THE FUTURE IS NOW
ED TECH AND BLENDED LEARNING IN THE CLASSROOM

What is online learning?

Online learning is learning from sources on the Internet, including books, videos, lessons and software. Online instruction is instruction between the instructor and the student via the Internet.

What is blended learning?

According to the California-based Christensen Institute, "Blended learning is a formal education program in which a student learns at least part through online delivery of content and instruction with some element of student control over time, place, path, and/or pace, and at least in part at a supervised brick-and-mortar location away from home." Some models of blended include: 1) group rotation where students move, in groups, between different learning stations, 2) individualized rotation where most instruction is delivered online in an individually customized way, with teachers' aides circulating to offer help, and teachers holding small tutoring sessions, and 3) the self-mixed model where students attend traditional classrooms, but supplement this with one or more courses online.

Where has blended learning succeeded?

Pacific Research Institute's books *Moonshots in Education* and *Short-Circuited* discuss a number of high-performing schools using blended learning models: 1) Grimmway Academy public charter school in Kern County uses a number of software programs in a computer learning lab for part of students' instruction, 2) Gilroy Prep, which is part of the Navigator charter school family, uses computer lab time to work on math and reading skills, with online assessments to keep teachers abreast of students' progress, 3) KIPP Comienza Community Prep School in Los Angeles rotates Google Chromebooks and tablets among more than 300 students who are assessed using adaptive software in reading, writing, math and science, and 4) Summit Public Schools in Sunnyvale uses, among other things, a customized content "playlist" for each student, which he or she completes at his or her own pace using a school-provided Chromebook.

What are some of the future challenges facing schools as they introduce education technology into classroom?

When the Los Angeles Unified School District gave iPads to students, the experiment failed because teachers were badly trained on how to use the technology and the associated curriculum. Teacher training institutions in California must set a goal of preparing teachers to use education technology effectively and to understand how technology fits into instructional delivery models such as blended learning.

PRI PACIFIC RESEARCH INSTITUTE