



New Education News

Corrales Institute for New Education // Instituto Corrales para una Nueva Educación

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This invitation was sent to our contacts in Tulsa at the beginning of September.

The date and morning time were set to accommodate the schedule of city councilor Laura Bellis, a strong supporter of creating a Learning Park in Tulsa.

Ray Vandiver, Executive Director of the Discovery Lab family museum, comped the rental fee for the classroom.

For the meeting, Shan Glandon prepared the following Organizer for Thinking and Discussing; an at-a-glance look at the Why, What, and How of a Learning Park.

Learning Parks: A New Vision for Public Education*

Purposes of Public Education in a Learning Park <i>The Why</i>	Components of a Learning Park <i>The What</i>	Practices of Public Education in a Learning Park <i>The How</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reclaiming democracy Saving and sustaining the planet Developing social and personal efficacy Living healthily Respecting our humanity Learning together with multigenerational people of all ages Growing the esthetic, emotional, and spiritual aspects of social life Using socially and economically valuable skills, understandings, and tools Exercising civic responsibility, ethics, and duty Making a good, satisfying and sustainable personal life Finding joy in learning and living 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 25-35 acres in a diverse community "Main Street" of up to 30 small businesses that double as learning centers e.g., <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Music Store Laundromat with Kinder-Space Child and Senior Day Care Centers Book and Media Store Bistro and Restaurant Tax and Accounting Services Journalism Center Machine and Carpentry Shops Health Clinic; and More Community Garden and Farmer's Market Housing for Participants, and Playing Fields Small Woods and Pond Nature Experiences Chapter House: Meeting and Governance Center for Direct and Equitable Democracy Performing Arts Center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating a place of learning that is as rich, dynamic and complex as the world around Creating a beautiful, convivial, safe and comfortable environment for learning Facilitating intergenerational exchanges Practicing care-driven, nurturing and mutually determined learning Learning together through practice, doing, and making, discussion and reflection Gaining experience with tools for making Practicing face-to-face, honest, open, and attentive conversation, and mutual respect Designing and making: useful things, clothes, gardens, etc., and for science, music, art, etc. Addressing the critical issues of our day Accessing resources in the community Evaluating and evolving the 'Why' Expanding Friendships and Service to Others

*www.neweducation.org

Michael McClendon prepared a welcoming power point, conversation guide:



Shan brought refreshments, and materials for name tents and note-taking.

There was a much smaller number of attendees than invited, perhaps because of the time of day for people involved in schools and jobs with morning commitments; for example, one confirmed



Enjoying refreshments at The Discovery Place



Name tents and information for attendees.

attendee needed to be on a panel at the University of Oklahoma that morning. Those who did attend were committed to helping think through ideas for how to proceed with a Learning Park in Tulsa, and to participating more actively once the prospect of a Learning Park became a reality.

INTRODUCTIONS



SHAN GLANDON



MICHAEL MCCLEENDON



PAUL TATTER

We explained our process for researching cities to identify those that might pursue creating a Learning Park, and have the social, political, financial and land resources to sustain it. We rank ordered them, and Tulsa came out number 1.

This led to a discussion of how a Learning Park might function in Tulsa, and various ideas about how to proceed with a patient process of creating a local identity, and preparing local support, a neighborhood, a location, and starting up.

WHY TULSA








SEARCHING FOR A CITY
 More than 3 dozen cities were identified, and then ranked and rated on a variety of factors, including: availability of natural space, an invested and engaged citizenship, educational creativity, etc.

IN REAL LIFE
 After Tulsa was identified as the front runner, in-person meetings and site visits revealed a strong desire and enthusiasm. Despite potential barriers within current educational systems, Tulsans are on board.

WHAT IS A LEARNING PARK?

A Learning Park is a public place of learning, where people want to be because it is vital and nourishing where people of all ages and backgrounds go by choice to learn: to meet, do and talk, create and make all manner of things, experience and pursue matters of mutual interest; to meditate, to play, to think freely, to challenge each other, to experiment with new things and new ideas, to exercise mind and body in an environment that enhances their relationships with nature, tools, and culture, and with their communities and each other as thoughtful, curious, creative, and enthusiastic human beings.



The meeting ended with an agreement to continue pursuing the creation of a Learning Park in Tulsa, with Shan and Michael taking the lead, and others promising to participate as the project develops further.



Shan Glandon

Shan Glandon retired last year after eighteen years as Executive Director of Teaching and Learning at Jenks Public Schools, a suburb of Tulsa. She oversaw an initiative creating two early childhood classrooms in a local senior living center, where seniors and children read in pairs, engage in math, science or art experiences and share their perspectives, and enjoy ice-cream socials, sing-alongs and gardening. On May 5, 2022 Shan announced a new initiative offering fine arts experiences for every student in the Jenks District, capitalizing on partnerships with Discovery Lab at The Gathering Place, Tulsa Ballet, Philbrook Museum of Art and Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, to

name a few. She is a Board Member of Discovery Lab, and former Chair of the Oklahoma Alliance for Arts Education Tulsa. She was selected as the Junior Achievement of Oklahoma's 2013-2014 Educator of the Year. Shan is a board member of the Corrales Institute for New Education.

Michael McClendon is the former Dean of Students at the University of Tulsa. He is a psychologist and counselor. Before becoming Dean, he was a counselor and then Director of Counseling & Psychological Services, and member of the Committee Against Sexual Violence, at the University of Tulsa. The Services used a mix of individual therapy, group therapy sessions and collaborations with other departments on campus to provide skills-based workshops and address resiliency issues and distress tolerance to help all students, not just students seeking therapy. A passion project of Michael's is to make the "Psychology of Everything" accessible to everyone. "I have often groaned of the jargon laden, psycho-babble that gets in the way of understanding fundamental aspects of psychology. This is my latest effort to explore the depths and richness embedded within the cutting edge and storied histories around understanding the human condition." Michael is a member of Leadership Tulsa 360, the Tulsa Market District Board, and the Executive Committee of the Oklahoma State Regions of Higher Education - Council on Student Affairs.



Dr. Michael McClendon

October 3rd, 2023: Shan, Michael and Paul met to talk about next steps in Tulsa. These included: recruiting a few more Tulsans to join Shan and Michael's current efforts, organizing some local activities to develop awareness of the Learning Park project and its principle concepts, and eventually incorporating a Tulsa nonprofit organization to realize a Learning Park in Tulsa.

Later, Shan outlined some next steps, incorporating suggestions from the September 22 meeting:

1. Meet with the city
2. Survey...to determine interest; commitment to working on next steps with the goal of a small local team led by Michael McClendon and Shan Glandon, with support from Corrales Institute
3. Build the “Learning Park” brand by the end of 2024
4. Build the Tulsa team to own it
5. Think in terms of a 3-5 year development process

October 9, 2023: Through the auspices of Learning Park supporter Laura Bellis, District 4 city councilor, Shan and Michael met with James Wagner and Rodrigo Rojas.

Laura Bellis is Tulsa city councilor for District 4 that includes Owen Park, Newblock Park, Crosbie Heights, Charles Page Neighborhood, Downtown Tulsa, the University of Tulsa and much more in the heart of Tulsa . Laura is a community health access strategist and organizer who focuses on breaking down social and political resource barriers. As the Executive Director of the Take Control Initiative (TCI), she has worked to expand access for women to quality care in coalition with over 200 clinic and community partners. TCI has developed strategies to ensure reproductive health access in a restrictive environment, including creating a statewide women's health think tank, Metriarch. Prior to joining TCI, Laura was an English teacher for five years at Nathan Hale Junior High.

Laura served as a mayor-appointed member on the City of Tulsa’s Human Rights Commission from 2017 forward, and rose to vice chair in 2018. For two years after that, she served as chair. In March of 2020, she co-founded Save Our State: Oklahomans United, a grassroots group of over 50,000 people working on pandemic-era resources and policies. In 2021 Laura was awarded a fellowship with the Aspen Institute. As a Healthy Communities Aspen Fellow she collaborated with national public health leaders and innovators focusing on national-level advocacy to drive local-level change.

James Wagner is the director of the city’s Department of City Experience, with the "mission to promote community education, develop and sustain private-public partnerships that enhance public safety, neighborhood revitalization and the quality of life of all residents within our city." He is a long-time employee of the city, most recently in finance. The mission of the Department of City Experience closely fits a Learning Park.

Rodrigo Rojas is the Deputy Chief of Staff for the City of Tulsa, working closely with the mayor and James Wagner. He leads the Community Development Office. Its goals are to "Create collaborative links between the City and its citizens. Acting as this link the Neighborhood Services Division and Neighborhood Liaisons are a point of contact between neighborhood groups, area residents, businesses, schools, and organizations. . . to help keep Tulsa healthy, attractive, and positive for those who work, live, and play here."



Laura Bellis
Tulsa City Councilor,
District 4



James Wagner
Director Department of
City Experience



Rodrigo Rojas
City Deputy Chief of Staff

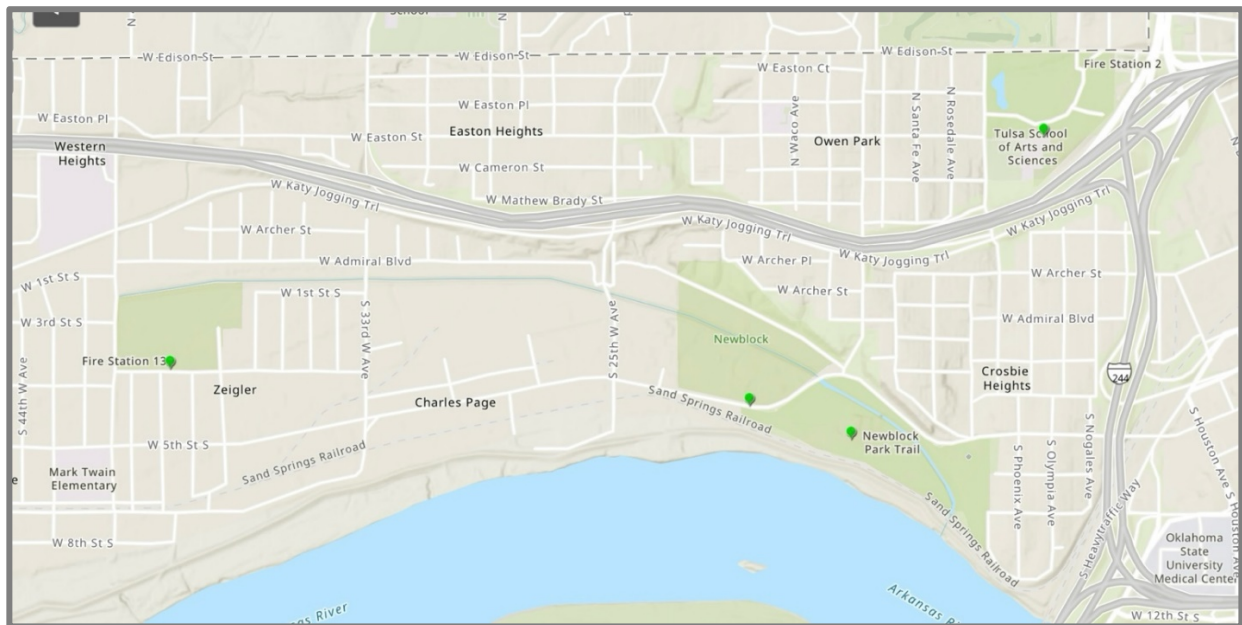
Several city initiatives are in the works, the most promising for a Tulsa Learning Park is implementation of the [Vibrant Neighborhoods Partnership](#): a three-year program of building neighborhood champions and growing thriving neighborhoods for the City. For the next three years this neighborhood development program will focus on four neighborhoods, all of which are potentially good sites for a Learning park.

"The goal of the Vibrant Neighborhood Partnership is to bring City departments, community partners, and neighborhood residents together to identify and address key issues through clearly defined actions for a set period of time. Potential tools and resources to support neighborhoods include: infrastructure, public art/beautification, food access, housing/homeowner support, after-school/youth programming, public safety."

And we have suggested to the city, through Laura Bellis, James Wagner and Rodrigo Rojas, the creation of a Learning Park in one of these four neighborhoods.

- **Crosby Heights**

Northwest side of Tulsa, just west of downtown, with one park, Newblock (84.6 acres) that could be a good location for a Learning Park. The east end of Newblock Park is 7 blocks south of Owen Park and the Tulsa School of Arts and Sciences. The park is within walking distance of Crosby Heights, the east side of the Charles Page District, and the Owen Park Neighborhood.



Newblock Park with Crosbie Heights, Charles Page Neighborhood, and Owen Park all within walking distance.



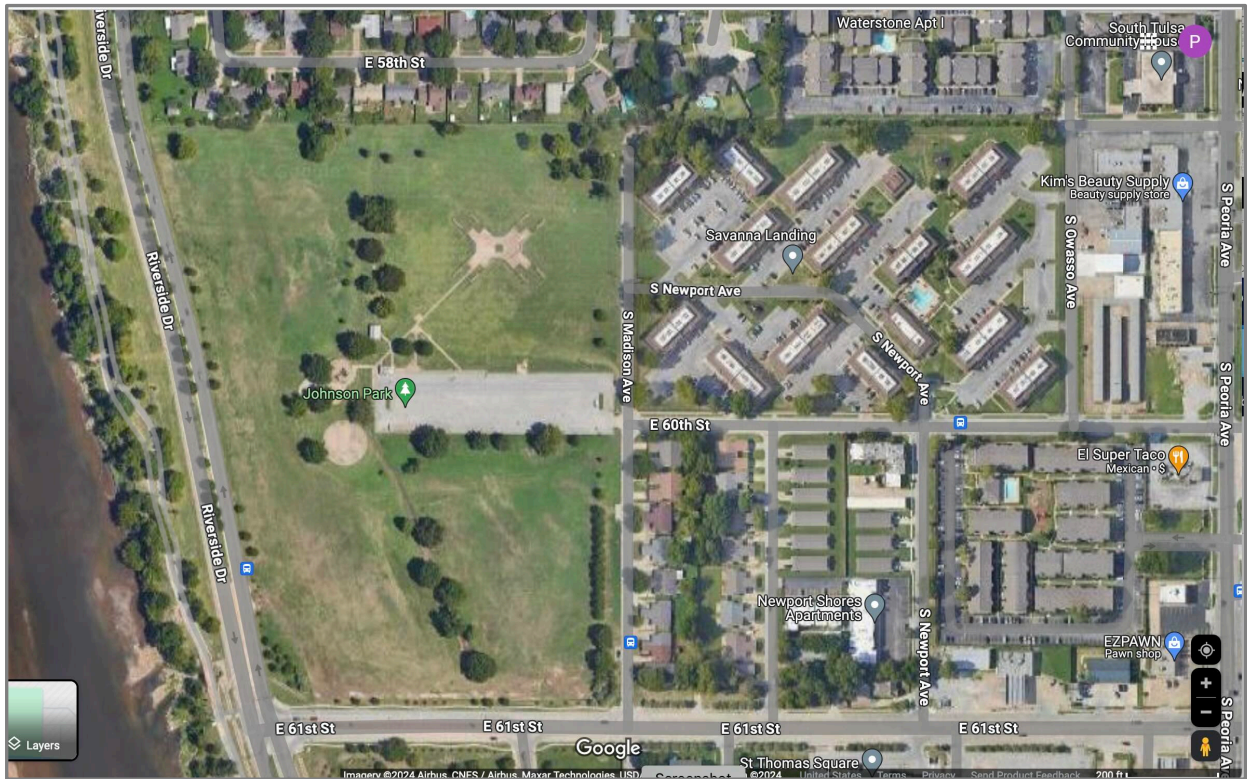
Newblock Park entrance and one of several fields

- **Riverwood**

About 5 miles south of downtown Tulsa, bounded on the west by the Arkansas River.

The city of Tulsa has appropriated \$3.1 million to develop Johnson Park, next to a mixed neighborhood with the highest percentage of Native American residents in Tulsa. Johnson Park could be a good location for a Learning Park.

Shan has requested to join the Economic Development, History, Culture working group, one of six Vibrant Neighborhoods working groups in Riverwood.



Johnson Park, Arkansas River on left, part of the Riverwood Neighborhood on right

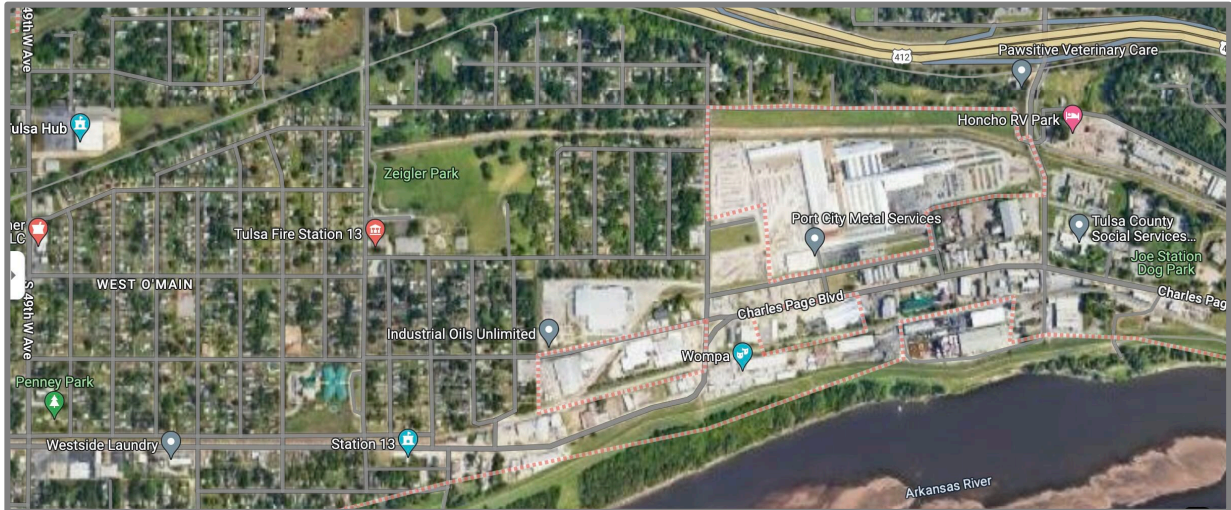


Johnson Park, 33 Acres in the Riverwood Neighborhood

- **Charles Page Partnership**

West side of Tulsa, bordered on the south by the Arkansas River. The west end of the 85-acre Newblock Park is 0.7 mile from the east boundary of the Charles Page Neighborhood.

[Draft Action Plan as of June 7, 2022](#)



Charles Page Neighborhood

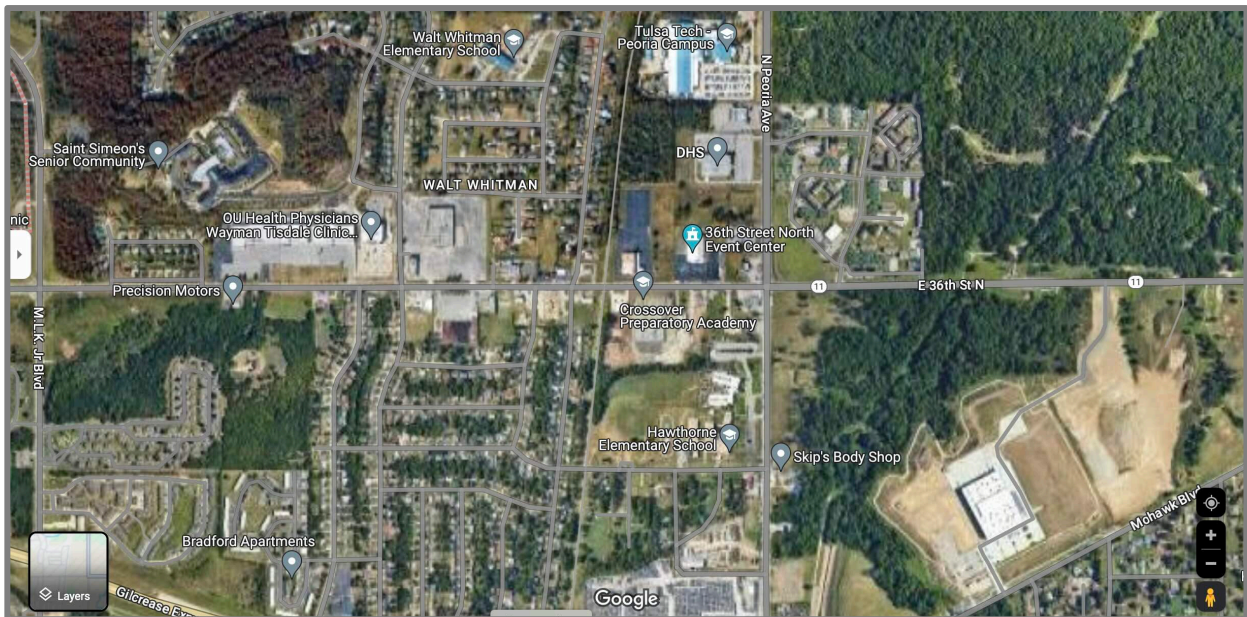
Shan and Michael had a Zoom meeting on November 30, 2023 with The Common Good (Northwest Tulsa Hub) located in the Charles Page district. They met with several colleagues providing services through the Hub. They are planning to meet again in January 2024, touring the facility and beginning to brainstorm program events that we could co-sponsor to begin creating the Learning Park brand.



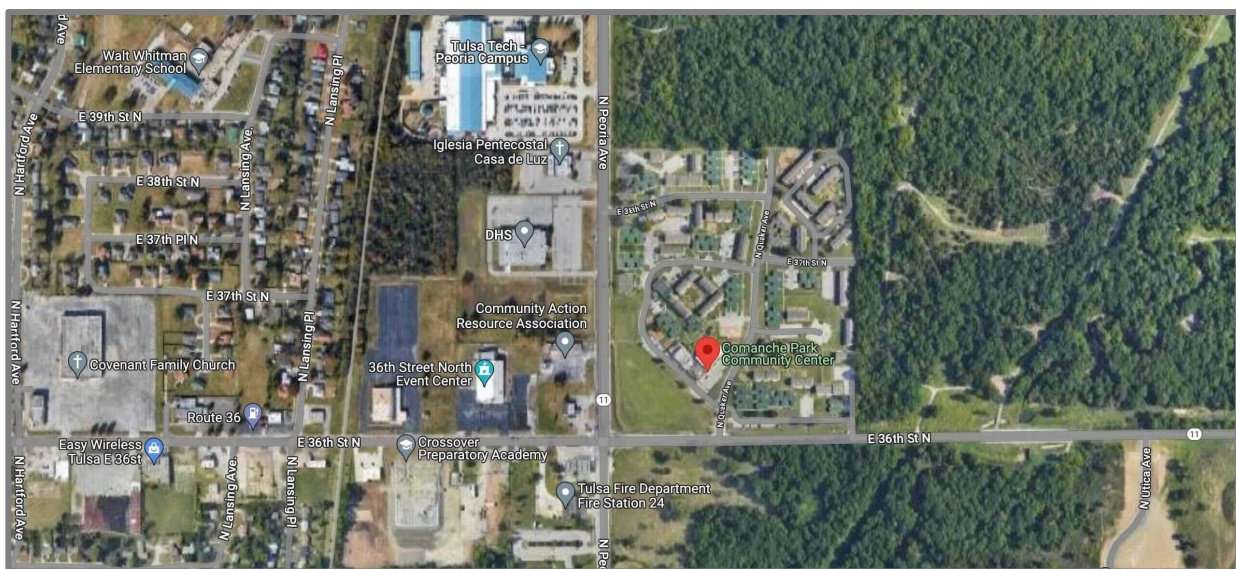
The Common Good (Northwest Tulsa Hub)

- **Phoenix District Partnership**

North side of Tulsa, bounded by Flat Rock Creek on the north and the Gilcrease Expressway on the south. One park: Hawthorne Park (5.73 acres). The east side of the Phoenix District is contiguous with a 230-acre wooded area, just south of Flat Rock Creek, including the south part of Flat Rock Creek Park and Dirty Butter Creek, that could be a good location for a Learning Park. On the west side of the District is the 50-acre Saint Simeon's Senior Community. The district is home to the Tulsa Housing Authority's Comanche Park complex. [Action Plan as of April 2022, recently updated](#)



Phoenix District: Dirty Butter Creek woods on right. St. Simeon's Senior Community on left



Phoenix District, Tulsa Housing Authority Comanche Park, (center red balloon) built in a corner of Flat Rock Creek Park. A Learning Park could fit to the north, east or south of Comanche Park.



Dirty Butter Creek (at right) & woods east of Comanche Park.



33 acre triangle, woods and Dirty Butter Creek south across street from Comanche Park.

The City of Tulsa manages 135 parks spread over 8,278 acres. This includes 2 nature centers, 6 community centers with fitness facilities, gymnasiums and meeting rooms, 2 skate parks, 2 dog parks, 4 swimming pools, 66 miles of walking trails, 186 sports fields, 93 playgrounds, 111 tennis courts, and 4 golf courses. Individual parks range in size from Mohawk Park, the largest at 3,100 acres, to small neighborhood parks.

Maps and facilities of all Tulsa parks can be found at:

- <https://www.cityoftulsa.org/government/departments/park-and-recreation/tulsa-parks-and-map/>

Kevin Mancini Elected Corrales Institute Board President

At its December meeting, the Corrales Institute’s board elected Kevin Mancini as Board President to succeed Paul Tatter, whose term expired on December 31st. [The Corrales Institute has term limits for board members and officers.] Kevin is a strong advocate for the Institute's mission, as expressed in his comment to the board:



Kevin Mancini

“I am so grateful and energized by finding like-minded individuals, dedicated to the same cause. I very much value this opportunity and the ideals of the Institute. I want nothing more than to work in collaboration and community with individuals striving for the same positive changes. Thank you so much for the opportunity and I am fully dedicated to assist the mission to the best of my abilities.”

Kevin is Counselor and Health and Wellness Instructor at the Albuquerque Academy, an independent, nonprofit, coeducational, college preparatory school serving 1,200 middle school and high school students. He oversees emotional, social, mental and behavioral wellness for these students. Before this he spent eight years as a local child therapist; and even earlier was the owner and founder of the Ini Ani Espresso & Wine Lounge in New York City, focused on gourmet coffee, eclectic food, world music, and avant-garde architecture.

We are grateful for the dedication of our current and former board members, volunteers, and donors in bringing a Learning Park closer to reality, significantly advancing the Corrales Institute’s mission to create a new place of learning, where education is an embodied, social, and lifelong process among people of all ages collaborating in learning together and developing their abilities to create a more humane, vibrant, and democratic society and a sustainable environment for ourselves and the health of the Earth.

A fresh start to a better, lifelong education for everyone.

LIBERATING LEARNING

Educational Change as Social Movement

Santiago Rincón-Gallardo

Chapter Two. A Glimpse into the Future of Learning [excerpts]

. . . .In stark contrast with the fast-paced spread and growth of digital technologies for learning, the basic grammar of schooling has remained practically stable for over a century. Some leading education thinkers are now suggesting that the future of learning will flourish outside of schools, while schools might continue to exist mostly to provide custody and care for children and youth. Others have suggested that if schools fail to nurture deep learning and durable learning skills among our younger generations, they will be substituted by different, more effective and agile institutions. Whether or not most schools and school systems around the world will succeed at becoming vibrant places for learning remains an open question.

While facing many odds, I am convinced that the pursuit of renewed public education systems that embrace and build movements to liberate learning is worth our best efforts. In this chapter, I will offer a glimpse into liberating learning, as can be observed in a handful of classrooms, schools and school systems around the world.

Liberating Learning in Classrooms

There are reasons for optimism. Throughout the history of compulsory schooling, and to this date, examples can be found of classrooms, schools, and school systems organized around liberating learning for young people and adults alike. Some contemporary examples offer us glimpses into the future of learning. Some of these examples come from the Global South, a region often overlooked by scholars of educational change. Others come from developed economies.

. . . .Walk into a place where liberating learning is regular practice and you will find students working individually or in small groups on problems or questions that matter to them, over extended periods of time. You will see each student working at their own pace and in the space of their choice – in one of many work stations set up in a classroom, in hallways, or outdoors. No assigned sitting, no rows of individual chairs and desks, very little – if any – time spent on adult lectures for the whole group. Some kids may work on tables, others sit or lie on their bellies on a carpet to read, others on rocking chairs, cushiony seats, couches, a foyer in the hallway, yet others stand up next to each other while discussing a text, a personal note, or figuring out how an artefact of interest works.

You will hear a constant buzz made up of the multiple conversations taking place, most of them centered around the work students are doing, the questions or dilemmas they're facing, or the strategies they're using to make sense of their topics of study. While there is a constant flow of people and conversation, everyone seems highly focused on their work. In fact, if you come to a place like this as an external observer, the people in the group will likely not notice you're there until you come closer to see their work and hear what they're saying. You will also notice that students seem unaware of time passing – they may be surprised when the time for recess or the end of the day comes. They continue their work during recess, at home, or on weekends. Students there work harder, but they don't seem to mind. They actually seem to *want* to work harder.

Approach any of the students in these classrooms and ask them about their work, and they will be able to articulate, on the spot and with remarkable clarity, what they are doing and why, what they are learning and how, why it matters, to what extent they've gained mastery of what they're learning, what are key areas where they need to get better at, and their plans to do just that. They may show you with pride some of the work they've produced, pointing to parts of it as they explain their learning. Ask them what they think about this way of working and you will hear genuine signs of excitement and self-efficacy.

Look for some examples of student work and learning tools being used in the classroom and you will start to see the varied ways in which students connect with the outside world as part of their regular activities. If the school you visit is equipped with internet and devices to access it, you may see blogs, podcasts or videos produced by the students to make their learning visible to wider audiences. Many students may use an internet browser to search for information or digital tools they need to make sense of the questions they're tackling. You may find evidence of exchange with experts in the fields that students are learning about – either because the experts visit the school, meeting with the class virtually to provide feedback, or because students visit them in their workplace to gain exposure to their expert practice.

Now pay attention to the color of the skin, the gender identity, or the physical mobility of students in the group. You may be surprised – for it is unusual –that the quality and degree of challenge of the work being done and the treatment from other peers and adults remains equally demanding and respectful no matter what the student looks like.

Follow one or more adults in the room and observe their interactions with students. Teachers move across the multiple learning spaces to engage in one-on-one or small group conversation with students. They constantly ask students to articulate what they are doing and why, offering specific feedback to their work. They listen attentively to what students have to say and remain alert to evidence of what they have learned, how they are thinking about the problem at hand, to what extent they are transferring knowledge and skills learned previously to tackle a new situation, or what misconceptions, mistakes, or dilemmas remain unresolved. Only after careful listening do they offer feedback, ask a carefully crafted question to help students find their own

answers, or suggest possible next steps. Adults make themselves available to respond when a student has a question or feel stuck, and intervene when conflict or another problem arises in a group of students working together. Whole group activities are brief and agile, used to make announcements for the class or to share insights or questions from individual students and small groups with the larger group. In a group like this, you will see spontaneous signs of affection between teachers and students – a tap on the shoulder, a smile, a joke, a big laugh.

In places like this, adults are constantly learning in public – perhaps by saying “I don’t know” when they don’t have an answer to a question asked by a student; by learning about a topic or how to use a digital learning tool from a student who masters it; by making mistakes in public, acknowledging and correcting them; by expressing genuine surprise and excitement when a student comes up with a good solution or idea that they had not thought about; by acknowledging confusion and going through it in public; by expressing aloud what and how they’re thinking about and through a puzzling question or problem; or by publicly opening their most hard-wired assumptions to scrutiny. . . .

Liberating Learning Across Thousands of Schools

Now, imagine visiting a nation or a state where liberating learning has spread to thousands of schools, across entire educational systems. What you will find is examples of lively and strong movements of pedagogical change where everyone, all the way from students and teachers to state and national leaders maintain a relentless focus on fostering learner-centered pedagogies, with a special emphasis of reaching the most remote and historically marginalized communities across the territory. . . . Across the entire system, you will hear expressions of pride and hope coming from the shared feeling that those involved, all the way from children to teachers to system leaders, are learning better and feel part of a cause larger than themselves. Furthermore, ask about trends in student outcomes and you will likely find that schools involved in movements of this kind are improving student outcomes at a faster pace than schools serving more privileged students. This will be the case despite the fact that improving test-scores is barely present in the purposes and the everyday work of movement participants.

If you talk to system leaders involved in these movements, you will discover that their discourse and leadership practice are remarkably different from that of a bureaucrat in a conventional public education system. . . . They are finding ways to change the institutional logic of the system where they operate, leaving behind vertical relationships of authority and control over schools, and nurturing instead horizontal relationships of dialogue, co-learning, and mutual influence. . . .

[To read more from Santiago, please visit our Readings page at www.neweducation.org]



Please Support the Corrales Institute for New Education

as we transition to creating an operative, prototype Learning Park.
This requires travel for which we must raise an additional \$15,000.

Any amount you can donate will be appreciated.

The Corrales Institute is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

All contributions are tax-exempt.

You may donate via PayPal from our website at www.neweducation.org or address checks to: **Corrales Institute for New Education, P.O. Box 1148, Corrales, NM 87048**. You also may request bank wiring instructions at the *Connect: Contact Us* page of our website.



Non-profit is a negative term and tells us only what these institutions are not. But at least it shows that all these institutions, whatever their specific concerns, have something in common.... And we now begin to realize what that "something" is. It is that they do something very different from either business or government. Business supplies, either goods or services. Government controls. A business has discharged its task when the customer buys the product, pays for it, and is satisfied with it. Government has discharged its function when its policies are effective. The "non-profit" institution neither supplies goods or services nor controls. Its "product" is neither a pair of shoes nor an effective regulation. Its product is a changed human being. The non-profit institutions are human change agents. Their "product" is a cured patient, a child that learns, a young man or woman grown into a self-respecting adult; a changed human life altogether.

— Peter F. Drucker

“Never doubt that a small group of committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

Margaret Mead