be addressed by a rising generation.

Strategically, it may be wiser in our current times not so much to teach *against* the rising tide of nationalism as *for* the enculturation of our students to a collective understanding of a common human destiny for which we all must share responsibility. One of the more exciting cross-curricular ways in which this work is being undertaken now is through the teaching of the Sustainable Developmental Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations. These are 17 ambitious targets for urgent agendas such as the elimination of poverty, the provision of health care, and guarantees of free, high quality public education around the world by 2030. Educators from many different nations have been working to create curricular frameworks for teaching the SDGs and these are being piloted by "ambassadors" and "advocates" in their schools (for more information, go to www.teachsdgs.org). Here is a clear example of a bottom-up, teacher and student led transformation of schools with a rigorous, globally-oriented curriculum.

From the Instrumental to the Existential Imperative

It is natural for the public to have high expectations of schools to prepare young people to enter the workforce, and it is entirely understandable that the young themselves want to learn disciplines in schools that will help them to gain financial independence in the years to come. There is nothing inherently wrong with acknowledging that education always must have some kind of practical outcome, even for the most theoretically inclined students, of whom by definition there are not many. This concern for objective, real-world skills recently led to the high priority given to the study of informational text in the Common Core State Standards, as well as to school reform movements like the Pathways to Prosperity Network, sponsored by Jobs for the Future (www.jff.org). It also has prompted philanthropies and government agencies like the National Science Foundation to provide millions of dollars of funding for new courses in computer coding in public schools, and in general to rush support to fields like science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

Much of this new sense of urgency about practical outcomes for education is long overdue. Increasing job market polarization—in which those with the right skill sets and dispositions experience soaring incomes, and those without them are thrown into a bottomless pit of low-wage work with no health care or other benefits—has been prevalent in the American workplace since the 1970s, and shows no signs of stopping (Cass, 2018; Piketty, 2014). Even the prospects of college graduates have turned increasingly grim, with over half of them now working at jobs that require no higher education whatsoever (Ford, 2015).

At the same time, however, these economic difficulties do not mean that it is right or appropriate to deprive the young of a rich and balanced

curriculum simply because of uncertain economic prospects. We have no research evidence that introducing elementary school students to informational text rather than thrilling fiction or incantatory poetry improves their motivation to read. Children pass through their own stages of development and are not simply raw material to be prepared for their roles as future workers. If educators want our students to flourish as whole human beings, we have to make sure that we are always treating them as such.

This means that, in addition to addressing economic considerations, "flipping the system" entails enabling our schools to do a better job with supporting the formation of our young people's identities and their quests for meaning and purpose. Much has been made of the rise of "identity politics" in recent decades, with some viewing this phenomenon as an essential prelude to genuine social recognition and others deploring what is viewed as an excessive preoccupation with the self or a group (Appiah, 2018; Michaels, 2006). Wherever one might lie on the spectrum of advocates to antagonists of the new preoccupation with identity—and for many this is a sliding scale—we should all be able to agree that it is best for our students, our schools, and our society when we create conditions in which all can participate as whole human beings on terms of free and mutual interaction.

Identity is a *psychosocial* process, meaning that the cultivation of the individual personality and a sense of belonging in a social group are shared projects of the young. Positive youth development in schools needs to provide support for individuals to become their authentic selves, and at the same time, should help the young to find membership in an entity and a purpose larger than themselves. Especially when the young experience their group identity as stigmatized because of their race, gender, or gender orientation, for example, schools have a responsibility for social affirmation. This does not need to be done in a blandly celebratory way, but also can entail elements of critique and debate, as for example when educators using Hip-Hop in their classes ask students to explore ways in which lyrics are sexist or otherwise exclusionary (Alim & Paris, 2017).

Coda

Note what flipping the system as defined by these five imperatives of educational change does *not* entail. It does *not* mean overthrowing the traditional, decentralized organization of American schools and replacing them with either an unregulated marketplace model of competition or a nationally centralized system on the model of France or Japan. It does *not* mean viewing teachers as expendable because so much information now is available on the Internet that real live human beings are no longer needed to guide the young to maturity. It does *not* mean a never-ending campaign to promote our students' self-esteem on the one hand, or to turn them into

robotic regurgitators of disconnected and ultimately meaningless snippets of information, on the other.

Flipping the system, as outlined here, has five components:

1 Take up an *evidentiary imperative* to study all kinds of data about how our students are faring, including their well-being, but also going beyond it.
2 Explore an *interpretive imperative* that gives educators the space and support to notice how their students are learning so that they can better accommodate their interests and needs.
3 Enact a *professional imperative* that will provide U.S. educators with the same level of trust and public confidence enjoyed by their colleagues in high-achieving countries like Finland, South Korea, Singapore, and Canada.
4 Recognize a *global imperative* that overcomes our local parochialism to achieve a shared destiny worthy of the rising generations to come.
5 Embrace an *existential imperative* that will provide our young with opportunities to find their own sense of meaning and purpose in their lives, both as singular individuals and as members of social groups which provide them with a sense of belonging and inclusion.

This is in no way intended to be an exhaustive list (those tend to be exhausting!) Like signposts on a mountain trails, these five imperatives are pointers that can and should be mixed with your own repertoire of preferred practices. Together, we can collaborate with one another to "flip the system" of our schools in ways that produce genuine improvements and that will shape a desired future we all can be proud of.

Note

1 For a fuller elaboration of these arguments, see Shirley (2017).

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