

Co-Opted Language: Decoding Ed Reform's New Sales Pitch

Words used to promote “future ready” public education do not mean to reformers what they mean to parents, teachers, and community members. For that reason we created this handout to pull the curtain back and expose the truth behind venture capital’s shiny promises of “personalized” tech-centered, data-driven education. Below is a crowd-sourced list of vocabulary that should be on everyone’s radar. More detailed descriptions for each term can be found at <https://wrenchesofresistance.net>.

1:1 Devices: A program where each child has their own data-gathering device for “anywhere learning.”

Anytime, Anywhere Learning: A push to disconnect education from “constraints” of buildings and teachers.

Assessment Reform: Punitive end of year tests exchanged for perpetual monitoring of online learning.

Brain Breaks: Mental safety valve for students and teachers.

College and Career Readiness: K12 public education as redefined by post-graduation outcomes.

Community School: Business opportunities for non-profit providers created through intentional austerity.

Data Dashboards: Tools to reduce learning to specific, measurable outcomes.

Deeper Learning: Education reimaged as a big, unstructured DIY project.

Digital Badges: Tokens of achievement rewarding skill acquisition or compliance.

ELOs-Extended/Expanded Learning Opportunities: Outsourced learning opportunities.

E-Portfolio: Cloud-based skill storage that replaces report cards and diplomas.

Evidence-Based: Parameters private interests use to set educational “success” criteria.

Gamified: Use of entertainment platforms to make student data capture more palatable.

Growth: Repeated data collection over time that can be used to evaluate returns on impact investments.

Grit/Growth Mindset/Resilience: Self-discipline promoted as a tool to deal with dysfunctional social systems.

Hybrid/Blended: Means to promote online learning while reducing face-to-face instruction.

Innovation Zones: Designation that strips districts of contractual protections while promising autonomy.

Innovative: Unproven “solutions” that disrupt school environments.

Lifelong Learning: Uncertain employment outlook that demands constant re-skilling and up-skilling.

Multiple Measures: Expansion of accountability categories for students, teachers and schools under ESSA.

Pathways: Means to direct students into targeted workforce sectors based on their aggregated data.

Pay for Success: Service delivery redesigned to capture proof of success for impact investments.

Performance Assessments: Promise of authentic projects replaced by canned, standards-aligned rubrics.

Personalized/Adaptive: Digital profiling whereby algorithms control student access to educational content.

Regionalization / Consolidation: Defunding and dwindling enrollment lead to diminished local control.

Social Impact Bonds (SIBs): Finance scheme that uses public services to generate venture capital profit.

Standards/Competency/Mastery/Proficiency-Based: Education reinvented as a perpetual skills checklist.

Student-Centered/Agency: Self-serve education model where teachers play a marginal role.

Whole Child / Social Emotional Learning: Non-cognitive traits are added to student academic profiles.

Learn more about the Ed Reform 2.0 privatization agenda at <https://wrenchinthegears.com>.