

Amirah Cummings Challenges the World to Rethink How We See Children and Their Potential



Los Angeles, California Aug 13, 2026 ([IssueWire.com](https://www.IssueWire.com)) - Amirah Cummings, founder of KIO: Kids In Orbit, believes we have been looking at children's potential the wrong way.

In her TEDx Talk, Cummings challenges one of the most familiar questions adults ask children: “What do you want to be when you grow up?”

Watch her full TEDx Talk here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7tvJR2qwxK0>

It sounds innocent. A child might say astronaut, artist, doctor, lawyer, or even astronaut DJ. But Cummings believes the question can unintentionally teach children that who they want to become belongs somewhere in the distant future.

“What if instead of asking a child, ‘What do you want to be someday?’ we start asking them, ‘What do you want to create today? Who do you want to become right now?’” she asks.

That question is at the heart of KIO, which stands for Kids In Orbit.

Cummings created KIO around a simple idea: **children should not have to wait for someday to explore their potential.**

A Different Way to Think About Education

KIO is Cummings' vision for the future of education, one where children have a greater role in shaping what and how they learn.

The initiative combines artificial intelligence, augmented reality, immersive storytelling, and curriculum to create experiences that allow children to explore their interests while developing the skills and confidence to pursue them.

One part of this vision is **Konaut: Unleashing the Hero Within**, an immersive educational series that brings learning to life through storytelling and technology.

The story follows a young character on a journey through the KIO Space Force Academy. Along the way, she explores the world around her while also discovering more about herself, her interests, and what she is capable of becoming.

For Cummings, the goal is not simply to make education more entertaining. It is to make learning more personal.

“We're not the masters of where you're going. We're not the experts. You're the expert of you,” Cummings says. “Tell us where you want to go and we'll provide the roadmap.”

Teaching Children How to Learn

Cummings believes education needs to move beyond simply telling children what they need to know.

"We want to teach kids how to learn, not what to learn," she explains.

In a world where information is available almost everywhere, she believes the ability to ask questions, follow curiosity, solve problems, and continue learning may be more important than memorizing a predetermined set of information.

KIO's approach also puts self-knowledge at the center of the learning experience.

A classroom might explore Earth's ecosystems, for example, but every child could connect with the subject differently. One student might become fascinated by rocks. Another might want to learn about turtles. Someone else might want to explore the oceans.

Instead of expecting every student to have the same experience, KIO envisions teachers as guides who help students follow their curiosity and discover where it can lead.

Building for a Future We Cannot Predict

Cummings' vision comes from years of exploring education and culture around the world. She has traveled to more than 20 countries and experienced different approaches to learning.

Those experiences have reinforced her belief that there is no single path to discovering a child's potential.

She also believes today's children are preparing for a world that adults cannot fully predict.

Humanity is moving toward a future of possibilities that include living and working beyond Earth. Cummings believes education needs to prepare children not only for the world that exists today, but for the worlds they may one day help create.

"We will be an interplanetary species," she says. "Most of us cannot imagine what we're doing on the next continent, let alone on the next planet or in the next solar system or in the next galaxy."

For Cummings, that future requires us to rethink how much control adults have over the learning process and how much room children have to imagine, experiment, and create.

Unleashing the Hero Within Every Child

At its core, KIO is about permitting children to see themselves differently.

It is about creating spaces where they feel heard, where their ideas matter, and where curiosity is met with opportunity.

Cummings wants children to feel that they do not need to wait until they are older, more experienced, or given permission to begin exploring who they can become.

"We have to unlimit ourselves," she says. "And we have to begin to unleash ourselves. We have to unleash the hero within every child."

Through KIO, Cummings is inviting parents, educators, innovators, and communities to ask a different question about the next generation.

Not just, “*What will this child become?*”

But, “*What could this child create today if we gave them the opportunity?*”

About Amirah Cummings and KIO: Kids In Orbit

Amirah Cummings is the founder of **KIO: Kids In Orbit**, an education initiative focused on creating new possibilities for how children learn, explore, and discover their potential.

KIO combines technology, storytelling, creativity, and student-driven learning to create experiences designed to help children understand themselves, explore their interests, and become active participants in their own education.

The vision is simple: **unleash the hero within every child.**

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