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Online learning is an important innovation in K-12 education, expanding access to educational opportunities never before possible.

Does Every Student Have Access to a World-Class Education?

Basic question is: does every student have access to the highest quality education available today, regardless of where they live, their zip code, their family's income level or background?

40% of high schools in the US Do NOT offer AP courses.

There are serious shortages in certain geographic areas for math and science teachers. For example, in the State of Georgia, there are 440 high schools and 88 licensed physics teachers. They graduated 1 new physics teacher from the state teacher ed programs in the last 2 years. How do we solve this problem? Traditional approaches have not worked.

Online learning is playing an important role in closing these gaps and expanding opportunity. Every student in Michigan and Kentucky have access to AP courses and even Mandarin Chinese through the Michigan Virtual School and Kentucky Virtual School. Chinese is collaboratively taught with instructors in the US and in Beijing, and students from both countries practice language skills interacting online peer-to-peer which is highly engaging, these students develop language skills and build cultural understanding. It is a whole new way to look at redesigning schools, engaging students, offering concurrent enrollment for college credit, or providing new ways to engage and reach students who need remediation or are at-risk for dropping out. With online learning, we can make it true that all students have access to a world-class education, regardless of what neighborhood they live in.

National Overview

Online learning gained my interest while I was writing the National Education Technology Plan, and it became a center piece for the plan. Online learning has served as a Trojan horse for reform. It is a powerful innovation that is growing fast.

Online learning is causing Tectonic policy shifts in order to level the playing field and expand options. It requires programs to explore alternative funding models that support students having options; before programs can offer a course online, they must examine and rethink every lesson, every piece of content to include in the online course, rethink

instructional models, rethink use of time, strategies, student-centered approaches, and services.

In the last 10 years, explosive growth in online learning at 30% annually, 2000 (50,000), 2005 (500,000), 2007 (1,000,000), 2009-2010 (1,800,000).

42 states have statewide online learning programs, or state virtual schools offering supplemental classes.

55% of school districts offer some online courses.

33 states allow full-time virtual charter schools; there are 220 cyber charter schools with 225,000 students;

Maps from Keeping Pace with K-12 Online Learning

Virtual schools are complete educational organizations that deliver online courses and provide teachers.

While online learning can give parents choices of providers, --online offerings and programs grow unevenly based on the state policy, appropriations and enrollment rules.

The Keeping Pace with K-12 Online Learning report on our website tracks all 50 state policies and programs. These maps came from Keeping Pace.

So, for districts, in states without a state virtual school to offer online courses statewide, It is up to the district - and only the wealthiest districts can afford:

- 1) Training for teachers to teach online
- 2) Cost of course development or licensing
- 3) Technology/LMS, program administration and management

For such a scalable innovation - there is uneven growth state by state, district by district

Kansas

Kansas has no state virtual school. There are 44 online programs in Kansas; the types reported include: charter schools, programs within a district, and buildings within a district. The Kansas State Department of Education reports 4,891 students using online programs in 2009-10. All K-12 grade levels are represented in online schools.

Research to Inform Policy

While there is a limited research base - about 10 rigorous studies in the last 10 years, here are the key points to remember from the research on K-12 online learning that exists today.

- 1) Expands options

- 2) All of the research shows it is “as good or better” than traditional face to face when based on student achievement;
- 3) It “Improves teaching;” This is consistent with findings in higher education faculty doing online learning. When the same instructor teaches face to face and is trained to teach online; the teacher has is given a whole new set of skills, a new instructional model, and using online resources to collaborate, individualize instruction and better meet students’ needs. One study shows the largest correlation of positive increases in student achievement is when the same teacher who already knows the content teaches the same class online.

There is a need for further research to study different models of online learning and the corresponding effectiveness of components. No one is funding this right now.

Blended Learning: the Best of Both Worlds

The future will be in mobile, online learning with more artificial intelligence and adaptive technologies, and blended approaches.

Blended takes advantage of the best of both worlds and can optimize both environments in ways impossible in other formats. Digital content, curriculum, LMS, online assessments, data system, AI, simulations.

Blended/online learning requires a shift in instructional model and training.

We’re working with the VOISE academy - high school in Chicago Public Schools, helping them develop the training to create a fundamentally different school model, use of time, resources, online courses and, changing the model in the classroom and using the same \$\$ - to build a truly replicable model.

Need to push concepts of what schools of the future look like, what is possible, how differently they operate.

World Future Society

The World Future Society believes these top 10 breakthroughs will transform life as we know it globally in the next 20-30 years. Their predictions have been accurate 97% of the time +/- 3 years over the past 15 years. It is the best forecast data available. The only item that relates to education is “virtual education”.

The future is now.

Our kids can’t wait.

We can change the course of education in America. Online learning is a technological innovation that is powerful - and for kids, it comes naturally. Thank you.