



WHAT is our vision of student success?  
WHO decides what determines student success?  
HOW can teachers contribute to those questions?

# PURPOSE

*Students, teachers, families, and communities collectively develop locally rooted, globally informed visions of student success.*

## OVERVIEW

Get started with a summary of insights and a sampling of resources about purpose.

## DISCOVER

Virtually visit classrooms and communities to see and feel these insights for yourself.

## LEARN

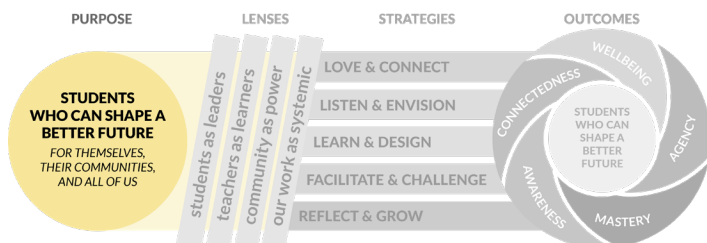
Explore the key ideas emerging from our collective studies and what that means for teachers.

## DO

Explore tools and resources to take action to reimagine purpose with students, educators, and families.

## SHARE

Contribute to and explore incoming insights, challenges, questions, resources, and research.



## OVERVIEW

*Transformational teachers collectively explore the purpose of education with students, families, and community members. These teachers align their daily efforts to a locally rooted and globally informed vision of student leadership emerging from those conversations.*



*We center our core purpose around an ambitious and contextually relevant student vision. Our decisions stem from this vision—our organizational goals, priorities, and strategy.*

*More importantly, we didn't create this vision from within the walls of our office. Instead, we partnered with our teachers, students, parents, and community members from over 150 partner communities. We know that the only way to facilitate real change in public education is by empowering the voices of the communities we serve and ensuring that they are at the forefront of creating this change.*

**Larisa Hovannisian**  
Founder & CEO, Teach For Armenia



### DISCOVER

Check out [this](#) compilation of student, teacher, and family voices from around the world, all asking what is the purpose of education, who decides this purpose and how, and what student outcomes align with growing students who can shape a better future?

### LEARN

*Who decides why.* Think of that as a statement, not a question. That idea is the starting point for teachers in classrooms that grow student leadership. These teachers critically question education's purpose as well as *who has been* and *who should be* at the center of determining that purpose. Transformational classrooms demonstrate perspectives, actions, and outcomes that align to a longer-term vision of student success that shares **three** characteristics:

- **COLLECTIVELY CREATED:** co-constructed and evolved in genuine partnership among educators, students, families, and communities
- **LOCALLY ROOTED:** grounded in the history, culture, and values of a particular community
- **GLOBALLY INFORMED:** reflecting global aspirations, what has worked in other places, and economic and environmental trends

### DO

See how transformational practitioners and programs around the world are co-creating purpose by:

- [Broadening perspectives](#)
- [Hosting dialogue and discussion](#)
- [Partnering with families and communities](#)
- [Critically examining history](#)
- [Collectively envisioning success](#)

Explore a toolkit for reflecting on the implications of purpose and motivation.

See how partner organizations across the Teach For All network, from *Empieza Por Educar* in Spain to *Teach For Armenia* to *Anseye Pou Ayiti* (Haiti), are contextualizing these global insights to their local visions, values, and programs.

### SHARE

Share your insights, questions, resources, and challenges related to developing visions of student success.

## DISCOVER

### Virtually visit transformational classrooms

*Teaching As Collective Leadership emerged from listening to and observing inspiring educators, students, and community leaders around the world. Thousands of teachers, coaches, researchers, designers, students, and others joined in the process of identifying patterns in and around transformational classrooms. We invite you to join this collective learning process.*

Virtually visit two or three of the transformational classrooms below and consider how they are similar and different. Please visit more than one. The power of these virtual visits is in seeing the contrasts and connections among these classrooms so that global patterns emerge among local examples.



#### Visions of student success from around the world

Through this [video](#) from 2018, virtually visit communities and classrooms around the world and learn from educators, families, and students about the power of asking *why*. Explore the potential of contextualized visions of student success to inform classroom practices. Who is deciding “the why”? How are these leaders encouraging and supporting these conversations?



#### Collectively discovering contextualized vision in Nepal

As shown in this [video](#) from 2018, Teach For Nepal has found it essential to examine the history that led to the marginalization of certain communities as a foundation for their work. By recognizing that we always come into any context with our own perspectives, values, and vision, we can start to recognize the limitations of our own perspective and more deeply appreciate the value of working collectively.



#### Community as the source of visions of student success in Haiti

Anseye Pou Ayiti (Haiti) has made collective co-construction of purpose a daily commitment. This [video](#) from 2018, explores recurring rituals that hold space for sometimes difficult conversations where educators and coaches seek to listen and understand local values, challenges, and aspirations.

#### GLOSSARY

**Transformational classroom:** Classrooms where students seem to be on a different trajectory. They seem to be making dramatic progress in their wellbeing, connectedness, awareness, agency, and mastery. That growth is transforming their paths and opportunities going forward.

#### Reflection Questions

- What thoughts and feelings do these classrooms and communities trigger for you?
- What conditions are enabling authentic, honest, collective conversations about the purpose of education?
- What was the original purpose that shaped ways of teaching and learning that you experienced? How does that shape your perspective?
- What do YOU think the purpose of education should be? Why?



### **Diverse perspectives to shape purpose in Mexico**

A nation with tremendous potential to improve educational opportunities for its youth, Mexico also faces a diverse range of challenges. As shared by former Enseña Por México CEO, Erik Ramírez Ruiz, in this [video](#) from 2014, the key to improvement is embracing the idea that Mexico's diverse challenges require solutions from many different perspectives.



### **Engaging with families to explore purpose in rural China**

Explore this [video](#) from 2013 that shows how Teach For China approached its work in rural Yunnan province. In this community, not every student had a spot waiting for them in middle school and rote learning is still the most dominant practice. Meanwhile, the economy and future of China have been changing before our eyes. What should a teacher and students work toward? Who decides?

Know of other great examples? [Share](#) them!

# LEARN

## Collectively contextualized visions of student success

*When we asked the students, teachers, teacher coaches, community members, researchers, and others participating in our global learning loops what purpose was driving transformational classrooms and who was determining that purpose, four key ideas emerged.*



1. Inherited models of teaching and learning are not preparing students for challenging and changing futures.

*After 25 years, if there is one thing I could do differently from the beginning with Teach For America, it would be to ensure that everything we are doing is aligned to local, collectively contextualized visions of student success.*



2. Rethinking teaching and learning starts with a collective inquiry into the purpose of education.

*If we are all working as individuals, and we are fighting this massive problem, it's probably true that we cannot get there in our lifetime. But if we are working with our communities and students' families and students and other educators to ask about the purpose of education, if we together create a collective vision within that community that everyone is aligning their energies toward, then it becomes possible to see that vision realized in our lifetime.*

**Wendy Kopp**  
Co-founder and CEO, Teach For All



3. Education's purpose should be growing students who can shape a better future for themselves, their communities, and all of us.



4. Classrooms that grow students who can shape a better future demonstrate different purposes, lenses, strategies, and outcomes.

### GLOSSARY

**Contextualized Vision:** A locally informed, collectively evolved picture of what education is aiming for.

**Grow Students:** We have chosen the verb “grow” in this phrase because we feel it’s more active and meaningful than more traditional terms like “develop.” We made this intentional choice to inspire readers to pause and think about the opportunity and responsibility we have to help students be prepared for a very different future than the one that shaped conventional classroom models.

Well, there it is. That’s basically the entire spirit of Teaching As Collective Leadership in a nutshell.

*We need a different social contract grounded in the idea that children are curious, capable, interested people, whose personhood needs to be respected and whose interests can be stimulated. Such a contract must start with giving students a clear purpose for their learning, moving from **what** they are learning to **why**. Purposes come in many shapes, and developing one is a critical starting point for any journey of consequential learning.*

### Jal Mehta

Harvard University Professor, and researcher.  
(Quote taken from [Possible futures: Toward a new grammar of schooling](#), 2022)



*Sometimes adults feel that they cannot learn from students. However, students can have brilliant ideas to benefit the world and their own wellbeing, but they often go unheard and remain silent. School should not be a limitation; it should be a place where you learn and take those learnings outside to share with others. Education goes beyond culture, region, and economics. The school should not be a limitation, but unfortunately, it often is.*

### Mikaela Valenzuela

Student Leadership Program Participant at Enseña Perú



*Most schools teach students to sit still, be quiet, and follow rules. And yet what the world needs is students who will stand up, speak out, and take action toward change. Our educational institutions must move out of the Industrial Revolution days of growing obedient factory workers, and instead learn to unleash the individual and collective leadership of our students so they can lead the world into a better place.*

### Sanaya Bharucha

Global Head, Student Leadership & Voice, Teach For All, 2009 Teach For India Fellow, Director, Maya musical

### Key Idea 1

## Inherited models of teaching and learning are not preparing students for challenging and changing futures.

The communities where the students of the Teach For All network's teachers live represent an incredibly diverse mosaic of cultures, languages, and values. Why, then, do the classrooms across those countries, communities, and cultures look so similar? What purposes drove the design of the teacher-in-front-of-children-at-desks-in-rows model of teaching and learning that we find on every continent in virtually every community?

We must start by examining what purposes have informed the ways of teaching and learning that we and our students are inheriting. Many of the classroom structures and education systems where the Teach For All network's teachers teach began in Europe early in the industrial age. Since then, external, colonizing forces imposed and spread these structures and systems. The purposes driving these classroom models included:

- Assimilating people with diverse cultures and languages into a single language and culture
- Preparing students for the rules and compliance necessary for industrial-age factory work
- Efficient building of basic literacy and math skills necessary for productive citizenship

These industrial-era systems are fundamentally ill-suited to the needs of our world today and the purpose of growing students who can shape a better future. They are:

- Designed to achieve narrowly defined academic goals, sometimes at the cost of other important student leadership outcomes
- Dismissive of the importance of cultural identities and community values to helping students realize their potential
- Uninformed by a revolution in the science of learning and development

And yet, today's children are inheriting a rapidly changing and increasingly challenging world. Climate change, artificial intelligence, pandemics—we are handing children difficult local and global challenges to address. To create a more just, equitable, and sustainable society, today's students will need to navigate uncertainty, collaboratively solve complex problems, and create meaningful careers in a changing economy.

That's not what we are asking them to do in schools. Perfecting our inherited, colonized, compliance-focused, industrial-era ways of teaching and learning will not lead to an equitable, just, and sustainable future on this planet.

But, there is another way. Transformational classrooms in marginalized communities around the world are revealing how to support students to realize their potential as **leaders of a better future for themselves**, for their communities, and for all of us.

### GLOSSARY

**Leaders of a better future:** A concept that emerged years ago, when Teach For All hosted a collective, year-long reflection process among students, teachers, teacher developers, CEOs, community leaders, and families about the aims of our network.

## Key Idea 2

## Rethinking teaching and learning starts with a collective inquiry into the purpose of education.



Too often and for too long powerful people and institutions (and often outsiders) imposed the aims of education rather than co-constructing the aims with students, families, and communities. When oppressed and marginalized voices join in on conversations about what education is for, education's purpose changes.

As you can see in the classrooms and virtual community visits in the previous section (Discover), these explorations of purpose have three common elements.

- **COLLECTIVELY CREATED:** Strong vision evolves in genuine partnership among educators, students, families, and communities. For educators, this means being open, humble, receptive, empathetic, and self-aware in ways that cultivate authentic human partnership.
- **LOCALLY ROOTED:** Strong visions emerge from the history, culture, and values of a particular community. For educators, this means listening and learning about systemic and historical trends and dynamics that have shaped current realities.
- **GLOBALLY INFORMED:** Strong visions reflect global aspirations, what has worked in other places, and economic and environmental trends that affect us all. For educators, this means looking out for concerning challenges that will face students' futures and for inspiration from other classrooms and communities that demonstrate what is possible.

### Dehumanized by systemic oppression

Paulo Freire wrote that the purpose of education is for the oppressed to liberate themselves and their oppressor. In this [video](#) from 2010, Brittany Packnett, discusses her personal experience of being educated in the U.S. in systems built for oppressive purposes.

*When you work with local people to create a shared understanding of the type of change that you want to see in the community, where our own idea and the idea of the community can come together to create a shared vision, then that allows you to become more effective in implementing that vision. That vision becomes the vision of the community you are working with.*



#### Shisir Khanal

Former CEO of Teach For Nepal. (Quote taken from the 2005 video, "[A collective, contextualized vision - Teach For Nepal](#)")

*The reductionist approach to success has led to an economic and ecological crisis that we are experiencing today. What would it mean for us to see ourselves as custodians of life, custodians of this planet, and move from an ego-centric definition to an ecocentric definition of success.*



#### Vishal Talreja

Co-founder & Trustee, Dream a Dream, Social Entrepreneur, Author

*Our families get to sit and reflect and think about what are their hopes and dreams for their child's education. And many families say, "I have never been asked that before. I have never been asked by a teacher, by a school leader, or by a school about what my hopes and dreams are for my child. Thank you for giving me that opportunity, because it makes me step back and think about what is all this for, and what can education really do for my family and my child."*

#### Veronica Palmer

Co-founder of RISE Colorado and Teach For America Alumna. (Quote taken from "[The Power of Parents](#)" 2014 video)

## Key Idea 3

**Education's purpose should be growing students who can shape a better future for themselves, their communities, and all of us.**

When students, teachers, families, economists, historians, and others come together and ask, "What is education really for?" The answer is often a variation of "Our children should be leaders of a better world."

In Armenia, those community-based conversations led Teach For Armenia to a call for education to support students' development as entrepreneurial creators of a new Armenia. In India, similar reflections led Teach For India to center student voices, ownership, and leadership in its classrooms.

Local versions of "students who can shape a better future" are based on the history, values, and context of the classrooms and communities. Across cultural, historical, language, and geopolitical contexts, we see communities calling for education to better prepare students for the future they will inherit, navigate, and shape.



*Our classrooms and the model of teaching has to change in a manner that children don't just come to school to acquire knowledge but rather come to school to try out the knowledge. Our schools must become hubs of solving community problems rather than just teaching about our problems.*

**Charles Obore**

Teach For Uganda Alumnus

*The fundamental question must be: What is the purpose of public schools in this nation-state? And if the purpose of public schools continues to be to create individual pathways out of poverty, we will never end poverty. The point of education is not to escape poverty. The point of education is to end it.*

**Jeff Duncan-Andrade**

Founder of Roses in Concrete Community School. (Quote taken from the [video](#) "Jeff Duncan Andrade The game is rigged (inequity by design)", 2017)

*Understanding "education" as a matter of collective leadership and "teaching" as an intentional act of fostering student leadership is a radical and most positive shift for many reasons. Also re-balancing the dialectic between "center" and "periphery," between central institutions and community voices, is a fundamental step in the direction of more lively, inclusive and thus solid democracies—which per definition should be rooted in an empowered and informed citizenry. Though I have some concerns about anchoring the epicenter of education and the definition of its purpose in community voices, especially in the absence of explicit foundational values about human dignity and autonomy. In some cases, local communities have developed and crystalized problematic views that are perpetuating inequity. What if a significant portion of the population of a community believes that "some" people are inferior or superior to others according to the color of their skin, or their religion, or the social group the parents belong to and act accordingly? What if a significant portion of people in a community or a region believes and claims to have inherited exclusive rights on resources or land inhabited by others and act accordingly? Are we saying they are the source of the wisdom that should give shape and essence to education and therefore being the fundament of visions for student success and leadership? In my opinion, this is highly problematic. The considerations about the role of communities and their voices has to be built around the core value of human dignity. I see the "collective" leadership we want to foster starting with and around education as necessarily "discursive": including people, institutions, and instances who have perspectives from the community and beyond the community as well. For these reasons I would rather prefer to say and think "community as a partner" instead of "community as power."*



**Dr. Antonio Piscopo**

Deputy CEO, Teach For Italy

## Key Idea 4

### Classrooms that grow students who can shape a better future demonstrate different purposes, lenses, strategies, and outcomes.

When the purpose of a classroom is supporting students to realize their potential as leaders in their own lives and communities, the roles of the student and teacher change. The classroom's relationship to the community and its history and assets changes, as does the nature of the problem, and the work that is necessary. The actions teachers and students prioritize each day to grow and learn are constantly evolving. The design of training and support for teachers changes, and how we define and measure progress also changes.

*When we aspire to grow students who can shape a better future, teaching and learning change.*

The following chapters of this guide are an exploration of those changes:

#### How we “see” ourselves and others changes.

In the **LENSES** chapter, we share what our collective studies reveal about perspective shifts that come from reimagining education's purposes as growing students who can shape a better future. When teachers are committed to this purpose, they see students differently (as leaders), they see themselves differently (as learners), they see the communities where they teach differently (as sources of power), and they see the challenges they are addressing differently (as systemic).

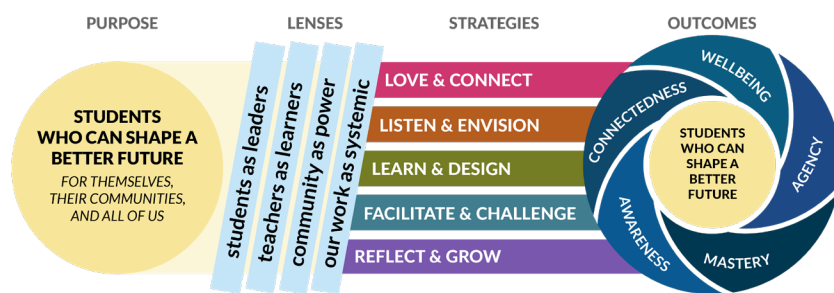
#### What we do changes.

In the **STRATEGIES** chapter, we share how orienting to this vision of student success influences teachers' actions. We find teachers who are building meaningful relationships with students' families, validating and learning with and from students' cultures, and supporting students' rigorous engagement with meaningful learning by centering student voice, ownership, and discovery. We find teachers who are reflecting on and intentional about their own growth and development.

#### How we define success changes.

In the **OUTCOMES** chapter, we share ways transformational classrooms define and measure broader outcomes that align to the vision of student leadership.

In a sense, the entire Teaching As Collective Leadership framework is simply a **map** of the **implications** of purposefully committing to a **vision** that defines student success as developing **collective leadership**.



#### GLOSSARY

**Grow Students:** We have chosen to say “grow students” because we are looking for something more active and meaningful than traditional concepts and we are hoping to inspire a brief pause to think about the opportunity and responsibility we have to help students be prepared for a very different future than the one that shaped conventional classroom models.

## DO

## How-to guides: What pursuing “purpose” looks like in the classroom

*Meaningful conversations about purpose are happening in and around transformational classrooms. Teachers, students, and families are critical contributors to those conversations.*

In the **Listen & Envision** strategies of Teaching As Collective Leadership, you will find a concrete map of actions teachers use when they put the question “why” at the center of their teaching and learning:



### **Broaden perspectives**

We seek insights and wisdom from multiple perspectives in diverse contexts to create a collective sense of possibility.



### **Host dialogue & discussion**

We hold space for authentic dialogue and discussion by being fully present, listening deeply, and exhibiting curiosity over judgment.



### **Partner with families & community**

We connect and collaborate with students' families and others in the community, engaging them in the classroom purpose and practices.



### **Critically examine history**

We explore the systemic roots of inequality, listening closely to those with lived experience of inequity, and seeking to understand the assets of the community.



### **Collectively envision success**

We listen and contribute to conversations among students, families, and educators about the purpose of education.

We are learning from the innovative ways partner organizations in the Teach For All network are adapting ideas about collectively developing visions of student success to their contexts:



**Empieza por Educar** in Spain brought together students, families, and educators to reflect on how classrooms aligned and did not align with their collectively developed vision. Not only did the ritual help educators make adjustments in classrooms, but student and family input challenged and changed the vision of success, leading them to feel ownership of education's purpose.



**Teach For Armenia** explored education's purpose with members of the community. A vision emerged of students growing as entrepreneurial problem solvers who will build a new Armenia. Coaches and educators realized immediately that the vision would require the adoption of broader student outcomes (including critical thinking, for example) rather than the rote knowledge traditionally valued in the Armenian system.

*What I have seen in schools that have a contextualized vision, you have this amazing synergy that happens from all folks rowing in the same direction. And while it takes more planning to make sure everyone has an oar and knows where we are heading, what you get when you are on the water and the water gets rough or the night gets dark is ... in the moments of greatest challenge you see the boat moving much more smoothly and much more swiftly because there is a shared sense that we all know where we are going.*

**Mike Johnston**

Mayor of Denver, Colorado, USA, Teach For America Alumnus

Please [share](#) ways that your organization is engaging with students, teachers, and communities to collectively develop the purpose of education.

The process of collectively constructing visions of student success has practical benefits for teachers, teacher coaches, program designers, and policymakers:

ROLE	BENEFITS OF ENGAGING IN A CO-CONSTRUCTIVE PROCESS	A CO-CONSTRUCTIVE PROCESS GENERATES KEY IDEAS AND INSIGHTS
Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Builds credibility and trust with students and the wider community</li> <li>Ensures what you are doing genuinely reflects the values of those you are working with</li> <li>Engages you on a journey of continuous learning in partnership with the community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides a foundation to assess student progress</li> <li>Allows you to clearly communicate what you are aiming for</li> <li>Serves as a support to bring you back to your core priorities</li> </ul>
Teacher Coaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Connects your work with the students and communities you are working with</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Defines what you are aiming for, which allows you to plan for the development of teacher mindsets/skills/behaviors needed to get there</li> </ul>
Program Designers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brings teams together around shared aims</li> <li>Reduces risk of organization being seen as imposing on the community</li> <li>Builds stronger relationships with key stakeholders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shifts the emphasis from the aims of a teacher to the aims of the community (and the teacher's role in contributing to those aims)</li> <li>Shifts the emphasis from the aims of the organization to the aims of the community</li> </ul>
Policymakers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensures policies are based on the genuine interests of the community</li> <li>Provides sources of innovation and diversity</li> <li>Increases legitimacy of policy decisions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allows multiple stakeholders to unite around common aims</li> <li>Provides a foundation for common evaluation of progress</li> </ul>

# TOOLKIT

## Resources for reflecting on (hidden) purposes and motivations in our daily actions

To jumpstart the creation of a library of resources and tools, we have been working with partner organizations, teachers, and teacher coaches to experiment with various tools and resources.

Here are some prototype tools and resources to spark innovations. Both of these resources are personal reflection tools designed to surface ways that when our purposes and motivations are different, our daily actions are different.

**TEACHING AS COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP**  
A Framework for Growing Students as Leaders of a Better Future

**Context**  
Critically examining the history and purpose of education systems reveals that the barriers to education equity and excellence are around children rather than inside them.

**Reflection Exercise**  
In this exercise, you will reflect on the purpose of 3 different education systems and what success looks like in those systems as well as the roles teachers play.

1. If you wish to engage in this exercise, please make a copy of the table on the next page.

In this system...			
The purpose of education systems is to ensure all children have the same access to resources	The purpose of education systems is to ensure all children attain the same levels of achievement	The purpose of education systems is to realize all children's potential as leaders of a better future	
How do we define and measure success?			
Who defines success in this paradigm?			
What is the role of the teacher?			
What teacher beliefs, mindsets, and perspectives are valued?			

**TEACHING AS COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP**  
A Framework for Growing Students as Leaders of a Better Future

**Context**  
Critically examining the history and purpose of education systems reveals that the barriers to education equity and excellence are around children rather than inside them.

**Reflection Exercise**  
In this exercise, you will reflect on your motivation for teaching and how that influences your actions, mindsets, and beliefs as well as how you view the role of students in the teaching and learning process.

1. If you wish to engage in this exercise, please make a copy of the table on the next page.

If this is my motivation...	My motivation is teaching in the way I was taught	My motivation is pleasing my head of school	My motivation is avoiding failure	My motivation is realizing my students' potential as leaders of a better future
How do I define and measure success?				
What is my role as a teacher?				
What teacher beliefs, mindsets, and perspectives are valued?				
What teacher actions are valued?				
What is the role of students?				

### Implications of Purpose

### Implications of Motivation

Please [share](#) tools that help students, teachers, and communities to collectively develop the purpose of education.

We are also collecting (and will continue to share in this guide) variations on those prototypes that are arising as partner organizations in the Teach For All network adapt and contextualize this model.

## SHARE

Make your voice heard: Help us evolve and improve these ideas and resources

*Teaching As Collective Leadership is a collective effort. It has been developed through contributions from thousands of people—teachers, coaches, students, families, researchers, and others from all around the world. Please join us in continuing to evolve this work by sharing your perspective.*

Below is our “digital bulletin board” which we are constantly updating with the input of generous readers who share their ideas. Please take a moment to click [here](#) on our **Co-learning Padlet** to contribute your thoughts, questions, challenges, illustrations, and links.

### Listening to explore purpose

*The question is did someone really talk to the kids and the community, and ask them what they really want? Have you talked with the parents, with the community’s authorities, and with the government’s own teachers? Or do you sense what their problem is, and you think you can solve it?*

**Jorge Aliaga**

Former RRCC Coordinator,  
Buenaventura

### Shared vision determines pedagogy

*So changing how teaching and learning take place and pedagogy are great and awesome and important. But at the end of the day, we need shared definitions and a clarity of vision toward getting to equity, justice, and liberation. And honestly, I think we’ve always wanted to get there as part of our earliest beginnings. But it’s our community approach and having community as a unit of change that helped us be more clear and more strategic about making sure that’s our ultimate goal.*

**Nedgine Paul Deroly**

Co-founder and CEO, Anseye Pou Ayiti

### Purpose lights the way

*I was a teacher for 30 years. I remember very well what it means to not have a clear purpose. I felt as if I were trapped in a labyrinth.*

**Mirela Stetco**

Training Director, Teach For Romania

### Purpose shapes strategies

*Without understanding what purpose an education system is currently pursuing, reformers cannot tack on new projects, programs, or policies (even those that have been shown to “work” in other contexts), and expect them to sustainably improve learning at scale.*

Focus to Flourish, RISE

### Who decides purpose?

*Very often we see that some people are deciding a pathway for others, not even asking what they want for themselves. How can we think of our vision for students if we don’t even think what are their dreams and aspirations?*

**Anush Kostanyan**

Former Head of Training, Teach For Armenia

### Preparing students for a challenging world

*Students now live in a world plagued by complex global problems, including climate change, massive economic inequality, ideological warfare, and a technological revolution marked by a chaotic proliferation of sources of opinion, fact, myth, paranoia, and disinformation. The generation of students coming of age today will be asked to navigate, survive, and, if they can, help to heal the world they have inherited. Schools will need to do their part to develop skilled, creative, educated, informed, and empathetic citizens and leaders—the kind of people that our economy, society, and democracy demand.*

**Jude Heaton**

From Teach For All

recommended Jal Metha and Sarah Fine’s book “In Search of Deeper Learning”

### Engaging with community to co-create purpose

*I think that, in our case, not thinking we had to do everything ourselves is what worked. Secondly, we didn't deliberately build a vision of education for Áncash from Enseña Perú. That now seems a bit irrational to me. That an outside organization comes and says, "This is my vision for this area." We have never done that, but we had the patience to work the relationships, to integrate ourselves, and become part of the community over the course of some years, and when we are ready, we allowed ourselves our own strong vision of Áncash or Huari. One built by many people. That is, this whole vision of decentralizing the work of the organization, so that the organization is not at the center, has been important because it has enabled us to get involved with types of leadership that are very strong, who are not participants of the two-year program nor are they alumni, and who are amazing leaders from the area in all kind of roles.*

**Franco Mosso**  
Former CEO, Enseña Perú

### Another education is possible

*What is most alive for me is that another education is possible. It's happening. I am moved by the desire to learn and listen more. My vision of education based on what I have heard is that we should bet on education as a comprehensive learning experience, where our teachers are the classmates, the environment, the grandmothers. An education that is less academic and more at the service of the needs of communities, cities, and countries.*

**Grace**  
Student leader, Perú



Contribute to our "Digital Bulletin Board" by sharing your thoughts, questions, challenges, validations, illustrations, and links by creating a note in our Co-learning Padlet ([here](#)).