

2023

# CONNECT EVENT SUCCESS REPORT



**IN**novative  
**ED**ucators  
**NETWORK**  
EDUCATION FOR ALL

# Introduction

**InEd:Connect is a South Florida event designed to connect families with innovative education solutions in their area. This pilot event was held on June 24, 2023.**

InEd Connect was designed as a unique event that brings together families and innovative educators in our area. We believe that every child deserves access to a quality education, and our mission is to provide families with the knowledge and resources they need to make the best decisions for their children.

InEd Connect offered 30 edupreneurs, educational funding information and 6 speakers to provide information about education choice and options for families. Through this event, parents connected with microschoools, homeschool pods, and STEM programs to determine which option best suits their child's learning style.

Speakers shared on how looking at education differently, homeschool and innovative education options, the changing landscape of school choice, funding choices, preparing students with nuerodiversities for the 21st century, edfuturism and preparing our students for an unknown future, and innovating for some of the most vulnerable student populations.

InEd:Connect opened a resources of option for customizing a child's education. Homeschooling is a very individualized thing. Whether a parent is looking for curriculum, online programs, hybrid option, STEM, sports, art of microschoool option, InEd:Connect offered a diverse look at what is available locally,

In Florida, homeschooling is loosely regulated. There are no educational or certification requirements for teachers, no list of required subjects, and no set schedule or required number of hours students have to spend learning. Students do have to be evaluated by a certified teacher every year, either by taking a standardized test or submitting a portfolio for review. The event saw about 60% of attendees exploring what school outside the traditional schooling system could look like.



# The Results

According to the 2022 research, there are 56.3 million active students in the U.S.

- 86.58% of students between the ages of 5 and 18 are educated in public schools. (b)
- 8.29% attend private schools. (b)
- 6.66% of students receive education at home or through microschoools/pods (approximately 3,7 million children) (b)
- The number of homeschooled students across the country has jumped from 2.5 million in 2019 to 3.7 million today. Throughout Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach and Monroe counties, nearly 8,000 students switched to homeschooling during the pandemic and haven't returned to traditional schools, according to public records obtained and analyzed by WLRN. (c)

Attendees and vendors were surveyed after the event to share the impact of the first InEd:Connect event:

**100%** of attendees would recommend the InEd:Connect event

"My family was able to see and interact with different people in different areas of alternative education programs which helped frame our options and narrow our interest to fit our purpose."

**100%** of vendors reported the InEd: event was extremely beneficial

"It was a great way for fellow Edupreneurs to gather and share their ideas on transforming what education looks like."

"It helped me affirm the value in my program. Being able to connect with families and hear their immediate feedback was incredibly helpful."

**97%** felt the event connected them to the things that mattered most

"As a parent, we are looking for options that allow our children to explore their passions. Having all of these options in one room, the variety in programs and the diversity of location and approaches, was encouraging as someone who chooses to educate their child in a non-traditional setting."

**94%** of attendees/vendors felt significantly more empowered

"The connections were priceless and InEd:Connect made that possible."

"This event was the most well attend event of it's kind that I have seen in South Florida. We are hoping that InEd will do many more events like this and expand to Miami-Dade and Palm Beach counties."

# The Speakers



## Jessica Cavallaro

Agile Minds Edufuturism

Jessica Cavallaro is an experienced educator who has embraced Agile as a solution for remote learning, transforming her teaching methods. She became a certified LearningFLOW educator through L-EAF.org and co-founded The Agile Mind to share the benefits of Agile with educators and students worldwide. She is skilled in project-based learning and design thinking, constantly pushing for educational evolution to meet the demands of today's learners.



## Christina Sullivan

Evolve Learning

Christina Sullivan, MSW, LCSW, is a highly qualified professional with extensive experience in social work, specializing in supporting individuals with neurological differences. With a focus on autism, ADHD, and related conditions, she is dedicated to helping families and the neurodivergent community. Christina's expertise spans diverse settings, including schools, hospitals, and community mental health, where she has worked with children and individuals dealing with anxiety, OCD, and behavioral disorders. Christina co-founded Evolve Learning Community, a compassionate micro-school that integrates social-emotional learning and Executive Functioning skills training for neurodivergent learners.



## Eva Goldstein-Meola

South Florida Homeschool Resource Center

Eva's homeschooling journey began when she decided not to enroll her daughter in public school due to developmental concerns. They moved to Northern Virginia, where Eva organized classes and activities for homeschoolers. Eva's dream of owning a Homeschool Resource Center was put on hold as she focused on homeschooling her daughter. Eventually, she founded Open Tent Academy, offering various classes for homeschoolers. Now, with her daughter in graduate school, Eva has established the South Florida Homeschool Resource Center, providing a range of options for homeschooling families.



## Ron Matus

Step Up For Students

Ron Matus is director, research and special projects, at Step Up For Students, a nonprofit that administers Florida's education choice scholarship programs. He joined Step Up in 2012 after more than 20 years in journalism, including eight years as the state education reporter for The Tampa Bay Times, Florida's biggest and most influential newspaper. His recent work includes co-authoring white papers on teacher entrepreneurs, rural school choice, and the choice-enabled migration of Black families in Florida to charter schools and private schools.



## Luis Brito e Faro

Brave Generation Academy

Luis Brito e Faro is a former Mechanical Engineer and rugby coach with international experience in Portugal, Panama, and the US. As a co-founder of Brave Generation Academy, he successfully opened the first hubs in Portugal and went on to serve as the Head of Learning Coaches, by hiring, training and managing a team of 80+ coaches across 40 global hubs. Recently, he has taken on the task of expanding BGA to the US, starting with Florida's first hub, in Boca Raton. Luis is deeply committed to empowering students and revolutionizing education through his experience and passion.



## Julian Aldave

Student and Aspiring Actor

Peruvian-South Floridian student, excelling academically with diverse educational experience. Aspiring actor, his insights emphasize the importance of creativity alongside intellectual growth. A visionary for the future of education, bridging the gap between academia and the arts.

# Event Sponsors





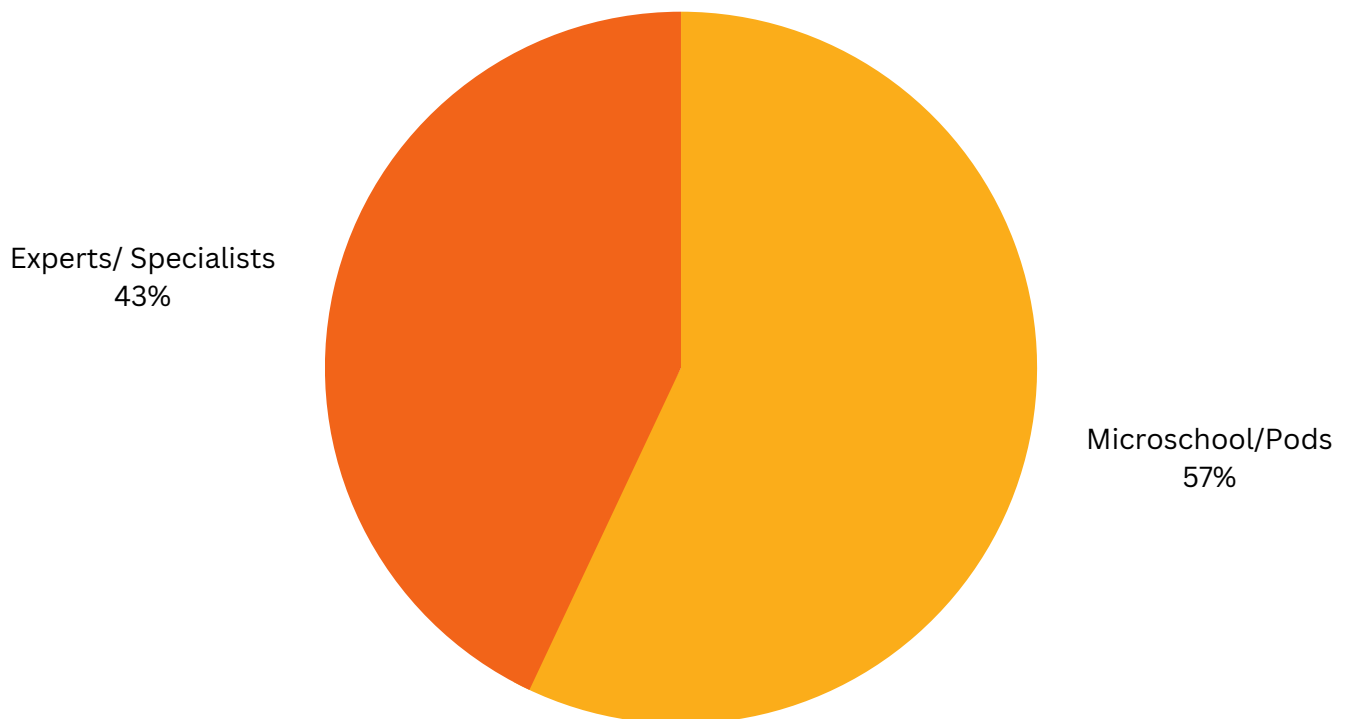
# The Edupreneuers

## Microschools/Pods

Academy of Christian Education (K-8)  
B Ready Academy (PreK-5)  
Brave Generation Academy (6-12)  
Colossal Academy (6-12)  
Compass Outreach & Education Center (K-12)  
Evolve Learning Center (K-12)  
Flex Learning Academy (6-12)  
Generations Christian Homeschool (K-12)  
Horizon Learning (PreK-5)  
Kind Academy (1-7)  
Nova Leadership Academy (K-5)  
Permission to Succeed (K-12)  
PlaySchool Academy (K-12)  
S FL Homeschool Resource Center (K-12)  
Tapestry Academy (K-12)  
The Living School (K-12)

## Experts/Specialists

Ananda Brains (SEL)  
Author League (Writing)  
Code-A-Robot (Robotics)  
Marie Poppinz (Drama)  
Project Flourish (Home Economics)  
Saltwater Studies (Marine Biology)  
Surf Skate Science (STEAM)  
TechnoTutor (Learning Support)  
Florida Traveling Tutors (Learning Support)  
The Hive Interactive (Learning Support)  
Youth Environmental Alliance (Environmental Science)  
The Fruitful Field (Farming)



# Next Steps

Where do you go from here?  
Success reports are not just about looking back, but also looking forward.

After the successful launch of InEd in South Florida, our network of educational entrepreneurs is ready to expand and make a national impact.

## 01

### **Expansion**

We will replicate the InEd network in other locations, establishing local chapters to connect educational entrepreneurs and parents who are passionate about innovation in education.

## 02

### **Conference**

We aim to host a groundbreaking conference that brings together innovative thinkers, entrepreneurs, and parents to serve as a platform to inspire new perspectives on education and showcase a diverse range of options for families.

## 03

### **Community Engagement**

We will actively engage with local communities, organizing regular meetups, workshops, and events to foster collaboration, knowledge sharing, and dialogue among parents, entrepreneurs, and educators.

## 04

### **Thought Leadership**

As a network, we aspire to be thought leaders in the field of educational innovation. Through research, publications, and advocacy, we will contribute to the broader conversation on reimagining education and empower parents with a wider range of educational options.

# Education for All



South Florida is currently undergoing an educational renaissance as families seek personalized approaches to their children's education, while driven entrepreneurs are actively responding by offering a diverse range of options. We are thrilled to be actively participating in this educational revolution.

At Innovative Educators Network, our mission is to empower and support visionary founders in revolutionizing education through the amplification of innovative ideas and practices. We strive to create a vibrant network that fosters collaboration, provides resources, and encourages the exchange of knowledge and experiences among educators, entrepreneurs, and thought leaders. By cultivating a community that embraces creativity, adaptability, and forward-thinking, we aim to drive positive change in education and ultimately enhance the learning experiences of students worldwide. Together, we are dedicated to shaping the future of education by championing and scaling impactful innovations that inspire lifelong learning and enable learners to thrive in an ever-evolving world.



InEd was founded in 2022 by Shiren Rattigan & Toni Frallicciardi

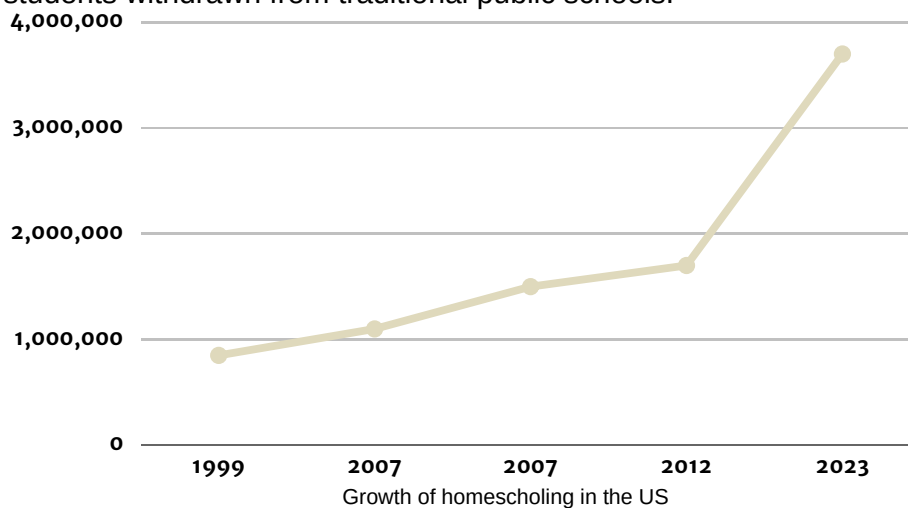


# Changes in South Florida Education

Homeschoolers and families choosing to look at education differently, today, make up between 3 and 4% of the total student population in Broward and Palm Beach Counties. In Miami-Dade, the homeschool number used to be under 1%, and now it's closer to 2%. While these percentages may seem small, they represent a significant number of students, as South Florida is home to some of the largest school districts in the country. In total, there are now more than 22,000 homeschooled students in the three largest counties.

## How is education changing?

While the public schooling vs. homeschool debate has long prevailed, a shift is evident as more parents are opting for homeschooling, leading to a significant increase in students withdrawn from traditional public schools.



# 22K

Students in South Florida being educated outside a traditional classroom

# 60%

of families have a more favorable view of untraditional schooling due to the pandemic



# 20%

As of February 2020, a total of at least 9 million of current US students had been homeschooled at least one time during their educational journey (a)

## Other Statistics (b)

- 80.3% of U.S. parents who homeschool their children said their main reason to do it is their concern over safety, drugs, and negative peer pressure.
- 78% percent of peer-reviewed studies on academic achievement show that homeschooled students perform better than those in institutional schools.
- 4.7% of homeschooled students live in rural areas.
- 16.2% of parents who homeschool their children have annual incomes less than \$50,000.
- The number of black families increased more than fivefold between 2020 and 2021.
- 66.7% of homeschooled students graduate from college.

# Conclusion

We celebrate the remarkable success of the 1st InEd:Connect event, This event, united over 650 attendees and ignited a passion for educational innovation. We will relentlessly pursue our goals, empowering parents and entrepreneurs to shape the future of education and provide transformative options for every family.



## Empowering Families

- Families were engaged
- Families were quipped
- Families were empowered



## Promoting Edupreneurs

- Edupreneurs were excited
- Edupreneurs felt encouraged
- Edupreneurs left inspired



## Connected to the things that matter most

- Resources
- Funding
- Networking
- Options

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(a) Admissionsly. (n.d.). Homeschooling statistics. Retrieved from <https://brighterly.com/blog/homeschooling-statistics/>  
(b) Skillademia. (n.d.). Homeschooling statistics. Retrieved from <https://www.skillademia.com/statistics/homeschooling-statistics>  
(c) WFSU. (2022, July 3). Once the Alternative, Homeschooling Could Become Mainstream. Retrieved from <https://news.wfsu.org/state-news/2022-07-03/once-the-alternative-homeschooling-could-become-mainstream/>

**We thank you for your continued support in  
our efforts to change the face of education.**

## Contact

**INnovative EDucations Network**

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