

## **Why Has What's Local Been Ignored by Educators, and Why Should This Concern Us?**

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Grounding learning in place is not simply a matter of incorporating local knowledge or understandings into children's learning experiences. It is essentially a political endeavor aimed at reclaiming the right of people in diverse communities around the planet to protect their regions and develop responses to the requirements of human life that are appropriate to their own geographic conditions. Formal education in general has not been favorably inclined to honor and support this kind of diversity, driven as it has been by the pressure to draw people away from loyalty to their home communities and places into membership in trans-local economic and political institutions. Given the current fragility of these mega-institutions in the face of climate change, resource exhaustion, overpopulation, and the growing disparity between the wealthy and the poor, balancing learning experiences that acquaint children with the national and global but that also prepare them to innovate and act at the local level seems both prudent and more democratic. In this way, the capacity of human beings to adapt and create can be more fully unleashed to respond to the daunting challenges that face our species at the beginning of the 21st century.