How do you figure out what students really need when there is no real script?” Christ asks. “Today it is a very exciting world with all kinds of new horizons, but there is no agreed-upon platform for how to give kids the best boost to make it in the future.”

With a $250,000 leadership grant from the Edward E. Ford Foundation in Portland, Maine, Christ and the team at Hathaway Brown will host a meeting of the minds to explore the best ways to educate kids for the future during the Education Innovation Summit Nov. 4-6 at the school.

The summit, the first of its kind to focus specifically on the idea of innovation in independent schools, will bring together an estimated 400 educators from around the country along with top thought leaders from fields such as medicine, business, the arts, philanthropy, and media. The goal is to unite the most forward-thinking educators with the most forward-thinking people in a range of other professions and industries and share successes in generating creative ideas and fresh thinking. Over the course of the summit, Christ says that 40 to 50 presenters will share their methods for creating an environment that is “robustly imaginative.”

Speakers will include Daniel Pink, the author of the New York Times bestsellers, “A Whole New Mind: Why Right-Brainers Will Rule the Future” and “Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us,” David Orr, one of the world’s foremost experts on climate change and sustainability, and Jessica Jackley, co-founder of kiva.org, the world’s first peer-to-peer microlending site. In addition, about 20 schools will present their successful innovations so other schools can learn about the process of creating such programming. Christ says sharing such knowledge will hopefully help other schools shorten their own cycles of program development.

While anyone can come up with an idea, Christ says the focus of the summit will be on how to take a practical and workable idea and actually implement it with measurable results.

“Let’s get the barriers down and make it all transparent,” Christ says. “We really want this to be an experience that connects the community and the educational sector. We hope that hearing stories about innovative breakthroughs will help our colleagues find ways to nurture ideas for reshaping the landscape not only in their own schools but also in schools across the country and around the world.”

The concept of exploring innovation seems to have struck a chord with independent schools around the country, and Christ expects to have representation from 80 to 100 schools. Registrations have come in from everywhere from Hawaii to New York. The Cleveland Metropolitan School District will also participate in the summit, and Christ encourages any Clevelander with an interest in innovation to register.

For more information: hb.edu/innovation