

Blended Learning Messaging



Implementing blended learning is complex. School districts must clearly describe the benefits of blended learning in order to build support among key audiences.

It is important to consistently and explicitly link your blended learning program to your student learning goals and other strategic education objectives. Talk about the teaching and learning, not just the technology.

The following is a guide to the types of messages that are important to create, and includes basic sample messages about blended learning that you can customize for your school or district.

BIG PICTURE MESSAGE

Articulating a clear message that captures the core reason behind your blended learning program is enormously helpful in building understanding and support for your efforts. Sometimes called an “elevator speech,” this big picture, aspirational message should work for all audiences and appeal to the heart as well as the head.

Sample Messages:

- All students deserve an education that prepares them for college, career and global citizenship. Our school district is committed to using blended learning to provide teachers and students with the tools to reach their full potential and succeed in the 21st Century.
- The world our children face is rapidly changing, requiring new skills and preparation to be ready for college, career, and citizenship. Blended learning provides teachers with tools to personalize learning for our students, increasing their engagement, growth and achievement.
- There are exciting shifts occurring in schools across America, as educators respond to the challenges and opportunities our children face in the 21st Century. Our school district is providing teachers and students with powerful new tools that enable personalized, student-centered learning by blending the best of face-to-face instruction with new technology.

KEY MESSAGES

The next level of messages reflect the key reasons for why you are implementing blended learning and explain its benefits. Segmenting these messages by audience will ensure the information you are sharing is the most compelling.

Sample Messages:

Target Audience: General, About Blended Learning

- Blended learning is the combination of in-person instruction and education technology that enables personalized learning.
- At its core, blended learning is the effective use of education technology so teachers can customize the learning experience for students, allowing them to move at their own pace (competency-based learning).
- Competency-based learning ensures that students proceed through course material at a pace that is right for them, rather than waiting for their peers to catch up or moving on without having fully mastered the material.
- Blended learning is taking hold across America. Hundreds of districts across the country are using blended learning, which personalizes education by taking into account each student's needs, skills, and interests to create tailored lessons that increase the likelihood of each student's success.
- Decades of research has shown that differentiated instruction (where teachers observe and understand the differences and similarities among students and use this information to plan instruction) and increased small-group, targeted time with teachers benefits student achievement. Blended learning allows these practices at scale, so teachers can reach each child exactly where they are for optimal learning.
- In blended learning environments, teachers facilitate instruction that is paced to each student's individual learning needs, often using a combination of one-on-one time with a teacher, group interaction with peers, traditional teacher-led lessons, tutoring, digital tools and online content, among other practices. Software programs help teachers to identify gaps in student achievement so that students receive help in areas where they need it most.
- By providing each student with the targeted support they need to succeed in school, blended learning has the potential to help close achievement gaps.

- Integrating technology into classrooms and school work promises to help alleviate the digital divide that exists between affluent and low-income schools.
- Blended learning is a journey of innovation and discovery. Supporting teachers and students as they try new approaches to teaching and learning - as they test, review and revise strategies - is critical to helping build confidence and creativity.

Target Audience: Teachers

- With blended learning, teachers have powerful technology tools to help them differentiate instruction and personalize learning for each student. Teachers should no longer have to teach to the middle but can reach every student effectively.
- Real-time data and instant feedback on student progress allow teachers to intervene quickly to ensure a student is mastering a concept.
- In addition, with blended learning teachers can provide pathways for accelerated learning for students who are ready to move on sooner than others.
- Teachers can use technology to decrease time-consuming, administrative work, and increase high-impact, direct instruction with students. For example, tasks like grading become much easier and efficient with new digital grade books.
- In a blended learning classroom, teachers can use technology to access learning tools from around the world, increasing knowledge sharing, communications, and global perspectives for students and teachers alike.
- Blended learning provides teachers the opportunity to innovate, learn new skills and develop themselves as professionals.
- With blended learning and digital content, teachers also have more educational content choices and can adapt materials to their students' needs.

Target Audience: Students

- With blended learning, students learn at their own pace and move on when they master the subject matter (competency-based learning).
- This type of personalized learning allows students to get the help they need, when they need it, and students who are ready to move on can accelerate their learning without becoming bored in class.

- The technology used in blended learning allows students to learn anywhere and anytime, building skills for lifelong learning.
- Students can take ownership of their learning. With real-time data on their progress and choice in how they learn material, students build other non-academic skills like resilience, self-motivation, and self-confidence.

Target Audience: Parents

- Technology provides parents greater access to the classroom and to their child’s work.
- Parents can have real-time information about their student’s progress and intervene if and when necessary.
- Students and their parents have access to learning 24/7, and can share in skill-building.
- Children of all abilities and socio-economic levels get the customized support they need and deserve with blended learning, increasing levels of student engagement and success.
- Students build the types of technical skills that are increasingly necessary for college and career-readiness. Learning these skills at school helps address the digital divide.
- The student-teacher relationship is one of the most important factors in student success, but teachers too rarely have the time for one-on-one interaction with students. Blended learning enables more one-on-one and small group interaction between teachers and students and provides regular feedback to teachers, allowing them to closely monitor student progress.

Target Audience: Community

- With high-quality blended learning, students will be less likely to “fall through the cracks” and graduate without key knowledge and skills. Teachers will know exactly when each student has mastered educational standards and will be able to intervene early with students who are struggling to reach mastery.
- Colleges and corporate leaders are demanding graduates have 21st Century skills to succeed in higher education and the global workplace. Blended learning helps build skills in using technology, but also in communications, team-building, creativity, and problem-solving.
- Blended learning helps us create well-rounded citizens who are prepared to contribute in the workforce or succeed in higher education.

CUSTOMIZED MESSAGES

The next step is to customize your key messages with relevant statistics, classroom examples or calls to action that are important specifically to your district's blended learning program.

Sample Messages:

- Learn more about the exciting blended learning happening in your child's classroom by attending our upcoming Open House on *x date* and *x time*.
- Students entering 4th grade in our school are reading between *x* and *y* levels. Our goal is to have students reading at *z* level by the time they enter 5th grade and we are using a blend of targeted online learning programs (*name*) and personalized teacher attention to successfully meet those goals.

Capture and share the authentic voices of your teachers and students talking about and showing blended learning in the classroom. They are your best messengers!

Examples:

[Mill Valley School District "Teacher Perspective" video](#)

[Mill Valley School District "A Day with Technology" video](#)

[Lindsay Unified School District "Transforming Education" videos](#)

The Blended Learning Messaging guide was compiled by TLA Partner Kira Keane.

For more information, please contact Kira at kira.keane@learningaccelerator.org.

For more information about The Learning Accelerator, please visit www.learningaccelerator.org.

