

## ***Teach Boldly: Using Edtech for Social Good***

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### **Abstract**

“Social good” is a term rooted in the field of social work, but has been making its way into the world of education over the past few years. While many works have been published that explore theory or strategies within Edtech, *Teach Boldly* is a call to action. *Teach Boldly* offers creative ideas, innovative practices, and project planning tools for new and veteran teachers alike. An invitation is extended to the reader to dream and act in big ways to inspire and empower learners everywhere.

**Keywords:** *Edtech, social good, teaching, innovation, instructional design*

Educators exist in many different settings—from well-appointed classrooms with the latest technology to repurposed spaces with makeshift furniture. In many cases, educators also act as makers of change and exist all around the world. With this global perspective in mind, *Teach Boldly: Using Edtech for Social Good*, by Jennifer Williams, invites the reader to become active participants in making positive changes in teaching and learning. Innovation, thoughtful use of technology and collaborative experiences with diverse people to impact social good, are key elements of *Teach Boldly*.

While many books in the field of education focus on research and theory, *Teach Boldly* calls for action. For example, each chapter introduces one big idea and invites the reader to put the big idea into practice. Organized into six chapters, each is focused on a specific concept (e.g., thinking globally, making time for social good) and includes inspirational real-world examples, action ideas, and portfolio-building activities. Educator vignettes are also included in the narrative. Elements like these are what help this text stand out.

*Teach Boldly* begins with the author’s story of how she was inspired to teach through the power of a teacher’s presence. Through thoughtful reflection, Williams is able to connect the exemplary traits of her former teacher into how today’s educators may use

technology to utilize practices that empower learners, locally or globally, and to dream and do for social good.

The term “social good” may be unfamiliar to many readers as the concept has largely been associated with the field of social work, yet it is not hard to understand. Social good encompasses programs and services that aim to improve access to housing or food, immigration policy, poverty, or any number of human rights or social justice issues. Williams suggests that calls to social good actions are not limited to any one field and that education can, and should, make a positive impact. In this regard, readers are encouraged to “teach boldly” by taking action or, perhaps, it may be an even bolder action to simply listen to our learners without judgment.

One particular strength of *Teach Boldly* is the structure that helps build skills chapter upon chapter and allows readers to immerse themselves into the role of a bold teacher who makes change for social good. Chapter one asks the reader to consider becoming part of something bigger than themselves. Readers are reminded that there is power in numbers and collectively, we can change the world. Educators seeking new ideas to implement into their classrooms will be pleased with not only the number of activities included in the text, but also by the depth and breadth of the offerings. *Teach Boldly* wastes no time in giving teachers the tools they need to change the world right away.

*Teach Boldly* is much like a Swiss Army knife in that it can offer something for nearly all types of educators. For those new to the profession, Williams offers introductions to interesting and important topics within Edtech such as human-centered design, accessibility, open educational resources, and Makerspaces. While not a deep-dive, per se, these brief summaries do a good job to help build the foundation for Williams’ overarching theme of intentional action for good. For those with a background in Edtech, *Teach Boldly* still has much to offer. There are many interesting activities to try, opportunities for reflection, stories from colleagues in the field to draw inspiration, and plenty of interesting and useful resources to access or save for later.

*Teach Boldly* is published by the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE). Thus, the contents of the book aligns with both ISTE’s student and educator standards. Each chapter is carefully aligned to one or more of ISTE’s seven standards. Overall, *Teach Boldly* does an excellent job at capturing the spirit of ISTE’s standards, particularly Educator Standards 1-3 – the Empowered Professional. As a reader, I feel like *Teach Boldly* has helped me become more of an empowered professional as a

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learner, leader, and citizen. Recommended for both the novice and seasoned Edtech veteran alike, Teach Boldly offers innovative ideas, next-day practices, long-term project plans, and perhaps-most importantly- the permission to dream and act in big ways and to inspire and empower learners everywhere.

## **References**

Williams, J. (2019). *Teach boldly: Using edtech for social good*. International Society for Technology in Education.