

## The Courageous Conversations About Our Schools Newsletter | Issue No. 3



### Ken's Reflections Without Personal Connections, Facts and Reasons Seldom Matter

If you are familiar with my podcast, you know my aim is to have better, less contentious conversations about controversial issues affecting our schools. The first question I ask my guests – usually people with divergent experiences and perspectives – is always a personal one. Like the one I used in my most recent episode on homeschooling: *What teacher significantly impacted your life?*

Heidi Sampson, a Republican legislator from Maine and veteran homeschooler, spoke about her high school biology teacher who “found the flicker, fanned the flame” and enabled her to pursue her dream -- to become a scientist.

Samantha Field, who was homeschooled herself, recalled her piano teacher, who, she said, “was such a strong advocate when I didn’t have anyone else in my life advocating for me.”

As I watched and listened to my other two guests share their teacher stories (we’re on Zoom, so we can see each other), I noticed all of them had been smiling. No doubt because they were sharing fond, personal memories. This small group of strangers quickly learned something about each other – something intimate and moving.

These exchanges, brief as they are, change everything...

READ THE FULL BLOG POST

**Tune into our latest podcast episode** 📡 🎙️

[A recent Washington Post article](#) highlights that homeschooling is now the fastest-growing form of education in the U.S., involving around 2.7 million students. This increase has sparked a range of perspectives. Some see it as an avenue for students to excel, but concerns exist due to the lack of regulation in the U.S., leading to varied educational quality. This evolving conversation includes parents, educators, and policymakers, delving into the complexities and debates surrounding homeschooling.

**When Homeschooling Fails Should the Government Step In? (Ep. 21)**



LISTEN TO EPISODE 21

## In the News Current Stories of Polarization Affecting Schools Nationwide

- *Home-schoolers dismantled state oversight. Now they fear pushback.* [Read in The Washington Post >](#)
- *Two Perspectives on Polarization in America.* [Read in Divided We Fall >](#)
- *In defense of education culture wars.* [Read on the Thomas Fordham Institute Website >](#)
- *Opinion: For 25 years, most school board meetings I covered were boring. Now they've gone haywire.* [Read in the San Diego Union Tribune >](#)

## Tools & Resources to De-Polarize

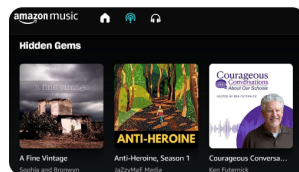


Our series about *Schools and Democracy* was produced for our sister podcast, [Teacher Stories](#), where listeners are invited to explore the

pivotal role schools play in supporting our democracy. This series features a range of experts, including educators, policymakers, and academics, who discuss various aspects of how education shapes and supports democratic structures and values. Topics range from character education, civic engagement, and teacher restrictions to navigating the challenges of misinformation and inequitable school funding. In addition to stimulating dialogue, these episodes provide practical tools for educators. It's a must-listen for anyone interested in the future of education and its role in sustaining a healthy democracy.

LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR DEMOCRACY SERIES

## Recent Accolades ★ ★ ★ ★ ★



We're honored! Goodpods includes us in their the top 100 political podcasts; we've landed on Amazon Music's list of "Hidden Gems"; and PlayPodcast.net selected us as a ["Must-Listen Podcast for Educators in 2023."](#)

➡ **Let's Amplify the Conversation!**

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Courageous Conversations About Our Schools, Carson Rd., Placerville, CA

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