

# INITIATIVE 2026-2027: THE PURPOSES OF EDUCATION

## Join us beginning in fall 2026

Through a series of 30 events – including webinars, discussions, classes, and our biennial conference – PLATO's 30th Anniversary Initiative invites educators, students, and communities to explore one enduring question: ***What are the purposes of education — historically, now, and in the decades ahead?***

In a rapidly changing global educational landscape—shaped by advances in artificial intelligence, shifting social and economic realities, and evolving expectations of schooling—PLATO supports and encourages reflection. Together, we consider how educational policies and systems have developed over time, examine what they are being asked to do today, and imagine how they may continue to evolve in the future.

*What are the purposes of education —  
historically, now, and in the decades ahead?*



# Initiative Events

## Opening Webinar: This History and Future of Education

Tuesday September 29, 7-8:30pm ET

The opening event will feature four distinguished scholars of education for a conversation about the history and changing purposes of education.

## Book for the Year

Not for Profit: Why Democracy Needs the Humanities by Martha Nussbaum

The PLATO community is invited to join virtual discussions throughout the year exploring Martha Nussbaum's *Not for Profit: Why Democracy Needs the Humanities*. The yearlong conversation will culminate in a community discussion at PLATO's June 2027 Conference.

## Middle and High School Classes

PLATO's 2026-27 online philosophy class high school course topics are "Power, Knowledge, and the Purpose of Education" in the fall; "Becoming Someone: Selfhood, Status, and Life After High School" in winter; and "Thinking, Learning, and Authenticity in the Age of AI" in the spring. Middle school courses will explore "Why Go to School?" in the fall; "Personal Identity and Education" in winter; and "What is Worth Learning?" in the spring.

## Professional Development

Free professional development seminars will offer teachers opportunities to think philosophically about education and their role in shaping it, and materials for professional development communities designed for use in schools across the country will be available on the website.

## Philosophy Across the Ages

Our intergenerational series inviting participants of all ages to explore questions such as What is most valuable about education? and What should schools teach?

## Winter Webinar: "Why Go to College?"

PLATO's Graduate/Undergraduate Consortium will host a panel of students from a range of post secondary-school institutions to consider the purpose and value of higher education.

## Questions: Philosophy for Young People

The theme of the 27th issue of *Questions: Philosophy for Young People* is "Why go to school?"

## The 8<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference: The Future of Education

**Oberlin College near Cleveland, OH, June 25-26, 2027**

As the culminating event of PLATO's 30th Anniversary year, educators, scholars, and practitioners will gather at Oberlin College to reflect about the future of education.

*The initiative honors PLATO's impact over three decades while we engage the next generation of thinkers, educators, and communities as we envision what a flourishing education system can be.*

