Blended Learning: Supporting Successful Student Learning Experiences

PRESENTATION TO COLORADO EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS TASK FORCE (S.B. 11-111)

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COLORADO ONLINE LEARNING

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### Landscape of K-12 Online Learning in Colorado

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<th>STUDENT REACH</th>
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<td>Single-District (23 in CO)</td>
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DEFINING BLENDED LEARNING

- ... combines the best elements of online and face-to-face education
- ... combines online delivery of educational content with the best features of classroom interaction and live instruction to personalize learning, allow thoughtful reflection, and differentiate instruction from student to student across a diverse group of learners
- ... a pedagogical approach that combines the effectiveness and socialization opportunities of the classroom with the technologically enhanced active learning possibilities of the online environment... not a ratio of delivery modalities
- ... represents a shift in instructional strategy

While some call this method of teaching “blended,” others call it “hybrid,” and others don’t bother naming it – they’re just implementing an approach that is helping students!

CONTINUUM FOR ONLINE LEARNING

Fully Online
- Fully online curriculum with all learning done online and at a distance – no face-to-face component

Blended Learning
- Mostly or fully online curriculum with select days required in classroom or computer lab
- Mostly or fully online curriculum in computer lab or classroom where students meet each day
- Classroom instruction with significant, required online components that extend learning beyond the classroom and beyond the school day
- Classroom instruction integrating online resources but limited or no requirements for online work

Traditional Face-to-face
- Traditional face-to-face setting with few or no online resources or communication

Online presence in K-12 remains in its infancy - approx 10 years -

Adapted from:
RICH INSTRUCTION IN THE 21st CENTURY

- Teacher-led courses...highly qualified teachers
  - teacher as facilitator/guide rather than purveyor of information
- Multimedia, engaging content
  - 21st century skills development
  - web 2.0 tools
  - consistent content evolution
- Synchronous & asynchronous components
  - synchronous = communication & collaboration
  - asynchronous = differentiated content & instruction methodologies
- Rich student experience (active & interactive learning)
  - thoughtful student reflection
  - student responsibility for learning
- Constructive, timely teacher feedback
- Data-driven instructional decision making & planning
  - frequent assessment (formal/informal, summative & formative)
  - teachers & students collaborate to individualize content/instruction in real time
- Bridge gaps – intervention, remediation, acceleration
- Effective student preparation for a future that will be increasingly grounded in information & services
  - gather info – analyze data – think critically – react to knowledge
SIGNIFICANT COMPONENTS OF BLENDED LEARNING

- Combines 2 delivery models (synchronous & asynchronous)
- Teacher as facilitator/guide
- Strong student-teacher interaction
- Strong student-student collaboration
- Active & interactive student-content interaction
- Consistent, rich data regarding student learning – used to manipulate instruction/content in real time
- Cost savings – extend building walls & expand school days
- Provides something different from the norm to effectively meet student learning needs
FACE-TO-FACE INSTRUCTION + ONLINE INSTRUCTION = RICH 21ST CENTURY INSTRUCTION → BLENDED LEARNING
ANOTHER WAY TO VIEW BLENDED LEARNING

**INSTITUTION LEVEL**
online schools gathering students on a regular, scheduled basis, with the teacher physically present or remaining at a distance

**STUDENT LEVEL**
students taking one or more fully online courses while also taking courses in a traditional classroom

**COURSE LEVEL**
combining online and non-online instruction within one subject

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this approach “applies to most of the state-led supplemental online programs such as . . . Colorado Online Learning . . . “

*Blended Learning: The Convergence of Online and Face-to-Face Education, NACOL – Promising Practices in Online Learning, John Watson, 2008*
COLORADO ONLINE LEARNING

Supplemental online high school program serving students in traditional schools, charter schools, BOCES programs (per HB 10-1037)

- 1700 - 1800 course enrollments per year
- 70 courses – core, AP, world languages, business, technology, health/fitness, art/music
- 9 dual-credit courses (CSU Pueblo, Jones International Univ, Adams State College, Colorado Mesa Univ)
- 41 NCAA approved courses
- Established, positive partnerships with more than 95 districts/schools statewide
- Average teacher/student ratio less than 1:20
- Consistent 90% or higher successful completion rate every term
COLORADO ONLINE LEARNING

STUDENT SUPPORT
• Site coordinator
• COL Student Services Director
• Experienced online teachers
• COL Director of Curriculum & Instruction
• COL Technology Director
• LMS Tech Support (24/7)

DEDICATED TEACHERS
• Colorado certified
• Highly qualified
• 93% hold master’s degree or doctorate
• Master teachers with multiple years of experience successfully teaching online

LIVING CURRICULUM
• Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)
• Data-driven instruction & content modification
• RTI support systems

ENGAGING STUDENTS
• Multiple levels of support (site coordinator, teachers, COL admin, technology)
• Rich, relevant, evolving content
• Differentiated content & instruction to meet individual learning needs

A MODEL FOR SUCCESS SINCE 1998
Heather Staker – author of Innosight Institute’s

*The Rise of K-12 Blended Learning - Profiles of Emerging Models*

quotes Professor Clayton M. Christenson of Harvard Business School:

“Disruptive innovations fundamentally transform a sector by replacing expensive complicated and inaccessible products or services with much less expensive, simpler, and more convenient alternatives.”
“... online learning has the potential to be a disruptive force that will transform the factory-like monolithic structure that has dominated America’s schools into a new model that is student-centric, highly personalized for each learner, and more productive.”
Online courses should:

- be high quality & engaging
- include synchronous & asynchronous
- be reviewed/revised regularly via an established quality monitoring process
- incorporate Response to Intervention (RtI) framework including:
  - short-cycle assessment
  - utilization of data for intervention & instructional decisions
• Online teachers should:
  - be committed, high quality
  - complete strong online training in teacher preparation programs
  - participate in professional development related to:
    - Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)
    - Response to Intervention (RtI)
    - effective use of synchronous tools & discussion threads
    - community & sharing best practices
  - hold Colorado online certification
• An online program should:
  ○ generate positive partnerships rather than create competition
  ○ employ use of an effective learning management system (LMS) for:
    ▷ content development & delivery
    ▷ record keeping
    ▷ data management
  ○ utilize data for instructional decisions & student learning
  ○ incorporate frequent student progress monitoring – keeping students consistently on pace
  ○ maintain effective student-teacher ratios
  ○ partner with a strong, consistent internet service
    ▷ EagleNET Project
    ▷ increased in-district technology support
    ▷ more robust external resources & support
QUESTIONS ??
RESOURCES

- iNACOL
  - “Promising Practices – Blended Learning: The Convergence of Online and Face-to-Face Education”
  - “Lessons Learned from Virtual Schools: Experiences & Recommendations from the Field”

- Evergreen Education Group
  - “Keeping Pace with K-12 Online Learning: An Annual Review of Policy and Practice”

- Innosight Institute

- Colorado Legacy Foundation
  - ELO Commission Report – September 2011