

## Learning Roundtable - Educating the Digital Generation

### Roundtable Presenters - Questions to Address

Because of the breadth of issues, a lengthy list of questions regarding various aspects of this discussion has been developed. You may address any, all or none of these questions, as may be applicable, in your allotted speaking time. However, it would be advisable to think of a response to these questions should they be asked by members as they relate to your work. Members will undoubtedly come up with their own questions based on the conversations of the day. You are invited to submit a white paper on any topics too lengthy to cover. Any questions that specifically address or border on competitive or anti-trust concerns should be answered in a very general way or with an encouragement to address the specific issue in an ancillary conversation.

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#### Cost Drivers

1. How do the costs of hard copy or electronic instructional materials in Texas compare to other states?
2. What cost drivers related to publishing content and our state adoption process should the Board be aware of? How do our cost drivers in Texas compare to that in other states?
3. How has the move from traditional to electronic materials impacted costs? Why have content costs not fallen, as many industry observers expected?

#### Adoption Process

1. What benefits would you identify in our state adoption process? Barriers? Suggested improvements?
2. Which of those improvements would make it more attractive for submitting materials and/or reducing the cost of materials?
3. Which adoption practices from other states might you suggest we incorporate in our process—whether at a local or state level?
4. How would you describe our current ordering system (EMAT) in terms of ease of use and flexibility for products offered?

#### Use of Materials

1. What details would help us better understand the various bundling options and how “bundling” of instructional materials works? We often hear that districts must receive books they will not be using as part of a bundle.
2. What are the current shifts and trends for using instructional materials in the classroom? Possible discussion points may include use of full-year

## **Learning Roundtable - Educating the Digital Generation**

### **Use of Materials (cont'd)**

comprehensive instructional materials, modular content by topic, access to multiple content resources on a unified platform on a per student fee basis, etc.

3. What considerations are undertaken to ensure the alignment of your content to Texas standards—including suggested student assignments and projects, chapter and/or unit testing—to support student preparation for success in state assessments of course standards?
4. Do you have any measures that indicate how effective your instructional materials are for student learning? If so, can you give us insight into how effectiveness is determined?
5. How has the emphasis on college and career readiness for all students impacted the level and rigor of content of your instructional materials? How have you considered the higher expectations for critical thinking and embedded them in your content?
6. How do you identify then proceed with the need to update or change online content?
7. We are beginning to see the emergence of Open Educational Resources (OER) in the K12 space. How would you address the concern that this material is not adequately peer-reviewed or aligned with Texas standards? How about the ongoing support needed for the maintenance and high quality of the content?

### **Education Technology**

1. Looking ahead, how would you describe the role of education technology in the delivery of content 5 to 10 years from now? What trends related to use of the various devices are you seeing in Texas and elsewhere?
2. What should we expect from content providers in regard to providing adaptive feedback so that teachers are able to better individualize instruction for each student in a real-time, user-friendly way?
3. Are you providing any other assistance or professional development that saves teacher planning time and helps them with delivery of high quality lessons?
4. Are you incorporating a parent portal in order for parents to have access online to instructional materials provided to their students?

### **Education Technology Challenges**

1. How can we meet the challenge of digital infrastructure needs for all students across Texas? We have hundreds and hundreds of miles of "white space" where there is no connectivity. Provide any insights on how other states have overcome the connectivity challenge statewide? Any other thoughts on how we meet this challenge?

## Learning Roundtable - Educating the Digital Generation

### Education Technology Challenges (cont'd)

2. If connectivity is accomplished, what challenges have you seen with the use of education technology for content delivery? Successes you can share on overcoming the challenges?
3. How do you address and adjust capacity as needed for quick server response time to end user requests if large numbers of students need simultaneous access?
4. The Learning Resource Metadata Initiative (LRMI) provided a standardized way of tagging online content (metadata schema) that is critical to the curating process for educators. Do you use the LRMI markup now recognized by the major search engines?
5. How are you meeting the challenge of providing your content for use on handheld devices? Enabling complete flexibility for use with any number of devices, browsers and operating systems?
6. What processes are in place to allow for automated student and staff account creation and maintenance? Multiple entries of the same information in multiple programs create errors and staff time issues.
7. Custom file formats and uploading processes for digital resources are VERY time consuming. What are the obstacles to industry standardization? What steps are needed to achieve a greater level of standardization?
  - o *EdWeek: One of the most significant issues educators raised concerned the integration of various types of software. Educators want online learning tools, for example, that can work together seamlessly, but vendors are more interested in development of proprietary products, the report said. The same goes for learning management systems and business and operations software that don't connect easily. The result is that districts have developed costly and time-wasting work-arounds to get software systems to cooperate, resulting in "the huge headache of software integration."*
  - o [http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/DigitalEducation/2014/06/lack\\_of\\_integration\\_ability\\_to.html](http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/DigitalEducation/2014/06/lack_of_integration_ability_to.html)
8. How do we eliminate the digital skills gap with teaching and learning that hinders effective use of technology as pointed out in the recent OECD study?
  - o *Gaps in the digital skills of both teachers and students, difficulties in locating high-quality digital learning resources from among a plethora of poor-quality ones, a lack of clarity on the learning goals and insufficient pedagogical preparation for blending technology meaningfully into lessons and curricula create a wedge between expectations and reality. If these challenges are not addressed as part of the technology plans of schools and education ministries,*

## Learning Roundtable - Educating the Digital Generation

### *Education Technology Challenges (cont'd)*

- *technology may do more harm than good to the teacher-student interactions that underpin deep conceptual understanding and higher-order thinking.*
  - <http://www.bloombergvew.com/articles/2015-09-15/computers-look-like-an-obstacle-to-learning>
  - <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-34174796>
9. What is the best way to encourage standardization in the use of terminology by publishers or content providers? For instance, what is the difference between fully electronic textbooks and online electronic resources? Universal terminology for types of materials is a barrier to knowing exactly what we are ordering. Districts need better clarity.
  10. How are you addressing the expectation for course content and assignments to be accessed on school devices while the students are away from school and without internet access? How about the ability for synching when student responses are entered while offline?
  11. Several states have already moved to requiring all or a certain percentage of classroom materials be totally digital. However, studies have indicated too much screen time is a detriment for learning. What is your response to this concern about too much screen time in the classroom?
  12. Describe the challenges regarding accessibility options for students with special needs. How are you meeting these challenges?

### **Security and Privacy**

1. How do you ensure security and privacy for our students? Who has access to student data? What safeguards are in place?
2. Explain the use of any advertisements or 3rd party applications in your software, cloud services, hyperlinks, etc. How do you ensure there are no security, privacy, or inappropriate content issues if these external sources are included?