Different Schools for a Different World
by Scott McLeod & Dean Shareski

Think you might want to read this book?
Know a traditional educator who could use a more modern lens on our profession? Have you lost some gusto in your own desire to move education forward? *Different Schools for a Different World* is a quick read for anyone who needs convincing or reminding why traditional education hasn't, and isn't, working. Links to organizations doing great work, the TRUDACOT model for tech integration, and examples of deep learning schools at the end are all handy. We can use them to remind us that there are tools and examples for us to tap into for inspiration and guidance.

What would Socrates ask?
- What in my lesson could the students accomplish on their own?
- Is there enough student choice in my units?
- Is this lesson engaging enough that I want to do it myself?
- What if I surveyed my students to see how engaging they felt the lesson was?

Research
- Fewer than four in ten high schoolers report being engaged in their classes.
- In a study of more than 1,500 classroom observations- 3% had evidence of higher-order thinking and 85% where fewer than half of the students were paying attention.
- In elementary school, 75% of students said that they were engaged in what they were learning. By eighth grade, however, that already-low figure had decreased to 45%, and by the end of high school it was 34%.
- … students in school environments that focus on deeper thinking, student inquiry, and project-based learning generally outperform traditional public school students on international assessments of reading, mathematics, and science core content, critical thinking, and complex problem-solving skills.

Concepts
- "Six Arguments" for making schools different are based on the following observations: 1- students need to be adept at accessing and evaluating information, 2- automation and globalization increasingly define the future economy, 3- teachers should no longer be the purveyors of information, 4- undemanding and tedious tasks have led to boredom and a lack of critical thinking, 5- innovation should lead to schools meeting evolving student needs, and 6- digital tools need to be more prevalent in learning.
- Deeper learning schools have most or all of the following components embedded in them: Higher-level thinking, Student agency, Authentic work, and Technology infusion.
- Living in perpetual beta- the organic process of focusing on rapid, iterative change with frequent feedback loops.

Quotes from the authors

- If we truly care about preparing kids for life and work success- *we need schools to be different*. If economic success increasingly means moving away from routine cognitive work, schools need to also move in that direction.
- We need to push aside the current norms defining education- that teachers are to govern, direct, and evaluate student work; that mastering content detailed in predetermined curricula is the best indicator of student success; that assessment and remediation are more important than feedback and reflection; that the primary reason for investing in tools and technologies is to improve on existing practices.
- There is no foreseeable future in which printed words- expensive and isolated- reassert their dominance over digital information- ubiquitous, cheap, and connected to the wider world. But in most classrooms, we still pretend otherwise. Schools serve many societal functions, but one of their primary roles is to help students master the dominant information landscape of their time.
- As educators, we cannot continue to pretend that there are viable high-paying jobs for large numbers of low-skill graduates.
- As we think about our children and grandchildren, our nieces and nephews, our neighbors and our friends, we owe them employment and career options that at least have a fighting chance of being financially viable. To achieve this, we must make schools different.
- School is no longer constrained to how far the bus can travel in the morning.
- … if you're still teaching chemistry largely as a content-oriented learning experience- one in which the main focus is on memorizing facts and formulas- you are ripe for replacement.
- Because content is no longer scarce, our students don't need us to purvey information. But they do need us- now more than ever- to help them learn how to think about the content, wrestle and play with the content, and put the content to work.
- We are wasting a lot of student potential because we refuse or can't figure out how to make schools different.
- … we've always tended to focus on those who physically disengage- tardies, absences, and dropouts- and much less on those who drop out mentally. As long as students are physically present and compliant, school systems are happy, and so are we as educators.
- Innovators ask questions like "Why?" and "Why not?" and "What if?"
- Innovation is important. But most schools don't have an innovation agenda. Instead, we make a few tweaks here and there, or we institute a new program that benefits a small number of students without significantly impacting the vast majority. And we pat ourselves on the back for doing something, anything, even if transformative impact is minimal and marginal.
- The level of meaningful voice and choice for classroom educators is fairly low in many school buildings, and when a few isolated teachers are brave enough to take a risk, they open themselves up to criticism and envy from many of their peers.
- The three mantras at New Tech High are "Culture that empowers, teaching that engages, and technology that enables."

Organizations/schools working on answers
- [CASTLE](#)
- [Hewlett Foundation](#)
- [International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE)](#)
- [Common Sense Media](#)
- [Surrey Academy of Innovative Learning](#)
- [New Tech Network](#)
- [EL Education](#)
- [EdVisions Schools](#)
- [High Tech High](#)
- [Iowa BIG](#)
- [New Village Girls Academy](#)
- [New Technology High School](#)
- [Ao Tawhiti Unlimited Discovery](#)
- [Asia Society Center for Global Education's International Studies Schools Network](#)
- [Independent Curriculum Group](#)
- [One Schoolhouse](#)
- [New Visions for Public Schools](#)

Gateways to further learning
- [Did You Know? (Shift Happens)](#)
- [4 Shifts Protocol](#)
- [Dangerously Irrelevant](#)
- [Ideas and Thoughts](#)
- [Tech and Learning](#)
- [Deeper Learning- For every student every day](#)
- [Big 6 model](#)
- [Screenwise](#)
- [Multimedia Educational Resource for Learning and Online Teaching (MERLOT)](#)
- [Instructional Practices Inventory](#)

The applicability of this book to education is ….

Abstract ←——————————————————→ Obvious