



EDUCATION FOUNDATION
OF ANAHEIM HILLS

EDTECH PREDICTIONS FOR 2021

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What a year!

The 2020 pandemic was like nothing else. For those of us that have been in the EdTech industry for quite some time, we remember the days of Race to The Top, the reissuing of IDEA, the No Child Left Behind Act, the release and implementation of the Common Core standards and, of course, standardized assessments with PARCC and SBAC.

In a matter of days in March of 2020, there were *1.6B new learners online, globally. Let that fact sink in for a moment.

Educators had to make the tough decision of closing schools, how to distribute food to our most vulnerable children, how to meet the needs of employee associations, and getting devices and the internet in the hands of millions.

It was scary, hectic and the future was uncertain. Everything we had known or were trained to do was off the table. We had to be adaptive and resilient in a time of an insane crisis.

Edtech is now at a tipping point. A crisis can often lead to innovation and our district administrators across the country found ways to navigate uncharted waters, lead with integrity, and provide the best they could with what they had.

After 10 months under our belt, we now have a good sense of what worked and what didn't. Thus, here is my annual list for K12 Edtech trends and predictions for the coming 2021 year:

1. Learning is no longer confined to brick and mortar locations. Learning is everywhere and location is no longer a barrier.
2. School schedules will continue to be reworked. Educators will provide options for parents and communities for in-person and hybrid with synchronous and asynchronous learning opportunities.
3. Access to online assessment and measurement will be the new norm.
4. We will move from one-shot summative constraints to ongoing formative measurements for continuous feedback and improvement over time
5. Students will now have more options and control over their own learning trajectory...as long as edtech vendors and educators continue to grow the movement around personalized learning. Creating a student agency in charting their own personalized path and ownership will create sustainable models, competition, and improved outcomes.

6. Students expect more and want their education experience to be relevant, relatable and fun! Our kids are digital natives and have been using technology since an early age. They are wired to create and build. We will see a rise in Project based learning, both virtually and in person.
7. Students by and large, are gamers, so the market will need to adapt to capture their attention. The increase in AR/VR/AI tools in the classroom will be demanded by our students.
8. On-demand tutors and extended learning opportunities will continue to rise.
9. The social and emotional needs of our students continue to rise. The trauma-induced experiences and emotions through this pandemic require practitioners to look at ways to reduce trauma, increase self-care and find coping mechanisms and tools to combat this huge need.
10. The pandemic has exacerbated structural inequities and has widened the gaps. Multiple supports and assets will need to be in place to ensure that every student, regardless of zip code, has access to a high quality learning experience.
11. The sphere of influence in one's education has grown to include more voice from parents, board members, union representatives, school district leaders, school leaders and learning coaches.
12. There will be continued pressure and competition from other education entities and options such as homeschool, private, and parochial schools. Public schools must meet the uncertainties ahead, provide options and pathways for supports.

Education technology is here to stay and it's only going to grow from here.

I'm committed to driving this important work forward, for the kids! That's all that matters! Are we as educators and edtech vendors doing our very best every day to help kids! I challenge you this year, to never lose sight of why you do, the work you do!

Will you join me?

What are your thoughts below?

Check out my other articles on this topic below:

EdTech is disrupting [#education](#) as we know it.

www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:6724763085984276480

What does EdTech look like post-pandemic?

www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:6726908317110812672

2.1 million. That's how many EdTech apps were available for download in 2018. (source: statista.com. www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:6719712574943961088)

*Source: "Dawn of the Age of Digital Learning, An Acceleration of Trends that have been building for years." Written by Michael Moe and Vignesh Rajenran

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Danielle Alcaraz has helped to transform school districts with the best interactive educational experiences for ALL students. With unwavering commitment, attention to detail and passion, Danielle's strategies have produced stellar results within these districts, preparing students for college and career. In parallel with those results, she guides organizations to truly make a measurable impact in the education technology space. Ms. Alcaraz currently is a board member with the Education Foundation of Anaheim Hills and is President and CEO of Women in Ed Tech Leadership-an organization that empowers, promote and deepen the connections in the industry.

Danielle has excelled in a variety of senior strategic sales and business development roles with Amplify, Scantron Corp., Campus Management, and Discovery Education and most currently with DreamBox Learning.