



Be Bold, Be Blended:

Future-Proof
through Hybrid and
Blended Learning

TECH
LEARNING

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

Stride Learning Solutions

HYBRID AND BLENDED LEARNING



Schools emerging from recent challenges and upheaval are leaning into a bold vision of future-proofing education. Learned lessons from the past two years have led many to consider the permanent move to blended or hybrid learning. An increasing awareness of the benefits of these education modes have become positive side effects, opening eyes and minds to the pros of such styles of learning. This is particularly true when embarked upon in an organized and deliberate, innovative path to academic success rather than merely a Band-Aid of necessity.

A FUTURE-PROOF PLAN OF ACTION

A [recent survey of K-12 administrators](#) showed a hefty increase in the prevalence of blended learning, not as a stopgap for COVID-19 pandemic shutdowns, but as the thoughtfully planned future of learning. There has been a growing trend of school districts cherry-picking the best tech and practices to inform and enhance their learning solutions.

“Districts are certainly realizing the value of leveraging effective educational-technology platforms to supplement pedagogical needs — such as scaffolding the needs of a variety of different learners on the same platform, with the

same content, but on their personalized level,” says Lindsey Gervais, product marketing manager at Stride Learning Solutions. “This allows teachers to use classroom time to have those critical conversations about content, while also using data to make more informed decisions about student remediation or intervention and to hone in on development and progress.”

Finding engaging and interactive course materials that are easily accessible for any curriculum, anytime, for all learners has become a key point for those districts considering a permanent move to hybrid or blending learning.

“Finding an edtech partner who offers both flexibility

and expertise can lead to educational transformation using digital tools. Ideally, this means a partner who offers all of the tools for a district to start small with hybrid classrooms by way of individual assets and activities, as well as a full online course that can be integrated easily into a curricular scope with the support of product experts and implementation specialists,” Gervais says.

THE PROS OF LESSONS LEARNED

Although the challenges of the past few years on academic progress have been well-documented, the shift in learning modalities is not without its benefits. Students are building new skill sets, enhancing their self-efficacy and mastery of self-paced learning through increased uses of hybrid and blended learning. For many, this primes them for future success in secondary and higher education and can build their confidence and sense of accomplishment in the present.

“Self-awareness and accountability skills can be naturally developed in a hybrid or blended environment,” says Rachel Goodwin, senior director of academic services at Stride Learning Solutions. “As students work through their digital learning landscape, they are going to be confronted with obstacles. If the adults supporting the child have established proper systems in place, the child will be able to navigate through the unknown. Through self-efficacy and self-



awareness, students will be able to discover the answers and/or tools to be able to overcome those challenges.

“The systems in place must allow students to feel safe to fail, but also celebrate the growth mindset and determination to develop their weaknesses and effectively use their strengths. In a recent research study, a group of scientists studied the effectiveness of leaders and what they found was self-efficacy and self-awareness are critical to effective leadership as they construct one’s identity, promote self-development, and connect them to a set of ideals. These are all essential skills needed in the workforce today,” Goodwin says.

When these integral skills are introduced in the younger grades and scaffolded throughout their educational journey in age-appropriate ways, the benefits and opportunities abound.

“Studies have shown that as early as age 4, children’s self-esteem starts to develop as children progress socially and cognitively. As educators, we are modeling self-efficacy and self-awareness constantly. However, in a digital learning environment, you need to be more conscious and deliberate in developing these skills. Digital courses and the platform should address the many ways that students learn, including the varied capabilities offered by the online medium and provide for multiple levels of mastery, with ongoing assessments to verify students’ progress and readiness for advancement,” Goodwin explains.

MULTIMEDIA FOR THE WIN

Students learn in unique ways. The addition of various multimedia types can be used strategically to engage different learning intelligences, particularly visual and kinesthetic

LET’S TALK ABOUT HYBRID

Making a plan leads to success. Here are some talking points to consider when discussing what can be done in post-pandemic blended- or hybrid-learning environments to improve effectiveness and outcomes.

- Professional Development for Faculty and Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)
- Instructor Presence and Building Social Presence in Hybrid, Blended & Online Environments
- Teaching Presence and Instructor-Student Connections
- Student Collaboration and Removal of Sense of Isolation
- Building Cognitive Presence
- Online Orientation for Students
- Assessment & Evaluation

HYBRID AND BLENDED LEARNING

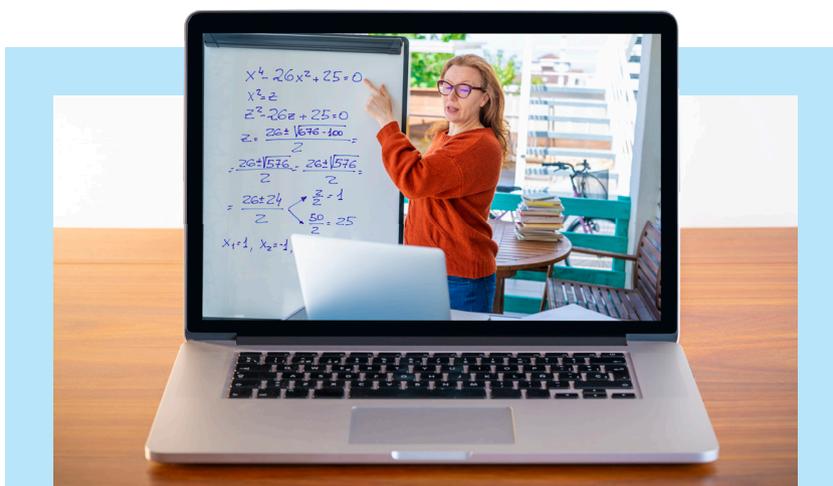
learners who are often harder to engage through traditional teaching methods.

- **Audio:** Maximizes the learner's ability to process information without being overwhelmed by visuals.
- **Photographs/Illustrations:** Represent, organize and interpret the content.
- **Interactive Activities:** Segment content, personalize learning, promote agency in learning and offer the opportunity to engage in activities incrementally increasing in cognitive difficulty.
- **Technology-Enhanced Item Types:** Offer students the opportunity to demonstrate varying depths of knowledge

mimicking high-stakes testing demands.

- **Animations/Videos:** Use concrete modeling of behavioral learning objectives, hooks to introduce real-world applications and bring instruction to life.

Adding activities within the scope and sequence of the course, using the above tools with aspects reflective of the community of learners they are serving, personalizes the experience to make it engaging and relevant for the class. These digital tools allow teachers to focus on community-building and mastering digital skills in a safe, secure environment.



SURVEY SAYS? K-12 ADMINISTRATOR THOUGHTS, BY THE NUMBERS

A recent [survey](#) of over 400 K-12 administrators unearthed some interesting insights.

- 36%** Project the demand for online learning will increase in 2022.
- 44%** Believe hybrid learning will become the new normal.
- 66%** Would seek out an edtech partner to implement a full-time online learning program.
- 69%** Are concerned about their district's ability to support teaching and learning online.
- 81%** Would welcome a one-stop-shop platform for digital curriculum.
- 86%** Believe online can complement in-person learning to meet individual student needs.
- 95%** Think it's important for teachers to be able to create their own digital content.

SYNERGY WITH LESS ENERGY

Another added pro of the transition to blended or hybrid learning is the enhanced ease of cross-subject synergy for a richer and grounded education experience. With cloud-based access between subjects and class materials, creativity by educators and students becomes naturally encouraged. The cyber world is limitless compared with a brick-and-mortar room or dog-eared textbook (and herding small students down the hall for an interactive film screening or to observe a lab performed, a thing of the past.)

“Utilizing a digital curriculum via a platform designed to enable different ways of ‘going to school,’ necessarily forces a holistic approach to logistics — from material access, to attendance tracking, to understanding my ‘To Do’ list for today,” says Kelly Engel, senior director of curriculum development at Stride Learning Solutions. “We start to think of a school day as a connected experience. In traditional classrooms, each subject area may utilize curriculum from all different providers, and while this can have its benefits, each course requires its own mental framework. In blended-learning models that emphasize digital solutions at the core, there is real value in having a streamlined, delightful and consistent experience of what ‘going to school’ means, regardless of the subject area. A cohesive ecosystem empowers students to make connections and teachers to centralize data-driven insights and better personalize learning.

“When not co-located, it can be incredibly beneficial to follow a more ‘flipped’ model, in which students gain an initial understanding of new ideas through self-study using videos, interactives and/or online-led hands-on activities, while teachers provide support as they practice and deepen their understanding. When time together is so precious, teachers can bring the experience to life through meaningful



dialogue, or via related, targeted instruction based on student need,” Engel explains.

Synergy not only extends from subject-to-subject, or educator-to-educator, but school-to-home. Keeping in the loop parents who became de facto “substitute teachers” during pandemic-related school shutdowns expands communication, making the learning experience seamless regardless of physical location.

“Courseware delivered via the digital learning system provides teachers, students and parents with easy access to data and dashboards for key information about grades, progress and feedback,” says Amanda Ferguson, senior director of product management at Stride Learning Solutions. “Having an online system that provides a place for educators and administrators to communicate easily and quickly with students and families is critical, especially in cases where live delivery of information and instruction isn’t possible for a period of time.”

While this became vital during the era when schools were forced to close, or when students were required to isolate due to exposure, it also offers equity solutions for students by allowing them to access learning anywhere, at any time.

OBSTACLES AND SOLUTIONS

The most common barriers to increasing online or hybrid learning are lack of teacher training, broadband access, ease of use for

students, public perception toward a new style of educating and the lack of a high-quality, digital curriculum. Focusing on choosing the right partner can alleviate most of these concerns.

“Blended learning provides students an opportunity to have more control over when and where they engage in the

CREATING FLEXIBLE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS, A RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

When building a flexible learning environment, add these eight ingredients to your recipe.

- 01 Create a standard of processes and procedures.**
- 02 Maintain a positive and collaborative culture.**
- 03 Foster a student-centered environment.**
- 04 Offer a variety of assessment opportunities.**
- 05 Set goals that are communicated to all stakeholders with consistent progress checks.**
- 06 Develop a strong onboarding program.**
- 07 Ensure you have wraparound supports in place.**
- 08 Consistently develop and train teachers and staffers.**

HYBRID AND BLENDED LEARNING

PREP FOR POSTSECONDARY SUCCESS

Are your students ready? Achieve these learning goals to send them off equipped to take on the world.

- Develop critical thinking and problem-solving capabilities by reasoning effectively, use systems thinking, and make sound judgments and decisions.
- Foster creativity and innovation by having students use a wide range of creative techniques, discover creative ways to work with others and challenge themselves to implement innovative impulses.
- Communicate clearly, exercise flexibility.
- Demonstrate visual literacy across cultural and socioeconomic barriers.
- Develop scientific and numerical literacy to integrate ever-changing technology into their lives and access and evaluate information.
- Increase a student's political and global awareness to identify their civic responsibilities and weigh the cause and effect for their actions as an individual or for society as a whole.
- Cultivate self-management habits while still being in a collaborative environment.



curriculum and can accommodate a wide range of needs as a result,” says T. Patrick Lambert at Stride Learning Solutions. “It provides districts another tool to serve the diverse needs of their families. An important consideration when choosing partners is the availability of onsite support to address bandwidth and other issues. I would suggest planning for more students than anticipated for the first year and have an alternate solution for internet access.”

Opting for a system that has been built from the ground up for digital interaction, instead of having been translated from print-based offerings, also ensures a cohesive ecosystem for uninterrupted learning, from school to home or back again. These solutions are comprehensive with easy-to-master instructional support for educators and a robust track record to facilitate buy-in by educators, students and the greater school community.

With a thoughtful organization plan and learning solutions partner, hybrid or blended learning can not only meet the benefits of an in-person experience, but exceed them. [Stride Learning Solutions](https://www.stridelearning.com/)’ custom-designed blended-learning programs integrate flexible in-person learning experiences with enhanced and collaborative online learning. This maximizes facility use, reserves the option to attend 100% online, builds a custom curriculum with a blend of core courses, electives, CTE pathways and districts’ own content, and delivers thoughtfully prepared instruction.

Lean on Stride Learning Solutions’ expertise to help you build a custom blended or hybrid learning environment in your district today. Learn more at [stridelearning.com/learning-solutions](https://www.stridelearning.com/learning-solutions) or call us at 844.638.3533.