



## Theresa Collins, Chris Thinnes & Kavan Yee

**Kavan Yee:** [00:00:00] All the aspects of that child's learning, whether it's learning needs, learning goals, whether it's their socioeconomic background, their ethnic background, whatever is going on in their lives, we need to make a direct connection and partnership with.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:00:15] Welcome to Learning Unboxed, a conversation about teaching, learning, and the future of work. This is Annalies Corbin, Chief Goddess of the PAST Foundation and your host. We hear frequently that the global education system is broken. In fact, we spend billions of dollars trying to fix something that's actually not broken at all, but rather irrelevant. It's obsolete. A hundred years ago, it functioned fine.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:00:41] So, let's talk about how we reimagine, rethink, and redesign our educational system. So, welcome to today's episode. As always, I am super, super excited about our guests today. And in fact, today, we're going to continue our conversation about progressive education. This time, specifically talking about promoting equality and justice. And joining us today are three wonderful guests.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:01:10] I'm super excited about it, obviously, but veterans in the progressive education movement to help us really talk about and wrestle with some of these components. So, joining us today is Theresa Collins, who is a 27-year veteran of high school English. And that alone should be celebrated, and as a progressive educator and past president of the Progressive Education Network, and the Co-Director of the National Institute of Progressive Education. So, welcome, Theresa.

**Theresa Collins:** [00:01:39] Thank you.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:01:40] And joining Theresa today is Kavan Yee from the Lowell School in Washington, D.C.. And he has served in a variety of roles, including middle school science teacher, science curriculum coordinator, director of middle school and student life, and as of 2015, became their Director of Middle School. So, welcome Kavan. And joining both Theresa and Kevin is Chris Thinnes. Did I get that right, Chris? Perfect. Awesome. We practiced earlier. And it's how that goes.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:02:09] Chris is a veteran independent school leader and active collaborator with educators and activists from the public and private sectors, and is engaged public school parent. And so, adding that into his bio, I think, speaks volumes about the conversation that we're going to have. So, welcome, Chris. So, I want to get started with this conversation sort of by setting the stage. So, Theresa, help those who might not have listened to some of the previous episodes that we've done about progressive education to just sort of really set the stage. So, what is this thing called progressive education? And why does it matter today?

**Theresa Collins:** [00:02:45] Wow. Well, I hope that I can lean on Chris and Kavan to chime in with their own definitions. But progressive education, the best, I think, quickest way to think about what progressive education is and how it differs from traditional education is this, in progressive education, we believe that teaching and learning is best done when teachers and students co-create or co-construct learning together. So, teachers are sitting beside their students, learning along with them.

**Theresa Collins:** [00:03:14] And across the developmental spectrum, they are teaching students and working with students on how to ask questions of the universe, as James Baldwin said. And figure out ways to put those questions to work in applicable and relevant ways when they are ready to become members of their community. And that can happen at age five and it can happen at age 18. And we hope that as progressive educators, that our students will be those lifelong learners.

**Theresa Collins:** [00:03:42] But more specifically, we want them to be contributors to the communities of which they will become a part. So, as opposed to teachers pouring knowledge into their students, and then having students kind of squeeze out the sponge on a standardized test or traditional forms of assessment, progressive educators are looking for ways to really tap into not only the specific skills and habits of mind of content areas, but the connection to students' communities, students' identities, and who they are, and who they're going to become in the world.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:04:15] And for those who listen to the program and who know me in particular, understand, this is exactly the reason why I love progressive education so much, because that's very near and dear to what we believe at PAST and all the work that we do. So, Kavan, I want to talk a little bit about how you came into the progressive education movement, and how you apply it at a place like the Lowell School, for those who are familiar with that school and that school setting. How do the ideologies that we just heard Theresa talk about translate into the day-to-day work that you do?

**Kavan Yee:** [00:04:47] Well, I started as a public school science teacher in Chicago. And when I was teaching six sections of 30-some odd students in my class, rolling them through, I really saw a whole spectrum of engagement in my classroom. And as a young teacher, I wanted to really engage my students, wanted to connect with my students, wanted to get them really involved with learning about biology, but I was wondering why no one was really paying attention to my class. What's going on?

**Kavan Yee:** [00:05:24] And as a teacher, I'm like, hey. So, instead of like wondering what's wrong with them, I started wondering, well, what am I doing incorrectly? Right? And I realized that I needed to know more about my kids, too. I needed to know, one, how I was going to present my information, how I was going to assess the information, but most importantly, I needed to know more about my kids.

**Kavan Yee:** [00:05:48] And research has more recently informed us that cognition is directly connected to emotion. And if students are coming to my class that maybe not have emotional stability, maybe something going on at home, maybe something they're worried about helping their family out and maybe not working, so they put food on the table, and don't really care about my biology class. So, it was important for me to learn more about my students.

**Kavan Yee:** [00:06:14] And to kind of echo what Teresa was talking about, is that even at the secondary school level, it's even more important that there's collaboration between the teacher and the student, and that we really try to understand the whole child, that all the aspects of that child's learning, whether it's learning needs, learning goals, whether it's their socioeconomic background, their ethnic background, whatever is going on in their lives, we need to make a direct connection and partnership with for that engagement to increase.

**Kavan Yee:** [00:06:45] So, how does it happen at Lowell? We begin at a preschool. And preschool is pretty much the foundation of any learning. It's like when the child, developmentally, is the most inquisitive. And you're honing in on those inquisitive builds of curiosity, and imagination, and creativity. Well, spiraling that through the secondary school, is not that we have an emerging curriculum, we certainly provide our curriculum to have space, and voice, and choice for our students. So, as they get older, they're helping us carry to take them further and deeper.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:07:16] And they totally do. I apologize. But that is one of the things I can say as a parent of a student that's gone through this type of education, they are the absolute best advocates in our community, right? I didn't mean to interrupt you, if you want to add any other thing.

**Kavan Yee:** [00:07:32] No. And just to cap off or echo what Theresa was talking about, the purpose of education is to create active participants in communities, our educated citizens. So, I think for schools to have that responsibility, it's most important that we engage our students in their learning, and also provide them the skills and the awareness of their EQ to improve their IQ.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:08:04] Absolutely. Thank you so much for that. So, Chris, I want to sort of round this out a little bit and sort of ask you the same question about sort of the how and why, really thinking about sort of the leadership and advocacy role that you've had in your career as it relates to progressive education. So, help our listeners sort of understand that space that you occupy.

**Chris Thinnes:** [00:08:28] I'm thinking a lot about what Theresa and Kavan just said to kind of frame sort of purpose-driven goals of progressive education, and I think that my career so far has played out almost exclusively in independent schools for a number of reasons. One is that I'm a product of them. My parents sent me to them and I learned a lot at them, for better and for worse. The second is that like a lot of people, actually, who I admire for some reason that I'm not completely clear about, who work in leadership roles in schools, I had a very complicated relationship to school.

**Chris Thinnes:** [00:09:13] I did not master the system. I was not an exceptional student. I had things that I cared deeply about, and often, did not have the opportunity to explore to leverage them when I was in school. I also noticed that in the schools I attended, that the purpose of them seems to be to advantage my own individual success. And so, when I started working in independent schools, like those were some of the things that I sort of felt like, it would be nice to be thoughtful about in them.

**Chris Thinnes:** [00:09:49] One was, what really is from 30,000 feet the purpose of schools in a pluralistic democracy? Second, recognizing that independent school in many but not all instances have the opportunity that was originally, not now, but that was originally used to imbue the proposal that we have a thing called charter schools, which is that they can operate much more quickly. They can steer much more nimbly. They can innovate much more deftly. And they can share what they learn about learning back with the broader network of schools.

**Chris Thinnes:** [00:10:30] That's what charter schools were supposed to be. It's not exactly what they, generally speaking, turned into, but it's what independent schools could be and are when they choose to be so. And so, asking questions about the public purpose of private schools and finding ways to think about independent schools in the context of public education are just kind of complicated and delicious systems to think about, and that I try to think about in the work that I do.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:11:00] Yeah. I love the way you were thinking about that, that it is, because it's very complicated, and it's very, very complex. And at the end of the day, as we collectively, I think, encourage folks

to reimagine what this whole endeavor should be, I really love that thinking. And I think that one of the things that we are at an intriguing moment, because of everything that's happened over the last year, almost really, really 18 months, is certainly the learning that we had prior to, but we we've gotten an odd, I'm going to use that term very deliberately, an odd moment to recalibrate, to rethink, and to restart.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:11:44] But only if we truly take advantage of the moment that has been provided, for better or worse, that we got here in what's going on with the world. But we do actually have a moment to think differently if we so choose to. And so, Theresa, I really want to sort of dig into the ideas of equality, and justice, and the opportunity that a progressive sort of educational mindset provides to us to think about these issues in a meaningful way moving forward. So, what does that mean to you as you think about it through that lens of progressive education from an opportunity standpoint?

**Theresa Collins:** [00:12:26] That's a great question. And it's really exciting. I mean, I think for better or worse or otherwise, as you said, Annalies, the moment is here. And one of the elements of this moment that I have been most intrigued, heartened by is the fact that I work with high schoolers, but I also lead adults. And the relationship between high school students and the adults who lead learning with them is this, students come in with questions. They come in with the things they've noticed.

**Theresa Collins:** [00:12:59] They come in with the things they've heard. They come in with this sensibility of, I need help in making sense of what's happening in the world around me, and moreover, back to the relevance question, what does this all mean? What does this all mean? And how am I supposed to be able to plug into this past whatever next step of my education I may or may not be taking? And so, the questions that inevitably arise between adolescence and the adults who teach them are part of this opportunity against the backdrop of the societal world that we all live in.

**Theresa Collins:** [00:13:35] So, that's one piece for me that really clarifies the fact that someone who is teaching and learning in a progressive mindset has to take advantage of that opportunity, right? So, we have to use that dynamic to inform the way that we're going to start to reimagine delivering curriculum. I think another piece is that we've learned a lot in distance learning about how we can better serve in a lot of ways, as Kavan was talking about, some of the students with a variety of profiles as learners.

**Theresa Collins:** [00:14:12] In-person schooling really isn't for every single person. I have a nephew who is on the autism spectrum and he attends a project-based learning school, which is a great example of progressive pedagogy practice. And distance learning has been phenomenal for him with occasional check-ins. So, I think that's another way that we can really expand our sensibilities around what teaching and learning can look like through progressive lens.

**Theresa Collins:** [00:14:36] And I have to say that thinking about distance learning brings in issues of equity and justice, because we have to think about the digital divides that exist, the opportunity gaps that exist in terms of who has what materials that are going to help them do the learning that they need to be doing. So, all kinds of conversations can exist in this moment that we can see through not only just the lens of progressive pedagogy and practice, but an equity lens and a justice-based lens. And so, as I think about reentry into schools, everyone has been throwing around, we don't want to go back to what used to be, we want to really reimagine what can be.

**Theresa Collins:** [00:15:19] Bettina Love recently had a piece in Education Week, where she says, we can't go back to the way things were. We don't want to go back to normal. And I think for progressive educators, regardless of where they were, whether in the public school system, the charter school system, the independent school system, we all have a great opportunity. And I think the more that we can have

conversations like this one and the more we can gather kind of likeminded educators together, maybe there's going to be a progressive renaissance in education in the coming days, weeks, and months.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:15:50] Yeah. Fingers crossed, right? I mean, that's what I'm hoping for without question, because we truly cannot afford to go back to what was, I would argue in many, many ways. And actually, Kavan, I'm going to toss my next question specifically to you, thinking about what Theresa was just talking about in the ways that community needs to think about moving forward, as a science educator in particular, in the wake of everything we've seen and we've been experiencing as it relates to sort of the place and role in science as an educator, as an equalizer, I want to ask you that same question that I tossed at Theresa.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:16:34] But I'm going to ask you to wear your science educator hat on it and really sort of dig in with us a little bit about the role of science education in the progressive way of thinking about delivering that content and that whole child component. How do you balance those components out? What's happening in the world versus your particular lens in teaching?

**Kavan Yee:** [00:16:59] I'm just smiling, because I feel-

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:17:00] I know. It's a loaded question, right?

**Kavan Yee:** [00:17:02] It's a loaded question, but I was just talking to my colleagues prior to this conversation that I've been more of an infectious disease manager this year than an actual school principal. And my science background certainly has helped with that, in that if we're trying to blend in the conversation about progressive education, it's to take advantage of the moments that are going on.

**Kavan Yee:** [00:17:30] And certainly, my science teachers be in their first year talking about viruses, and talking about infections, and how things are transmitted, and what are hand sanitizers? And how do hand sanitizers affect viruses? And in layers of mitigative strategies, why do masks or why do we have to stay six feet? So, these questions, I mean, these were all natural questions our students came in with. And like Theresa was saying, they are all coming in with the prior knowledge, and a lot of questions, and whatever they can find on the internet.

**Kavan Yee:** [00:18:10] And as educators now, we cannot be the keepers of knowledge anymore. I mean, we're now the facilitators of learning, and helping them find the right resources, find the right information, find facts, how to analyze data to find facts and draw conclusions. And as a science teacher, that's something that—I mean, if anything through this pandemic, it actually was a science teacher's dream to start off to be or to actually have full engagement, because you're not only learning about learning goals that your school or state may have, but it's also something that they really want to know about.

**Kavan Yee:** [00:18:48] And they want to carry on and pass that knowledge on to their friends and family as well. I actually want to piggyback to what Theresa was saying about learning in a pandemic or what we've learned in the last 18 months or last year. And I would say also that she said that there were certain students that definitely had found success under distance learning, but at the same time, it was validated that students need to have in-person learning. And a lot of students need to have an in-person learning.

**Kavan Yee:** [00:19:24] Why? Right? Is it because of the amazing lessons that I wrote? No, not at all, right? I mean, if you ask all these child psychologists, Lisa Damour writes an article in The New York Times almost every week about how our students, because of the lack of engagement with their friends, the socializations, the lack of collaboration, the lack of in-person communication, the teens, unfortunately, have increased depression rates or even suicide. And mental health, I mean, you can't find a therapist that's free these days.

**Kavan Yee:** [00:19:59] Everyone is looking for them. Why? It's because schools were a main source of connection for kids, right? And in a sense, progressive schools, progressive teachers, public or independent, are the most well-equipped to help us carry us out of this pandemic. I'm reading all of these things about, what now? What are we doing next? And everything that all these psychologists or experts are saying is that don't worry about your curriculum right now. When you're bringing them back into school, you really need to check in on them how they're doing, socially.

**Kavan Yee:** [00:20:37] Ease up on the school and focus more on community, on connection, because we need to re-engage these kids. They have not been in a classroom for a year. They haven't talked to their friends face-to-face in a long time. And a lot of them, not only coming with anxiety about the pandemic, anxiety about how to communicate again. I mean, how do I act in class anymore? So, as a progressive teacher and thinking about what I was talking about, being the whole child and understanding the EQ, I really feel that progressive teachers, or the progressive schools, or the progressive movement is the answer. And it's always been the answer. And now, schools are looking for what's next, well, let's talk.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:21:26] Exactly. Right here, right?

**Kavan Yee:** [00:21:27] It's right here. You need to start doing what we're talking about.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:21:30] Yeah. No, absolutely. I wholeheartedly agree. And so, Chris, I want to circle back around on a piece of this, because I agree. And again, being a parent of a child that's gone through a progressive education in its entirety, he's getting ready in the next year or so to fully graduate. But what I can tell you is that because of the experience and the foundational piece that my son had in elementary progressive education and moving on through, and one of the things that I have seen, and in, certainly, talking with lots and lots of parents and educators around the country and around the world, one of the things that I think that has been a great benefit to the students that I've seen or know that have gone through progressive education is that they are so self-reliant.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:22:23] And they are their own internal advocates in many ways. And certainly, my son learned very, very early on how to present knowledge, how to ask questions, how to be an active participant in the community. And so, how do you see those types of sort of student interactions, as we really do think about what comes next in the broader educational landscape, playing key roles that not only let us reconnect as we restart in this great opportunity, but also to carry forward the great learnings and teachings that happen from those types of very applied, hands-on, progressive sort of opportunities that students have?

**Chris Thinnes:** [00:23:08] My goodness. What a great question. Wow.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:23:14] I got to put my anthropology hat on, right? So, I always love those moments.

**Chris Thinnes:** [00:23:19] Yeah. I feel like part of the answer is really quite simple conceptually. And it really traces back to what you've said in your question about asking questions and just not to lose sight of it, but like one of the keys is the capacity to ask a precise question is far more cognitively complex than being able to provide a precise answer. And mapping this back onto some of the things that Theresa and Kavan were talking about, this idea, particularly now.

**Chris Thinnes:** [00:23:58] Because what is the excuse not to, which is to ask the children what they need to know to make it through this next phase as better versions of themselves, to let them ask what happened, if they don't fully understand it, so that they can discover what can engender meaning and imbue their lives with

purpose moving forward as soon as possible. It's not going to take a day. This is what learning is and always was.

**Chris Thinnis:** [00:24:35] On the other hand, it's spectacularly complex, because there's nothing in the last 50 years of American education policy that agrees with us that now is the moment. Nothing. Zero. But it is the moment. But what the moment requires, and this is obliquely to your question, and I don't mean, in any way, to change the lane, but the question makes me think of it, like what it's going to require is a greater level of discomfort from classroom teachers and site leaders to step out of their lanes.

**Chris Thinnis:** [00:25:18] To do what they already knew was the right thing for children all along. There's no magical answer to how to get people to do that, because that sounds like an invitation to be subversive, and I don't necessarily mean it that way, or to be provocative, or destructive, and I definitely don't mean it those ways. But to do what all of us on the call are agreeing as parents, and as learners, and as professionals, is called for is currently not—there isn't currently a system or a structure that invites us to do that. So, we're going to have to make one.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:26:01] We do. And I actually really, truly appreciate that. One of the things that I will tell anybody, and we get visitors from all over the world to come to the PAST Innovation Lab, that's the virtual lab. It's not real, obviously, because we're not there today. But we get visitors from all over the world. And we built this place, because we wanted to be able to show folks that if you literally take off those boundaries, if you will, those things that you think you know, and you say instead, teaching and learning could be a thousand different things, and the participants can be actively engaged in every moment of it, right?

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:26:41] So, we built all these glass boxes so that teaching and learning can happen in them, through them, around them. You can throw open the doors. You can make a mess. You can have all the different contents interspersed, that that's the thing that you were looking for. And two things that I would argue really hold true, and I hope that moving forward, these are things, a couple of the pieces to see, the first one is that I will tell folks that we have a fundamental belief that every kid who walks through the doors, no matter where they're from, what their background is, what their experience has been, that they are capable of solving the world's greatest problems, right?

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:27:21] It's just the untapped potential, but if we believe that we can help them get there. And the second thing is that I would put the kiddos that participate in the sort of environment that we've crafted around it and the same environment that all of you are talking about up against any industry R&D team in the world, because they are so comfortable and competent in the idea that they can problem-solve and get there, because they can ask the right questions. They can understand knowledge.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:27:54] They can dissect it. And they don't require anybody to stand there and teach it to them. They need you to stand beside them to help them find their way, right? And so, I wanted to make a point to say that, because my next question and the way I really want to round out our conversation today is to say, what happens next in this moment as we reimagine and the idea that we have to also reimagine what it means to be a citizen of a global world? Right?

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:28:29] Because I think that's one of the other pieces that we've lost along the way. We've gotten so mired in testing, and memorization, and a whole bunch of other things, Theresa, that as we think about what comes next, how do we ensure that what we folks walk away with is being such a well-rounded individual, that they're great citizens of the world? What does that look like from a progressive lens?

**Theresa Collins:** [00:28:55] One of the things, I wish we had so much more time, because like every time somebody speaks, I have five different thoughts. But here's something that kind of tags off of what Chris was just talking about, which is this question of, what happened? Right? And I think one of the things that we have to do moving forward is to revise the questions that we're asking of ourselves as teachers and adults, and then revising the questions that we're posing to our students.

**Theresa Collins:** [00:29:28] And here's why. Every single person who is still alive and with us right now has seen someone else who needs help in figuring all of this out. So, there are experts who exist in our society right now who have helped us through this. They've created the vaccines. They've created practices and protocols. They've created solutions to help us get through some of these moments.

**Theresa Collins:** [00:29:58] But there are other things that have taken a little bit longer, that have taken a little bit more effort, and that have taken different sets of pathways to figure out what we are going to do and how we are going to be in schools. And so, I think for me, the questions that have to be part of whatever it looks like moving forward is, what happened? What's changed since the last time something like this happened? What stayed the same that needs changing?

**Theresa Collins:** [00:30:31] And through a progressive lens, and in particular, through the lens of equity and justice, when we think about the diversity, and I'm talking racial, I'm talking identity, I'm talking any level of identity that you want to think about, who are we talking about in each of these places and spaces? Like what does it mean, for example, for students who are just now learning like, oh, well, there are some communities, there are some people who don't want to get the vaccine, there's a history behind that, right?

**Theresa Collins:** [00:31:04] And so, this is an example of what I mean, like what has stayed exactly the same since the last time we went through something like this, whether it was HIV AIDS, or the Spanish influenza outbreak, or what have you, right? There are reasons why people are scared and remain scared. And so, that's something that has to change. And so, I think revising the questions that we ask as we think about moving forward and being sure that we are eminently more inclusive than we have been.

**Theresa Collins:** [00:31:29] I liked what you said about the learners that you want to have come into the PAST Foundation irrespective of their background. We have to be really intentional about that and make sure that we are deliberate about tapping into those communities. Not just the people who are going to walk in the door, because they know that there is a place there, but making sure that we provide windows, and mirrors, and sliding glass doors, so that literally, every child, every learner knows that this education is for everyone. It's for everyone. And we need you. That has to be a bigger message as we move forward.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:32:03] Yeah. No question about that at all. Kavan, same question to you. What do you see as the opportunity from a progressive education standpoint as it relates to thinking about the sort of next generation of global citizen? Because back to what Theresa was talking about, the world has changed in so many ways. And for all the right reasons, and certainly, when you think about and talk with our youngest learners, many, many, not all, but many of them really understand that they live in a global setting. They don't just live in their own communities, or even in their own states, or their own countries, but because of their access and the broad influences that are coming from a variety of different places, we're talking about a very different endeavor.

**Kavan Yee:** [00:32:58] I think to have these opportunities, to have these conversations in class, it's important for any teacher or any facilitator to make sure that there's equity for voices to be heard and everyone is included. And how do you do that? Well, you have to really just start off simply by providing a safe space. You

need to create an environment. And maybe I'm the one on the panel that just keeps talking about social, emotional learning, but for us to have these conversations, everyone needs to feel included.

**Kavan Yee:** [00:33:34] Everyone needs to feel that they're part of the conversation. And so, it's important that schools, in particular, progressive schools, this is one of the pillars of progressive schools, is making sure that there's a safe space for people to have this conversation. And it's unfortunate that I have a folder for how to address mass shootings or resources for mass shootings. I have, unfortunately, a folder to talk about racial injustice and how we can provide resources for my teachers and parents how to speak to their kids.

**Kavan Yee:** [00:34:05] I mean, I've only been a principal for five, six years, and I have a folder. It's sad. It scares me, where our society is heading. And unfortunately, we have to have these conversations with our kids. We have to help them process and find clarity, help, first, one feel safe, but also provide them the opportunity to be parts of those solutions. So, if we're talking about whether it's climate change, whether we're talking about social justice, whether we're talking about even just vaccines, we need to make sure that our students have the ability to understand or listen to multiple perspectives, have the ability to ask the right questions without bias.

**Kavan Yee:** [00:34:56] And if they do have—everyone has bias. And if they do have some bias, to provide them the skills to seek clarity and to learn more about the other perspectives. And that's the only way your kids in the PAST Lab, in the Innovation Lab are actually going to help solve problems, because they have to really understand each other and how to communicate with each other in order for us to move forward.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:35:21] Absolutely. Chris, same question to you. Kids can lead us in a new direction, what does that look like?

**Chris Thinnes:** [00:35:30] I think for some reason, I spend a lot of time talking to people who work at school or in schools and feels as though sometimes, we've lost sight of the fact that this wasn't just the year of the global pandemic. It was also a year of an unprecedented confrontation and nearly partial reconciliation with the history of race in the United States. It was a moment of crisis for democracy, layer upon layer of shared, and individual loss and change. Any one of which could have been a monumental rite of passage in one's life, and was.

**Chris Thinnes:** [00:36:23] And so, like for me, listening to Theresa and to Kavan, I think what students are pretty clear on, for example, is that next year, we need to stop talking about cultural competency, and identity development, and race, and racialization, and racism, and start dismantling, and reframing it, like for real, though, in work at school. And next year as adults, like there's nothing in schools like more than the areas that we're not supposed to touch, because that's the family's business, right?

**Chris Thinnes:** [00:37:06] And there's lots of things on the table that a progressive model of pedagogy requires to be on the table that are at odds with that old idea. It's easy on the old idea of what schooling is, which is the transmission of free prepared content from one mind to another, to say like, we don't actually have time to talk about these other things, because we have all this stuff you have to download. It's actually impossible, not just implausible, but impossible to use a purposely progressive model, and not welcome these questions and this dialogue.

**Chris Thinnes:** [00:37:40] So, in a nutshell, and I know there's a lot of weeds to get lost in conversation, but coming to terms with which parts of these ideas we seem together to abhor about traditional education are rooted explicitly in Whiteness and White supremacy. It is the systemic work of schools right now, in my opinion. Virtually, everything we've spoken to as a challenge to children actually learning and thriving is a function of

that framework, I would argue, and I think many of us would argue. And I think that's what's next for truly transformative rather than transactional changes to take place in the system.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:38:31] Yeah, very, very well-said. And certainly, we appreciate that. And I know that our listeners recognize, there's so much work yet to be done, and yet here we are at a great opportunity in which to do that work.

**Theresa Collins:** [00:38:46] It's been fun. Thank you so much.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:38:48] Yeah. So, I want to thank all of you for taking time out of your day to share in this conversation with us. And I look forward to having more of this conversation. We just touched the tip of the iceberg of what's possible in this conversation and I do hope we get the chance to have more of it. So, I want to thank you all for joining me today. Thank you for joining us for Learning Unboxed, a conversation about teaching, learning, and the future of work. I want to thank my guests and encourage you all to be part of the conversation. Meet me on social media @AnnaliesCorbin, and join me next time as we stand up, step back, and lean in to reimagine education.