

What counts can't be counted.

FROM THE MAKERS OF RACE TO NOWHERE

BEYOND MEASURE



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ABOUT THE FILM

LOGLINE

Innovative schools on the cutting-edge of education reform show that it's possible to transcend outmoded, test-driven education policies and create more equitable, empowering, student-centered schools.

SHORT SYNOPSIS

In *Race to Nowhere*, director Vicki Abeles unveiled the dark side of America's achievement culture. In her follow up documentary, *Beyond Measure*, Abeles travels to public schools across the country as they embark on a journey to transcend the limits of our outmoded, test-driven education system and create a more equitable, empowering, student-centered education culture from the ground up. By putting research and innovative models into practice, groundbreaking school communities are transforming how and what they teach. In chorus with experts including Sir Ken Robinson, Linda Darling-Hammond, Yong Zhao, Alison Gopnik, Jo Boaler and Daniel Pink, the change makers in *Beyond Measure* prove that both a new vision and a higher purpose are within reach for American education.

LONG SYNOPSIS

Beyond Measure sets out to challenge the assumptions of our current education story. Rather than ask why our students fail to measure up, this film asks us all to reconsider the greater purpose of education. What if our education system valued personal growth over test scores? Put inquiry over mimicry? Encouraged passion over rankings? What if we decided that the purpose of school was not the transmission of facts or formulas, but the transformation of every student? And what if this paradigm-shift was driven not by politicians but by students, parents, and teachers?

In *Beyond Measure*, we went in search of those answers and found a revolution brewing in public schools across the country. From rural Kentucky to San Diego, and from bucolic Massachusetts to El Paso, Texas, we feature schools that are breaking away from our outmoded, test-driven education culture and pioneering a new vision for our classrooms. These are schools that are asking our students to invent, to make, to think beyond their school walls. These are schools that are asking students to imagine how they can effect change in the world. They're transforming the roles of students and teachers, and putting more faith in the ingenuity of our children. They see critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity as the bedrock of a good education and the key to success after graduation. Best of all? They are dramatically and measurably improving outcomes for children of all backgrounds--becoming schools where practically every student graduates and goes on to finish college.

Beyond Measure boasts a collection of scholars and experts who put our stories in context, including Sir Ken Robinson Ph.D., Linda Darling-Hammond Ph.D., Daniel Pink, Yong Zhao, Ph.D., Jo Boaler, Ph.D., and Alison Gopnik Ph.D..

Beyond Measure fills a void that too many other education stories have left empty, offering a positive picture of what's innovative and possible in American education when communities decide they are ready for change.

FILMMAKER NOTES

Every day we hear stories about the troubles in American education: our test scores are stagnant, we're falling behind our international peers, and our schools are failing to prepare future generations to succeed in the 21st century.

In my last film, *Race to Nowhere*, I also uncovered the dark side of American education: an epidemic of burnt-out, exhausted, anxiety-ridden students whose passion for learning had dried up under a regime of non-stop testing, rote instruction, and a more-is-better culture that values output over inspiration.

But there is a brighter story to be told. In making *Beyond Measure*, I set out to tell a new narrative: one that uplifts and leads by example. A story that showcases the courageous, enterprising and innovative educators, students and parents who are forging a new path, and unleashing the true human potential of our students as they do so.

Beyond Measure is unique among education films in its dedication to exposing what's working, and celebrating the school communities that are daring to break the mold, rise above challenges, and reinvent the classrooms of the last century to make way for better learning and more inspired teaching. By going into the schools that are trying out the most cutting-edge research and promising teaching models, we find a picture of what's possible in public education.

It is our hope that you will walk away from the film with fresh ideas and that it will embolden you and your community to take concrete steps towards education reform.

Onwards,



Vicki Abeles

Vicki@ReelLinkFilms.com



Vicki Abeles
Director
Beyond Measure

DISTRIBUTION

We have a proven track record for distributing films to a wide audience. With *Race to Nowhere*, we had one of the most successful, truly independent releases of a documentary, ever. We've directly facilitated more than 7,000 public, community-hosted screenings in all fifty states and more than thirty countries. The film has also played in hundreds of theaters across the country, including successful premieres in New York and Los Angeles. These screenings reached an audience of millions and established our brand as a trusted name among families, educators, and healthcare experts.

Building on this success, *Beyond Measure* will employ a multi-platform distribution plan designed for maximum audience reach and community impact. We are tapping into our extensive network of individuals, school districts, universities, medical centers, nonprofits and other community organizations to promote the film, as well as reaching out to our robust social media following.

EXHIBITION FORMAT: DIGITAL CINEMA, BLU-RAY AND DVD

SOUND FORMAT: DOLBY STEREO

THEATRICAL PREMIER: ANTICIPATED FALL 2015

A PRODUCTION OF: REEL LINK FILMS

A FILM BY: VICKI ABELES

EDITOR: JEFFREY FRIEDMAN

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: MARK SMITH

COMPOSER: MARK ADLER

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: LYNDY WEINMAN AND THE COYOTE FOUNDATION



FEATURED SCHOOLS



From Garfield High School, Seattle, WA to NY Performance Standards Consortium, New York, NY

Fed up with standardized assessments that burden instruction and unfairly label students, teachers at Garfield High School put their jobs on the line when they refused to administer a district-wide test. When Garfield High Social Studies teacher Jesse Hagopian receives word that a fellow teacher is backing out of the test, he is fueled with passion and unofficially leads the movement. Convinced that changing the way we measure achievement is the first step to transforming instruction in our classrooms, the Garfield teachers then turn to an alliance of small New York public schools that have spent the last decade refining a revolutionary approach to student assessment.



From Trigg County Schools, Cadiz, KY to High Tech High School, San Diego, CA

Ready to abandon a “drill and kill” approach to teaching at their K-12 district, educators from rural Kentucky travel to a San Diego charter school in search of a model for rich hands-on, problem-based learning. What they find is a school with long-term success training teachers for problem-based learning, preparing students for college, transcending racial and socioeconomic differences, and cultivating lasting, meaningful relationships between students and caring adults. One hundred percent of High Tech High’s graduates enroll in college and 86 percent graduate from college on time. Inspired by the level of active engagement he observed in High Tech High students, Trigg County Superintendent Travis Hamby begins to slowly integrate problem-based learning throughout his district in Kentucky.



From University of Texas, El Paso, TX to Olin College of Engineering, Needham, MA

Two college programs join forces to test if the innovative practices at work at an elite New England private school can work for students at a public university on the Texas-Mexico border. In the process, they examine the science of motivation and the keys to unlocking student engagement. Roger Gonzalez, Director of Engineering Leadership at UTEP, internalizes the Olin College model and helps his engineering students flourish and build complex, hands-on projects while being active participants in their own education.



Monument Mountain High School, Great Barrington, MA

Tired of seeing his fellow classmates disengaged and apathetic towards school, Sam Levin brings teachers and students together to start a school within a school that gives young people greater autonomy to shape their own lessons in and out of the classroom. One of his classmates, Matt Whalan, finds himself struggling in the constraints of a regular classroom and is on the verge of dropping out until he is introduced to Sam and the Independent Project.

THOUGHT LEADERS

Sir Ken Robinson, PhD: Author of multiple books including *Finding Your Element*, Robinson is an internationally recognized thought leader in creativity, education, and innovation. His TED talk “How Schools Kill Creativity” is one of the most watched in TED’s history.

Ron Berger: Author and Harvard School of Education lecturer, Berger runs the nonprofit Expeditionary Learning Schools. This network of 160 project-based learning public schools helps to transition existing schools toward high student achievement with emphasis on character and citizenship. His work is centered around professional development and resources to raise teacher capacity.

Linda Darling-Hammond, PhD: Author of *The Flat World and Education: How America’s Commitment to Equity Will Determine Our Future*, Darling-Hammond is an education professor at Stanford University. She is an original founder of the Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education. In 2008, she served as the education advisor for President Barack Obama’s presidential campaign.

Daniel Pink: Author of New York Times best-selling books *Drive* and *A Whole New Mind*, Pink was named by Thinkers 50 as one of the top 15 best business thinkers in the world. He was a speechwriter for former Vice President Al Gore and an aide to former US Labor Secretary Robert Reich.

Alison Gopnik, PhD: Author of several books including *The Scientist in the Crib*, Gopnik is an internationally renowned expert in child psychology and development. She is currently a professor of psychology at the University of California at Berkeley.

Yong Zhao, PhD: Author of over 20 books including *Catching Up or Leading the Way* and *World Class Learners: Educating Creative and Entrepreneurial Students*, Zhao is an internationally known scholar and education expert. In 2012 he was named as one of the 10 most influential people in educational technology by *Tech and Learn* magazine. He is currently an education professor at the University of Oregon.

Jo Boaler, PhD: Boaler has authored such books as *What’s Math Got To Do With It* and *Mathematical Mindsets* and is the CEO and co-founder of Youcubed, an organization that provides mathematical support and resources to parents and educators. She is an advocate for mathematics education reform and is currently a Professor of Mathematics Education at the Stanford Graduate School of Education.



FILM TEAM



Director/Producer - Vicki Abeles

Filmmaker, author, attorney and passionate education advocate. She directed the award winning documentary *Race to Nowhere* and brought the film to millions of viewers around the globe using a cutting-edge community distribution model. She is the author of recently published *Beyond Measure: Rescuing an Overscheduled, Overtested, Underestimated Generation* (2015). Additional film credits include Associate Producer on the Sundance favorite *Miss Representation* (2011) and Associate Producer on *Plastic Man: The Artful Life of Jerry Ross Barrish* (2014).



Editor - Jeffrey Friedman

Academy Award-winning filmmaker. His editing credits include a number of award-winning films and television documentaries including *Never Cry Wolf* and *Kings Point*. In 1987, Jeffrey and Rob Epstein formed Telling Pictures and began working as a filmmaking team, producing and directing a wide range of award-winning films, including *Common Threads: Stories From the Quilt* (Academy Award, Documentary Feature, 1989), *The Celluloid Closet* (Emmy Award for Directing, 1995), *HOWL* (2010) and *Lovelace* (2013).



Executive Producer - Lynda Weinman

Entrepreneur, author, philanthropist. She is the co-founder and executive chair of lynda.com, one of the most successful companies in online education today. Before launching lynda.com, she was a faculty member at Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, California, and worked as an animator and motion graphics director in the special effects film industry. She is an education advocate, deeply committed to helping schools better prepare students for the future.



Composer - Mark Adler

Emmy Award-winning composer. He previously worked with Vicki Abeles on her film, *Race to Nowhere*. He has scored numerous National Geographic specials, four Hallmark Hall of Fame TV movies, and four Oscar-nominated feature documentaries, most recently *Food, Inc.* for Robert Kenner. He's been a regular at the Sundance Film Festival, having scored almost a dozen films that debuted there. These include the Audience Award-winning Miramax film *Picture Bride*, the soundtrack of which was released by Virgin Records, with the film's main title featured in the compilation, "Miramax Films Greatest Hits." He also won an Emmy for music direction on HBO's *The Rat Pack* and garnered another nomination for Hallmark Entertainment's *Forbidden Territory: Stanley's Search For Livingstone*.



Director of Photography - Mark Smith

His work has spanned documentary, television comedy, commercials and indie features. Assignments have taken him to Africa, the South Pacific, Asia and the Caribbean on documentary projects for Discovery, independent producers and other broadcast programs. Camera credits include *Returning Mickey Stern*, Grand Prize winner Rome Film Festival, *Worlds of Sound*, Cine Golden Eagle winner for the Smithsonian Channel, *Finding Amelia*, for Discovery, which he also co-produced. Mark previously collaborated with Vicki Abeles on *Race To Nowhere*. As a parent and founding member of a community based school, he developed an interest in education, which informed his participation in *Beyond Measure*.

REEL LINK FILMS

Reel Link Films is a media organization established to produce and distribute films to bring critical awareness to the important issues of our time.

Its first feature documentary, *Race to Nowhere*, has screened in more than 7,000 schools and institutions in all 50 states and more than 40 countries.

Reel Link Films believes in the power of story to educate, engage and inspire diverse audiences around the important issues of this era. Reel Link Films distributes documentary films using its unique grassroots, community platform, which reflects the organization's priority to engage film audiences not as consumers but as activists and stakeholders.

Reel Link Films' unique platform for distribution of documentary films in schools, libraries, universities, non-profit organizations and other educational settings allows for the incredible power of documentary to effect change in our communities.



CREDITS

A Reel Link Films Production

Executive Producer
Lynda Weinman
The Coyote Foundation

Original Music By
Mark Adler

Cinematography By
Mark Smith

Written By
Vicki Abeles
Jeffrey Friedman
Mitzi Mock

Edited By
Jeffrey Friedman

Directed And Produced By
Vicki Abeles

Associate Producers
Stefan Hearst
Wendy Ratcliffe
Paul and Pam Roy

Co Producer
Mitzi Mock
Wendy Ratcliffe

Line Producers
Kristine Stolakis
Chelsea May Bedard

Additional Editing
Jessica Congdon

Additional Cinematography
Sophie Constantinou
David Altizer
Chris Adams
Chris Jones
Howard Shuck

Assistant Editors
Mitzi Mock
Fred Kolouch

Production Assistant
Sara Godley

Intern
Catherine Cove

Sound
Peter Townsend
Hannah Fairlight

Audio Post Production
Berkeley Sound Artists

Re-recording mixers
James LeBrecht
Dan Olmsted

Sound Effects Editor
Bijan Sharifi

Dialogue Editor
Erik Reimers

Additional Field Recordings
Haley Barbieri

Transcriptions
Carol Lee Kidd
Kate Goldsworthy

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San Francisco

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Ashley Pagán

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Kim Aubry

Title and Graphics
Bil White

Fiscal Sponsor
Filmmakers Collaborative SF

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Cowan DeBaets
Abrahams & Sheppard
Dean Cheley
Donaldson Callif

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Edi Manus
Jill Lervold

Distribution Consulting
Caitlin Boyle
Peter Broderick
Janis Plotkin

Poster Design
Rita Valencia

Poster Photography
Park Shade
Claude Shade
Lauren Parks

Website Design
Orange Static

Educational Consultant
Sara Truebridge, Ed.D.

Creative Consulting
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Adam Keker
Caitlin Boyle
Maimone Attia
Jennifer Steinman
Sharon Wood
Simon Firth

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