

## #113 The K-12 Culture Wars

**Jennifer Berkshire** Welcome to Have You Heard, I'm Jennifer Berkshire.

**Jack Schneider** And I'm Jack Schneider.

**Berkshire** And We're going to do something today that we have not done in a while. I'm going to take you on the road with me and share with you my findings from a story I've been working on about the culture wars that are suddenly threatening to basically engulf our public schools. Are you excited about taking a little trip with me?

**Schneider** I am, though I'm worried we're going to disagree about what audio book to listen to on this trip.

**Berkshire** Well once I started thinking about how this is something we haven't done for a while, it got me thinking about just how long we've been doing this show together. It

**Schneider** It does seem like an eternity sometimes.

**Berkshire** Well, to help you process that I went back and I looked at the original email that I sent to you where I invited you to join me. And I think I'd like to share it with you and the world right now. Are you ready?

**Schneider** I am. I often talk about this as a, a con job, so I'll be interested to see how my recollection matches with reality.

**Berkshire** Okay. So this email was sent on December 20th, which happens to be my birthday, 2016. Would you have any interest in doing some podcasting with me in 2017? I need an occasional sidekick, local, local smart drill, knowledgeable on all topics, not a huge commitment and could be in a locale convenient to you dot, dot dot.

**Schneider** Wow. So I think I'm right, that I got conned into this. You know, some podcasting, low level of commitment seems like you were right though about the characteristics of your co-host.

**Berkshire** And here's your response. Yes. Period. I'm in period. JS

**Schneider** Pithy.

[Music]

**Berkshire** OK - now to our road trip. We're going to be stopping at several education culture war hot spots. Those would be places where lawmakers are busy trying to keep teachers from talking about quote unquote divisive concepts like racism or sexism. Where critical race theory

is suddenly the talk of the town. And parents are up in arms about school district equity plans. First up: a return visit to a state we've been talking about a lot lately. That would be New Hampshire.

**Misty Crompton** My name is Misty Crompton. I am in my typical life, seventh grade social studies teacher in Derry, New Hampshire. And this year, then a little different because I was the recipient of the Christa McAuliffe sabbatical award through the New Hampshire charitable foundation.

**Berkshire** A little more about that scholarship. It's awarded every year to an exceptional teacher in New Hampshire and Misty was thrilled to be picked. A couple of years ago she got involved in the NEA's Leaders for Just Schools program. She loved it. And she saw this as a way to really dig into issues she cares about. And the timing was right too. Misty has been in the classroom for two decades, a career that began just as standardized testing took center stage in schools.

**Misty** And it was really timely for me too, because I could see, you know, that we were sort of spilling out of No Child Left Behind. And we were getting into a place where we were starting to have less conversations about testing data. And we were having more conversations, using words like, you know, trauma informed or social, emotional learning and the things that I had really craved in my career. So I saw that that change was starting to take place, even things like suicide prevention, trying to understand students from a human raw materials perspective instead of outcomes based, you know, looking at testing data and you know, how that's really shaped the school environment in such a powerful way that I, I knew that I needed to do more, you know, to really help move that along.

**Berkshire** So Misty has spent the past year thinking about this question: What would a more just school system really look like?

**Misty** So creating a more equitable environment for both staff and students that requires us to sort of flip things on their head a little bit and ensure that we have a system that is really not just in a gimmicky way, student centered, that we truly are being student centered and that we are listening deeply and authentically to students. And that we are trying to understand who they are, you know, understand their identities and certainly listen to the stories that are out there of people who feel that they have been excluded somehow or been harmed in some way by the school environment. And what was it that did created that condition and what can we do to remedy that? So that's the part, obviously that I love just thinking about our history with people who are different maybe than us.

**Berkshire** In other words, Misty was kind of living the dream. And her goal was to bring other teachers along with her. Teachers who shared her commitment to this kind of non-gimmicky student centered education and realized that getting there would require a big commitment.

**Misty** Like if you're gonna examine equity, if there's not like one program that you can, you know, hire a consultant from North Carolina to come in and be like, okay, we're going to do this week long program. And then we're done, this is a real commitment to, you know, examining not only ourselves as you know, the educators, but also working together as, as in the entire school environment, as often as possible to just examine what we're doing, take a look at it, say, who, who is this working for? Who might this not be working for? How can we create a better system for students? And, and we consider that a form of progress.

**Berkshire** By now you're probably thinking - well this sounds great. Something nice happens to someone who deserves it. Alas. For months now New Hampshire has been the site of an intense debate over some highly controversial education proposals. One would create a ginormous private school voucher program. The other would prohibit quote the dissemination of divisive concepts. And suddenly Misty found herself right in the middle of all that acrimony. She became campaign fodder for some local school board candidates who actually cited her on their campaign literature. I'm going to read it to you.

Quote Right now, a Derry teacher is training to change our social studies curriculum to teach Critical Race Theory aka Marxist ideology in our schools with no community input. End quote.

More elected officials joined the fray, making Misty out to be on some kind of anti-American, anti-New Hampshire mission. The experience was disturbing, but it also got her thinking about teaching during a time of intense social division.

**Misty** I mean, I, I swell with pride at being American in American, you know, and I absolutely became a teacher in and, you know, especially a social studies teacher, you know, certainly to examine this world that we live in, but, but I certainly do celebrate it too. It's not like that part isn't there, but I celebrate what people are doing to create better communities, to create healthier communities, to create, you know, the kind of world that we would want our students, even when they leave school to create the kind of communities that, you know, we would want them to live in and to be inclusive, as inclusive as they could possibly be. So this whole conversation now, as confused as I was about why somebody like myself would have been attack looking at that national conversation and that sort of obsession with critical race theory that sort of trickled down from the federal level and led to this sort of template bill that's been introduced in all of these various States. I do understand why it was kind of the perfect storm of timing.

**Berkshire** So Jack - you heard Misty talking about being attacked, well she's not exaggerating. I want to play for you some tape of a Republican state rep from Derry. Here she is raising some um concerns about Misty and her sabbatical at a school board meeting this spring.

**State rep** I have another issue that I wanted to discuss with you, and I'm not a hundred percent prepared, but it's the first time this has been discussed publicly in, but it's been in the news all over the world and all over the nation. And that is that's because the National Education...the union, the NEA has good marketing skills and that is the Misty Crompton sabbatical. I have a degree in history, American history. I would not need a whole year off to look through a

curriculum and to find out if it was too Euro centric or whatever is going on with that sabbatical. I also think the people of this town should be aware that the, in the sabbatical with the Leaders, for Just Schools program, it's linked directly to Black Lives Matter. I just have one, one last thing to say, I know a lot of people like black lives matter. They don't realize it's a Marxist organization. They don't maybe think too much about what Marxism is, but I promised my friend who is a survivor of the Cambodian genocide that I would talk about these things publicly. I said that I would, I'm almost done. I'm almost done. That's all I have to say, but it's never been discussed much.

**Schneider** Wow. I can't say that I saw the Cambodian genocide coming there. That that was a neat trick to pull out of the hat there.

**Berkshire** Well, I had exactly the same reaction and the reason that I wanted to share this story was that I think it's actually a great and by great, I mean, chilling example of just how sort of flexible this category is, right. That here in New Hampshire, we basically have all the enmity being directed at a single teacher. And so Jack, what I want you to do, I'm wondering is if you, when you listen to that state rep, did you flash back to earlier periods of us history when the schools were also convulsed in culture wars?

**Schneider** Yeah, I had a flashback. All right. So you know, the schools have been enmeshed in culture Wars many times in their history, but I think the most obvious parallel and one that we've talked about on the show is the red scare and the way that that impacted public schools and public school teachers. So, you know, if we look back to the cold war period, we can see that, you know, there was not only a lot of concern about what was being taught, but about who was teaching. So, you know, you can find records from you know, particular states or particular cities in New York. For instance, I did a little bit of digging and found that more than a thousand teachers were questioned about membership in the communist party. After New York State adopted a law in 1949, that called for the firing of teachers who quote engaged in treasonable or seditious acts or utterances.

And, you know, these efforts were not being led chiefly by the states or by the federal government. You had all of these other organizations you know, much like we see popping up today. There's a new group called Parents United, which I think is the second group called Parents United that has now organized to make sure that private prep schools are not teaching privileged white kids to question their racial or economic privilege. During the cold war, we saw groups like the national council for American education, which sounds anidine enough, but which was publishing screeds, like how red are the schools and socialism is stupid and they want your child. You know, there was another group called the committee for constitutional government, another sort of milk toast name that was campaigning to eliminate what they called socialized education and to remove any alleged Marxist influences from the schools, other groups, the sons of the American revolution, the American Legion, your right, it goes on and on people accusing teachers of being traders and teaching kids to hate America. So, you know, thinking about that obviously causes us to wonder about the sagacity of going after teachers today. When we look back on the cold war and we remember that the show trials that McCarthy

led also included teachers that, you know, hundreds of teachers were fired. Thousands of teachers quit under protest. You know, the parallels are clear enough that I think it really should give us pause.

**Berkshire** Back to our tour. Our next stop is Iowa. Nick Covington teaches high school social studies in Ankeny, a city west of Des Moines. And when I talked to him a few weeks ago he told me that the Iowa legislature has gone full 1776. He's referring of course to Trump's 1776 Commission and report - more on that in a bit. There was a bill banning the teaching of divisive concepts. Another one about trans student athletes. One getting rid of tenure for faculty at public universities. And then there was this measure that got snuck into the budget appropriations process.

**Nick Covington** There is a provision in there that says that if 5% of the voting population that had voted in the previous school board election, if they bring a petition to the school board, the school board within 30 days, we'll have to have a public hearing about the issue about the proposal. So if that involves curricular materials, then that means the curricular materials will be withheld for the duration of that time until it can be addressed. So it's a carte blanche for small groups of, of activists. You know, you could bring it to your church on a Sunday or bring it to the golf course and get a few hundred signatures. And then you could de facto pull curriculum materials without a lot of debate and approval. So it's just part of a bigger strategy in Iowa and elsewhere to solidify that idea of minority rule. So if you can't win through the democratic process, you have to sort of undermine it in the name of parents' choice or in the name of giving power to certain constituencies.

**Berkshire** Nick is used to teaching about political polarization in his classes but lately he's been experiencing it directly. This year the content of what he teaches keeps getting him into trouble.

**Nick** During the January 6th, the insurrection incident event, I was covering that live with my, the kids in my classroom. And obviously then the next day, trying to process with them what headlines around the country and around the world were saying it wasn't until weeks later at the end of January, that I was pulled into a meeting with my administrator because an anonymous phone call claiming to be a parent had said that I had called all Trump supporters Nazis and had directed students to, you know, my social media, where I was doing the same. And, and that stuff was all false, of course, but that is what really got started then with a lot of the other issues that I've seen since January, I showed my students a video of the Charlottesville protests from 2017 in the context of nationalism and particularly white nationalism in the United States. And that got me launched into two days of meetings. They were trying to get my license revoked. They were, they were talking to the superintendent and the school board I was told in no uncertain terms by my administrator, that current events do not belong in history class.

**Berkshire** The aftermath of the 2020 election has been particularly divisive in Ankeny. A local resident participated in the January 6th riot. And a school bond vote actually had to be suspended because a live pipe bomb was found at one of the polling places. For Nick, that's

meant trying to navigate a world in which the parents of his students don't even agree on who the president is.

**Nick** I think it's really difficult being in an environment now where parents do have those competing views, not just of of political beliefs, but of reality too, beforehand, those things were sort of on the margins or maybe at the extremes of particular issues in the early two thousands fights about evolution in textbooks or things like this, but to be able to talk about the electoral college or the, the inauguration, and somehow that has a political bias from people who might not believe that the current president holds that office legitimately to when I show the video at Charlottesville, one of the complaints that I got from parents was that it seemed to portray the former president in a negative light. And all that the video does is show the former president in his own words. And in the words of the white nationalists were protesting in Charlottesville.

So I guess, you know, it's, it's that old Colbert line that reality has a liberal bias or something. And that I think has really come to the forefront now that parents not only feel emboldened or perhaps they're afraid, they feel marginalized, you know, now in the political discourse, but the Iowa legislature is going to give them more power and more voice than they had before by dent of these laws and legislation around canceling divisive concepts in the classroom. And by giving 5% of the voters in the previous school board election, the ability to withhold curriculum materials again on an ad hoc basis.

**Berkshire** So Jack, listening to Nick just now made me think one that, you know, he and teachers like him are really in this impossible situation, but you can also see the impossible situation that public schools are in right now. And so once again, I call on you, you lend us your historical knowledge, and I bet this, we must see this theme popping up again and again.

**Schneider** Yeah. And I think maybe the clearest way to talk about it is to talk about two conflicting missions that the schools perpetually have. One is to reproduce the social order to remake the world. As we know it, now, people want their present values and beliefs to be inculcated in the next generation. And then there's a second and contradictory aim, which is to make a new social order, right? To create a world that is different from and better than the one we know now. And I think that what we can see is that when it seems like the existing social order is in peril, the dominant culture tends to activate the social reproduction function of school, right. They step in and tilt the scales and begin becoming involved in curriculum and pedagogy in a way that they ordinarily are not in order to ensure that a social order of the future does not fully displace the one we know in the present.

**Berkshire** Well, Jack, thank you for that. Very interesting and enlightening history lesson. And now it's time to humble you with a geography lesson. So we are headed to the next state South of Iowa. And what state would that be?

**Schneider** South of Iowa is going to be Kansas.

**Berkshire** We're actually headed to Missouri, but you know what? I think you did pretty well. We're headed to the Northwest corner of Missouri. And originally I was going to quiz you on what, what other state Missouri borders to its west

**Schneider** To its west? Well that IS Kansas.

**Berkshire** Well, I was thinking of Nebraska.

**Schneider** That's that's the Northern border of Western, Missouri,

**Berkshire** You mean Missoura.

**Schneider** If you are from, I think Southern Missouri, which also borders Arkansas as I recall, but go on.

**Berkshire** The north west corner of Missouri or Missourah is home to American literature teacher Jessica Piper. Her passion is using literature to teach history. And part of the reason for the way she teaches is how and especially what she was taught.

**Jessica Piper** I grew up in the South. I graduated in 1993. So I learned that the Civil War was about states' rights. And I didn't learn anything about the words of civil rights leaders. I didn't learn anything about the words of the enslaved people until I went to college. And when I went to college, I found a course in African-American history and I was interested in it. I took it and I could not get enough of it after that, because it was just things that I didn't know. I didn't realize that I had a huge hole in my knowledge until I started reading for myself. And so I became very interested and I graduated and started teaching and you know, really just fell into that, just trying to survive for a few years. And then I, once I was able to, to get, you know, teaching the practice of teaching under my belt, then I started back into looking into things that I didn't know.

**Berkshire** Jessica spends her summers working with historians and Black scholars. She's traveled all over the south. And along the way she's assembled all sorts of supplemental materials to make sure that her students don't leave school with the same hole in their knowledge that she had. For example, when she teaches a unit on slave narratives she makes sure her students know about local history.

**Jessica** It usually starts when we start talking about [inaudible] and we start talking about slave narratives. We would move on to Harriet Jacobs. And then of course, reading slave narratives really piques the interest of my students as well. And then I think it was four or five years ago. I had just Googled the town that I was teaching in Maryville, Missouri and a lynching came up that I had never heard of. I'm not born and raised in this town, I should say. So I probably wouldn't have any background knowledge of this, but when I stumbled upon it, I realized that a lot of my students weren't aware of it either. And so finding out that there was a lynching in your hometown is horrifying. And then at the same time, it's like, well, why didn't I know about this? Because it wasn't that long ago. It was 1931.

**Berkshire** Like in Iowa, Missouri legislators have spent this session waging culture war. A Republican lawmaker introduced an amendment that would ban the teaching of the 1619 Project. That amendment ultimately failed, but for Jessica, it felt personal - like it was aimed at precisely the kind of teaching she does.

**Jessica** Obviously it's going to impact the way every single history teacher, every single American literature teacher teaches in this state. What they've done with the amendment is it says 16, 19, but it's so broad. It says that we're not allowed to teach about race or racism or oppression or privilege or any of those things. And so how do I teach letter from Birmingham jail? If I can't talk about oppression, it's the word is mentioned several times in there. And that's what the letter is about. So I think one, I know that they're not teachers who are creating these bills and so they don't understand what they've done, but in effect they've taken away, they're trying to rewrite a curriculum, state curriculum.

**Berkshire** So Jack, as we were listening to Jessica's story, and my first thought was how sad this was going to make you, because here's somebody who just like falls in love with history and decides that it is her personal mission to teach literature and history and how they intersect. And I don't know when I listened to just talk, I just know that this is a fantastic teacher. And so when I asked her if she felt like the legislation that's under consideration in Missouri is aimed at teachers like her, when she said, you know, yes, without a doubt, it just made me really sad. And I just, I wondered, I, I think we need a, we need a pick me up from you right now.

**Schneider** Well, yeah, I don't think you're going to get it. This also made me sad and you know, it made me think about the long history in this country of trying to bust up a sort of class-based multi-racial coalition which you could potentially see emerging in these times of extreme economic inequality by promoting racial solidarity among whites, right? So stoking racial resentment among whites in order to erode any class-based sympathies that might draw them to the democratic party, right? There's a long history of using racial allegiance to Trump class Alliance in this country. And it seems like it's being done today in a way that is not only bad for our society, but is going to be bad for schools and bad for teachers and you know, bad for the future of public education.

**Berkshire** So Jack, before we go any further, I need you to address a topic that came up again and again, as I worked on this story, and that would beq year and the year was 1776. This year, right before the end of, of Trump's term, the report of the 1776 commission comes out and it's almost immediately panned by coastal elites, such as yourself, tell us about the report and where it came from, but also why, like, why did it get that kind of response?

**Schneider** Yeah. The 1776 Commission was Trump's rejoinder to the New York Times' 1619 Project. And it got the reaction that it did because you can treat it two different ways. The first of those is as an intellectual project. And if you treat it that way, there is a lot to comment about in terms of the errors of commission and the errors of omission there. So I remember scholarly publishers weighing in and saying that if it were submitted to a university press, for instance,

that it never would have made it through the vetting process, that those kinds of works go through, but then it can also be treated as a symbolic project. And that's really what it was designed to be. It wasn't designed as a kind of intellectual inquiry into America's past. It was designed to create a symbol to which people could point when they wanted to reject, you know, a critical project like the 1619 Project, which itself has become more of a symbol than anything else. Right? Most people haven't actually engaged with it. And most schools and districts are not using any curricular materials designed to accompany it. But in this symbolic war, the right knew that it needed something to point to, to say this, not that. And in so far as that's the case, it's been tremendously successful

**Berkshire** For the final stop on our journey, we're headed to New York City. I met 4th grade ELA teacher Selena Carrion on Twitter, which is where a lot of my interviews originate. And while she didn't make it into the story I was working on I've been thinking a lot about her story. Selena has been teaching in the Bronx for ten years and as long as she's been teaching she's been pushing to make school more responsive to the needs of her students.

**Selena Carrion** I think I'm definitely on a mission to provide curriculum that really meets the needs of my students. And that's the way I can put it the most broadly without bringing in other terms, you know what, shouldn't be coming more popular now, like anti-racist teaching or as high bias or culturally responsive teaching, but it's, it's really all comes down to curriculum that actually meets the needs of the students that are in front of me.

**Berkshire** What really inspired me about Selena is that her efforts have not always been successful. In fact, earlier in her career she ended up leaving a school because the other teachers were so resistant to the kinds of curricular changes that Selena was after. But the story that she tells about what's happened in New York City is one of progress. Things ARE changing and teachers like Selena are a big part of the reason for that.

**Selena** 10 years ago, we were at the cusp of maybe thinking about these ideas. And now I think that there are a lot of educators who are leading the charge on some newer, some, you know, veteran teachers who really, I think, feel like this is the moment now to really transform things. And I see even instructional changes as well, just in terms of like certain curriculum that was really popular a decade ago is now kind of being looked at as not culturally responsive is actually not being trauma-informed or not being very friendly towards students who are English language learners or not having a curricular approaches that are really inclusive of different types of students 10 years ago. You'd never would have been able to bring those conversations up. I think because it was just like, this is status quo. This is what we teach is the way we teach it. We're not really questioning how we do things. And I think now there's a lot more diversity of thought around that.

**Berkshire** Listening to Selena reminded me of something New Hampshire teacher Misty Crompton told us at the beginning of this episode. That we're in the midst of a cultural shift in this country, and it's not just about waking up to racial injustice. The No Child Left Behind era which has so shaped the careers of teachers like Misty and Selena is ending. And in many ways

that explains why we're back to fighting over the content of what gets taught in schools. But the end of that era has also opened up real possibilities for progress.

**Selena** Older millennials in my age group, I think, definitely grew up with either No Child Left Behind or grew up with high stakes testing and really in a time period where I think they saw for themselves had a lot of quote unquote progressive school reforms had actually failed them. And I think now, like they kind of see themselves as change agents for a system that really didn't suit their needs. And now they want to kind of change that for this next generation of students. So I do think that those, you know, my age group is, is definitely leading the charge, but I think there are also veteran teachers who have felt this way, but maybe felt like they were being suppressed so much by the system. But now see, this is an opportunity to really engage in it

**Berkshire** A big thanks to teachers Misty Crompton, Nick Covington, Jessica Piper and Selena Carrion for help with this episode. And thanks to all of the teachers out there who are trying to navigate these crazy times. Jack and I will be right back to reflect on what we've learned about the culture wars and to reveal the topic of this episode's In the Weeds segment for our Patreon subscribers. Here's a hint: it turns out that fanning the flames of the K-12 culture wars is actually a highly effective way to generate support for another GOP priority. That would be private school vouchers. Just go to [Patreon.com/HaveYouHeardPodcast](https://Patreon.com/HaveYouHeardPodcast) to become a supporter.

[Music]

**Berkshire** I wanted to share a little bit of Selena's story because I think that it's easy to look at the sort of culture war flare up and come away feeling frankly, a little down, right? Like it's, it's come upon us with such speed and ferocity that it can be really easy to lose sight of the fact that one, the teachers like the ones we've been hearing from are responding to real world challenges in their classrooms, in the lives of their students, but also that, you know, despite feeling frightened by what's happening right now, they also feel like they've made some progress. And so I, I don't want us to lose sight of that. I'm hoping that you can give us a little bit of context here for just, you know, like how our world, our education world really is in transition.

**Schneider** Even if we just look at race, we can see that the U S is going through a pretty major transition in terms of a shift away from a white majority and that's happening even more swiftly in our public schools, you know, 20 years ago, white students made up a pretty sizable majority of enrollments, a little over 60%, and now it's down to about 45% and that's projected to drop further. The enrollments are growing fastest among what the census calls, the Hispanic population, but a population that variously identifies often as Latin X these days. And those students along with black students and Asian students will account for a majority as large as the one that white students represented 20 years ago just in the next few years. So there's one very major transition. And the other, which is linked to, that is related to the number of students who are in poverty.

We see poverty rates in much higher levels among black and Latin X populations. As well as among some Asian groups, right? Asians are not a monolithic group. So, you know, many

Southeast Asians Asian immigrants from some parts of China are coming with, you know, less than a high school education or came with less than high school education. And we know that the poverty rate among kids whose parents have less than a high school education is extremely high. You know, roughly two thirds of kids whose parents have less than a high school education are currently living in poverty. And teachers are trying to figure out how to respond to this. And we're talking chiefly about schools in urban areas, which have, you know, higher enrollments of these students in question of racially minoritized, students of low income students, of students in homes where English is not the first language being spoken. And there's a lot to think through in terms of trying to serve those students well and trying to serve them equitably in trying to reflect back some of the things that they have said matter to them and as that's happening we can see that it's also engendering a pushback from the traditional majority groups.

**Berkshire** Well Jack, I picked up on one other theme as I was reporting this story and I'm, I'm going to raise it now. And I'm going to suggest that we make it the topic of our In the Weeds segment for our Patreon subscribers, the tremendous push for school choice during the pandemic, a story that I think has been greatly underreported. That story to the extent that it's being told at all is being told as somehow completely separate from the culture war flare up, that we're hearing so much about. I want to make the bold case behind the paywall, that these stories are very much overlapping. And I'm hoping that you'll join me in that enterprise. May I count on you?

**Schneider** Yes, you can count on me for that, but before you lure people to your paywall, let me preempt that and remind them that there are lots of ways to support our show other than by kicking in your Bitcoin into our digital wallet. You can go on and give us a review wherever you have downloaded this episode, you can make sure that you're a subscriber. My favorite way as our regular listeners know is when you share the most recent episode or your favorite episode with somebody who you think might like, or not like our show, sometimes a little dose of Have You Heard, can be just that spiteful contribution that somebody needs you to offer them. Our show's Twitter handle is @HaveYouHeardPod. We've gotten lots of great ideas for shows from there. We now perhaps have too many of those. So we're chiefly interested in hearing what you thought about the recent episodes as we work through a massive backlog of episodes that have both been recorded and not yet recorded. And we always like sifting through the, have you heard mailbags? So if you want to send us something there, the email address for that is

**Berkshire** Me.

**Schneider** Yeah. You just send it Jennifer's way.

**Berkshire** And fan mail only, please. And if you do want to join us on the other side of the paywall, just go to [Patreon.com/HaveYouHeardPodcast](https://Patreon.com/HaveYouHeardPodcast). You'll see a list of all the cool extras you can get just by chipping a little, a little cash our way each month. And a reminder that if you subscribe at the \$10 or more rate, we will send you a free autographed copy of a Wolf at the Schoolhouse Door. That is our new book. And for today, we're going to be talking In the Weeds about how the push for school choice and the culture war flare up that is threatening to

consume the schools may actually all be part of the same thing. So come along, if that interests you until next time, I'm Jennifer Berkshire. This is Have You Heard.