



BLENDING LEARNING-PARENT TALKING POINTS

When a school implements blended learning, parents often wonder how the changes will impact their students. This resource gives school leaders or teachers concise talking points that can educate existing or prospective parents on the benefits of blended learning. The dialogue below is in question and answer format, with a parent asking and a school leader answering.

Q: Why blended learning?

A: Blended learning empowers schools to meet the unique academic needs of each student. We can now guarantee that every student will learn the right skills at the right time. Schools that adopt blended learning can see impressive academic growth as well, because both online and teacher-led instruction is more personalized.

Q: What does a blended learning classroom look like?

A: In most blended learning classrooms one would see a group of students receiving small group instruction from the teacher and a group of students learning independently on computers. These two modes of learning happen simultaneously. It is also common to see the two groups switch half way through class, so that each student has every day access to the teacher and to their personalized learning pathways on the computer.

Q: How does blended learning benefit students?

A: Students receive more small group instruction from their teacher than in a traditional classroom. Small group instruction is led by the teacher and it creates a space with a more favorable student to teacher ratio - this allows for more participation opportunities and individual attention from the teacher. Small group instruction is also effective because it allows the teacher to focus on the exact skills that the small group is ready to learn. Small group instruction is supplemented by digital programs that assign individualized lessons that target each student's needs.

Q: Does this mean students will be spending more time on computers?

A: Blended learning is much more than computers, and time spent on computers is always intentional. The online programs provide a personalized learning experience that is impossible to replicate in a traditional classroom setting. The online programs also provide data the teacher will use to make informed teaching decisions and suggest new strategies during small group instruction.

Q: Does this mean students will be taking more tests and assessments?

A: Students are much more than a collection of data points. The assessments students take this year will always have a purpose - they help teachers adjust instruction to better meet the needs of each child. To prevent students from being overwhelmed, assessments on the computer occur no more than three times per year.



Q: How will this change the student's relationship with the teacher?

A: Blended learning is a tool designed to empower teachers, not replace them. The most important part of the classroom community is always the interaction between teacher and student. In this model, students will receive more personalized small group instruction and less whole group instruction, allowing them to have more interactions with the teacher.