

# EP 6: GEVER TULLEY

## FINAL TRANSCRIPT

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The time stamps begin at 00:00:00:00 when the guest appears (after our intro reel).

Christian (host)

00:00:00:09 - 00:00:21:24

Gever, it's amazing to have you. My great challenge today is that there's so much that I want to explore with you. And some of it I'm familiar with. And I just want to get into it, and hear more. And other bits are nothing I'm familiar with and I just want to have you as a guide.

Christian (host)

00:00:22:23 - 00:00:49:24

But I want to go back to a moment that I had six, seven, maybe eight years ago. And it was my first visit to Brightworks, at your previous location in the warehouse. There were a number of things that I was excited to see and a number of things that I've thought about since. But what absolutely won me over was this idea of Kid City.

Christian (host)

00:00:49:24 - 00:01:10:04

What I've tried to explain to people over time is: imagine this warehouse space and young kids, third grade, fifth grade, eighth grade, all invited to build a multi-story 'kid city'. And I'll just leave it there. Would you tell us a little bit about what that was?

Gever (guest)

00:01:13:28 - 00:01:49:05

Yeah, so imagine, if you will, that you felt so determined to start a school that you signed a lease on an empty warehouse. Just a few months before opening the doors for the school we had barely enough time to grind down the floor and remove all the old diesel and seal it in epoxy. And we opened the doors to a school that had no physical structure.

Gever (guest)

00:01:49:15 - 00:02:26:22

There were no beams coming down, no pillars. It's this beautiful old mayonnaise factory. And started just with refrigerator boxes and various doors that we recovered on the street and started creating, like, Shoji-style Japanese screens to break the space up and to try and understand how to utilize that space. At the same time, we were launching a brand new pedagogical experiment, right, which was this notion of what I call the arc..

Gever (guest)

00:02:26:22 - 00:02:56:16

Right? Like a narrative arc. And every arc in our year has a theme. And we started the school with the theme of City because we were in one and we had this kind of poetic notion of like the way that a child sees the city starts with their bedroom and it grows out through their house, into their block, you know, into their neighborhood, into their city, into their region.

Gever (guest)

00:02:57:07 - 00:03:41:00

And the school is in that expanding ring, or it's another one. And the two, they're like two raindrops. And they create these concentric circles of distance and familiarity. And we are working our way through our very first arc. And as a school with brand new staff, we'd only known each other since mid-summer. And, and I'll be honest with you, like really beyond the conception of the idea of the arc, and that we might have multiple of these in a year, I hadn't really thought through what happened at 9 a.m. on Monday.

Gever (guest)

00:03:41:22 - 00:04:23:15

You know, there wasn't a given structure of the day. And I think in my naivete, I thought that that would emerge from just trying it and trying to fit things into a conversation about city. Each of the staff whom we call collaborators. We renamed the role of teacher over to collaborator because that's what I'd been using at my summer camp at Tinkering School. I really wanted the mindset in the staff of I'm working with the students, we are collaborating on making learning happen.

Gever (guest)

00:04:25:08 - 00:04:48:22

So roll the clock forward a few weeks and we're you know, there's a lot of hiccups. There's a lot of parental concern. There's also a lot of joy. Right? And that's one of the things that really strikes you know, if you talk to Mackenzie, who is one of the founding teachers and she's now our head of school.

Gever (guest)

00:04:49:00 - 00:05:39:09

She was one of our founding collaborators and when we look back at those days together, we both just remember how much fun it was. Like it was stressful. It was there was a lot of unknown, but it was there were a lot of moments of just insane, pure, ecstatic joy. And when things worked out and when the kids were making discoveries and their minds were on fire, we felt like it was hitting that vision of a place that was a combination of all the best elements of kindergarten and all the best elements of grad school like, you know, merged together, independent thinking, you know, research-driven kids really taking topics and running with them.

Gever (guest)

00:05:39:17 - 00:05:43:06

Like you get those moments and that's what feeds you.

Christian (host)

00:05:43:06 - 00:06:02:28

But you, and by the way, you're making me think of the MIT Media Lab, where their own self-defined expression is "Lifelong Kindergarten." So I love the idea that early on

you saw this emerge purposefully and accidentally, that it was the best of kindergarten, the best for grad school. That's such an interesting way.

Christian (host)

00:06:03:08 - 00:06:05:08

And anyway, continue on with the kids.

Gever (guest)

00:06:05:11 - 00:07:08:17

Yeah. So Kid City is the result of having a weeks-long conversation with a mixed-stage group of staff and students about what makes Healthy Cities. And the conversations all revolved around how a healthy city kind of has these shared spaces that are healthy, positive sharing spaces with a lot of, like, social interaction and across age groups, across economics, across, you know, racial dimensions and gender and that that like what they when they identified locations in San Francisco that they really loved, one of the commonalities was it's next to this area where people kind of hang out on Friday afternoon and there's like music playing because a couple of people have guitars.

Gever (guest)

00:07:08:17 - 00:07:40:19

And there's also like an organic grocery store right there, you know, in the timeless way of thinking, Christopher Alexander talks about this "timeless way of building". He talks about these squares where because of the shared resources, people are drawn in and interacting with each other in a very ad hoc, unscripted way to their mutual benefit, kind of like bringing the best out in each other.

Gever (guest)

00:07:41:03 - 00:08:09:00

So, you know, here we are with this giant floor and we've been drawing things with masking tape where we think maybe next year a classroom would go or something like that. And spontaneously out of the conversation about cities and the conversation about our future spaces that we might subdivide this space into because it really was like a wide open prairie for most of the year.

Gever (guest)

00:08:09:11 - 00:08:34:27

And you could hear everything from everywhere. The like. Nobody can point their finger exactly at the moment when Kid City emerged as a project. But we're starting to talk about like, well, what if we built like this? And then the group of students just and there were only 19 of them when we started and they were kindergarten through sixth grade.

Gever (guest)

00:08:34:27 - 00:09:13:28

So, you know, it's just a wonderful, wild time. And it kind of emerged from this idea and we started building cardboard prototypes together. And right away the kids were like, If

we're going to build this, we need this to be our space. You know, the adults got the building and you make all these executive decisions about various things and what we have access to and what we don't in order for this to really, like, be an expression of our idea of a city, it has to be ours.

Gever (guest)

00:09:14:08 - 00:09:47:00

And so we agreed to only enter when invited, like from pretty much from the laying of the first few boards to define that huge space and as you recall, it was something like it was like 12 or 15 meters, you know, 35, 40 feet long on one side and a good 25 [on the other]. It was kind of a rectangle, but it had apartments overlooking a square.

Gever (guest)

00:09:47:04 - 00:10:12:01

And the apartments were also storefronts because they'd been looking at all these Victorian stores that had it, like your store. And then upstairs in the back is the little family who runs that store. And so they had taken that idea and condensed it into a single kind of cube-like space that had a storefront a wide, wide boulevard in front of it.

Gever (guest)

00:10:12:10 - 00:10:44:19

And that and that was ringa a shared courtyard down below. So we had two stories of that with a third story up above that was like the mayor's office kind of, you know, whoever was in charge of Kid City that we and that had like a hammock up on the third story, it was up inside the rafters, kind of the whole structure was built independent of the building, but it kind of wove through some of the big truss beams that went through it.

Gever (guest)

00:10:45:05 - 00:11:18:25

And what I loved so much about that is Kid City was built in the exact location where at the beginning of the city arc we had kept goats. So a friend was coming through the city to speak at a conference about something up in Seattle. And she dropped off the goats, went to the airport, went to Seattle, and we took care of the baby goats in this location.

Gever (guest)

00:11:18:25 - 00:11:41:08

And that also resonated in the city because there used to be livestock in the city. And, you know, every 20 years or so, some new animal would be excluded from the city, horses and cows and chickens. Even now we have chickens again. There was a period of time when you couldn't have chickens. Now you just can't have a rooster.

Gever (guest)

00:11:42:04 - 00:12:22:07

So yeah, but Kid City allowed us to really embody some principles about what the kids had identified as great qualities of good governance and, I think that a big part of what made it magical was that everybody on staff treated that space as there as belonging to

the students and that we only entered. And then one of the older students pointed out, like the analogy between staff and vampires, that the vampire can only come in if you invite them across the threshold.

Gever (guest)

00:12:23:16 - 00:12:58:24

So that was another interesting thing. But yeah, Kid City stands out in my memory too, as one of those great culminating moments in our first arc where in our reflection as a staff, which we would do weekly at the end of the arc, we were kind of sitting back and looking at the year. So far, like, okay, okay, this has been like one of the most stressful, hard, difficult times, but if this is what's going to come out of it, it's worth getting better at this.

Christian (host)

00:13:01:26 - 00:13:12:00

You know, well, and I just as in terms of the play on language, I love the idea that baby goats and children both attach themselves to kids.

Gever (guest)

00:13:12:00 - 00:13:12:11

Right, the double entendre.

Christian (host)

00:13:12:11 - 00:13:46:27

I really love the fact that there were emergent ideas you could have whenever strategically designed for you could have had a pretty right as you did but you could not material we have affected even an approximation of it wouldn't have gone where it needed to go. And so that for me I think is really compelling about I think, one, it's part of you as a creative and a leader and an entrepreneur and a protector of spaces where young people's imaginations and questions are not cute, they are vital.

Christian (host)

00:13:47:12 - 00:14:07:24

But there's also this idea of we've got to name the shop, we've got to by design or with purpose, right? Whether it's because of liability or marketing or we just want to have a direction to head, even if we get lost. On the other hand, we have to keep space for the unexpected, right? And the discovery and the oblique, you know, what's around the corner.

Christian (host)

00:14:08:10 - 00:14:24:18=

So I want to give you two things that from the very moment you launched the school, I had just become aware of you. I think, you know, you'd been on sort of the big stage at TED, and, you know, you were talking about giving kids dangerous things. It was a beautiful way to get to know somebody's way of looking at the world.

Christian (host)

00:14:24:18 - 00:14:39:22

And you were getting ready, you know, Tinkering School, I think, was existed or tinkering. Tinkering, yeah. A thing where you were clearly doing experiences and having kids build roller coasters and build sailboats and put them in the Bay. And that was time to create a school. Can we do this for real money?

Christian (host)

00:14:40:02 - 00:15:05:19=

And right away you did two things in terms of language that I have never forgotten. One, you named your school lowercase "brightworks" so you immediately sense that something is prototypical if it's like, 'we're not trying to compete with all the other independent and established schools'. There is a realness to it, but also humility.

Christian (host)

00:15:05:19 - 00:15:12:27

I thought that was an interesting move. Right? Secondarily, you called it an extraordinary school day one. You're not even...

Gever (guest)

00:15:12:29 - 00:15:13:24

Yeah.

Christian (host)

00:15:13:24 - 00:15:38:16

You've barely gotten out of the mayonnaise factory. We have it like we don't have next Monday planned out yet and yet day one no apologies and extraordinary school not we are an extraordinary school I thought that was a really interesting third and then I want to ask you about it. And third, you said, and I don't remember the exact phrasing, but everything is interesting or where everything is interesting.

Christian (host)

00:15:39:00 - 00:15:58:18

And if you know nothing about this school, in fact, you don't even know that Brightwork says the word school attached to it. And you see something called brightworks, lowercase something. You're not going to forget that.

Christian (host)

00:15:58:18 - 00:16:07:20

Tell me a little bit about you and your job and you know, your co-conspirator was like naming your moonshot, but also playfulness. Like, talk about that a little bit.

Gever (guest)

00:16:08:08 - 00:16:38:29

Yeah. When you're about to try something that you have honestly never tried before. I mean, I had been running the overnight camp since 2000. I started in 2005 in this very

room and when you know, when you're trying to organize yourself to actually, like, pull this project off, you spend a lot of time living in the space mentally where it already exists, right?

**Gever (guest)**

00:16:38:29 - 00:17:05:12

Like you, you have to project yourself forward enough. And I think whether it's my gift or my curse, I often get stuck in that place and you'll find me talking about a new project that hasn't even started as if I'm already working on it as if we're already in it. And I chose it, chose Bright Works in a conversation with another educator.

**Gever (guest)**

00:17:05:25 - 00:17:38:18

It, you know brightworks is that part of a sailboat that you don't varnish, that you keep, you keep clean and you keep it integral by polishing it by hand. And I thought, you know, that's a great idea. Like if the ship I I'm fascinated by the idea of single-handed sailors and these people who cross oceans, you know, alone in these 16-foot sailboats and things like that.

**Gever (guest)**

00:17:38:29 - 00:18:18:09

And if the ship is the metaphor and the sailor is the mind of the student and the ship is the student, you know, as a person, then this notion that I'm going to apply myself to keep this piece of brass from corroding by polishing it every day, it was I just thought that was a beautiful idea for a way that we keep our mind fresh and we keep you know, we keep these things that make us who we are alive by polishing them.

**Gever (guest)**

00:18:18:23 - 00:18:48:17

And so I leaning into that metaphor of this thing as a shared effort where we're all polishing these pieces of this big ship. That was kind of the language that I was using, the decision like this is another one where it's far enough back that I'm not sure any of us remember when the tagline extraordinary school became part of the vocabulary.

**Gever (guest)**

00:18:48:17 - 00:19:43:23

But for me, what it constantly reminded me of, and I'm sure I wrote it in a notebook somewhere, the thing that it kept me at was if you can't walk into this place and feel immediately, hear distinctly, see, obviously how different it is from the school that you went to then we're not quite there yet. So calling ourselves an extraordinary school was a way of setting our expectations for our own work to be out there and tinkering School had taught us that these big charismatic projects are not for show, it's that they leave an impression on the student who was working on that wind-powered train on that roller coaster.

Gever (guest)

00:19:44:10 - 00:20:11:06

They never forget that experience. And so kid City is a perfect example. You can talk to any of those 19 kids, you know, of which the last one graduated last year just as a milestone. But you could ask Nora Bell, you know, what stands out in your mind about the very first arc at Bright Works? And she'll say, Kid City, you know, 100%.

Gever (guest)

00:20:12:12 - 00:20:38:27

I think if you ask kids what happened in third grade, you know if you ask them when they're in ninth grade, they can't remember third grade. If you ask them when they're 30, there's a 10% chance they remember the name of a third-grade teacher, you know. Right. Because there's no distinguishing characteristic. No experience there to tie those memories to.

Gever (guest)

00:20:39:09 - 00:21:08:18

And I fundamentally believe that you know, one of the core principles is we think with our hands, right? That when we touch things, when we create things, when we claim things, when we interact with them physically, we are making connections intellectually to the ideas we're exploring and the physical experience of building or constructing that idea. And I think you mentioned lifelong kindergarten.

Gever (guest)

00:21:10:13 - 00:21:42:12

Seymour Papert is one of my heroes. I have an altar to him in the back of my mind because every time I feel like I've figured something out, I feel like, oh, I find some piece of research. And then I see Seymour wrote it and but what a delightful and wonderful man. And in his idea that we construct knowledge by constructing things, whether they're the construction of a story or the construction of a physical object.

Gever (guest)

00:21:42:27 - 00:22:16:02

You know, when we make this thing, we learn a lot, not just about how plywood goes together, but about how light behaves inside a lantern, you know, about how it looks when it's on a shelf, how, you know, I just feel like that notion of an extraordinary school would be what's going to come from our emphasis on making learning tangible, even if we're talking about philosophy.

Gever (guest)

00:22:16:02 - 00:22:46:00

And, you know, there's this amazing man on our staff, Anthony, and he gets into these conversations with our students. It doesn't matter if they're in third grade or 10th grade about, you know, meaning and the purpose of existence in these conversations last four years, you know, it'll be an ongoing conversation with a group of students. And you could look at that and you could say, well, that has no tangible component.

Gever (guest)

00:22:46:27 - 00:23:10:02

But then you look at the miles they put in walking together and the time that they spent just sitting quietly in a room, chewing on an idea, like reading a paragraph out of a book and chewing on an idea. And then you know, like adding something, adding a new chip to the pile, essentially. I think those are all also construction activities.

Gever (guest)

00:23:10:02 - 00:23:44:12

Constructivists put it in papers in know terms and that's if there is a secret source, it's that, you know, we believe in the impact of doing right that that's maybe one of the characteristics of great works. I think the other is that we built a school on the like one of the foundations is just this notion that we're always working on our collaboration.

Gever (guest)

00:23:45:14 - 00:24:17:08

Right. You know, I think a lot of schools would quote their academics and things like that, or maybe they point at their project-based learning curriculum and look at all these beautiful robots that the kids made. We're just as likely to talk about, you know, to get up on stage and talk for hours about how well these kids communicate with each other because they adopt each other's worldviews of the problem and they share language and aggressively try to support each other.

Gever (guest)

00:24:17:29 - 00:24:24:23

You know, and I think that's the other half of what makes it an extraordinary school.

Christian (host)

00:24:25:15 - 00:24:45:10

And I have I'm going to ask you another question I'm going to ask. You brought up Christopher Alexander a few moments ago. And I think for a lot of architects, Chris Alexander represents a mindset of design that's based upon the patterns of human behavior. First and foremost...

Gever (guest)

00:24:45:10 - 00:24:46:04

Right.

Christian (host)

00:24:46:04 - 00:25:17:15

...are the behaviors of the gestures, the intuitive nature of being live. And from there we discern patterns of design or space, right? And maybe the space exists and we see how it's used or the space doesn't exist and we create it based again. And one of the classic ones is the difference between a sidewalk versus a footpath. And to a degree, your school has always reminded me of noticing the footpath that emerges, and the footpath can only emerge if people are given permission to explore.

Christian (host)

00:25:17:29 - 00:25:56:21

But then there's a sensibility and an awareness of that. The footpath isn't destroying the grass, metaphorically or literally. It's actually the natural behavior of curiosity, learning relationships, and the pace of walking. So to me, there's something interesting about your school. So mascot, I'm going to reference something from the very beginning. In the first couple of years when I come to visit Brightworks versus you and your community have just moved to a brand new building in the Presidio, you know, an illustrious, historic, you know, sort of piece of buildings that anyone that goes to San Francisco knows the Presidio and even just feels San Francisco, they see the Presidio

Christian (host)

00:25:56:21 - 00:26:21:19

and a view of the Bay, all these things. And yet it's more it's a predetermined set of spaces. So not that a man is factory isn't predetermined. That's not what he was, nor two things. Yes, when I first visited and I'm curious about the difference as you go now, how you recreate the atmosphere for the unexpected. So early on, I remember one thing that the kitchen, the dining room, the area, right, breaking bread or eating lunch or getting a juice box.

Christian (host)

00:26:22:04 - 00:26:49:23

It is what you treated as found in the material. So every chair looked different because they had been actually donated by a family or founded goodwill or wherever. And it was this wonderful sort of like no one knows where that chair came from, but it feels right and it's off that a lot. But I remember that and just thinking and the material of cooking like the colander was visible to the student and the student may actually prepare the pasta within collaboration with.

Christian (host)

00:26:49:23 - 00:27:06:11

So it wasn't just like a meal is done differently than learning, it was all of a kind. And yet you still had to get kids through lunch to get them to the arc, right? So there was something you did that was super modest that gets at the same spirit that I loved. And, I think it may be one of the most magical things you did.

Christian (host)

00:27:06:22 - 00:27:24:04

And, so just give you credit for it. And I'm curious about as you move to the new school, what did you get to borrow from your old bag of tricks? So you had a long piece of paper, effectively the long kind of paper teacher's having rolls and they, you know, maybe put a homecoming paint, you know, sign up on a gym.

Gever (guest)

00:27:24:12 - 00:27:24:23

Right.

Christian (host)

00:27:24:23 - 00:27:40:21

It's just that kind of like the paper you quickly tear and it's in every single school. It's kind of iconic, like the apple, the desk. And you had that spread across an entire long warehouse wall, right? No windows on that wall were just and it was a space for you. I think you met on a regular basis. You would circle up a lot of presentations.

Christian (host)

00:27:40:21 - 00:28:00:18

Big things could be built and torn down. But what I loved about it is on the far left, which is very western, we start on the left, moved to the right, and everyone in the community could stick a photo of something that reminded them of an experience, a moment, learning, discovery, presentation, getting lost on a field trip, whatever it was.

Christian (host)

00:28:00:28 - 00:28:22:25

And some of them were probably like, Hey, kid, stop. Let me get your photo. Others are much more, yeah, B-roll. But what I loved about it is at the beginning of the school, it was a blank piece of paper. It's September, October, and March. The images started showing up like a constellation emerging and but it was always there's blank space for the next memory or perspective.

Christian (host)

00:28:23:04 - 00:28:50:29

And I was struck by the fact that in almost every school we see images of learning. We see photographs of people who have done a thing worth remembering or celebrating or just taking note of. Right. This is these are our people. I have never seen a school hack the bulletin board or the framed composite. It. That's a human way that if you just saw that and you took 30 seconds, you would know what you stand for as an institution.

Christian (host)

00:28:51:05 - 00:29:11:15

You would know that it was democratic. You would know that it wasn't precious. You wouldn't know those pictures could be pulled off like a Post-it note or moved, you know, that people could have done something else with it and I've always thought that was a really savvy move because it was inexpensive, it filled space, it was invitational, but also it was a principle writ large.

Christian (host)

00:29:11:15 - 00:29:38:27

So kids in the warehouse see prototyping furniture that didn't fit on the kitchen table, the board. So now you move to an incredible new space that has real structural, real walls, a real vista, a real arrival, all those things. And you have to now create this reality and the purpose. Tell us a little bit about how you and your team designed or made peace with the design in this new space.

Gever (guest)

00:29:40:03 - 00:30:23:29

Well, I think, you know, it goes back to the way that Kid City emerged from a conversation about what makes a city great. We've been in four different spaces now, you know, which is very unusual for a school to survive moving, let alone moving three times, you know. And we were pretty much unceremoniously kicked out of that warehouse space when it turned out that the landlord had, shall we say, misled the fire department about how many fire exits there were, and that had just been on the books and unchecked for a decade.

Gever (guest)

00:30:23:29 - 00:30:55:25

\But the thing that we see when we look back at that original space, at that warehouse, was that it had those it had actually four centers of shared activity. There was the kitchen that you just mentioned, which yeah, that's the beating heart of our house. That's the beating heart of our school. It had an art studio that was under this beautiful skylight in this pool of light.

Gever (guest)

00:30:56:11 - 00:31:29:09

And the art studio was actually at the intersection of all paths through the school, and then over just barely to the side of that was the woodshop, right, where, you know, power tools and all of that. And our beautiful tool wall where kids could walk up and get the tools they needed there. That permission was tacit. It was, you know, set up in such a way that the tool was said to the child, like, We trust you.

Gever (guest)

00:31:29:28 - 00:32:03:27

Grab a pair of pliers when you need them, right? Grab a drill. And then the other one was what we called the cork floor, which was just a reference to the material we put down. But it was a place where you could grab a beanbag chair, you could hang out with your friends on a rainy day. You know, you could go and dance or rumble, tumble, whatever you needed to do to get your eyes out and get back to you or, you know, get back to whatever activity you needed to.

Gever (guest)

00:32:03:27 - 00:32:36:00

But those shared spaces were so critical because they weren't scheduled. You didn't book them like a meeting room. You headed towards the shop with the intention of using the shop. And if there was already somebody in there, either you figured out how to work in the same space with them. And so now this group of students is seeing with that student, that group of students is working on, or, you changed your plan on the fly, right?

Gever (guest)

00:32:36:00 - 00:33:29:17

So as a teacher that the collaborators constantly had to adapt on the fly and as a result, the students did too. And I think that made the space feel alive, that it was a constant. It itself was a constant collaboration and negotiation. And that negotiation is positive in nature because it's constantly the conversation. The students are constantly seeing, the collaborators trying to accommodate each other, having this very supportive, mutual, like, oh, can you just give us 15 minutes and we'll finish dominating the shop will be into our glue up and you can take over the tools, you know, like that kind of thing.

Gever (guest)

00:33:30:00 - 00:34:01:05

And, that's a very different way for teachers to relate to one another and a very different way for students, you know, to relate. So the other thing that I think really stood out about that is that no space was frozen. You know, we changed the shape of each of those studios. Then we carved a chunk out of the caulk floor to create a high school space.

Gever (guest)

00:34:01:21 - 00:34:09:12

You know, as the school grew and the students were inching up, the art studio changed shape three or four times while we...

Christian (host)

00:34:09:12 - 00:34:12:27

Were where you literally lowered the floor because your kids were taller?

Gever (guest)

00:34:13:28 - 00:34:14:09

No.

Christian (host)

00:34:14:20 - 00:34:17:06

No, I would say I said, yeah.

Gever (guest)

00:34:17:20 - 00:34:18:15

We can't do that.

Christian (host)

00:34:18:21 - 00:34:22:20

Yeah, you were. Yeah. But the school had to quite literally morph in real-time.

Gever (guest)

00:34:23:08 - 00:35:05:18

Exactly. Exactly. And so nothing, you know, going back to your observation that none of these things were treated as precious, you know, a lot of times of visit. I'm a huge fan of the Reggio approach, but sometimes I see, especially in their like mid-years of Reggio-inspired schools, that the Italians have become kind of 'precious'. They're like they're

curated to the point of museum status and then the kids enter them as if they're, they're afraid to touch the exhibit a little bit and they sit in the center and don't interact with the objects.

Gever (guest)

00:35:05:18 - 00:35:29:13

Not you know, I think they all go through a phase where it feels that way and then you come out of it and you suddenly realize, like, oh, I need to co-curate this space with the students and I need to like this will become, you know, more meaningful when they see their own reflection in this space.

Gever (guest)

00:35:31:03 - 00:36:03:18

And I think the other amazing thing is how it just comes back to that foundational element of it's all about collaboration, the design and use of the space. What we do here is an ongoing, somewhat improvisational collaboration. We each have a kind of structure to the day that we're headed towards, but if something changes and you know, that's okay because we have five other things we could do.

Gever (guest)

00:36:03:18 - 00:36:44:13

So moving into this new space, we also had the experience of just having for the year before COVID started and then over to the past two years, three years total in an old Catholic school, which is a classic cells and bells architecture of central hall corridors, rooms with doors, separation, and isolation all up and down the board, structurally, yeah, it was, it was the least accommodating of bright works approach that you can imagine.

Gever (guest)

00:36:44:13 - 00:37:12:25

And where did we start doing this? We start taking doors off. We start, you know, creating shared spaces in the hallways and the adaptation is happening. And then COVID hits and we're in the distance learning and we're sending home boxes of tools and materials and, you know, we're doing what we had to do. But when we realized we just absolutely had to find a different space.

Gever (guest)

00:37:13:15 - 00:37:43:11

And we started looking and we were looking for that old warehouse feeling. We were running into a new, unexpected challenge, which is that San Francisco is backlogged on permits and getting a change of zoning to let us put an education facility in and a light industrial warehouse was going to take years, you know, and so we started, you know, we started looking at very exotic solutions.

Gever (guest)

00:37:43:11 - 00:38:10:06

And then this space came up and it was a little group of three buildings. I mean, they're very large buildings now, you know, but there were these three buildings. And as soon as we got there, it was in the woods. It's like you said, you can see the bay, you can see the Golden Gate Bridge, and you can also there's a great big freeway, you know, raised up just to the west of us.

Gever (guest)

00:38:10:17 - 00:38:34:22

And you can hear the freeway, you know, that is part of the environment, but you can also walk for about five or 6 minutes and be in pristine forests that you can't hear the freeway and all you hear is nature birds and the wind and the trees. You can walk 8 minutes down and be standing in the Pacific Ocean.

Gever (guest)

00:38:35:21 - 00:39:03:10

It is a ridiculously beautiful spot, but it's also an old army barracks. You know, it was the barracks for the mounted cavalry. And there's a horse paddock down below us, and it still has horses. When we looked at it, we immediately started like our sketches on top of the Floorplans were like, Oh, what if we put the studio here and we overlap?

Gever (guest)

00:39:03:29 - 00:39:52:23

Okay, this will be like an art studio an old cork floor. This will be the hangout place. Now this is going to be art studio and science and life sciences, you know, and we're starting to figure out not how do we carve the spaces up, but how do we create deliberately shared spaces that make sense in that sharing and create those serendipitous overlaps of groups of students coming in and accommodating each other and, and the serendipity that comes out of those crossings, you know, to have microscopes and paint brushes in the same room, you know, flies in the face of every high school in America.

Gever (guest)

00:39:53:12 - 00:40:22:25

And yet, of course, they're there. It's a beautiful combination of things and the detailed drawings of flowers, you know, plants and animals that the kids are bringing in from their walks in the woods because there's the art studio and the sciences up against each other downstairs. It's the shop, but oh, it's also a glue-up area.

Gever (guest)

00:40:22:25 - 00:41:02:27

Oh, and it's the access to what we call the cages, which is where all the raw materials are, which is just the old leftover storage system of the previous tenants of the building. There's a space downstairs that's music and math. Right? And of course, those go together. I mean, you know these are the things that by association allow us to bridge what are normally silos of knowledge and start to see the connections between that are where everything new and wonderful is discoverable, you know.

Christian (host)

00:41:04:09 - 00:41:21:27

Amazing. All right. So we got to talk. Yes. You have referenced art. So I want to save some space for talking about what arts are. And I want to ask about some of the things that you guys are working on next or you're experimenting with. And because I just know you never stop, no matter how things are.

Christian (host)

00:41:22:05 - 00:41:45:00

So like on your website right now, I'm going to read a line, but I just see something that I just found beautiful and I think sets up this idea of what a mark is. So you're talking about the pandemic and these last two plus years, you and every school community have had to really sort of reimagine its purpose, figure out how to just take care of people the next morning.

Christian (host)

00:41:45:00 - 00:42:12:17

Really, everything can be taken for granted. But here's what I love that you all did, because every school has been put in a moment of not knowing what comes next. And here's what you wrote. Your team wrote In Fog, Rain and glorious sunshine, kids found new questions in the ways birds soared and turtles basked, made epic forts, and discovered math in the cemeteries of plants.

Christian (host)

00:42:12:26 - 00:42:36:24

We're not talking about a teacher blog or something on LinkedIn and a caption. We're talking about like our story. Like, you're right, any family who wants to apply is going to read that. First of all, beautiful as a parent. Some of it. But what I find beautiful about that, even more important is you are always doing that, but even you all had to reclaim that and I find that interesting.

Christian (host)

00:42:36:24 - 00:42:58:07

So yeah, it comes down to this idea of the art and you as a school have always explored is project-based learning. But in a weird way, it's not project-based learning. It is about it's about noticing a phenomenon. So for instance, if a child or a team of collaborators notices, a wind strike merges with the noticing of wind.

Christian (host)

00:42:58:07 - 00:43:25:15

So it's a phenomenon and it is easy. It's difficult to name and exactly easy to understand like it's and then the arc is a more it's more the methodology of how we make progress. So would you talk about noticing the what would you talk about ARC and about this, this sort of idea of a phenomenon? And how does that give people space and shape on a Monday over the course of a, you know, from kindergarten to high school?

Christian (host)

00:43:25:15 - 00:43:30:19

Like. Talk to us about that. Yeah, at the heart of everything.

Gever (guest)

00:43:30:19 - 00:44:07:13

I think when I was starting to shape the school, you know, formulate this idea, of course, I was sharing it with everybody that I knew and at that point, I was working at Adobe. I think so. Boy, it's a little bit hard to remember, but one of my very best friends is also has been a board member ever since we started Tinkering School, and actually, I have the pleasure of having two very good friends on the board who've been with me all the way through.

Gever (guest)

00:44:07:28 - 00:44:49:15

And one of them was, you know, sea level and Adobe. And he was leading a big design initiative and reinventing how we approached user interface and user design and user centrism. And, and he gave this great analogy to a group of us where he said, you know, imagine for a moment that you have the of, you know, building the earth and you tell a group of designers, hey, we need animals.

Gever (guest)

00:44:49:15 - 00:45:13:00

Like, I'll take care of land and water. You do animals and the designers go away. And for six months they noodle around and there's like no cohesion. There's no sense to it. They have no finished animal to show you the re's nothing. And you realize, like, okay, just how about this? Make birds, you focus on birds, I'll do the rest.

Gever (guest)

00:45:13:15 - 00:45:44:02

And, you know, six months go by and you find yourself in the exact same situation. There's no finished bird. And they're arguing about what it is, what makes a bird. And, you know, and finally, you're just like, look, make ducks, just make ducks. And you come back in two weeks later and you've got 50 varieties of duck, right?

Gever (guest)

00:45:44:02 - 00:46:11:06

When I was talking to Michael Goff about the purpose of the ark, you know, he reminded me of the story about ducks, and that stayed in my mind, you know, all these years of we need a constraint. We need a way to focus our attention as educators and students. We need the thing that we're working on.

Gever (guest)

00:46:12:01 - 00:46:40:28

So the arc is designed to be this element in the narrative. It's the MacGuffin in a lot of senses, right? It drives the plot along. But around it, we're constantly doing tangential

things. So the purpose of the art, it's not to be able to go around and tell a group of students and an educator what to ask them, like what does that have to do with cities?

Gever (guest)

00:46:41:16 - 00:47:25:11

It's to provoke the thought process that gets them to take on something deeply and engage with it at the deepest level s and in that sense, the arc has been a remarkably productive structure. It consistently gives us a touchpoint to return to if we feel like we've, you know, we're a little bit lost or we've run this whatever exploration in line of inquiry to its logical conclusion either along the way, we've spiraled off a couple of things that we want to go back and check out, or we go back to the ARC and we look at this ever-growing list of things that is related to that arc topic.

Gever (guest)

00:47:25:26 - 00:47:53:12

One of my favorite examples and the one that may be most clearly characterizes what this is like is when I announced to the school that the next arc with salt, you know, and I have to say it was the greatest dramatic lead balloon in the history of announcements I have the students and the staff were like, What the hell, dude?

Gever (guest)

00:47:53:18 - 00:47:54:24

You know, like, you.

Christian (host)

00:47:54:24 - 00:47:58:04

Could have given us rocket ships or angry lions. You gave us...

Gever (guest)

00:47:58:04 - 00:48:30:15

Yeah, gave us salt and I kid you not at the end of the salt arc that the students and the staff were like, you know, do we have to go on to the next arc? Could we just stay with salt through the end of the year? Like we've got so much going on? And, you know, I was also reminded of one of our new educators, a staff member who'd come over from Tinkering School and was now working with the students.

Gever (guest)

00:48:30:22 - 00:49:09:18

It was like the time to stop the activity, you know, the time to call for a break in the activity at the end of it. Like if you're just trying to wrap up the school day or something is when they're in the heat of the moment because they'll come back with that passion. And this is the same way we had a visiting writer when we were talking about books, Cory Doctorow stopped by and he was talking about the students and the students were like struggling to work on their own books, which they were writing during the book arc.

Gever (guest)

00:49:10:01 - 00:49:32:05

And they asked me, how do you get yourself to finish your book? And Cory said, I write for one hour a day, rain or shine on the book that I'm working on. If I'm working on two books, I write for 2 hours, one hour on each book, and when that timer goes off, I stop in mid-sentence.

Gever (guest)

00:49:32:07 - 00:49:51:28

It doesn't matter. And I go away. And sometimes my mind is on fire and it's all I can do to keep myself from rushing back to the keyboard and working on the book. But I don't do it. And I come back the next day and I get back. I go now I feel like I've only got one hour to capture all of this stuff I've been thinking about and I pound it out.

Gever (guest)

00:49:52:24 - 00:50:11:25

And then there are those days where I can barely stand to be at the keyboard and I'm hating it and I'm just writing and I'm forcing myself to write for an hour. My editor and I discovered a few books into the process that neither one of us can remember, which were the good days and which were the bad days.

Gever (guest)

00:50:12:15 - 00:50:49:07

When you look back at the book, that feeling of struggle and hating it is not compromising the quality of your writing. It's a reflection of the challenges you're facing with your own writing. It's fighting with the demon. And, and I think that, too, is one of these qualities of the arc. So when we hit the end of the salt arc and it was like, no, we're going on to what was the fairness?

Gever (guest)

00:50:49:15 - 00:51:15:18

It was the first time we tried something that wasn't a noun. We went on to fairness, and that turned out to be wonderful as well and challenging in its own way. The characteristic of a great arc is the metaphor that I use. It's that I'm a keyhole, which if you're across the room from a closed door, what you see is a little speck of light.

Gever (guest)

00:51:16:15 - 00:51:41:29

And the closer you get, that light starts to show you like, Oh, there's an, if you peek in, there's a bookcase and if you put your eye right up against it, maybe you see the lamp and, and a chair and oh, there's someone in there. And when you pass through that keyhole, that room, what you see is this world where everything is related to salt.

Gever (guest)

00:51:42:18 - 00:52:11:00

You know, you notice, like, and this is true, our world is like coated in salt, everything salted it. Everything depends on salt. There are, you know, dozens of kinds of salt, but

you also kind of realize like, oh, I have these lenses now, these glasses or this perspective from this room where I see all these salt relationships. But, oh, it's.

**Gever (guest)**

00:52:11:11 - 00:52:18:28

It's my world, right? Everything's related to salt. Yeah, including my sibling, you know.

**Gever (guest)**

00:52:21:00 - 00:52:48:21

And I think that's the thing I come back to and why our arcs are often these like distill it words like salt. You know, salt is it's one of these unequivocal words. It represents a very distinct thing, and yet it connects to everything. So this year, one of our great experiments, we normally do three arcs in a year.

**Gever (guest)**

00:52:49:03 - 00:53:32:19

This year we're doing two conversations with the students. Over the past couple of years, everybody was on board. Let's try it. Let's do two and we're doing it. It's funny, I just drew a blank. Oh, yeah. We're under the overarching theme for the whole year. Is this notion of magic, right? So. So that's an element of the arc in the year is that we'll have three arcs arranged under, a fourth concept this year it's magic as the overarching concept.

**Gever (guest)**

00:53:32:19 - 00:54:28:22

So we're looking for evidence of magic. We're looking at things that draw out the magic in experience, the arc that we're starting with as monsters. Right. And, and in metaphor in politics, in, you know, in mythology, in in history, in actuality, you know, the living monsters of our time, the all of these things. And the second arc is monsters and machines and when you start to look at these topics with the perspective of we're going to spend half a year on monsters, well, you just have to take a moment for a deep breath and figure out, like, there are so many places we could start and so many places we could go.

**Gever (guest)**

00:54:29:05 - 00:55:20:27

Right? And the truth is, we only need a good place to start because out of that conversation, all the new opportunities will come out. But the act of mapping out the possible landscape gives us, uh, gives us like waypoints that start to show up as things we keep an eye out for. You know, our mom, one of the, one of the groups recently the youngest group, had a conversation in the collaborative, was writing down the ideas that the kids had just around, you know, kind of a concept map and just riffing on the concept of monsters and are monsters real and, you know, how do we what should we do when we find a monster,

**Gever (guest)**

00:55:20:29 - 00:55:58:20

you know, like going back and forth from the imaginary to the actual physical, the actual. And what was beautiful about this list of ideas related to the concept of Monster in the Corner, someone had written the question Do monsters wear shoes? And like, I guarantee you, if we put that if we put the word monster in the middle of a chalkboard at a graduate school, and we started asking people about, you know, what are some concepts related to monsters?

Gever (guest)

00:55:58:20 - 00:56:29:25

We would never get the question, do monsters wear shoes? No, it is a really good question. It's not you know, it's it speaks so much to the ability of that student in the moment to just imagine the life of a monster and realize, like, I wonder if their feet get sore. They're so big, you know, and standing on those feet, I wonder if they have comfortable shoes.

Christian (host)

00:56:29:25 - 00:56:45:14

So you think like Monsters Inc, there's clearly going to be a shoe store there somewhere, at least a foot doctor, but yeah, in the world of a student. And so anyway, we do hope at some point in time you'll let our audience and us know whether or not they crack the code on the shoe. Question Yeah, I only have a little bit of time left.

Christian (host)

00:56:45:21 - 00:57:09:27

Oh, yeah. I mean, one, I mean, it's flown by. But there are a couple of things that you were sharing kind of off-camera earlier. Yeah. That I found it really interesting that you are exploring next. And so, you know, later on, will point to the ARC descriptions and you know, it's where Kate gets to explore and they express themselves in different materials and ideas and they eventually have to share or have an exposition.

Christian (host)

00:57:09:27 - 00:57:32:11

Right. They have to invite the world into what they discovered, which is amazing. And it's not just about exams and tests. It's actually like, I'm going to take you to a place that yeah, but so you've got a couple of things and you can talk about all them. Talk about one of them however you want to do. You've been working on something called the Mars Project for a while, and it's one of those things where you're like, Oh, that's clever, but I have a sense it's much bigger Instagram shows.

Christian (host)

00:57:33:03 - 00:57:53:17

Yeah, you have been talking about something that you're rolling out now and it will like next year it will become more solid. It's something called Gap Lab, which is like a Gap year. So I'm curious about what Gap Lab is. And then finally and I love that you're going to you're writing a manifesto and it's a festival and you're imagining what's coming next.

Christian (host)

00:57:53:17 - 00:57:59:07

I am super curious. So yeah. Lab manifesto. Whatever you want to talk about.

Gever (guest)

00:58:00:14 - 00:58:29:06

Why don't I. There are two very concrete things there in your list and let's just touch on them because they are. I think they're fascinating. I think they speak to ways that we might scale education differently than we typically do. And then the last one, the manifesto. Let's just end on that because I want to share six of the manifesto.

Gever (guest)

00:58:29:16 - 00:59:00:04

Yeah, we'll get to that. Let's leave that as our it's our capstone deal. So maybe the simplest one of these to describe is an experiment that we're piloting right now, which you mentioned, it's called Gap Lab and it's a Gap year program. It's open to students 16 and up. We don't have an upper age limit. And so I'm actually talking to a couple of educators who are thinking about taking a sabbatical and spending six months to a full-scale school year with us.

Gever (guest)

00:59:02:01 - 00:59:52:01

It's an immersive program. You come and join the environment. One of the philosophical pedagogical principles of the Gap lab is that by focusing on other people's learning, we become we develop a better understanding of our own learning processes. And I developed gap Lab because I was seeing high school students going off to college with no sense of what they were going to do there and no mental transition from the passive receiver of buckets of information being poured on you in high school, in testing, and all of that.

Gever (guest)

00:59:52:20 - 01:00:23:10

And they were just going to bring that same mindset to college and hopefully, something would stand out as something interesting that they wanted to get involved in, but they have no idea of what it was going to be. And, you know, I think for the majority of American high school students, that's how they approach college. Maybe they have some notion they'll have like a career in mind and it'll have a broad title and somehow they're going to go to college and learn the things that put them in that career.

Gever (guest)

01:00:23:10 - 01:00:50:01

But what is it like? Less than 30% of graduate college students go into the field that they got their degree in right after five years or something. I'm sure I'm misquoting some of those numbers, but it is a really awful number. And I don't say that in terms of college. College is a great place to go and find new horizons and things like that.

Gever (guest)

01:00:50:17 - 01:01:33:23

But I don't think spending two years not knowing why you're there, not doing what your purpose is, is a good way to start. And so Gap Lab is exploring this idea that by coming and working in the classroom alongside one of our class collaborators on creating provocative, engaging phenomena-based learning experiences for a group of students really gets you to focus on like how the challenges of any given student might relate to your own challenges and, and how you might reconnect with the joy of learning.

Gever (guest)

01:01:34:28 - 01:02:10:05

So that's the morning of your day. And then the afternoon of the day you're working on your Gap Lab project, in which you join an ongoing series of projects that produce interesting learning artifacts for others. And we're working on some asking the question, what would math manipulable look like in high school if we took the Montessori effort of making math tangible and we carried that all the way through high school so that math was a hands-on activity.

Gever (guest)

01:02:10:05 - 01:02:43:06

What would it look like? You know, these are Penrose tiles. There are two of them. They have two different shapes and they have very unusual relationships with each other. And they create beautiful patterns that never repeat. This is hands-on infinity. As you play with these tiles, you start to understand how those pieces fit together and suddenly you realize this is tiling the infinite plane without repeating a pattern.

Gever (guest)

01:02:44:06 - 01:03:05:06

And there is an aha moment that comes from just playing with the tiles. There are a whole bunch of other personal discoveries that kids have had with these tiles, but these are examples of the kinds of things and projects you might work on. Gap Lab. Mm-hmm. So that's Gap Lab. I mean, that's not all of Gap Lab, right?

Gever (guest)

01:03:05:07 - 01:03:48:04

There's journaling and, you know, conversations and feedback and working on your collaboration skills. But that's Gap Lab. The other project that I'm really excited about that's kind of going to go from being a response to CO VID when the first year of COVID hit, right as summer was starting up and we had our camps all lined up and we were going to have hundreds of students coming for summer camp, COVID hit, and this group of very young staff, most of whom had come up through tinkering School, we were about to be like cabin fever because we were all in lockdown.

Gever (guest)

01:03:48:20 - 01:04:28:13

Yeah, we came up with this project together of Let's Build Mars, and students and campers will like it and do summer camp on Mars as robots. So we built robots. We built a giant set of Mars. And, you know, seven weeks later, eight weeks later, kids signed up for a camp where you spent the day on your laptop, being a robot on Mars, driving a physical robot that was in this giant set that we just recently had to dismantle that project, like kept iterating.

Gever (guest)

01:04:28:13 - 01:05:14:05

We're on generation three of those physical robots. They're amazing. There we've started bringing it into classrooms. And what we've discovered is, in a 45-minute classroom, in a typical classroom session, about third grade and up, we can get kids into being the robot on Mars, even though there's a 32nd delay between when you send your command and when you get your feedback back, which is a simulation of the delay between here and Mars, you don't get to drive around on Mars like you're in a sports car.

Gever (guest)

01:05:14:27 - 01:05:42:05

It's a strange kind of free-form chess. You plot your moves, you execute, and then you see what happens. It is incredible how quickly the kids get into it and what they take out of it is it's not just a platform for learning about Mars. It's robotics. It's a collaboration. It's two students on a single laptop and they're working out how that's going to work.

Gever (guest)

01:05:42:05 - 01:06:07:22

And I think we'll get through if we go over here. They're looking at rocks. They're looking at the terrain. Is that too steep? Are we going to roll over? You know, all of that stuff is happening. And what they're looking at is a still image taken from one perspective from where their robot is in, our Mars landscape. And we're making all of these standard curriculum connections.

Gever (guest)

01:06:07:22 - 01:06:31:08

And suddenly we have this Trojan horse we can bring into a classroom that brings self-directed learning to a classroom. So our vision on the Mars team, the students and I who are working on it with me, we were just talking about like if we were going to scale this, what would we do? And it's we would build an Olympic pool-sized crater.

Gever (guest)

01:06:31:08 - 01:06:47:16

We would dig it with a couple of backhoes and a bulldozer. Right. And put one of those pool bubbles over it so we could have 200 rovers in there and run classrooms, 24 seven around the world. So. So we have a vision of how it scales.

Christian (host)

01:06:48:07 - 01:07:08:17

Yeah, it's almost like Biosphere 2.0. Like, but, but on the cheap and with kids driving the vision. Right. And I know obviously, you're, you're big thoughtful and so in time would love to hear more about this. Yea h. That's working with schools far and wide and giving them access because obviously, not everybody can go to work.

Christian (host)

01:07:08:17 - 01:07:26:08

So it's like, how can that be accessible? The very last thing we're going to. Yeah. Before I just ask you where people can find you naturally. Yeah. There's a manifesto and it's a couple of early principles that. Yeah, it leaves us with before you, the publisher releases this to the world.

Gever (guest)

01:07:27:00 - 01:08:03:02

Let me see if I can frame it for you in 90 seconds and then I'll just give you my six dangerous things. The question that I have and the question I'm struggling with came out of a conversation with an amazing NPR correspondent, writer Anya KAMENETZ and she wrote a book called "The Test". And it's about how the United States in particular has this dangerous relationship with testing.

Gever (guest)

01:08:03:02 - 01:08:41:00

But essentially the premise of her book is that the test is there and it will be there for a long time. And we have to figure out how to make it positive. And my response to that book was like, no, we don't. We could just get rid of testing. Like and I have this idea that when a school is working like a school, like frameworks works, when it's really working perfectly, the manifest work product of the student obviates the need for testing you just that there's just too much evidence nobody is asking the question.

Gever (guest)

01:08:41:00 - 01:09:08:08

But what are these kids learning? There it is. You know, Mars is one of those artifacts like nobody sees Mars and wonders if that was a good use of those kids' time. You know? But I feel like if we're going to change society's relationship with school, to education, we have to address this notion of testing and how this has always been.

Gever (guest)

01:09:08:08 - 01:09:37:20

Traditionally, since public schooling started in the United States, that's been the evidence that we looked for. And how would we change that? And I think I think the way that we change that is we change what we're testing. And fundamentally, I think we change the equation. We test the school, not the students. And here are the six dangerous things every school should measure.

Gever (guest)

01:09:39:07 - 01:09:45:16

And Christian, this is the first time I've like said this on a platform where someone might just put.

Christian (host)

01:09:45:16 - 01:09:47:21

Elements around all of it. So we know it's just.

Gever (guest)

01:09:48:14 - 01:09:54:11

It's a work in progress. So okay. But here they are. And in any order of precedence. Right.

Christian (host)

01:09:54:24 - 01:09:55:09

I got you.

Gever (guest)

01:09:55:18 - 01:10:25:12

But I think these are the things that when made the focus of the education system would have a transformative, positive impact on students. Right. So here they are. The first one is joy, right? How frequently do students take delight in the topic of discussion? Right. The work at hand, their experience? Are there regular aha moments? Is there evidence of joy during the day as ideas and discoveries?

Gever (guest)

01:10:25:23 - 01:10:55:23]

Experiences come together right? It's pretty simple. But if you start to look at that in different education contexts, you see some context where there's very little joy, right? Like Near Zero Agency. The next one is agency students exploring the intellectual and physical landscape of the experience with a high degree of autonomy. You know, are they able to run down a tangent, even if we know as educators it's a dead end?

Gever (guest)

01:10:56:00 - 01:11:31:25

You know, do they feel confident in their ability to participate in a manner that works for them? And the group are, you know, do the students have collaborative relationships with the adults in the learning experience? Where is the agency of the student's next mindset right? For want of a better term, and I kind of like this term, do the students feel as though they can apply themselves to new topics, situations, and experiences, and make their own progress in their own understanding?

Gever (guest)

01:11:31:25 - 01:12:02:08

You know, that mindset of the voracious learner is not always accessible to them, right to students. Okay, next one, each one of these I feel like we could talk about. The next one is engagement. How often do students pick up a new topic, provocation, or project idea and run with it? Are students negotiating for access to resources outside of school hours in order to make more progress or grow deeper?

Gever (guest)

01:12:02:21 - 01:12:34:21

Are they bringing up the topics in other contexts outside of school? Parents at Bright Works tell us the difference between the school they were at and Bright Works is that everybody at the dining table is talking about what's going on at work right next. I guess this would be the fifth collaboration. So I can't get away from this as a foundational element of healthy learning.

Gever (guest)

01:12:34:21 - 01:13:08:10

Do students seek out advice or contributions of time and ideas from others? Do they welcome spontaneous ideas from their peers inside and, outside of their affinity group? You know, and the final one and I get this one from conversations with Sir Ken Robinson, who should be, I don't know, posthumously awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in a creative capacity are students.

Gever (guest)

01:13:09:03 - 01:13:37:00

As students, progress is their ability to bring new ideas to fruition improving right? Do they commit to their ideas and plans in order to see the work through and have tangible evidence of their idea? And, you know, to put it in Ken's terms, are they retaining that kindergarten creative capacity all the way through high school, into college, and life beyond?

Gever (guest)

01:13:37:24 - 01:13:52:14

If they're not going to college? Right. I feel like we should all be writing that question up on the whiteboard. Do monsters wear shoes? You know, like that's evidence.

Christian (host)

01:13:52:14 - 01:14:03:1

That's at the very least, would you and your team commit to a screen print T-shirt that asked that question on the back? It says, "Come to Brightworks and help us figure it out".

Gever (guest)

01:14:03:26 - 01:14:04:10

Okay.

Christian (host)

01:14:10:05 - 01:14:36:2

Yeah, I know that. I appreciate the fact that you're sharing six principles that are not yet ready for publication. And to a certain degree, they're in the right direction. But you haven't shaped what might be the product, the artifact, or the next TED talk if you would. But an absolutely wonderful thing and I appreciate that it is only possible even though you said it wasn't an order, if joy and delight are not in the mix, the rest may not be, may or may not exist.

Christian (host)

01:14:36:28 - 01:14:47:2

Right. Where can our viewers, audience members, our new I find you maybe they wouldn't find us easily?

Gever (guest)

01:14:47:21 - 01:15:24:19

If you want to see a sort of weekly glimpse of what's going on in my world that's on Instagram at @GeverTully. If you want to connect with Brightworks that's sbrightworks.org and if you want to get a hold of me and have a conversation or proposal or you want me to come and do something with your team, which I occasionally do, that's just info@brightworks.org.

Gever (guest)

01:15:24:19 - 01:15:56:20

And then as soon as you mentioned my name, they get sent over to my inbox. And then lastly TinkeringSchool.com is our summer camp and Tinkering.School.com/Mars is where you as a teacher if you want to bring Mars to your classroom, you can let us know through tinkering school dot com slash Mars Christian thank you so much for giving me a chance to you know to share what's going on.

Christian (host)

01:15:57:28 - 01:16:03:14

Absolutely a pleasure. Thank you. All right. Well, have a wonderful day.

Gever (guest)

01:16:04:15 - 01:16:07:28

Thank you.