

[The Bill Walton Show](#)

The Schools We Need with Jeanne Allen and Sarah Walton

Crew Member 1:

... Rarin' to go. Okay, I'm going to start rolling everything.

Crew Member 2:

Jeanne, when we're doing this, being that our multi-talented camera person is also now one of the guests-

Bill Walton:

She's in the show.

Crew Member 2:

You may occasionally see me walk over here and do something with camera-

Jeanne Allen:

Okay, don't look at you. Right.

Crew Member 2:

Yeah. Don't look.

Jeanne Allen:

Right.

Sarah:

Oh, you're talking to me! [crosstalk 00:00:21]

Jeanne Allen:

[crosstalk 00:00:20] the camera person-

Crew Member 2:

That's my camera woman!

Jeanne Allen:

Is not on the camera.

Crew Member 2:

All right. All right, The Bill Walton Show! May 10!

Bill Walton:

I've got a voice teacher that has become a great friend. Lisa [Miley 00:00:40]. She runs the Performing Arts group at the Performing Arts department at the University of Maryland. And we had her on the show, and we started out with some of my vocal exercises.

Jeanne Allen:

Oh, fantastic.

Bill Walton:

So we can all now burble.

Jeanne Allen:

Oh my gosh. That's great. My husband does that with people too.

Bill Walton:

Does he?

Jeanne Allen:

It's pretty amazing.

Bill Walton:

Oh, that's right, he's the-

Jeanne Allen:

He does, yeah, and he'll walk behind me, and he'll just do ... sometimes if I'm in a [inaudible 00:01:03], no, he'll just push my neck up, because if you stay down here, it's like, just, you know?

Bill Walton:

He did all that stuff.

Jeanne Allen:

All that stuff that you don't think about. He'll just like, walk up. Doesn't that feel better?

Bill Walton:

Okay, now we're rolling right now, so [crosstalk 00:01:15]

Crew Member 2:

[crosstalk 00:01:15]

Bill Walton:

We're rolling, okay, we can do ... the outtakes are always the best.

Crew Member 2:

All right, good. All right, so, Bill will address the camera, then everybody just talk amongst yourselves, forget about the cameras. Okay?

Crew Member1:

Bill, when you're right.

Bill Walton:

K through 12 schools in America are broken. Not for most ... not for all kids, but for most kids, schools in America are broken, and we need to address it. With me today to talk about that is Jeanne Allen, who's the longtime friend of mine and founder of Center for Education Reform and who I consider the leading advocate for educational change in America.

Jeanne Allen:

Hi Bill.

Bill Walton:

Welcome Jeanne. And also joining me is my bride Sarah, who's an outstanding painter, but more pertinent to this show, she was CEO for a while of the business we formed to teach Spanish and language to kids JK through sixth grade in public schools and private schools throughout the Midwest, and at its peak, we had about 20,000 kids enroll in both an after-school and in-curriculum program in a number of places, and Sarah has a few stories to share about that experience.

Sarah:

I always say that Bill was the brains, and I was the brawn.

Bill Walton:

Well, you carried all the books around!

Sarah:

I did.

Bill Walton:

But you designed them. You designed all the books! But you know, Jeanne, let's kick off with a couple of things that are on my mind that we talked about before the show. There's a book written by ... almost 20 years ago, over 20 years ago, by E. D. Hirsch, on the schools we need. And another book that came out about 10 years ago, Real Education, by Charles Murray. And, in both of them they talk about educational romanticism. And, E. D. Hirsch's case, he talks about romanticism as it pervades the curriculum, as it's been designed, and in Charles' case, he points out that, you know, kids very distinctly in terms of ability, and ability to succeed in school, so our expectations that every kid is going to do great in school and go to Harvard just isn't realistic, and we need an education system that addresses that fact. Lots.

Jeanne Allen:

You know, there is romanticism, both in the way Hirsch and Murray describe it, but also across our country, we find our schools and the education of our kids is just so lovely. I mean, think of how when

you're preparing your kids to go to school, and when they come home with their first report cards, and how proud we are when they're Honors students, and we just think everything's great! Until reality hits, and we actually read the data. And so when there are problems, we tend to think it's because of somebody else's kids, or it tends to be an anomaly, or we think, "Oh my gosh, my child has a disability." And so, beyond the lack of really strong curriculum, and the fact that we think everyone is already getting educated? Parents and the general public have this sense that, you know, it's just the most wonderful thing to ever happen to you, to enter into the public education system.

Bill Walton:

Well, and we've talked about this before that ... it's sort of like your local Congressman. Everybody thinks Congress is terrible except maybe their Congressman's okay.

Jeanne Allen:

Right.

Bill Walton:

Same thing with schools. Everybody says, "Well, schools are broken. They need fix. We need radical change." Yet, my school's pretty nice and I like the people, and we're across the street from an elementary school and it's just the most charming place imaginable, yet it's not producing the outcomes that we need.

Jeanne Allen:

And I totally agree with you, and I say what I said with just some regret, because it is a fundamental time in your child's life. It's a fundamental time in your community's, where you make your friends, it's where great cultural events happen, where you can develop the mind and the body, but as Hirsch points out, Bill, as you know, the content is so uneven, and so unequal across the country in terms of what kids know and be able to do, it's why he took off with cultural literacy, and wrote those books, what your fourth graders should know, and your fifth graders should know. And he stunned people by saying it, because they thought everybody was already learning the things that he said they were learning.

Bill Walton:

Well, he said this started, and I said we were going to name names, I hoped, who ... culprits behind some of this. It started with the Teachers College in Columbia University in New York in 1918, and they wrote up something about the ideal curriculum, and said it shouldn't be fact-based. It should be based on attributes, and consequently, curriculum development fell into this sort of, what he calls the romantic mode, and we've really been there ever since where that's considered to be the cause celebre, if you're an educator. I mean, if our language kids, Sarah, had that view, would you just be teaching them French culture, and not how to actually speak the language?

Sarah:

That was what a lot of schools wanted.

Jeanne Allen:

So, I'm curious too. So, most schools just thought, "Well, let's just talk about France. Why require them to know something?"

Sarah:

Well, let me start with my best story. We were recommended by the Head of Foreign Languages at the Chicago Public School to go out to Schaumburg, which is a suburb of Chicago that had 28 new elementary schools. And they were starting a Spanish program, and it's overwhelming. So I went out to see the Head of Curriculum, and I showed her our program. We had books, audio tapes, teacher guides, flashcards, games, songs, and she said, "Okay, I'll take the books, but not the audiotapes." And I said, "But it won't work then." And her response was, "We don't want the Spanish program to be better than the Math program. We don't want to raise parental expectations." And I knew right then the program was going to fail, and they were going to blame it on our books.

Jeanne Allen:

You know what's so amazing about that story? I literally just heard about Schaumburg, Illinois. A day before I just sat down with you all. And the story was how bad the schools were there. At one point, and how bad the college system was there, because they were getting students who, like most colleges in this country, have to remedial educate, something like 75% of colleges, universities. And someone came along, and I'm not entirely sure, and we should find out, and maybe report on it afterwards, and completely changed the way the schools interact with the community colleges and lifted, and made it much more personalized, much more adaptive, so that students actually going into community colleges are on a career path, and had mastered some incredible amounts of knowledge and content before they get there. And so, someone figured out that they were literally-

Bill Walton:

So they fixed it. The fixed it.

Jeanne Allen:

... as ignorant ... sounds like it's on its way to being more innovative. So maybe they had, like, hit rock bottom. But what a comment for people to make.

Bill Walton:

Well, one of the things we found was that we were teaching, not only out in nice suburbs like Schaumburg, we were teaching inner city Southside Chicago and, in some ways, one of my thoughts was that these schools in the ghetto, were actually better schools than the ones in the suburbs, because they had to do more with less, and the kids coming into the school were not well prepared by their parents to succeed. Yet, if you're in Schaumburg, the parents are out there reading the kids early, doing most of the work, and so the variable that schools are in terms of bringing about change in kids is, it's surprising. I thought the inner city schools in some ways were doing a better job.

Jeanne Allen:

Well, it's interesting because, what's happened is, this really interesting shift dating back to when, you are kind of putting a pin on the map on teacher education, and this notion that there really should be no particular canon, if you will, of knowledge. And yet, the schools that are doing great, who have come to be in response to that issue? They don't say that you have to be overly prescriptive, but they do say there has to be a core set of content and expectations. So Boys' Latin in Philadelphia, a men's charter school, which requires you to know Latin to be able to recite the school motto in Latin by the time you graduate, which requires literature, their founder David Hardy, when he speaks says, "We have demonstrated that you actually cannot only teach, but help the students excel and go to college and

high career levels, because they are actually enjoying learning." He said, "Look! Learning is actually something we like. It's a natural phenomena."

Bill Walton:

Right.

Jeanne Allen:

And it's what happens to them to deprive them of learning, that sets kids into troublemakers, or disinterested, and breaks down this system we have and this process.

Bill Walton:

Kids thrive when they can memorize no facts, can point out things on a map, they love that.

Jeanne Allen:

They love that, and they love using it to then do things that they can carve their own path.

Sarah:

Well, our first through third graders picked up language so much faster than the fourth through sixth graders. It was incredible, and they'd often get ahead ... the first through third graders would often get ahead of their non-Spanish-speaking teachers. It's incredible.

Bill Walton:

So the thing we tell you about romanticism, and we also ... the last time you were here, we talked, maybe time before, we talked about the structure of schools, about how we've got a nineteenth-century factory models within a place where you get inputs that are managed, and we didn't really talk so much about the curriculum models that are blocking change, and we talked about romanticism. Can you break that down into how curriculum is going one direction, it could have got ... it could go another with a little more hard-headed approach?

Jeanne Allen:

Sure, so, let me start by, kind of, talking about today. Just some fantastic innovations in learning that are happening about a student's ability to drive their own education when given content and good, strong pedagogy ... the pedagogy is basically something the student creates themselves by being accessible to content. I mean, look, we're in the day and age of technology. Let me boil it down. And we have access to unbridled opportunities. So many different points of information? So knowledge is no longer a commodity, you can find stuff. It's what you do with it. So the school in Iowa, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, where the student is actually creating kind of an architectural model for his school. He had to do math, he had to read certain formulas, he had to draw out something, he had to interact, he had to collaborate, he had to figure out how cities, how schools are built. He took something because they give and empower students in a model like that, to use the programs around them.

Jeanne Allen:

So what's happened is, we've gone from curriculum is vapid. You don't really need much. You just need to lead kids and they'll thrive. And it could just be the lowest level, lowest common denominator, because we don't want a challenge to meet people, to a world of standards and assessments, which was

very prescriptive, and everyone has to follow in lockstep, and that's the system that we sought to reform with choices in charter schools, it's got this lockstep thing, to yet more standards, and now we're coming back and saying, "Standards are good." But what are we giving students to do? They've got to learn to be independent. They've got to learn if they're going to be a painter, if they're going to be something-

Bill Walton:

Now, how individual are those programs? I mean, if you got 25 kids in the room, how many of them are getting the same thing as the others, or are they all ... you have 25 different things they're doing?

Jeanne Allen:

You know, it varies greatly depending on the program, depending on if it's a classroom, depending on the school. But essentially, it's a drive towards competency. You should not be able to go from one Math class to another unless you're actually competent in the essentials that were in that one Math class. So, whether it's 10 problems per week, why would you go on to the next 10, if you've got 8 out of 10? Those two that you might have gotten wrong, you might have needed it as those building blocks. So it's actually partly filled driven by the student's capacity, at that point their competency, not capacity.

Jeanne Allen:

And then the teacher can move around the classroom and look in real-time how you're progressing. That is the wave of the future.

Bill Walton:

But where is this happening? I mean, is it-

Jeanne Allen:

In about a hundred school districts and a huge number of charter schools, and then in some private schools, more and more.

Bill Walton:

But we have 30,000 school districts.

Jeanne Allen:

Exactly. That's the problem! That's why it's just beginning to scratch the surface.

Bill Walton:

We get two-thirds of kids not at grade-level proficiency in any subject. So.

Jeanne Allen:

Exactly.

Bill Walton:

So, what are the barriers to this? I've got some candidates here. We talked before about inputs. Schools need to be accredited. So that means if you're going to be going to public school, it's got to have an accreditation. If you're going to set up a charter school, it goes through the same accreditation process.

And that standardizes both models pretty much, not look very different from each other, or am I listening, am I getting this right?

Jeanne Allen:

No. So, we might want to roll back.

Bill Walton:

Okay.

Jeanne Allen:

So, public Schools gain their authority simply by the fact that they are run by a school district.

Bill Walton:

Okay.

Jeanne Allen:

Charter schools have to go to an authorizer for the "accreditation," but they're essentially authorized, and they can operate as long as they've agreed to meet health safety standards, et cetera, and they have a different boss. Some states, it's still the school district, which is not a good law. Some states it's a mayor, some states it could be a university, an independent authorizer.

Jeanne Allen:

They both though, regardless of charter or public, traditional public or charter public, they both are pretty much, even though I favor an option to have more autonomy in choices, they both pretty much are following the traditional model of education, because they're being held to the same tests and assessments that we put in that say, the 25 or 30 kids in the class have to be here at the end of a year. Well, what if you could be much farther ahead? What if you have a completely different interest? What if you've begun to actually tease out that you're of a career, and you know in eighth grade where you want to go? Why are you having to sit with everybody else and be taught lockstep?

Bill Walton:

So, I'm still trying to break down the difference between if I'm sending my child to a public school, that's run in the normal manner, or a charter school, how different are the standards as to what the schools have to provide, and how much autonomy do they have?

Jeanne Allen:

Well, the outcomes are not vastly different, but the autonomy's dramatically different. So the charter, like a private school, can have lots of authority to change the way they do business, which is why so many of the innovations that are actually making their way into lots of different systems in schools today, started in charters. So there's a whole [ownership 00:16:43] personalized learning, being able to go at your own pace, but at the same time, still achieving proficiency in something, as something was incubated and started in some of the charter schools out in California. For the first time, Rocket Ship doing blended learning. The Alliance Ready College Public Schools, same thing. So, how they teach the different levels of teachers, the performance they're held to, much higher, much more diverse, much more innovative, because they have that flexibility. But it still doesn't mean every charter, just like every

traditional public school, is really using this knowledge of content. I mean, again, going back to E. D. Hirsch and cultural literacy, and what students should know, are we really requiring to know everything they possibly can know about our world, about our country, about the culture, about arts?

Bill Walton:

But that still sounds romantic. I mean, is every child ... we mentioned Charles Murray here, and he's a pretty trenchant thinker about some of these things. He wrote the bell curve, and one of his metrics is the IQ, or he calls it G scores, it's so we don't get in the i2 Conference, and he talks about how ability varies wildly among kids, and it's not like we've gone, half of us are below average, and half of us are above average, and we end up with these schools that assume everybody from fourth grade on is going to be on the college track. And so, we set out a curriculum, sort of one-size-fits-all with standards for the high ability students, same standards for them as maybe the [inaudible 00:18:27] students. What do you think?

Jeanne Allen:

Well, I think there's another book out there that actually advances farther the debate on average. It's called the End Of Average, by Todd Rose who was a welfare father, single parent, who now operate a center at Harvard. He's actually looked at the data and the research governing what average is. He started with a cockpit for the Navy, and how they determine what average was, and he began to realize that around the country and particularly in education, we set this average. So at one point in time, Charles Murray was right, there was above average, there was below average.

Jeanne Allen:

I don't think we've ever quite really unpacked the fact though, that every student starts with a certain level of foundation. And if that foundation is lacking, then comparing them to average, whether they're above or below, doesn't serve the purpose. Today, what we can do is, we can say, "Where is your passion? Where is your ability to learn? Where is your interest? What do you do really well? How do you learn do more of it well?" I actually think all of our students at every level, adults too we're finding out, are still very, very malleable. They can still learn a lot, and do a lot, and be retrained.

Bill Walton:

What was his name?

Jeanne Allen:

His name is Todd Rose.

Bill Walton:

Todd Rose.

Jeanne Allen:

And, it's a fascinating theory. And if you think of people's brains the way you think of their sizes, there is no average. And so that also speaks to why you need individualized learning. I'm not saying a school that 400 kids are all doing something vastly different, but it's probably a lot like your language programs, where people excelled at their own pace. I'm doing Rosetta Stone right now again to practice my Italian to go back to Italy, and I'm at a different pace, 'cause I've got stuff going on that doesn't allow me to do

it all the time. It's the same with any kind of learning. And so that's where we have to be talking about. Whether it's K or career.

Bill Walton:

The army does that.

Jeanne Allen:

Really.

Bill Walton:

I was in the army, and I get sent to clerk school, which was sort of nice, since Vietnam War was raging at the time, and they ... in clerk school, they give you these stacks of books that go through and, you know, how you type, or how you fill out a form, or how you do this thing, it's all standardized. You can go at your own pace. And, it was an eight week course that we were ... [inaudible 00:20:53] a lot into it, but you could do it at your own pace. Well, it was really, it wasn't that hard. And so, it took me about, I don't know, about seven or eight days to finish the course for the week. And I was also the company platoon leader. And so, what I got to do was, I would march the rest of the platoon to class, and I'd go play golf in the morning, and then I'd come back for lunch and then march them back to lunch, and then afterwards-

Sarah:

That must have made you very popular.

Bill Walton:

No! But my point was, you can ... everybody had to have the same outcome in terms of what they knew, and everybody got there. In fact by the end of it, I had a lot of ... that half of the company was often at the golf course with me, so we had a good time.

Sarah:

Good.

Jeanne Allen:

So, great variation how they got there.

Bill Walton:

Yeah.

Jeanne Allen:

But they all got there. You know, I keep meeting these students who were recipients of an opportunity scholarship, a voucher, or went through a charter school, and the story is the same over and over again. "I was a troublemaker, I couldn't do this. I wasn't a good student. I was bad. They thought I was X, Y, and Z, and then I got into a school where they held me to an expectation, and now I'm going to become a nurse." Or, "Now, I'm graduating college and I want to work for you!" And no one thought that they could learn. And then they've also uncovered and unlocked their various abilities.

Jeanne Allen:

And so, I think that what we know about the brain today, is amazing, and I wonder if Charles Murray, he's a friend of yours, we should ask him if he was writing that book in a day and age when technology was as ubiquitous as it is today, where the brain is literally on fire on a regular basis. Love it or not, with all of our phones and all of our equipment, it's changing the way we can react and act in the face of information, trauma, danger, or opportunity.

Bill Walton:

Does that mean the smartphones made us smarter?

Jeanne Allen:

Smartphones may have opened up and unlocked some keys. Maybe not. Maybe a little bit more ADD, sadly.

Bill Walton:

Well, but how do we ... these are all great individual success stories that happen in specific schools. How do you bring about institutional change across the country for these sort of things that work and, you know, I guess you've cleared my thinking on accreditation, but we've also got teachers, colleges, and certification, and textbook approval, and textbook publishers, and they pretty much operate in lockstep with sort of the old paradigm.

Jeanne Allen:

We need a complete transformation in the way we do education at every level from K through career. What we've been talking about a lot, and I know this is an interest of yours is, are we preparing students for something they can do for life? More than half the kids are kids who go to a four year college will not complete it. Well over half. I mean something like more than 60 million adults have not completed anything, not a certificate or a degree, and many of them are in jobs that are not serving their highest value, and are not serving the country. And that doesn't mean we shouldn't give everyone a chance to aspire to as much education as they want. But a degree is a badge, just like we got badges in Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts. It's a badge. It happens to be recognized badge, and a lot of Higher Ed innovators are talking about, why isn't a certificate a badge? And in fact, why isn't eighth grade, or maybe finishing sixth grade, or maybe we shouldn't even be sixth or eighth grade. Maybe it should be acquiring a certain amount of knowledge in a certain amount of time, get you badge.

Bill Walton:

So like sitting for the CPA exam? So you don't really ... it doesn't measure how many years or how many semesters of accounting you took, although that's one of the prerequisites, but it's mainly whether you can pass the test. And so you'd have something like that for all sorts of occupations?

Jeanne Allen:

That's a great analogy. And for all sorts of curricula. And programs. And content. So we want all of our kids to know, I do at least, I don't know about a lot of people, why the American Revolution was fought and what happened. Why is that fourth grade? I wouldn't ... was reading to my kids about in kindergarten.

Bill Walton:

Yeah, exactly. Well, Sarah and I, back in the days when we were teaching language and we also had a reading program, I became friends with an ex-high school football coach who'd created a program where we take kids that had dropped out of high school or been kicked out of high school for behavior issues, and he would take the first student allocation as his revenue, and then he would take these kids, and this was 20, 25 years ago when computers were-

Sarah:

Very beginning.

Bill Walton:

Very beginning, you know, they looked like big refrigerators, you know, they're enormous, but he'd have them doing things with these computers in the morning, and they got through the whole high school curriculum in about three hours a day, five days a week, and then he had them going off to part-time jobs. And so they were not only learning, moving along at their own pace, but they were getting workforce training.

Sarah:

And getting money.

Bill Walton:

Oh, yeah. Getting paid!

Jeanne Allen:

And it's kind of like the idea of apprenticeships, right?

Bill Walton:

Yeah.

Jeanne Allen:

It's not just about, you know, the word "vocation" was bandied around a lot today. I don't like the word vocational because the older vocational education was almost along the German model. You're ninth grade. You don't seem quite as promising as this one over here. So by the time you get to tenth grade, you're going to go off on a bus, happened to many of my friends, and you're going to go beautician school, or you're going to go to, you know, some woodworking thing. And yet, they may have not gotten the foundation.

Bill Walton:

Well, it's like those old notions of working class or middle class.

Jeanne Allen:

Right.

Bill Walton:

I mean, they ... I think it was Arnold Kling said, if you came down from Mars and looked at the country, you couldn't see if there's a working-class and another class. Everybody's sort of lumped in together.

Jeanne Allen:

And so imagine taking that definition too, if you said to students starting first or second grade, they're constantly exposed to a wealth of pathways while they're learning and exploring, and they might decide by eighth grade or seventh grade or some weird time in their history, that they want to be on a different path. Maybe that's a completely different kind of education school. Maybe it's online. Maybe it's at home. Maybe it's in a college. Maybe it's in a school we've never heard of.

Bill Walton:

But I've already said you're the leading educational reformer, bringing that change in America. How do we multiply, how do we force-multiply this, I mean, how do we roll it out?

Jeanne Allen:

We have to do a few things, and they're hard. And they-

Bill Walton:

Well, let's do the hard thing.

Jeanne Allen:

... and they buck the status quo. One is we truly have to change laws that require schools to be measured based on seed time.

Sarah:

Oh, yeah.

Jeanne Allen:

Right? And numbers. So we pay for butts in seats. The [old 00:27:43] Carnegie units. That's how districts get funded, that's how the federal government, the state government, the local government, fund schools. It doesn't matter whether you have a federal education department or not. It's irrelevant. All schools are funded based on number formulas of kids and seed time. Instead, you should be funding them based on what's happening locally and whether there's competency. Student-centered funding-

Bill Walton:

Certain certification, or whatever.

Jeanne Allen:

Yeah. Right?

Bill Walton:

Okay. Now, we went through this whole thing with No Child Left Behind, teaching for the test, and that sort of thing. How do you avoid that trap?

Jeanne Allen:

So, you know, the teaching to the test, in a way, was a necessary evil, and I don't even want to say teaching the test. The testing was a necessary evil. A teaching the test came about-

Bill Walton:

I think testing is essential.

Jeanne Allen:

Right? The teaching the test came because this system that we're trying to transform didn't know how to react to these incentives or the sticks and the carrot. So rather than saying, "Oh my gosh, they say that our kids should know this level of math," whatever it happens to be by fourth grade, we're not going to teach them math, we're just going to make sure they test well in math.

Bill Walton:

So-

Jeanne Allen:

So it shows the flaw of the system, that people felt like they had to teach to the test, or just, you know, they felt like they had to practice testing.

Bill Walton:

Got it.

Jeanne Allen:

What teach to the test means really-

Bill Walton:

So they weren't learning, they were just learning to take tests.

Jeanne Allen:

... is they were practicing the test.

Bill Walton:

Yeah.

Jeanne Allen:

And in the process some kids learned.

Bill Walton:

Yeah.

Jeanne Allen:

And actually we saw a huge bump in minority kids' scores.

Bill Walton:

But there's not much evidence that that sticks.

Jeanne Allen:

But, right. Exactly. It's not persistent.

Bill Walton:

There's a lot of evidence that it doesn't stick.

Jeanne Allen:

Right. Right. And by the way, the corollary is on the nation's report card, the states where there's more flexibility, more autonomy, more innovations happening, their black and brown kids in particular but all students, particularly those in charter schools, went up eight to ten percentage points over the last few assessments.

Bill Walton:

And seed time is JK through 12.

Jeanne Allen:

Yeah.

Bill Walton:

All the way through. Now-

Jeanne Allen:

And your diploma is based on time-

Bill Walton:

That's a big one, so if you said to parents, and voters, "Look, if you really want educational change, let's rethink this whole thing." That's a cause.

Jeanne Allen:

How about you don't get a diploma for graduating 12 years. How about your diploma's based on competency?

Bill Walton:

That you don't get one if you don't get it within 12 years?

Jeanne Allen:

If you don't ... you get it whenever you've mastered the program of instruction.

Bill Walton:

Oh I like that. More time for golf.

Jeanne Allen:

Exactly!

Bill Walton:

So, seed time, right, that's a big one. What else was there? Is there another big one that you could say, "Gee, if we could change seed time that would change a lot..." What else?

Jeanne Allen:

Teacher certification and teacher education. I mean, that's where ... that's the reinforcement that you have to be sitting in rows. Right? You're being taught basically most of teacher education accepted the more, I'd say progressive institutions? Are about classroom management. You know, I ... there's a Dean in Boston College who was actually at Penn when I was there, who taught about Dewey, he taught about differential ways to think about language, how we all come to language, he talked about community. I remember thinking, "Oh my God, we're going to talk down John Dewey, this is going to be crazy." It was interesting because he was talking about the foundations of education, asking people in this class, some of who were going to become teachers, most were going to become entrepreneurs in education, how to think about students.

Bill Walton:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jeanne Allen:

That's different than, I show up to get my certification, and I'm told that if I turn on and off the lights five times, my kids will quiet down if they're in third grade.

Bill Walton:

So we need to have certification based on classroom mastery. Or classroom-

Jeanne Allen:

Certification should be based on ... you should be able to hire a teacher who does something really well and proves that they've got some experience in their content field.

Bill Walton:

Well, we've been through that, with Language Odyssey.

Sarah:

Yeah. In Indiana, 20 years ago, I don't know if it's the same, if you were an accredited high school Spanish teacher, you are not allowed to teach elementary Spanish.

Bill Walton:

Well, the other thing too is we-

Sarah:

It's unbelievable!

Bill Walton:

We headed from-

Jeanne Allen:

Oh my gosh.

Bill Walton:

We had a program in a suburb that was not unlike Schaumburg, and the ... Sarah had sold the teacher, that the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum was a marvelous person-

Sarah:

Wonderful.

Bill Walton:

... and she brought us in, and she ... we were all set up and we had eight schools we were going to be teaching in, had hired [eight 00:32:09] teachers. We hired a couple; one of them had a PhD, was Spanish, had a PhD in engineering, but wanted to teach kids, and we had all sorts of highly-qualified Spanish speakers, because it's an immersion program, and the Indiana Teachers Unions found out about this, and so, "No, no, no, you can't ... these people are not certified," and so even though they're fluent in Spanish, which works great in an immersion program-

Sarah:

And they were highly educated.

Bill Walton:

And so-

Jeanne Allen:

Right.

Bill Walton:

So they said, "You can't hire them. You got to hire the teachers we provide," and they provided eight teachers, none of them could speak Spanish.

Jeanne Allen:

Oh my gosh.

Sarah:

Well, they knew some numbers and some food.

Bill Walton:

Okay. Numbers and...!

Sarah:

Colors.

Bill Walton:

All right, anyway, we ... how long did that program ... we did it for a couple years trying to make that work. I remember you going down there trying to teach Spanish to ... and your Spanish is not-

Sarah:

Well, I, no, I-

Bill Walton:

Neither one of our Spanish is all that great! But that's ... Okay, so let's circle back to big change. Seed time-

Jeanne Allen:

Yeah, so let me ask you a question, back on the teachers. Do we allow doctors to practice, right away after they've passed the medical exam? No, they have to have been in a hospital as a resident.

Bill Walton:

Sure.

Jeanne Allen:

And observed, and then satisfactorily validated by their supervising doctor. We do six weeks of classroom teaching, and we go, "Okay. Done."

Bill Walton:

You're in.

Jeanne Allen:

You went to school, you're in.

Bill Walton:

Yeah.

Jeanne Allen:

So imagine if their peers could say, "Sarah's coming in and doing Spanish language." Maybe Sarah's a painter. When she just happens to spend a lot of time in Spanish. Language exercises.

Bill Walton:

So, we need sort of an apprentice program for teachers?

Jeanne Allen:

I think maybe a part apprentice, part content, and yeah, I think that's a huge barrier, and then really learning to refocus the unit of measurement on the student. It's very hard. How do you decide without going like, "Oh, we just want schools to do anything." But if you focus unit of measurement on the

student, is the student making progress? Then I might pick a school that's different from what you might pick.

Bill Walton:

Okay, so how is that different from we have now, unit of measure on the student. what does that mean relative to where-

Jeanne Allen:

We measure schools on whether the school is progressing whether an average ... an aggregate number of students is making progress-

Bill Walton:

I got it.

Jeanne Allen:

... on a set of tests, even before we had a federal requirement for state by state testing? There were, you know, the Stanford 9, some of you have heard of, or just standardized tests, and you'd say, "Oh, the average numbers, this is where the average came from. The average number of kids is doing really well, 70% of them are doing pretty good on our state tests or on this norm-referenced test."

Bill Walton:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jeanne Allen:

And those are good substantial measurements to get a gauge of where people are. There's been a lot of science put into them, not pooh-poohing tests. But that doesn't mean the student is ready to graduate if they've done well, or that they're not ready to graduate because they've done poorly. Because if you're Walter Bank who ended up being saved by a charter school in Ohio, and ended up going to Ohio State, and now is graduating, and you just left the measurement of the test and didn't give him an option? He'd still be ... he'd probably be in jail.

Bill Walton:

Okay.

Jeanne Allen:

'Cause he was that bad.

Bill Walton:

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. You know ... concerning outcomes, one of the thought experiments I tried when I was ... Sarah and I were toiling in the education of vineyards with our programs, was it ... we thought we were doing something better, faster, cheaper, because it's hard for elementary schools to create a language program raised to scale-

Sarah:

And to keep it going.

Bill Walton:

And keep it going. All sorts of issues with staging these third graders and the sixth graders, it's complicated. But we had a ... we were doing it very cost-effectively, and I came to think of a thought experiment. If we were just selling a pill, that we could give you, and it would teach you how to speak Spanish without any other things like that, would the education establishment let us give you that pill, because we'd gotten rid of all the other nonsense. We just produced outcome.

Jeanne Allen:

No, the answer's no, because the education establishment actually thinks that you're there to be socialized.

Bill Walton:

Okay.

Jeanne Allen:

And that's why they don't like homeschooling, and that's why they don't like parents choosing to go to their own charter or private school, because they think we should be socialized. Look. I'm a huge proponent of the melting pot. You know, my dad was a recipient of ... we probably talked about this before, of like, tens of millions in this country, of being able to get into America and be socialized to our civic values, but we're not even doing that now. So, I think our kids are pretty social without having to have the education establishment.

Bill Walton:

I think they think they've got that covered.

Jeanne Allen:

Yeah.

Bill Walton:

Yeah. Well, once again, fascinating. I think we've got some solutions here. We just need to get together and make them happen. And so I'm going to ... sign me up for your army.

Sarah:

Yeah.

Bill Walton:

Let's make some educational change.

Jeanne Allen:

You're in.

Bill Walton:

Sarah, thank you for ... and sharing your war stories, and Jeanne, thank you.

Jeanne Allen:
Thank you, Bill.

Bill Walton:
I'll see you.

Jeanne Allen:
And Sarah.

Bill Walton:
I'm sure I'll see you in a few months to talk about this more. Great. Take care.

Jeanne Allen:
Thanks.

Crew Member 2:
Super!

Jeanne Allen:
That was quick.

Crew Member 2:
Very nice!

Jeanne Allen:
That was good.

Sarah:
Yeah.

Bill Walton:
That was very quick. But it was 36 minutes.

Jeanne Allen:
That's great.

Bill Walton:
And-

Jeanne Allen:
Yeah.

Bill Walton:

Yeah, you know, you're going longer than that.

Jeanne Allen:

Yeah.

Bill Walton:

I think we got into some interesting things. I also love circling back to ... could you boil it down in fifty words? Seed time, certification, unit of measurement.

Jeanne Allen:

Right. Yes. Now?

Bill Walton:

Yeah.

Jeanne Allen:

Okay!

Sarah:

Gee, he put you on the spot!

Jeanne Allen:

I can actually probably send you a paragraph that's even better than that, from Education. There's a great vision document out of Education Reimagined.

Bill Walton:

Because what I want to do is I'm going to want do a takeaway.

Jeanne Allen:

Yep. So let me-

Bill Walton:

Is the document right at hand, or is it-

Jeanne Allen:

It's very much at hand. I can actually-

Bill Walton:

If you can send it to me right now, I could turn that into a takeaway.

Jeanne Allen:

Yeah. It's a really, really good, about what the vision for education should look like?

Bill Walton:

Yeah.

Jeanne Allen:

And it's agnostic, as opposed to where you go and what you do. Let me pull this up. Because you will like that a lot.

Bill Walton:

How'd you do? How do you feel you...

Sarah:

[inaudible 00:38:26]

Bill Walton:

Well, some of these stories, I mean, my story about marching kids back and forth in the army-

Jeanne Allen:

What's common ground-

Bill Walton:

Everybody was charmed by that. They didn't, they weren't jealous of that-

Sarah:

I just, I'm your wife, I have to...

Bill Walton:

I know, you're the wife.

Jeanne Allen:

Big barkers always bark.

Bill Walton:

But really, they like to-

Jeanne Allen:

Our two big-

Sarah:

Barkers-

Jeanne Allen:

Barkers, I have to remember that.

Sarah:

Always bark.

Jeanne Allen:

Always bark.

Bill Walton:

And that would be a true statement.

Bill Walton:

[crosstalk 00:38:52]

Crew Member 2:

Are you going to want to do-

Jeanne Allen:

Yes. Our two big barkers always bark.

Bill Walton:

She's going to interview me right now.

Jeanne Allen:

Hold on, what ... so it's all one ... no capitals?

Bill Walton:

No caps.

Sarah:

All...

Jeanne Allen:

Our two...

Bill Walton:

Our ... two should be a number.

Jeanne Allen:

Yeah? Our two big barkers always bark. And that's common ground, or is that hillcrest?

Sarah:

It's in a hillcrest.

Jeanne Allen:

Oh it's the hillcrest. That's the problem was. Okay great. Got it. Our two big barkers always bark. All right. Got it. All right, and you get me a Education Reimagined document. Education Reimagined vision, okay. So, a transformational vision ... for educa-

Jeanne Allen:

Simply put the current system is-

Crew Member 2:

Okay. Take it away.

Jeanne Allen:

Hi, and welcome to Reality Check. This is Jeanne Allen. Reality Check is a weekly show, a podcast about all things education, cultural affairs, and whatever else happens to make me think that people would be interested. And today is a really fantastic show. I am thrilled to introduce my longtime friend and guest Bill Walton, who has a fantastic and very broad array of experiences and activities, for a very overdue conversation here on Reality Check.

Jeanne Allen:

First and foremost, today, Bill was the host of The Bill Walton Show, a podcast that I will make sure I give you information about before we end today. And he is the managing partner of Rappahannock Ventures, a private equity firm, and Rush River Entertainment. His feature films, he's an entertainer extraordinaire, and include Max Rose, The Ticket, and The Price of Desire.

Jeanne Allen:

Previously, when I met Bill, he served as Chairman of the Board and CEO of Allied Capital Corporation. He was also Managing Director of Butler Capital, was a Senior Vice-President with Lehman Brothers, Kuhn, Loeb. He serves on the board of my alma mater, The Heritage Foundation, where he's been a trustee, Media Research Center, ForAmerica.

Jeanne Allen:

He is very engaged with his wife Sarah, lovely wife Sarah, on the National Gallery of Art, and all sorts of other amazing organizations. I'm so pleased to welcome you Bill, thank you for joining me.

Bill Walton:

Great to be here. Thank you!

Jeanne Allen:

So, it's so funny, because Bill, you and I go way back, and around the time that you were working in finance exclusively, and you were really interested in education. And educational change. And I felt myself so fortunate to kind of connect with you, because independent-minded business leaders often are our biggest advocates. But I've never quite understood why. How did you really come to appreciate the cause for educational change?

Bill Walton:

Well, it actually happened is ... in something I did entrepreneurially. Almost 25 years ago, I was in private equity, had my own firm, looking around to buy different businesses and things like that, and came across a language curriculum that was developed by an entrepreneur in California teaching Spanish and French. And, through a whole series of ins and out, it came to be that I created my own language with the curriculum, and with my wife Sarah, and oh gosh, dozens of other people who knew a lot more about language than I did. With the idea that a private sector entity, a for-profit business could do something better, cheaper, faster than the educational ... than schools could, because it's ... it was a highly specialized curriculum, and it's tough to replicate, tough to find teachers, things like that.

Bill Walton:

And so, my idea was that you would have outsourcing of a service to a school, and the school wouldn't need to provide their own teachers or anything; I would do all that for them. And I thought that could work in Math, it could work in Science, it could work in Art, it could work in any number of things, because you find all sorts of talented people who aren't in the school system, who would love nothing more than to teach, and provide a great educational experience for kids.

Bill Walton:

And, what I found when I started doing that ... I guess I should have read up more on teachers unions, and school bureaucracies and school superintendents, and what I discovered in the process of doing that was just massive resistance to change. Massive resistance to bringing in somebody new. And, we fought the fight; I think company's called Language Odyssey, for about five or six years, and we ended up with 20,000 kids enrolled in about eight to nine states in the Midwest, which was a measure of success, but boy, it was a fight to get there, and it was ... I became interested in the barriers to change ever since. And I still believe that a free market in education rather than government-run schools is the ideal system for every child to flourish in. And we don't have that now. And so, it's just not only ... I think it's utilitarian to teach kids, I think it's a moral cause, because in inner city schools, for example, we failed three or four generations of students, since the 60s.

Jeanne Allen:

Mm-hmm (affirmative). And it's interesting, because your experiences through that company, and with all the resistance, some two decades ago right, almost, is almost the exact same resistance we're saying today. How do you account for that?

Bill Walton:

No, it hasn't changed since 1992!

Jeanne Allen:

What is happening? Why does this continue day in and day out, I mean they're entrepreneurial more so than ever before. Entrepreneurial people like yourself who come smack dab in conflict with this education system that they're trying to change. What do we have to do to get more people to recognize this?

Bill Walton:

Well, I came to conclude that it's not about bad people. It's about bad ideas. And we have an education establishment, I mean, think about change, there are five or six million people working in K-12 education in America right now. They're doing just fine as adults with the current system we have, and they don't

have a lot of incentives to change, because they operate within a monopoly, and we all know monopolies without competition ossify and don't get better. So, that's happening. There are good people working in a very, very bad system, and there are a lot of bad ideas in the system.

Bill Walton:

You know, I've talked before that, the whole idea of a progressive curriculum came about in the early twentieth century, and it sort of ran parallel with progressive politics, and that's unfortunate because the progressive curriculum is promulgated by the Teachers College of Columbia University. In 1918, was when they wrote their first, tome on the topic. Basically de-emphasize facts, de-emphasize hard knowledge, de-emphasize really, the tools of math and reading that we know really work, and the kids really respond to. And, unfortunately, the progressive curriculum has been completed with progressive liberal ideas, and that's a mistake. There's a man that you and I both respect a lot, E. D. Hirsch, and he says, "I'm a Liberal, but I'm an educational Conservative." In fact, I see myself as a pragmatist, and I think too often people think good intentions are enough to educate kids and they're not. You've got to be very hardheaded about it.

Bill Walton:

So, there are good people operating with a bad set of ideas that are promulgated through the teachers unions, of the teachers colleges, with the students, the certification process, school accreditation, textbook publishers. There are all sorts of forces there that don't want any change. And even political financial ones like the fact that most big city schools are big source of patronage jobs for big city mayors.

Jeanne Allen:

So I'm curious. How did you come to even think this, even before you founded that company? Something had to have set this shit off in your brain. What were you ... what was your education like growing up? I know you and I have talked on your show about differentials in-house, how people learn and you were telling me a story about the army. But like, what was your ... did you know when you were growing up that there was an issue with education? I mean, when did that actually strike you?

Bill Walton:

My experience is a little ... I grew up in Indiana, Indianapolis, went to public schools. I'm a total product of public schools, went to [PS86 00:47:17], went to Shortridge High School, that was an eyeopener. At Shortridge, we were sort of gerrymandered into the district, where my school classmates were about 80% African American. And so I could see across cultures what education was, and for most ... most of us, I think I wasn't really aware of really being a good student or bad student. I had some wake up call my senior year. I ended up becoming a National Merit finalist, and I didn't even know I was very smart. I just ... I was a kid.

Bill Walton:

So then well, they must have been teaching me something, and then I went off to school. I'd skipped a grade and I went to Indiana, dropped out after a couple semesters, ended up getting drafted, going into the army, and the army taught me a lot about leadership and also the ability to learn, because the army has the job of teaching every soldier to function competently in their military occupational specialty. So, I got to see it happening there, but ... and then I became sort of a lifelong learner myself, and began to see that the real opportunities for people come when they invest in themselves. And, you know, people ask me, "You've been a successful entrepreneur." It wasn't obvious I was going to be a successful

entrepreneur. You know, you sort of build things as they come along. But they asked me, "What should I do?" And my first piece of advice is, "Invest in yourself."

Bill Walton:

And that means getting yourself as educated and as smart and getting yourself the skills and the attributes. For me, I ended up ... because I was running things, I did things, you know, corny things like, I went to Toast Masters, and taught myself to do a little public speaking.

Jeanne Allen:

Right.

Bill Walton:

You know, I think like you, I love these online courses, well they didn't have them online then, they were mail-order, so you can self-teach yourself. And then I backed up into what I experienced myself in school, that I wasn't really being taught the things I wanted to learn, so it made me think, "Gee, maybe these schools need to be rethunk." And I still think that.

Jeanne Allen:

I'm talking with Bill Walton, if you happen to get distracted for a second. Bill is fantastic host of The Bill Walton Show, lifelong entrepreneur, and devoted education reform change agent as well. Shares my passion for that certainly, and those of you listening, and talking about leadership, Bill, and then how important that is, reminds me that this is probably one of the most important discussions today in education at large, whether it's in our traditional systems K-12, which hopefully someday we'll stop calling them those, or colleges, is that you can't really-

Bill Walton:

K-12's your seed time.

Jeanne Allen:

Right, it's the seed time, exactly-

Bill Walton:

Sorry, I'm going to-

Jeanne Allen:

... as we talked about!

Bill Walton:

... I'll come up with a new name.

Jeanne Allen:

You'll come up with a new name!

Bill Walton:

Competency-based-

Jeanne Allen:

Non-competency [inaudible 00:50:19] in our competency-based or non-competency-based system, you know, what people are struggling with is how do you have better education if you're constantly ... there's turnover in superintendents, you don't get enough principals, there aren't leaders or people who are willing to buck the system inside, and so a lot of people go, "If we can just find great leaders, things will change," but you and I have talked about that that's not necessarily the case, right?

Bill Walton:

No, you need to ... as long as you have a monopoly, you're never going to see change. The only way you'll see change really, is if you set up real competition with schools, and not just charters or, you know, vouchers to go to schools, which have pretty much the same inputs as the regular public schools. You need to have real ... you know, I'm a believer that education is a service that can be provided by businesses as well as government-run schools, that you'd be just as sensitive to your customers, your students and maybe more sensitive, because if you weren't doing a good job, their parents would take them away from you.

Bill Walton:

And, you know, we had the experience when I was at Allied we owned a piece of Nobel Learning Community, which was a, hate to say it's K through what, I can't remember-

Jeanne Allen:

Right. K-12 education's network, right?

Bill Walton:

... A series of schools, and you know, we couldn't bring it, we couldn't accommodate all the people who wanted to come into our schools, because we were providing something that was differentiated from what they were getting in the public schools. And, so I think without competition, we're not going to see those kind of changes. A great leader inside of a monopoly's not going to change much.

Jeanne Allen:

And how do you feel about our global competitiveness? I know that you certainly have recognized the decline, or at least the stagnation of our scores on [eighth 00:52:08], et cetera. How do we compare to other countries? You do a lot of interviews on your show with people in other issues; you've talked about China, you've talked about, you know, the different wars, what's ... how does it look?

Bill Walton:

I think our education ... I think the way we educate kids would be comical if it weren't so serious and upsetting. And compare us to China; I mean, China's got a lot of issues. It's authoritarian, it's Communist, but it's also figured out a way to let the market work to allocate resources, and that's kind of what I'm talking about with educational resources. You let the market work and people go to where they can get the best result.

Bill Walton:

Politburo. China. It's not ... it's run by engineers. Almost all the people that lead China are engineers, and they go to the ... graduation ... the so-called STEM classes, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math. And they're producing 7 or 800,000 STEM majors every year in China, versus our 100, 150,000. People quibble about whether there's that quality, but they're taking hard subjects seriously, and see that as their future. I don't see any seriousness in the way we go at education. You pointed out to me that the goal of schools is really not to teach hard ... I don't even want to say hard, but interesting and useful things, but it's to socialize kids. And ... yeah, I think they're pretty social on their own!

Jeanne Allen:

So true. From very early on. You know, it's interesting. So, China is one of the countries, they care more about math and science it seems, than we do. We don't, you know, and when I say care, of course everyone cares, but yet, most of the teachers teaching math and science are not mathematicians or scientists.

Bill Walton:

The reason I want competition so much is, we've got this idea, which I think is incorrect, that there's this monolithic K-12 system where it's one-size-fits-all, and everybody comes through and you get pretty much the same thing. I'd like to have a hundred different models. For a hundred different attributes, and interests, and things like that. And, this whole thing where we're training kids, we're bringing kids through with the idea they're all going to go to college. That's a terrible idea. I mean most jobs don't require a college degree and we set up a second class system where if you didn't go to college, you're not considered to be smart. There are lots of people that are plenty smart, but they just may not have the academic interest that the good students have. And so, I would, I'm quite [crosstalk 00:54:45]

Jeanne Allen:

Or maybe we need to find college instead of ... I like to say that rather than say, "Not everyone should or might want to go," why don't we say, "Everyone has a different path that may end up in two years, four years, six years of higher learning, but let's redefine what higher learning is. Why is it a four year residential college, or just a commuter school? Why isn't it so much more? You could be learning engineering in two years. You could be learning it in six months, it could take eight.

Bill Walton:

And you should be able to do that.

Jeanne Allen:

Right? I mean higher ... isn't higher learning and career paths, I mean, they so intersect today, it seems to me.

Bill Walton:

They do, and most people I know that are good at what they do keep teaching themselves as they go, regardless of whether they're sitting in a classroom.

Jeanne Allen:

Right.

Bill Walton:

And there's so much self-learning, so much online, I mean even for kids, are things like the Khan Academy, that you can learn any subject on the planet online, and not step foot in a classroom. I think your idea that we have some sort of certification or some sort of proof-of-skillset, not passing a test, proving that you're skillful at something in order to get ... to show that you know it, instead of just saying, "I've got my college degree." So what?

Bill Walton:

I had this issue when I've hired ... I've hired untold number of peoples in the various jobs I've had, and I don't really look ... we didn't really look too much at the degree perse. We were always trying to get underneath that to what they really learned and knew. And, you know, very often we ended up hiring people that didn't go to Harvard or Princeton, but went to Penn State, and did really well at Penn State, and learned a lot of stuff and, you know, I've sort of blanched one time, the guy went to Harvard Business School, said, "Well, I didn't take an accounting course because I never wanted to be an accountant." Yet, the accounting's the building block of finance and business, and if you don't know that, you don't know very much.

Jeanne Allen:

Right.

Bill Walton:

So, you got to look for underlying attributes, not just degrees. I think smart hiring people do that. But even so, there are business that won't hire you, won't talk to you unless you've got that certificate, or that degree, and that's unfortunate.

Jeanne Allen:

So, is that part of the reason then, your interest and passion for lifelong learning, that you started this podcast? Tell me a little bit about it.

Bill Walton:

Well, the podcast came out of the fact that ... I've really sought out interesting people my whole career. I really get turned on by high achievers and people that have done things, and I've also been very interested in books by people like Charles Murray, or E. D. Hirsch. They're highly specialist in their matters, but, and they may have sold well for that type of book, but they didn't reach a wide audience. And so, then an awful lot of people, experts in China, for example, who we wouldn't see on TV, but yet they've got a very, very set of interesting ... ideas that we all want to have, so, and since what I like to do is to make more accessible some of the best thinkers and best leaders, and do this in a ... do it on my program is 30, 40 minutes, depending on how the topic shapes up, and get in-depth, ask questions, and not have it, you know, cable news shout fest, and actually get into the why people think what they should think.

Bill Walton:

And then also, as a lifelong learner, I've learned an awful lot from this. I've brought you on just recently, and I learned an awful lot about educational romanticism and E. D. Hirsch, and stuff that I wouldn't have known, had I had not prepared for the show.

Jeanne Allen:

Well, and you also recognize that people need to hear, as people need to see. There's lots of different learners, right? And so you provide them that venue. It's been a great opportunity for me, and I appreciate your having me on it. My guest today has been the remarkable Bill Walton, a lifelong learner, fantastic, successful executive, whose podcast can ... you can follow him at Bill, at-

Bill Walton:

Just type in The Bill Walton Show.

Jeanne Allen:

Type in The Bill Walton Show. You can follow him on Twitter and Facebook as well, and throughout the show, you will probably have heard a number of snippets from our previous interviews that we wanted to share as well, and of course, you know where to find us, at Ed Reform, and follow me on Twitter at Jeanne Allen. This has been Reality Check. Thanks again, Bill for joining me today.

Bill Walton:

Great. Great. Great. Great. Great to be here.

Jeanne Allen:

And thanks for listening.

Bill Walton:

Okay.

Jeanne Allen:

Bye for now!

Bill Walton:

Bye.

Jeanne Allen:

Awesome. Good! Bill, I'm so glad that we just did that, you just-