

[ press kit ]

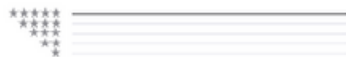
# COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS ABOUT OUR SCHOOLS

Founder and podcast host Ken Futernick believes America's culture wars are taking a heavy toll on America's public schools. "Board meetings have become battle zones," he says. "Fear, confusion, and mistrust resulting from a wave of new school policies are driving dedicated educators out of the profession – a profession already beset by critical staffing shortages."

To help calm the culture wars, Futernick launched the Courageous Conversations About Our Schools so that education stakeholders could speak from the heart, listen to one another, and engage in respectful conversations about their visions for public education. Futernick believes what's at stake is nothing less than the survival of public education and the future of American democracy.

## RATINGS

**5.0** out of 5



## SIGNATURE TOPICS

- ✓ Critical Race Theory
- ✓ Indoctrination
- ✓ Gender & Sexual Identity
- ✓ Parents Rights
- ✓ Book Banning
- ✓ LGBTQ Rights
- ✓ Toxic Polarization

*And much more...*

## POPULAR EPISODES

- [Ep. 11 - Political Opposites Discuss a Controversy at the Center of the Culture Wars](#)
- [Ep. 14 - The Latest Culture War Dustup: Balancing Parent Rights with Student Rights](#)
- [Ep. 09 - Journalist Monica Guzman on Bridging Today's Toxic Divides](#)
- [Ep. 06 - Journalist Amanda Ripley on calming the culture wars that are harming our public schools](#)

# KEN FUTERNICK

*Host & Educator*

## ABOUT THE HOST

Ken Futernick is a life-long educator, writer, and educational consultant to schools, school districts, and policy makers across the United States. His interests include labor-management partnerships, educator recruitment and retention, school and district transformation, implementation science, and community depolarization.



He began his career as an elementary teacher near Sacramento and, after earning his MA and PhD in education at the University of California, Berkeley, served as a faculty member at California State University, Sacramento, for twenty-two years. As a professor of education, he taught courses to new and veteran teachers and conducted research on teacher retention, educational policy, and pre-service teacher education programs. He also served as chair of the Department of Teacher Education. In 2016 he founded and directed [EduCorps](#), a system-wide teacher recruitment initiative for the California State University.

In 2008, Futernick helped found and direct the School Turnaround Center at [WestEd](#), a national nonprofit educational research and service organization based in San Francisco. He and his colleagues helped school leaders across the nation improve student outcomes by strengthening teaching and learning conditions.

Futernick currently hosts [Teacher Stories](#), a podcast he launched in 2018 that celebrates the profound and lasting impact many teachers have on their students and communities. In 2021, he launched [Courageous Conversations about our Schools](#), a podcast that invites education stakeholders to listen to one another and to engage in respectful conversations about the controversies at the center of today's culture wars in education.

Futernick is currently leading an effort in El Dorado County in northern California to bridge political and social divides within and across all major sectors of the community. For more information, see [bridgingdivides-eldorado.org](http://bridgingdivides-eldorado.org).

Futernick lives in the Sierra foothills in California and can be reached at [ken@schoolconversations.org](mailto:ken@schoolconversations.org).

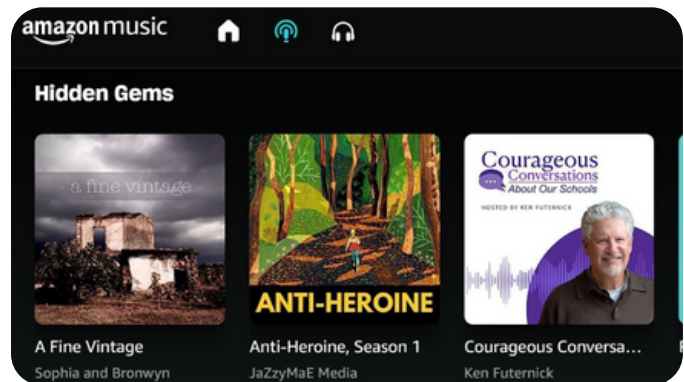
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# FEATURED ON AMAZON MUSIC *Hidden Gems*



# TESTIMONIALS

“One of the most courageous ways to have conversations is to put curiosity first — ahead of winning, ahead of impressing others, ahead, even, of the need to be right. This podcast puts in the effort, and it shows.”

—Monica Guzman, Senior Fellow for Public Practice at Braver Angels and Author of *I Never Thought of It That Way*

“Ken Futernick's podcast *Courageous Conversations About Schools* is just what the times call for – a forum that turns down the heat but sheds lights through thoughtful dialogue on the hot-button issues that threaten to turn schools into ideological battlegrounds. Ken is a skillful moderator who strives for mutual understanding despite disagreements. His podcast could be just as easily titled *Insightful and Hopeful Conversations*.”

— John Fensterwald, Reporter and Editor at EdSource

# LET'S WORK TOGETHER

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