Implementing Blended Learning: The Myth vs. the Reality

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Our Agenda

• Making the switch to blended learning
• Debunking the myths
• Looking at a successful implementation
• Understanding why it works
What is blended learning?

The Clayton Christensen Institute’s definition of blended learning is a formal education program in which a student learns:

1. at least in part through online learning, with some element of student control over time, place, path, and/or pace;

2. at least in part in a supervised brick-and-mortar location away from home;

3. and the modalities along each student’s learning path within a course or subject are connected to provide an integrated learning experience.
Blended vs. Technology-Rich Education

Blended learning goes beyond one-to-one computers and high-tech gadgets. It involves leveraging the Internet to afford each student a more personalized learning experience.
What can we do to make the switch?

• Don’t get hung up on the models

• “Blended is a strategy for helping teachers achieve what they strive to do every day—deeply understand and enable each student they work with to reach the very highest levels of educational mastery.” (Powell, Rabbit, Kennedy 2014)
Blended Teacher Competency Framework

**Mindsets**
- Core values or beliefs that guide thinking, behaviors and actions that align with goals of educational change and mission
- Understood, adopted, and committed to

**Qualities**
- Personal characteristics and patterns of behavior that help an educator make the transition to new ways of teaching and learning
- Coached, encouraged, and reinforced

**Adaptive Skills**
- Higher complexity that are generalized across domain/jobs. Help people tackle problems and tasks where the solution might be unknown or that require organizational learning and innovation
- Developed through modeling, coaching, and reflective practice

**Technical Skills**
- Skills that are known and specific to task and domain. Observable “know-how” and basic mechanics and expertise helpful for execution and implementation of day-to-day job (for teachers instruction)
- Acquired and mastered through instruction, training, and practice
How do we simplify the change?

Coaching provides teachers with personalized and collaborative professional development.
Teachers who engage are the key!

- Emphasize coaching and mentoring.
- Implement a formal coaching program.
- Build a relationship with the teacher.
Myth

Teachers are being replaced by technology!

Reality check

✓ Teachers’ roles change
✓ No successful and large digital programs without teachers
✓ None
Myth

If students can attend online schools from home, none of them are going to want to go to school!
Reality check

States with Statewide Fully Online Schools

FIGURE 2: NUMBER OF STUDENT ENROLLMENTS BY STATE AND PERCENTAGE OF STATES K-12 POPULATION

Number of Enrollments in SY 2013–14

% of state K-12 population

AZ 4.8%
CA 0.88%
CH 2.24%
PA 2.07%
GA 1.07%
CO 1.60%
FL 0.60%
TX 0.21%
NV 2.67%
MN 1.14%
SC 1.22%
IN 0.79%
WI 0.89%
OH 1.35%
OK 1.35%
MI 0.48%
WA 0.50%
KS 1.05%
ID 1.61%
UT 0.55%
LA 0.48%
TN 0.23%
AK 1.67%
AR 0.23%
Myth

Cheating is easy in an online class!

Reality check

✔ Is it cheating or collaboration?

✔ If answers are Google-able, then the questions aren’t very good
Myth

Every student can learn from the single best expert in the country (world)!

Reality check

✓ This idea is decades-old
✓ Teaching is not lecturing
Myth

Taking **online courses** in high school will **negatively impact** my college application!

 Reality check

- Colleges want students who stand out and contribute
- Students challenging themselves by taking non-traditional courses show a commitment to learning
Myth

Online learning is easy!

Reality check

✓ Online learning is the modality
✓ Can be harder, easier, or the same as f2f
✓ Downward pressure on rigor exists in some cases
Myth

Digital learning will **save** money!

Reality check

- Initial investment required
- Change in allocation of funds (e.g. textbooks)
- Teaching is single largest expense—doesn’t change
Myth

Digital learning is less personal than traditional instruction!

Reality check

✓ It depends on how the course is designed
✓ It may be re-evaluating how you define personal
Dana Spurlin

Instructional Technology Director,
Tift County Schools, Georgia
The Beginning

- Three buildings
- Grades six through nine
- Varying models
Challenges

- Teacher buy-in
- Varying skills by users
- Reluctance to change
- Availability of technology
- Infrastructure
Current Reality

• Implementation
  – One school Blended Team at each grade level
  – Other schools teachers still reluctant to fully embrace
    – Shared planning time for blended teachers

• Edgenuity online content available for all
Overcoming Challenges

• Coaching model for teachers
  – Targeted for fully blended teachers
  – Continued support for other teachers

• Constant Dialogue
  – Two-way communication
  – Sharing success

• Recognizing new blended teachers need time to experiment, learn, and grow
What does blended learning look like in the classroom?

Blended learning is personal, and each classroom has a unique set of variables.
## Dimensions of Blended Learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Instruction Using Online</th>
<th>Unit/Lesson</th>
<th>Single Course</th>
<th>Entire Curriculum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time</strong></td>
<td>Fixed Daily Schedule</td>
<td>Modified Schedule</td>
<td>Open Entry/ Open Exit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Role of Online Components</strong></td>
<td>Enhance Traditional Instruction</td>
<td>Transform Traditional Instruction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher Role</strong></td>
<td>Teacher Leads Instruction</td>
<td>Teacher Supports Instruction</td>
<td>No Teacher Involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Role</strong></td>
<td>Teacher Driven Learning</td>
<td>Teacher Guided Learning</td>
<td>Independent Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Support</strong></td>
<td>Little or No Support</td>
<td>School Based Mentoring Support</td>
<td>School and Home Mentoring Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student to Teacher Ratio</strong></td>
<td>Traditional Classroom Ratio</td>
<td>2-3 Times Traditional Classroom Ratio</td>
<td>Instructional Helpdesk Model</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teachers need time to successfully transition to blended learning.

Only 32% have a chance to frequently co-create or reflect with colleagues about how a lesson has worked.

Only 21% are given time to frequently examine student work with colleagues.

Only 14% frequently receive feedback from colleagues.

And only 10% frequently have the opportunity to observe the teaching practice of a colleague.
According to *Keeping Pace*, the states shown in blue are using a blended learning model.
How do we know blended learning is working?

Case Studies
Proof Points

Joint partnership between Evergreen Education Group and the Clayton Christensen Institute for Disruptive Innovation
Edgenuity is the solution.

Blended Learning Services

Instructional Services

Professional Development Consulting

Concept + Credit Recovery
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- Customized solutions
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