Virtual Academy Sub-committee Report - May 2017

Sycamore Advisory Committee

Charge to the Committee

"As with other districts, Sycamore has a number of students who choose to be home schooled or access online charter schools. As a result, funding for these students is diverted and there are questions as to the quality of education these students receive. The project goal is to: examine potential options that a district could create to offer a program of study allowing students to access services without attending school either on a full time or part time basis. As a part of this project, there is a move to require students to take at least one online course while in high school to prepare them for college" (SAC, 2016).

Initial Guiding Questions

- How do we offer a flexible learning environment that fosters lifelong learning, develops skills needed for the next generation and leverages technology tools to deliver instruction effectively and efficiently?
- What changes to the traditional classroom model need to occur so students can succeed in today's world?
- What are the challenges today's schools face with the rise of online schools?

Revisions to Guiding Questions (BLUE for Added)

- What are the challenges today's schools face with the rise of online schools?
- What changes to the traditional classroom model need to occur so students can succeed in today's world?
  - What successful models for online learning are schools implementing to meet the needs of all learners in the school community?
  - What steps need to be taken to prepare our students for online learning?
- How do we offer a flexible learning environment that fosters lifelong learning, develops skills needed for the next generation and leverages technology tools to deliver instruction effectively and efficiently?
- How does Sycamore Community Schools offer online learning opportunities that embrace student choice and prepare them for college and career readiness?

Methodology

- Monthly team meetings
- Individual team member research
- Meetings with sycamore teachers and administrators
- Group synthesis and analysis of findings
- Written presentation with attached resources

What are the challenges today's schools face with the rise of online schools?

- One issue is the quality of education Sycamore resident students receive while enrolled in online schools.

- A second issue is a funding discrepancy due to the Ohio funding formula
  - Sycamore's payments to online charter schools significantly exceed State per pupil funding that the school district receives for each student
  - The shortfall in payments to online charter schools is made up with local funds generated by tax levies, etc.

Charter School Academic Performance

Ohio Report Card Grades All Charter Schools (2015-16)	Achievement	Gap Closing	K-3 Literacy	Progress	Graduation Rate
Electronic Classroom of Tomorrow*	F	F	F	F	F
Greater Ohio Virtual School*	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R
Insight School of Ohio*	F	F	N/R	F	F
Ohio Connections Academy*	D	F	D	B	F
Ohio Virtual Academy*	D	F	C	F	F
Treca Digital Academy*	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R
Dohn Community	M/S	M/S	M/S	DNMS	M/S
Summit Academy of Cincinnati	F	F	F	C	N/R
T.C.P World Academy	C	F	D	D	N/R
Sycamore Schools	B	D	F	B	A

* Online Charter School   **N/R** - Not Rated   **M/S** - Meets Standard   **DNMS** - Does Not Meet Standard

Sycamore's Funding of Online and Brick and Mortar Charter Schools

All Charter Schools (2016-17)	Student FTE	Total Transfer	Ohio per Pupil Funding	Sycamore Local Funds
Electronic Classroom of Tomorrow*	9.90	$85,990.16	$6,583.50	$79,406.66
Greater Ohio Virtual School*	1.76	$10,560.00	$1,170.40	$9,389.60
Insight School of Ohio*	0.62	$3,720.00	$412.30	$3,307.70
Ohio Connections Academy*	4.93	$72,711.64	$3,278.45	$69,433.19
Ohio Virtual Academy*	3.95	$52,701.20	$2,626.75	$50,074.45
Treca Digital Academy*	1.90	$15,124.65	$1,263.50	$13,861.15
Dohn Community	0.20	$2,005.92	$133.00	$1,872.92
Summit Academy of Cincinnati	1.85	$42,077.88	$1,230.25	$40,847.63
T.C.P World Academy	1.00	$6,344.61	$665.00	$5,679.61
Community School Total	**26.11**	**$291,236.06**	**$17,363.15**	**$273,872.91**

* Online Charter Schools

Sycamore Ohio Per Pupil Amount $665.00/Student

Charter School Funding by Nearby School Districts

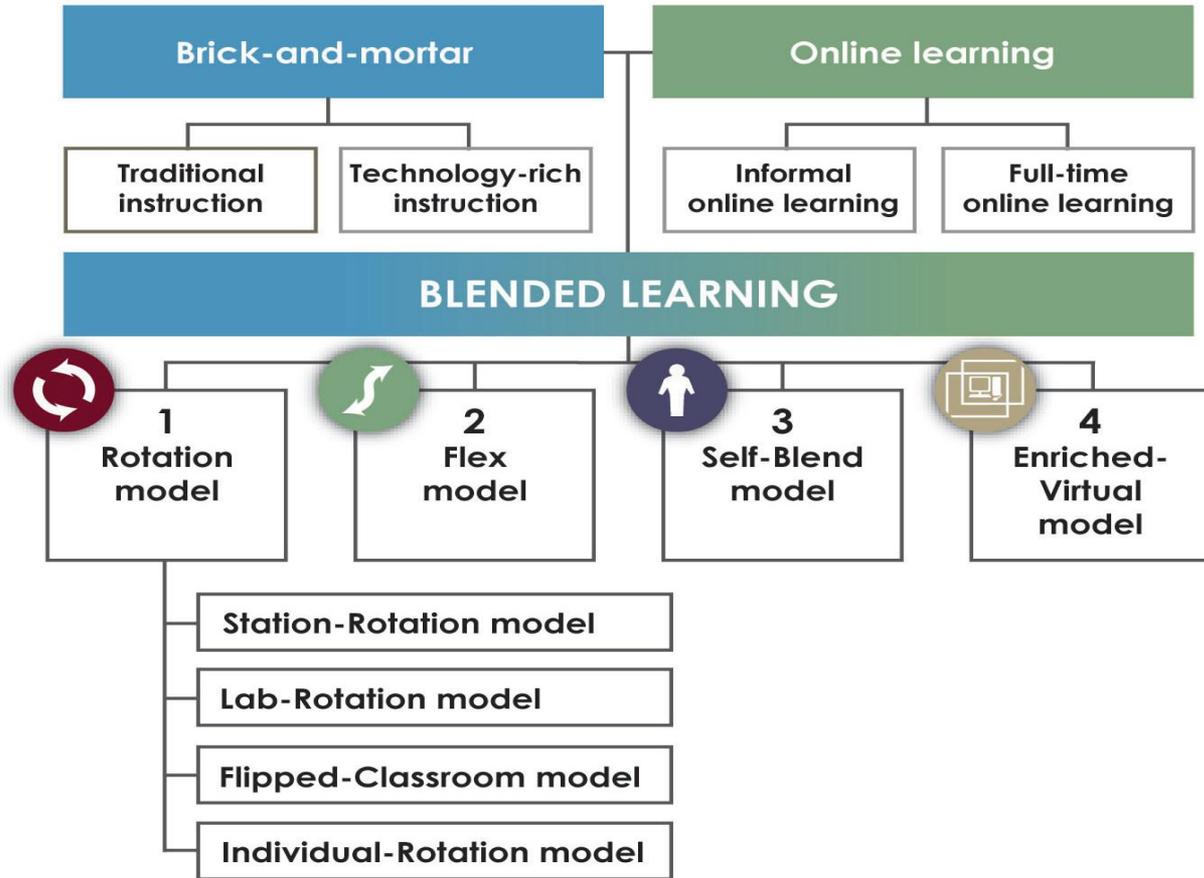| District	Total Transferred	Taxpayer Subsidy
Cincinnati	$55,091,261.00	$25,173,448.00
Princeton	$748,487.00	$655,062.00
Milford	$696,763.00	$394,986.00
Mason	$623,135.00	$378,430.00
Loveland	$274,947.00	$156,772.00
Sycamore	**$178,079.07**	**$162,625.00**
Indian Hill	$125,196.00	$118,674.00

What is Blended Learning?

"Blended learning systems combine face-to-face instruction with computer mediated instruction" (Bonk & Graham, 2006).

"A formal education program in which a student learns at least in 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" (Staker & Horn, 2012).

Lots of Synonymous terminology: "hybrid learning", "technology-mediated instruction", "web-enhanced instruction", "flipped classroom", and "mixed-mode instruction"
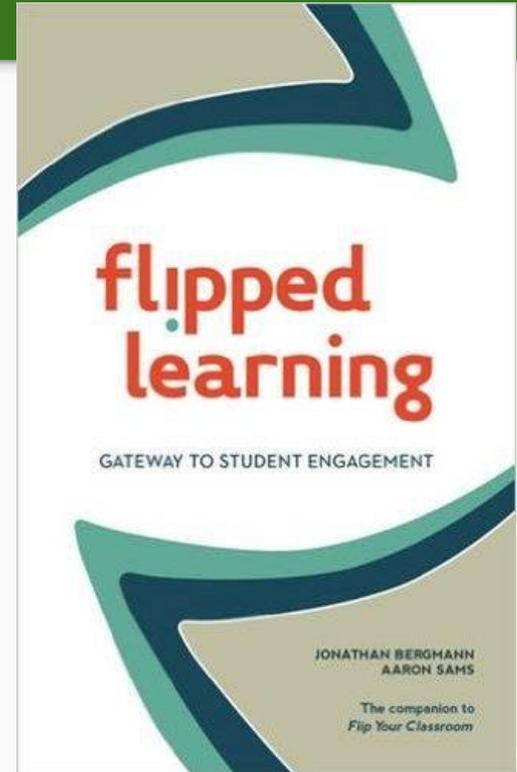
One interpretation: (Staker & Horn, 2012)

One example of Blended Learning Pedagogy: Flipped Classrooms

"Flipped learning is a pedagogical approach in which direct instruction moves from the group learning space to the individual learning space, and the resulting group space is transformed into a dynamic, interactive learning environment where the educator guides students as they apply concepts and engage creatively in subject matter" (Bergmann & Sams, 2014).

What is Online Learning?

Today often synonymous with eLearning or Distance Learning it is often defined as:

"Distance learning, where the majority of teaching and learning activities occurs away from the classroom site via the use of technology… The prominent format is online, where 100% of teaching and learning activities occur asynchronously via the internet" (http://www.uc.edu/distance/about.html).
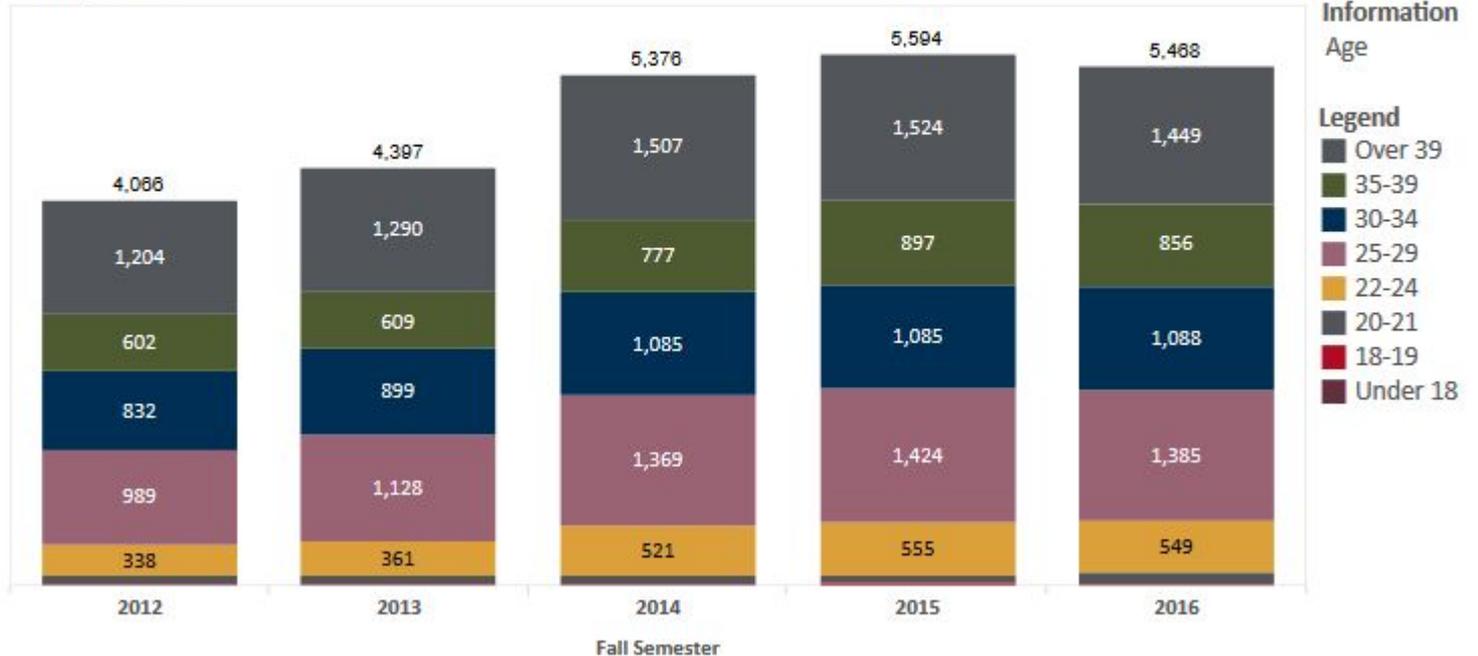
Enrollment Trends at University of Cincinnati

http://www.uc.edu/provost/about-us/peopleandoffices/institutional_research/student_reports.html

Distance Learning Programs
By Age

College: All

Demographic Information
Age

Legend
- Over 39
- 35-39
- 30-34
- 25-29
- 22-24
- 20-21
- 18-19
- Under 18

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Total	4,066	4,397	5,376	5,594	5,468
Over 39	1,204	1,290	1,507	1,524	1,449
35-39	602	609	777	897	856
30-34	832	899	1,085	1,085	1,088
25-29	989	1,128	1,369	1,424	1,385
22-24	338	361	521	555	549

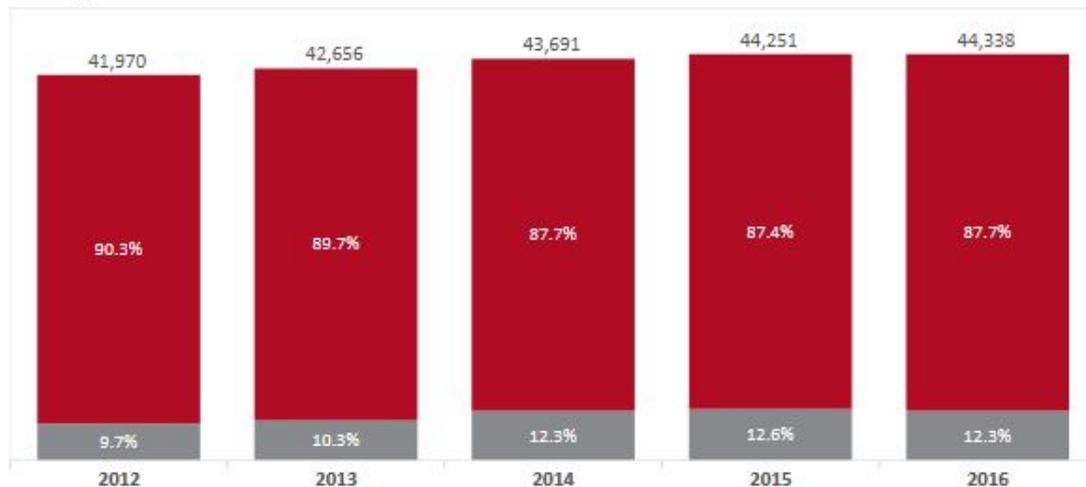Fall Semester

Enrollment Trends at University of Cincinnati

http://www.uc.edu/provost/about-us/peopleandoffices/institutional_research/student_reports.html

Total Headcount Distribution
By Distance Learning

College: All

Demographic Information
Distance Learning

Legend
- Not Distance Learning
- Distance Learning

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
	41,970	42,656	43,691	44,251	44,338
Not Distance Learning	90.3%	89.7%	87.7%	87.4%	87.7%
Distance Learning	9.7%	10.3%	12.3%	12.6%	12.3%

Fall Semester

37,904 (90.3%)	38,259 (89.7%)	38,315 (87.7%)	38,657 (87.4%)	38,870 (87.7%)
4,066 (9.7%)	4,397 (10.3%)	5,376 (12.3%)	5,594 (12.6%)	5,468 (12.3%)
41,970 (100.0%)	42,656 (100.0%)	43,691 (100.0%)	44,251 (100.0%)	44,338 (100.0%)

What is Sycamore's current experience with Online Learning and Blended Learning?

Credit Flex: College credits CAN replace Sycamore credits meeting standards

Online credits also offered at Sycamore High School

Blended learning includes "Open Mike" 2 nights/week on specific content, then instruction 2 days/week face to face (Used in Phys Ed department presently)

Personalized Learning School with 4 content teachers will allow students to advance at own pace, coming in 2018

E.H,Greene--5th Grade team investigating going to and living on a distant planet over 4 content areas

Project Based Learning (PBL)

Maker Space-- Area in Media Center where students design, problem solve and make items on 3D printers, poster makers , Hummingbirds and button makers, electronic sewing machine and Cricuts.

Media Center--5th-6th grade students are investigating contentious subjects, choosing a 'side' and creating a slide show to 'prove' the position taken, all independently, using on-line sources.

2nd grade students begin learning typing; STEAM is utilized in making a trail at Symmes; 3rd grade students write/type a 5 paragraph paper.

- What changes to the traditional classroom model need to occur so students can succeed in today's world?
  - What successful models for online learning are schools implementing to meet the needs of all learners in the school community?
  - What steps need to be taken to prepare our students for online learning?

- Online school environment (Charter) is mixed or poor
- There are collaborative/shared models of online schools for districts within Hamilton county and the state to compare/investigate
- A comprehensive study of current blended and online only practice within Sycamore is advised
- Progressive view of blended learning (skills model) that accounts for learner development in digital literacy (example: saving files iteratively)

- How do we offer a flexible learning environment that fosters lifelong learning, develops skills needed for the next generation and leverages technology tools to deliver instruction effectively and efficiently?

- Focus on the pedagogy first
- Continue to foster experimentation and adaptation among teachers
- Offer common guidance on best practice and emerging trends
- Do hold common planning time across schools, and between, to bridge any gaps in knowledge and practice
- Do consider the need for a constructivist paradigm of instruction (research needed)
- Do look to a strategic plan for iterative guidance (research needed)

- How does Sycamore Community Schools offer online learning opportunities that embrace student choice and prepare them for college and career readiness?

- This committee would recommend focusing on Blended Learning first over investments in online learning
- Seek partnerships with sister districts to leverage common resources
- Acknowledge the cost of and limitations of establishing an online only course offering (research needed)

Summary Recommendations

Develop a strategic plan for technology integration and instruction in K-12 (like the "Flight Plan") in a pedagogy first language.

Create consistent district-wide use of terms i.e. "blended learning," "online learning," etc. Define terms - blended learning online etc.

Focus energies in blended and hybrid pedagogy with regard to technology and not online learning.

Sycamore's total transfer of funds to charter schools is not sufficient to invest resources into a direct effort to curtail this loss. The district should be proactive in implementing the previous recommendations and, perhaps, retain the few charter school students who attend online charters for purely technology related reasons.

Special Thanks

- Mr. Bill Fritz, Sycamore Technology Director
- Ed Clark, Sycamore Teacher
- Barb Snyder, Sycamore Teacher
- Lorinda Ottaway, Sycamore Teacher
- Beth Weber, Sycamore District Treasurer

Resources:

Teacher Technology Literacy Standards:

https://www.iste.org/standards/standards/standards-for-teachers

Student Technology Literacy Standards:

https://www.iste.org/standards/standards/for-students

Resources:

edX: BlendedX Blended Learning with edX

ed.ted.com

The Basics of Blended Learning <Education Elements>, [5:50] September 24, 2011

Resources:

[Blended Learning and the Future of Education: Monique Markoff at TEDxIthacaCollege](), [12:29] May 6, 2014

[What 60 Schools Can Tell Us About Teaching…: Grant Lichtman at TEDxDenverTeachers](), [15:29] March 20, 2013

[What If? Let's Reimagine Learning. Technology Can Help. | Kerry Gallagher | TEDxYouth@BHS](), [15:48] June 3, 2016

[Teaching Methods for Inspiring the Students of the Future | Joe Ruhl | TEDxLafayette](), [17:41] May 27, 2015

[A Different Way to Think about Technology in Education: Greg Toppo at TEDxAshburn]() [15:19] Nov 21, 2012

[Creating classrooms that work: Esther Wojcicki at TEDxBeaconStreet](), [13:46] February 5, 2013

[Can Technology Change Education? Yes!: Raj Dhingra at TEDxBend](), [16:43] June 15, 2012

[Blending Technology and Classroom Learning: Jessie Woolley-Wilson at TEDxRainier](), [11:33] Dec 17, 2012

[Blended learning: Frank Baxter at TEDxManhattanBeach](), [10:43] November 17, 2012

Questions?

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https://knowyourcharter.com/2014/12/16/local-tax-revenues-subsidize-ohio-charter-schools/

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http://learningaccelerator.org/media/abc5d315/Ohio%20Report%20101415_F.pdf

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How Ohio Charter Schools Are Performing

https://knowyourcharter.com/

UC: Fact book 2016

http://www.uc.edu/content/dam/uc/provost/docs/institutional_research/student_reports/student_fact_book/Fact%20Book%202016.pdf

UC: Distance Education

http://www.uc.edu/distance/about.html

Pew Research Center:

http://www.pewinternet.org/2016/09/20/appendix-detail-on-digital-readiness-and-other-metrics-across-groups/