

eLearning Friend or Foe?



By Gordon Kubanek [Physics teacher] for CACOR September 29, 2021

Some Personal Stories – Friend AND Foe

- My teaching at HS 2021 – most students lost motivation, stopped submitting decent homework, cheated, did the minimum, stopped engaging, were exhausted
- 14 year old student I have tutored in Manotick – online school before Covid – done VERY well, HIGHLY supported by affluent parents
- My brother in a Manitoba High School – teaching to blank screens, he sees that they learned at best 50%, weak students 0% or dropped out
- An adult family member tried an online course, she did not complete her course.
- I will be teaching 5 grade 9 kids online who live in Val David this Fall
- In 1999 I did a 1 year long online course from MIT – it was great!

Punchline: Online is

- Your Friend if
 - You think of education as training or the acquisition of specific knowledge
- Your Foe if
 - You are young, poor, poorly supported/motivated, immature, need more “people” smarts
- **Isolation** is the great risk
 - Healthy if it brings people together in a REAL way who otherwise could not connect
 - Unhealthy if it replaces personal contact, if it keeps people in their own self-delusional bubbles
- Therefore
 - Depends upon emotional maturity, learning style, life situation, disability, stability/cost of technology
 - GREAT for adult training
 - HELPFUL for kids with socialization/distraction problems [in short term]
 - TERRIBLE for most kids who learn because they are with their friends
 - DISCOURAGING for teachers as they lose the energy from teaching ‘live’

What is goal of Education?

- To develop free human beings who are able of themselves to impart purpose and direction to their lives
- Freedom is our ability to intervene between stimulus and response so that we will not simply keep responding automatically to situations in which we find ourselves.
- This can only be developed in the child through structure and direction.
- Children should first experience to perceive reality as it really is & feel it with their **whole being**
- True learning is intellect, emotions and body – head, heart, hands
- *We don't truly know if the thought only remains in our head, because that does not change us, it does not motivate us, it does not allow us to work together from a common vision. You "know" when the thought has gone into your bones, when you behave differently and relate to people and the world differently. In other words, unless knowing is transformative it does not count.*

Foe

To learn takes Courage

- My #1 Observation of what has changed in 30 years?
 - **When the going gets Give up.**
- Kids have a hard time with constructive criticism.
- Any comment is personal, is an attack.
- Their resilience
- Helicopter parenting is one cause
- Playing virtual games instead of engaging in the real world is another
- If online learning is done out of fear, it accelerates isolation
- Fear is a mind killer,
- Covid has instilled a lot of fear and made feeling afraid acceptable
- Good teachers purposely create challenges for the students – it is not the facts that matter, it is the sense of personal accomplishment that makes the students believe in themselves that matter – for this to happen learning cannot be too easy and there must be SOCIAL recognition and affirmation

Friend

Wherever. Whenever. Train with eLearning



eLearning is a critical component of IATA's fast-developing digital training strategy. And it should be a part of your training strategy too.

Whether you are just starting in the industry and looking to grow your expertise or an industry veteran looking to retrain for a different role, eLearning is an invaluable yet cost-effective tool.

What's more, we are continuing to develop our portfolio. Whatever your speciality, eLearning will provide you with an opportunity to improve.

Find out why eLearning spearheads IATA's digital training strategy.

Learn with eLearning

- E-learning is the perfect teaching method for a modern world; **short-interactive** learning that is paperless, eco-friendly and available across all devices.
- And the use of **gamification** with **social rewards** makes it especially relevant to younger generations looking for a community spirit.
- Moreover, e-learning is **cost-effective** and a flexible option that allows you to **study at your own pace.**

Is this a bit Pavlovian?

Friend ...Sounds good for some kids...

- my older daughter did so well with it. She started participating more with teachers and became more comfortable than when she was in a school setting. Her grades were amazing."
- Her daughter, 13, is on the autism spectrum and diagnosed with sensory processing disorder, conditions that often make it harder for children to communicate, socialize and adapt to environmental changes, such as distracting noises in the classroom.



Friend Online schools are growing

- The Colorado Spark Online Academy currently has 200 students enrolled in kindergarten through eighth grade and is "growing like crazy"



Friend Bullied at School

- For online classes, you don't have to worry about trying to fit in, who will talk to you in the hallways,"
- "I struggle with social anxiety and overthinking.
- Virtual school made it so much easier for me.
- I didn't have to deal with some of those pressures."



Friend...then Foe

Tale of a University student

- Successfully completed a University degree virtually
- But at 1st job had a very hard time fitting into the corporate culture and could not read the “between the line” messaging of what was demanded....
- Lost the job
- And was so traumatized that he changed careers



Foe Emotional Self-Regulation

Is ADHD made worse by social stress?

- According to Gabor Mate, A CDN. doctor. [<https://drgabormate.com/>] Rather than an inherited disease, Attention Deficit Disorder is a reversible impairment and a developmental delay, with origins in infancy. It is rooted in multigenerational family stress and in disturbed social conditions in a stressed society.
- Circuits in the brain whose job is emotional self-regulation and attention control fail to develop in infancy. He shows how “tuning out” and distractibility are the psychological products of life experience, and this programming can be changed.

Foe CONTROL

- People have a need to control
- But the truth is we control very little
- All we can really control is our response
- Eg. Trauma is not the event, it is how we react and heal, with support, from the event
- Online/computers emphasize control and make us think we or another person is in control
- This makes us less able to cope with life when when we encounter events over which we have no control
- Eg. Best soldiers are 'country boys' who grew up adapting to nature and the seasons – you just 'do what you gotta do'

Foe Mental & Physical Health

- Worsened mental or emotional health in their children, compared to children received in-person instruction.
- Note - but during COVID this was worse for everybody
- They were also more likely to say their children were less physically active, spent less time outside and spent less time with friends.
- virtual instruction contributed to emotional distress for parents.

Foe

DISTRACTED!



1. Lack of structure

2. External distractions

3. Internal distractions

emotions and worries can be as distracting as a loud TV.

4. Less support for time management

At home, there are no set start and end times for when to get work done. See more of what you like and less of what you don't [Update your topics](#)

5. No in-person help for refocusing

At school, the teacher can refocus students with a hand on the shoulder or a quiet reminder.

6. Not enough sleep

Changes in routine can upset sleep schedules..

7. Long, written communication

Many teachers are using email t**8. No change in scenery or built-in breaks**

Who actually did the work?

- “I have to be honest, I’m not sure how much of the work my kids did and how much the parents did”
- A College Prof told me that the marks increased by 10% last year when exams were virtual....



Foe Cheating

It has become normalized

It is accepted because “everybody is doing it”



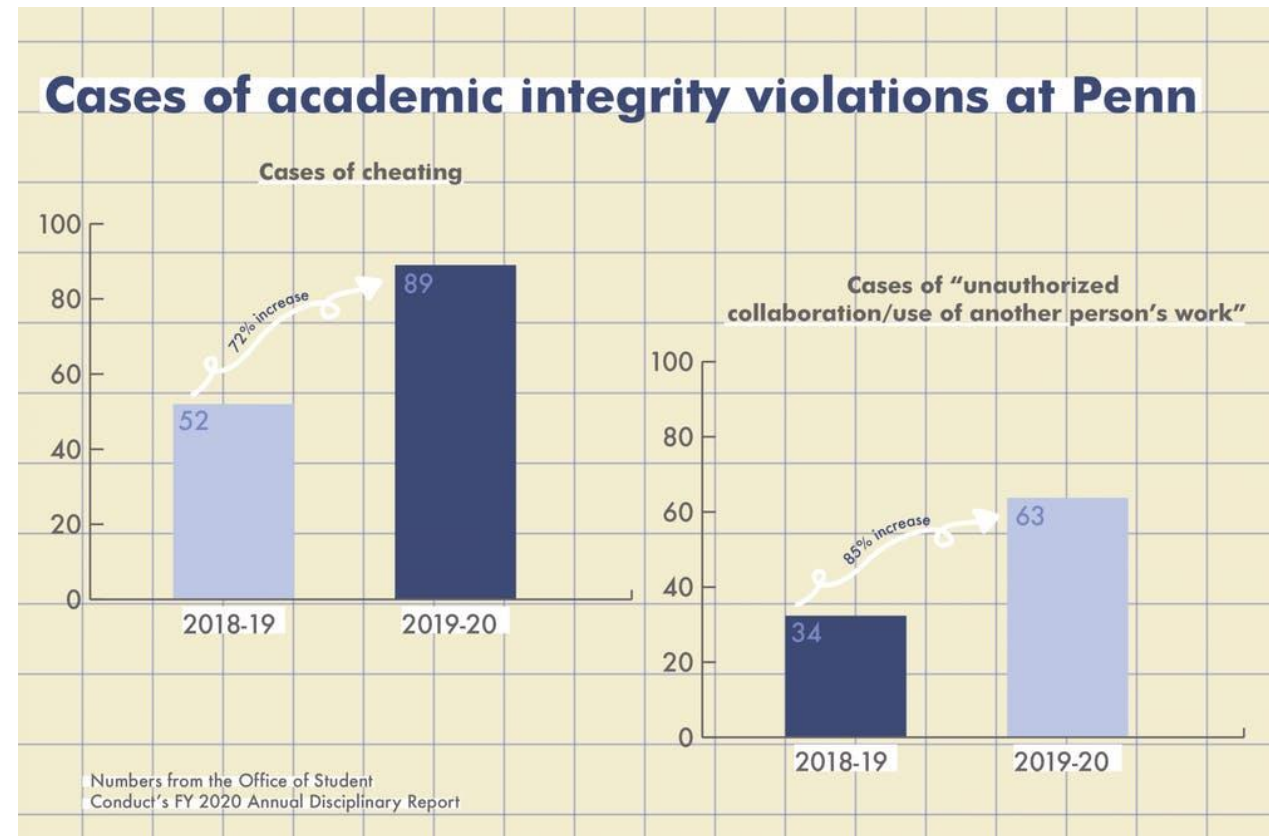
- Example: remote monitors some schools have hired to watch test-takers through their webcams — discovered by reviewing video recordings that this same person had taken tests for at least a dozen different students enrolled at seven universities across the country.

- Ninety-three percent of instructors think students are more likely to cheat online than in person,

Foe Cheating

- ProctorU, caught people cheating on fewer than 1 percent of the 340,000 exams it administered from January through March. During the height of remote testing, the company says, the number of exams it supervised jumped to 1.3 million from April through June, and the cheating rate rose above 8 percent.
- “We can only imagine what the rate of inappropriate testing activity is when no one is watching,” said Scott McFarland, CEO of ProctorU.

- Schools are unable or unwilling to pay for safeguards, according to faculty and testing experts.
 - Eg. U. of Ottawa tried to implement a exam security system and the student council objected saying “it was an invasion of



How to cheat

- Sending Screenshots to an Expert
- Screen mirroring/sharing is a way in which students can utilize more than one monitor while working
- scientific calculators are programmable. Students can store data and formulas and use them during online exams to help them score highly.
- recruit another person



- Proctoring software relies on the webcam to monitor the candidate's actions and activities that may signal cheating during an online exam.
- When the proctoring software attempts to pull a live feed from the candidate's webcam, the software intercepts it and provides a prerecorded feed from a "virtual" webcam. Software like [ManyCam](#) can be used for this purpose.
- This is an effective technical method because candidates can prerecord themselves taking the actual test and use a software like ManyCam to fool the proctoring software.

Foe The Digital Divide

- closure of classrooms has the biggest impact on students from underserved communities.
- They are more likely to have unreliable internet access, or a caregiver who is affected by the economic impacts of the pandemic.
- Their world has been turned upside down, and that, educators say, can make school fall down the priority list, especially for teenagers.
- National dropout numbers for this school year are yet to be released, but anecdotal evidence from across the country shows steep declines in attendance, a rising number of failing grades, and shrinking enrollment.
- educators warned that remote learning meant that students who had trouble getting online would struggle.

Foe

Have vs Have Nots

- The pandemic exacerbates social inequalities
- Dropout crisis among high school students worsens
- Schooling becomes a lower priority
- caregivers with front line jobs who may not be home to supervise the remote learning shift
- in places where the virus has hit harder
- homes where jobs have been lost
- Some students never showed up for class because their parents were essential workers who couldn't be around to help them get online.



Foe Age Isn't it OK for older students?

- I.e. Bimodal learning at U of O this fall
- In Gandsman's large introductory courses, the number of students who did not complete the course was far higher last year than anything he's seen before.
- "I've never seen students struggle as much as they did in the last year," he said. "Something about the in-person experience helps performance."
- Gandsman decided to volunteer because he feels in-person classes are the most rewarding experience for both the students and himself.
- Although some students have embraced virtual learning during the pandemic, others find it difficult to keep up, he said.
- Attendance drops off and if students miss assignments, there is a "snowball effect."

Friend & Foe

The Teachers Perspective

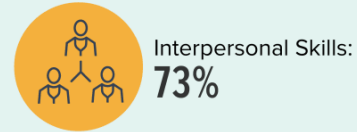
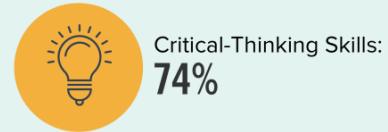
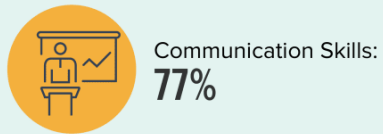
- for everyone's **health** and safety, online learning is the best option.
- many who are advocating for reopening have said that young people are not as affected by the virus as older people are, but that this statement doesn't take the health of staff, including teachers, paras, bus drivers, secretaries, and school nurses, into account. “
- COVID: Young kids most likely didn't even understand what was going on.
- “Kids, **emotionally**, have been affected by not being able to be around their peers and not being able to do their normal things,”
- “I'd much rather be in-person, but I realized and I appreciate it's the only responsible thing to do at this point,”

Foe “Soft” skills

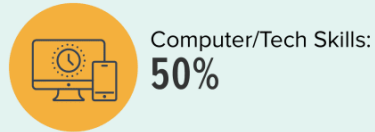
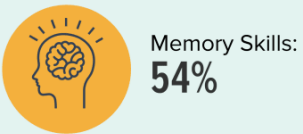
THE RISE OF AUTOMATION MEANS JOB CANDIDATES WILL NEED ‘UNIQUELY HUMAN’ SKILLS

As jobs become increasingly automated, employers are seeking workers with skills that machines can't replace.

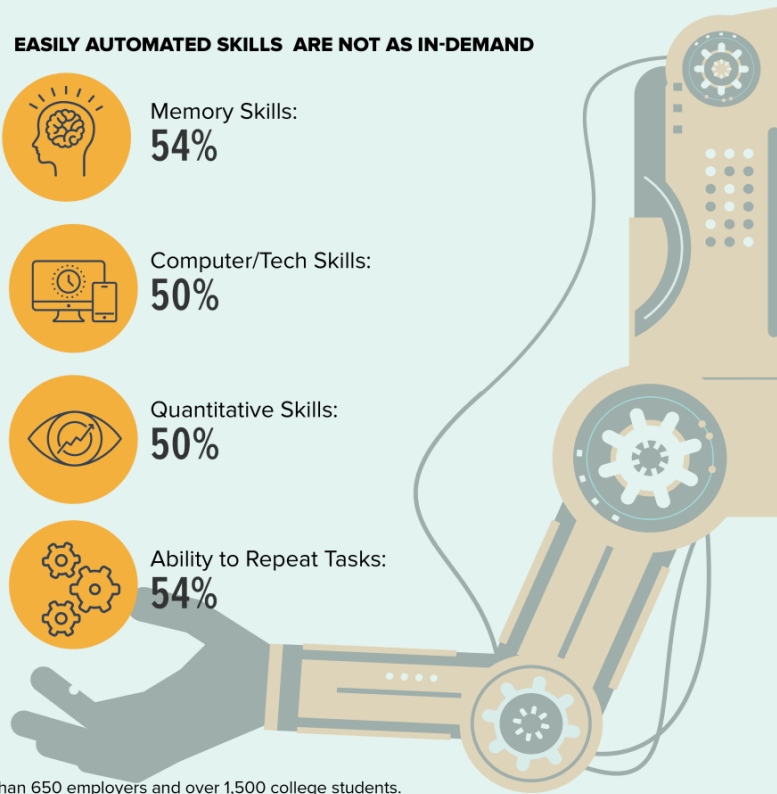
HUMAN SKILLS ARE IN DEMAND



EASILY AUTOMATED SKILLS ARE NOT AS IN-DEMAND



Percent of employers who say these skills are very important to gaining leadership positions at their organizations.



Source: Cengage/Morning Consult, a 2018 survey of more than 650 employers and over 1,500 college students.

- It seems college is graduating many 'book-smart' people with no real people skills or no real-world use of their knowledge skills,


- With computers and AI automation taking on work that is routine means thinking beyond what is obvious, cooperating, inspiring others, being persistent are essential



Education=Character

- Is the goal of classical education

- Developing character is the great work of human life which begins in the teenage years.
- We become what we WILL to become. Thus, the essential ingredient in each person growing into their true self, their character,
- is having adults around them to build up their will and guide them to develop the universal human qualities that
- transform human as animal into human as “angel”, in that, instinct no longer dominates, but ideals and visions of how much better the world can be
- when we work together to a common goal.



Marcus Aurelius

This is the mark of a perfect character - to pass through each day as though it were the last, without agitation, without torpor, and without pretense.

AZ QUOTES

Foe You are a Somebody. You matter.

- When kids feel anonymous,
 - that they do not belong,
 - that they have no value just because of who they are....
 - Really bad things happen ie. Gangs, drugs, and worse
- Online, no matter how hard you try, is impersonal.
 - When the family you came from is denounced and your tribal ways and rituals are pronounced backward, primitive, savage, you come to see yourself as less than human. That is hell on earth, that sense of unworthiness. That's what they inflicted on us.”
 - Indian Horse, R.Wagamese

Foe

Learning is Social, it's relational

- Story of my young dog learning from my old dog
- To learn you have to trust the person
- Trust takes time to build, so long term relationships are a HUGE boost to learning
- *how long does it take children to grow so accustomed to the quality of mind, the temperament, the mannerisms of a teacher that they feel happily anchored, understood, and secure?*



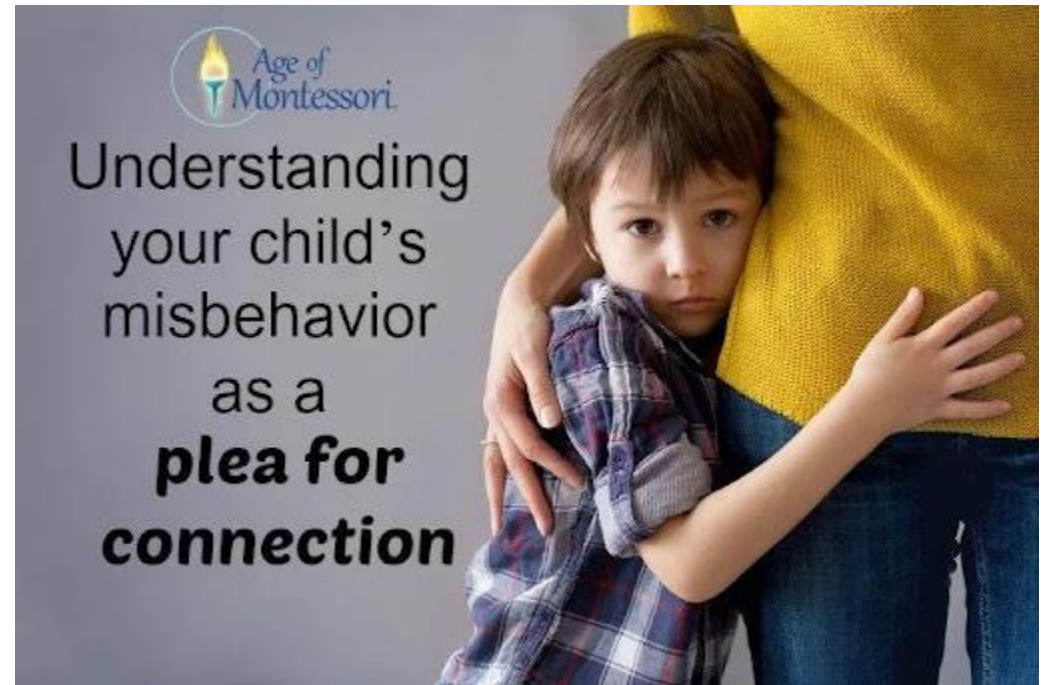
Foe Education is not about DATA

- Very Young kids learn by absorbing what is around them – it is PHYSICAL
- Elementary age kids learn by their emotion and mimicking those around them – it is social and emotional [think chimpanzee]



Foe To be Human is to be CONNECTED

- To be safe a child must be connected
- Physically when young, 4
- Emotionally when older, 8
- Intellectually later, 17
 - Ie. Truth, no hypocrisy
- Without this there is no learning beyond facts and regurgitation



Foe Connections – from 1999 – What happened?

- new research on the brain by neuroscientists is adding a new dimension to our knowledge about learning that reinforces our previously tentative conclusions from cognitive psychology.
- This research provides growing evidence that learning is about making connections—whether the connections are established by firing synapses in the brain,
- the "ah ha" experience of seeing the connection between two formerly isolated concepts,
- or the satisfaction of seeing the **connection between an abstraction and a "hands-on" concrete application.**
- colleges are experimenting with learning communities that call for making connections with the ideas and challenges of peers

Boredom, Motivation

- [more than 90%](#) of these would-be learners don't finish. Many don't even start the courses for which they are registered. And a lot of those who finish [don't take another one](#). [2013 data]



Seventy-one per cent of kids aged 10 to 17 surveyed by the Angus Reid Institute said that “bored**” is the emotion they’ve been feeling the most over the last few weeks. [2020, Ontario]**

The research also shows that, while 75 per cent of kids said they’re able to keep up with the online lessons, 60 per cent said they **felt unmotivated**

Foe

Do you trust Google?

- Kids consider a google search or a Facebook news feed “research”
- Over 40 percent of activity on the internet is fake
- less than 60% of traffic on the internet is human, Bots create it
- 67% of US adults say they’ve come across false information on social media.
- 35.5% of millennials read political news on Facebook.
- 56% of Facebook users can’t recognize fake news that aligns with their beliefs.

In conclusion – Foe?

- We are conducting a huge experiment where our children are the Guinea pigs
- Online learning has its place – in a limited way
 - for training,
 - for special situations, eg. for children how are bullied

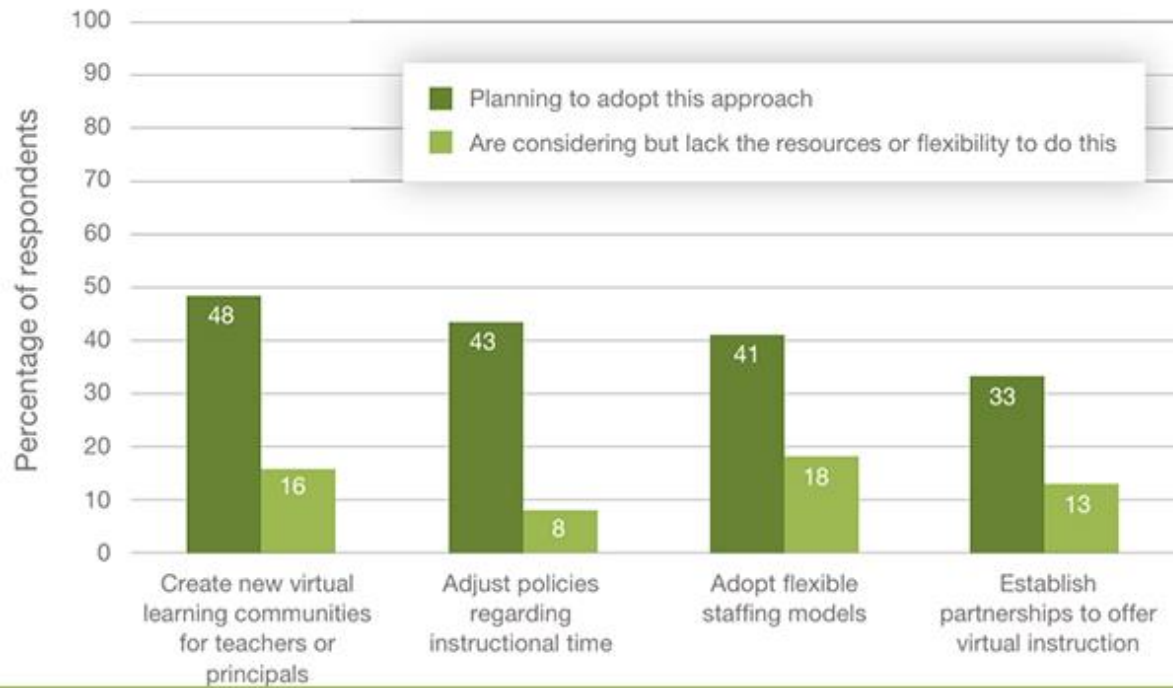


- Increasing digital divide
- Accelerating have vs have nots
- Is usually isolating
- Teaches the head only – not the heart and the body

AND FRIEND!

- Its' here to stay
- It will improve by becoming much more mobile, personal and social.

FIGURE 2
Top Five New Approaches Districts Say They Are Adopting in 2020–2021



**There are
NO STUPID
QUESTIONS**

STRUGGLE

the problem of making it 'easy' & "bite sized"

- let him struggle. Let him pull himself up and fall, however many times. Let him learn to balance himself with his own efforts. Besides learning how to stand, the child is developing and strengthening his will forces. Without any self-consciousness, he is learning that he can do things on his own. He knows, in the deepest possible ways, that he can meet and overcome the resistance of gravity and the limitations of his little body. And this knowledge, fully embodied in the young child, will apply to all things encountered throughout life. With repeated efforts of will, he can achieve great heights--two feet above the ground, yes!--and beyond! This is a fundamental lesson that the modern parent is often persuaded to circumvent. With wonderful intentions, we "help" them. How does the teenager respond to resistance and "failed" attempts?

