The 2021 Digital Transition Survey Results are in: More Alternatives, Less Traditional Schooling
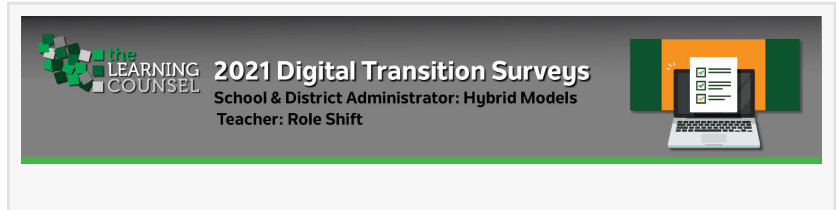
Comprehensive survey reveals trends, some surprises

SACRAMENTO, CA, USA, December 14, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Results of the Learning Counsel's 2021 Digital Transition Survey are being analyzed, and many results were released during a widely watched market briefing by Learning Counsel CEO LeiLani Cauthen at the organization's annual National Gathering event.

2021 Digital Transition Surveys
School & District Administrator: Hybrid Models
Teacher: Role Shift

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>
> *LeiLani Cauthen*

21,098 educators responded, including full and detailed responses from 373 districts, 202 schools and 819 teachers. Multi-part questions included four levels of intentions for 22 major tech areas and preferences across eight of the major schooling models, resources, purchase behavior, teacher time use and more. Responses were accepted from March 15 until November 2 of this year. Respondents included School and district administrators, and for the first time, teachers in a separate survey that was also used in cross-analysis with school and district leader responses.

Top takeaways included:

Spending
•Edtech spend increased by $2.2 billion to $39.5 billion inclusive of all hardware, major software systems, digital curriculum resources and network spending.

•Esports at 36% and social-emotional learning systems at 31% are the highest tech areas in purchase consideration.

•Audio enhancement considered critical for hybrid classrooms where students may be

attending live and others virtually, at 31% is the highest type of tech schools said they plan to purchase more of. Robotics at 27% and student coding apps at 25% are then next highest in plans to purchase.

•The market grew less than expected in 2021 given the three big stimulus bills flooding money into K12, but at least 60% of districts/schools have yet to spend their full portions.

•Far more rural schools and districts responded, confirming that the U.S. market is reaching saturation of devices for all students as smaller institutions embrace full digital transition.

School Models Shift

•The K12 market has fractured into more alternatives with far less traditional model schooling. Both administrators and teachers are interested in a delivery model shift and lean toward Hybrid Hyflex and Blended/Flipped (tied for highest interest.) Competition for students remains high.

•Slight gains were seen for traditional public schools/districts due to new offerings such as online-only paths attached within the institution and by charters. Private schools lost students. Homeschooling was up by another .6% and slowing in rate of growth to under 10%.

•Estimate of pure traditional schooling without at least offering hybrid simultaneous flexibility (attending classes via web conferencing) is less than 50% of the market now.

•37%, or 21 million students are "opt-outers" of purely traditional on-campus full-time schooling now and have moved to public online only, charters, private schools or homeschools, with another small percentage the remote learners who rarely attend physically on campus but "attend" via web conferencing but are enrolled.

New Priorities

•Workflow and elements of time and space logistics remain mostly manual. This is the area of most concern to analysts – and is the real model-shift difference expected. Learning Counsel Research is working on the "uberization" of learning to help schools solve this with the Hybrid Logistics Project.

•74% of teachers are feeling overwhelmed or burnt out. Analysts cite that teacher-centric lesson planning is a massive hidden time cost which lowers attention on students and is the real inhibitor of predictive analytics that would create full personalization.

•School and district leaders have a completely different picture than teachers of how much time teachers spend on finding digital lesson resources, then building lesson sequences, and then on the digital traffic of back-and-forth assignments, managing email, monitoring systems, checking app notifications, and work that is more distribution and administrative and not directly

instructing students live to help them understand something. 24% of teachers report spending as high as thirty or more hours a week on just these tasks whereas administrators say only 8.5% of teachers spend as much time.

• New types and new ways of offering PD are needed, especially to address teacher overwhelm and social-emotional aspects of teaching today.

Top pressures cited among school and district administrators included:

• Time and space management– 46%
• Attrition – 20%
• Staffing – 13%
• Student achievement – 8%
• Integrations/tech model architecture complexity – 5%

Top pressures cited among teachers included:

• Student absences – 30%
• Time management – 29%
• Student engagement, staying on task –14%
• Simultaneous teaching – 9%
• Unrealistic administrative goals – 8%
• Student achievement – 7%

According to Learning Counsel CEO LeiLani Cauthen, "One of the more interesting trends we're following is the digital spend on the consumer side. Parents have continued their shopping for digital learning apps, sites and individual items like eBooks, jumping up spend by almost $6B in 2021 and which all total is now slightly less than double what all schools spend. We were happy to see, though, that school spending on professional grade digital curriculum and courseware is now experiencing a faster rate of growth than prior years and is expected to maintain it for several years as going digital takes the place of merely digitized elements without quality workflow or user interface. School spending, though, is still much smaller than consumer spending."

The Learning Counsel acknowledges and thanks these sponsors for underwriting the National Gathering event and presentation of the National Digital Transition Survey results briefing:

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About the Learning Counsel

Learning Counsel is a research institute and news media hub with 310,000+ readers that provides context for schools in digital transition from a deep understanding of tech user experience, systems, and organization. Our mission-based organization was the first to develop a thesis of education's future based on technology's evolution — and start helping schools advance systematically. Our EduJedi Leadership Society is a membership organization created for community amongst educators. The Hybrid Logistics Project is being developed inside our social ecosystem site, Knowstory.

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