

Blended Learning

- Many districts have successfully implemented one of the four models of Blended Learning
- Results: a) Increased Achievement b) lower dropout rates
- Involves a student learning partly online and partly face-to-face with a teacher
- Time with the teacher is less structured...small group or one-on-one support
- 2/3 of the nation's 14,000 districts offered some form of BL option in 2012
- By 2019, 50% of all high school courses will be online
- Students in BL classes outperformed those in fully online course and/or face-to-face courses. Source: Department of Education
- The No. 1 thing BL offers is flexibility and all the choices we could offer for a school in a small district like Cass City.
- More students will elect to take AP classes
- Helps teachers create better tests. Because the assessments are given online, teachers have to think of more in-depth questions that can't be answered quickly with a Google search.
- It's not cheaper to educate kids online but it helps keep students in school and offer them flexibility in competitive market. We could see our enrollment increase.

I. Getting Started

Don't buy devices without a plan for how they will enhance learning.

Technology should be used as a delivery system to create a shift in the instructional model that gives students more control and flexibility.

- a. Decide on specific learning goals/outcomes you want students to achieve (CCSS)
- b. Choose qualified/cooperative staff to create a model for delivering BL
- c. Figure out what devices and software programs you want to use/purchase
- d. BL helps ignite learning and achievement for students at the extreme ends of the academic spectrum ...Gifted/AP Classes to Credit Recovery Classes
- e. BL helps deliver classes we might not otherwise be able to offer such as online courses for electives that only a few students want or need.
- f. Professional Development is essential to make BL work effectively
- g. Funding for BL comes through federal grants and local and national foundations.
- h. Schools need to also look to shift around existing resources

II. Model #1 – Rotation Model

- Most common form of BL
- Elementary students rotate between online and face-to-face instruction for 1 or 2 classes
- Usually done with math and ELA
- 120 minute blocks for each class. After 10 minutes of whole group instruction (Flipping a Classroom), students rotate through three stations for 35 minutes each.

For example ELA small group: 1) Guided reading with an aide
2) Vocabulary with a teacher 3) Independent online coursework

Times could be adjusted. Classes added. Secondary subjects with a block schedule of back to back classes could be looked at.

- Teachers can see which contents students spend the most time on or where they are struggling which in turn help focus in on customized support and one-on-one classroom time with students.
- Data coach can help teachers interpret their student's data without having to spend time trying to find the data. Skyward Data Warehouse.

III. Model #2 – Flex Model

- Students attend school Monday – Thursday and Friday mornings. The other half of the day Friday is for one-on-one help, staff professional development and checking on student progress and preparing for the next week's lesson.
- All classes are split between online instruction and face-to-face time with teachers
- Half the time is spent on the computer lab doing coursework and the other half of the time is spent working with teachers in individual tutoring or small group instruction.
- Advisory Class is part of this model. The Advisory teacher acts a mentor and closely monitors student progress while teaching skills important for success with online education such as developing work habits, time management and organizational skills.
- Students must learn to decide what is needed to get accomplished on a given day and they learn to have the freedom to make some decisions about what they are doing each day. It's very much like what we do in our adult lives.

IV. Model #3 – A la carte Model

- Students take one or more courses entirely online while continuing to take traditional classes at school. Students can take the online class on or off campus.
- A la carte model has grown in popularity with Michigan requiring that all students take at least one class online before they can graduate.
- Students may have traditional face-to-face classes for the first two periods of the day, then take a Chinese course online in the “Cyber-Lounge” and then go back to regular classes for the rest of the day.

V. Model #4 – Enriched Virtual Model

- Students divide time for every course between school and home. It differs from the Flex Model because students do not attend the physical school every day.
 - Students in grades K – 5 come to school every day and those teachers develop/use a model of instruction that they agree upon.
 - Students in grades 6 through 8 come to school on Monday, Wednesday and Friday morning.
 - Students in grades 9 – 11 come to school on Tuesday and Thursday.
 - Seniors come in only on Tuesdays.
 - Students spend the other days at home or somewhere with internet access and are working on online courses of a program of our choosing.
 - The school is essentially a large, one room computer lab with some offices for one-on-one tutoring or conference spaces for group instruction. When students are in school, instruction is focused on the concepts with which they are struggling.
 - Teachers also focus on skills like writing, note-taking, organization, time management and others identified by staff as essential to be successful with online curriculum.
1. BL requires that teachers be flexible and patient with students as they are learning to develop time management skills and how to use online curriculum. Before students are allowed to enroll, students and parents are interviewed to ensure they realize the responsibility of managing their time.
 2. Students learn to advocate for themselves and can't blame a teacher for not learning. So many students blossom when they realize they're in control.
 3. Online course example:
 - a. Warm-up
 - b. Video instruction from virtual teacher
 - c. Assignments
 - d. More Instruction
 - e. Quiz (must earn a 70% or better to continue on to the next lesson)

