

Jewish Day School Affordability Knowledge Center A Partnership of PEJE and the OU

April 2013
Nisan 5773

“ACCORDING TO HIS WAY”: BLENDED LEARNING

A white paper about how Jewish day schools are using blended learning

By Charles Cohen



Orthodox Union (OU)

The Orthodox Union is the largest Orthodox Jewish umbrella organization in the United States, representing nearly 1,000 congregations. Through its many programs, the OU seeks to strengthen our Jewish community. Today, a prime focus of these efforts is supporting Jewish day schools and the families who use them through political advocacy. The Affordability Knowledge Center is another means through which the OU seeks to achieve this goal in proud partnership with PEJE.

Partnership For Excellence in Jewish Education (PEJE)

PEJE believes that day schools are essential for fostering an engaged Jewish people for an enduring future. With our deep knowledge of and relationships with schools, communities, and the field, we increase financial sustainability and affordability in our educational institutions—for the 21st century and beyond. PEJE is proud to partner with the OU on the Affordability Knowledge Center.

Jewish Day School Affordability Knowledge Center

To create a hub for collecting, analyzing, and disseminating information about day school affordability, the OU and PEJE jointly established the new Jewish Day School Affordability Knowledge Center. Through the Center, strategies will be shared and analyzed to help day schools and their stakeholders learn from each other. Information will be shared online and through white papers that examine affordability initiatives being implemented in various communities.

Charles Cohen

Charles Cohen manages the Jewish Day School Affordability Knowledge Center. A strategic planner with experience building relationships between and among day schools, synagogues, and central education agencies, Cohen served as Planning Manager for Jewish Continuity at the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh, where he worked with local day schools on the “Free Tuition for Transfer Students” program.

חנך לנער, על-פי דרכו — גם כי-יזקין, לא-יסור ממנה.

"Train a child according to his way, and even when he is old, he will not depart from it."

Proverbs 22:6

"[A] child should be educated 'according to his way': for everyone has his own mental ability, talents and propensities, which can be recognized and should be respected. Then his education will be a lasting one. Any training that goes against a pupil's nature will not be longlasting."

Rabbi Meir Leib Wisser (Malbim)

Introduction

Jewish day schools are central to an enduring Jewish future. No other Jewish experience affects lasting Jewish identity more than Jewish day school education.¹ However, today's day school parents are finding it less and less affordable. That is why so much effort and attention is spent on finding ways to help families pay for day school education. Communities and schools are looking to well-established tactics as well as cutting-edge strategies to address this critical challenge.

To create a hub for collecting, analyzing, and disseminating information about day school affordability, the OU and PEJE jointly established the Jewish Day School Affordability Knowledge Center. Through the Center, strategies are shared and analyzed to help day schools and their stakeholders learn from each other. Information is shared online and through White Papers that examine affordability initiatives being implemented in various communities.

The White Papers—the third of which is printed here—have two goals. The first is to provide a snapshot of affordability strategies as they exist today, laying out their successes and challenges. Based on interviews, academic research, and other data, these documents will help the field think more effectively about what it takes to meet the ongoing challenge of providing an excellent, affordable Jewish day school education to the next generation of committed Jewish leaders.

The second goal is to analyze each strategy so you can learn from communities that have implemented the project. That knowledge will help you decide whether or not to take on the initiative, help you avoid obstacles, and show potential supporters that a given approach can achieve desired outcomes.

¹ Cohen, S. & Kotler-Berkowitz, L., "The Impact of Childhood Jewish Education on Adults' Jewish Identity: Schooling, Israel Travel, Camping and Youth Groups," *United Jewish Communities* (July 2004).

Blended Learning

What is blended learning?

The Innosight Institute defines blended learning as “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.”² Public and non-Jewish independent schools have been incorporating online instruction since the early 2000s, while the first Jewish day school built wholly on a blended learning model opened in 2011.³

This White Paper examines two different blended learning models: new blended learning schools, whose curricula and class structure are grounded in blended learning (“Model 1”); and traditional schools implementing blended learning in specific courses (“Model 2”).⁴

SCHOOLS INTERVIEWED FOR THE WHITE PAPER

MODEL 1

The Binah School
 The Pre-Collegiate Learning Center of New Jersey
 Tiferet Academy*
 Westchester Torah Academy
 Yeshiva High Tech
 Yeshivat He'Atid

MODEL 2

Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School
 Chicagoland Jewish High School
 The Epstein School: Solomon Schechter School of Atlanta
 Yeshivat Noam

* After research for the White Paper was completed, it was announced that Tiferet Academy would merge with Hebrew Academy of Long Beach in September 2013, rather than open as a Model 1 school.

² Staker & Horn, “Classifying K-12 Blended Learning,” Innosight Institute (2012). The Innosight Institute is a think tank that has done extensive research on blended learning and its educational and financial impact on public and independent schools. See Appendix A for a breakdown of different blended learning models. There are excellent resources, both within the Jewish day school world and beyond, about the educational theory behind blended learning and its benefits. See, e.g. Innosight Institute, *Digital Learning Network*, *Open Day School*, *Affordable Jewish Education*, *iNACOL*, and the *Michael & Susan Dell Foundation*.

³ See Appendix B for more information on the blended learning schools and for information about schools interviewed for the White Paper using blended learning in their classrooms.

⁴ Blended learning is just one example of an educational intervention that can impact affordability. The same lessons can guide your school as it considers other strategies, such as project-based learning, or shifting to a paperless classroom.

What does blended learning have to do with affordability?

Blended learning may help your school address affordability in two ways: (1) reducing the actual cost of the education; and (2) increasing the quality and impact of the education. Model 1 schools arose in response to the challenge of day school affordability. These schools have garnered a lot of attention because their tuitions—from \$5,000 to \$10,000—are dramatically lower than Model 2 day schools, whose tuition can exceed \$25,000. As explained below, Model 1 schools have a smaller faculty and administration, which may allow them to charge less tuition.

Parent perception about the value of the education they are buying is another factor in day school affordability. Perceived value “is the only factor with a significant relationship to enrollment.”⁵ A recent analysis of 22,000 parents’ responses to the Jewish Day School Parent Survey™ revealed that regardless of tuition, parents are most likely to recommend their child’s school if it “supports the Jewish development that the parents desire for their child, academically prepares the child for high school or college, and responds to parent concerns about the child or school.”⁶ If blended learning improves the degree to which graduates are academically prepared for their next educational level and helps a school better respond to parental concerns, current parents might be more likely to keep their children in the school and recommend the school to others. This positive word-of-mouth promotion, more effective than other marketing strategies, can lead to increased enrollment because it may attract new families who might not otherwise have considered enrolling their children in Jewish day school.

It is not yet clear whether blended learning—in Model 1 or Model 2 schools—will be able to impact affordability in a substantial way through either lowering costs or improving education. Indeed, the consensus in both the Jewish and broader educational fields, from teachers and administrators, is that more research is needed to fully evaluate the costs and benefits of blended learning.⁷

Still, a review of current attempts to lower day school costs and improve academic quality through blended learning yields some useful guidelines. The examples set by existing programs show us that **focusing on educational outcomes, taking advantage of blended learning’s capacity for generating data, considering the cost to your school and families, and engaging stakeholders through a common vision and unified effort** are all essential components to implement blended learning successfully in your school.

⁵ Held, “*Learning from Parent Voices: How to Turn Positive Perception into Enrollment Growth*,” *PEJE and Measuring Success* (2013).

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ See, e.g., Means, et al. “*Evaluation of Evidence-Based Practices in Online Learning*,” *US Department of Education* (September 2010); Battaglino, et al. “*The Cost of Online Learning*,” *Thomas B. Fordham Institute* (April 2012); Pittinsky, “*The Benefits and Limitations of Blended Learning*,” *Techrav.blogspot.com* (January 2013).

Focus on educational outcomes

“We wanted to empower learners using the tools that, as digital natives, they were most comfortable with. Cost was never a consideration.”—*Stan Beiner, Head of School, The Epstein School: Solomon Schechter School of Atlanta*

“We’re creating a personalized learning experience. All other decisions flow from that goal.”
—*Rabbi Netanel Gralla, Yeshivat He’Atid*

According to a recent study by The AVI CHAI Foundation, schools cite “individualization, whether for remediation or challenge, and the opportunity to meet all students’ needs as the overwhelming value of their current online offerings.”⁸ Blended learning makes individualization and differentiation easier; indeed, *Disrupting Class*⁹, one of the foundational texts of the blended learning movement, is premised on the theory that blended learning is the quickest way to achieve student-centric, personalized education. Administrators at both Model 1 and Model 2 schools emphasize the educational benefits of blended learning rather than the potential or actual cost savings.

Model 1 schools emphasize educational opportunities

The founders of Yeshiva High Tech in Los Angeles, for example, want to create “a home school in a bricks and mortar setting.” The Pre-Collegiate Learning Center of New Jersey (PCLC) provides each student with an individual team of coaches and mentors to tailor a distinctive academic curriculum based on the student’s individual interests and goals.

MODEL 2 SCHOOLS MEET STUDENT NEEDS BY ADDING BLENDED LEARNING

Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School in Rockville, Maryland, has infused classroom instruction with online resources for a few years. In 2012, the institution shifted its entire upper school to a BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) model, which has allowed the use of blended learning in 90% of classes. Ginger Thornton, Director of Instructional Technology, says the school made the switch because “blended learning gives teachers more time to develop close relationships with their students, which is something on which we pride ourselves.”

In the first year of the blended learning pilot, there have not been many opportunities to assess whether it has improved educational outcomes. But Thornton says that students are more likely to submit homework on time, and, when surveyed, students have said that the online tools have made them more organized and more comfortable with the material they learn in class.

⁸ Deeter, “Online Learning State of the Field Survey,” *The AVI CHAI Foundation* (December 2012).

⁹ *Disrupting Class: How Disruptive Innovation Will Change the Way the World Learns*, McGraw-Hill (2010).

Rabbi Gralla of New Jersey's Yeshivat He'Atid wants to create "an environment of experience learning" to build 21st century skills.¹⁰ To do so in a Model 2 school would have taken years, as the culture gradually changed and stakeholders understood and approved the new model. By leading a new school, though, Rabbi Gralla could create the culture long before any students were enrolled.

Many day schools—among them both Model 1 and Model 2 schools—are looking to their peers to help effectively achieve their educational goals through blended learning. The 34 schools in the DigitalJLearning Network¹¹ all implement online and blended learning solutions that meet their schools' particular needs, such as: remediation, enrichment, expanding course offerings for more flexible scheduling, and individualizing instruction for all learners. The Open Day School project is another resource that allows Jewish educators to collaborate with schools "to create open-source Judaic courseware for fully online and blended courses and to help schools build their capacity to implement online/blended learning."¹² Through such networks, schools learn from each other to reach their blended learning goals. By focusing on educational outcomes, schools are already seeing strong positive responses from parents, teachers, and students.

Take advantage of blended learning's capacity for generating data

It is the data that allows teachers to make informed decisions when personalizing the learning for their students."—*Dr. Eliezer Jones, Educational Technology Specialist at Yeshiva University's Institute for University-School Partnership*

Blended learning provides data about students that can be used for evaluating student impact and for communicating the platform's success to stakeholders: parents, board members, and funders. It also can help create a data-informed mindset that spreads to other areas like financial oversight.

Using data to evaluate blended learning's impact on students

Online courses and tools provide more useful data to teachers than they could get from traditional classwork. Dr. Jones says that the highly specific, granular data a teacher can access through blended learning are critical to differentiation. Without such timely, student-specific, and assignment-specific data, a teacher in a traditional classroom may not be able to use her time as efficiently because she won't know as precisely where to focus her attention for either individual students or the entire class.

Constant evaluation is not unique to blended learning schools or courses. But through blended learning, teachers are able to collect and analyze more data faster.

¹⁰ *The Partnership for 21st Century Skills lists creativity, innovation, critical thinking problem solving, communication and collaboration as essential 21st century skills.*

¹¹ *DigitalJLearning Network is a collaborative program of The AVI CHAI Foundation, the Jewish Education Project, and the Jewish Education Service of North America (JESNA).*

¹² *Open Day School is a project of Yeshiva University's Institute for Day School–University Partnership.*

Model 1 school proponents believe their model not only matches, but may even exceed the educational quality in traditional schools. This is Khan Academy founder Salman Khan's belief. He says that traditional schools focus on the wrong metric. Emphasizing the student: faculty ratio compels schools to constantly increase faculty. If schools used the "student-to-valuable-human-time-with-the-teacher ratio,"¹³ they could reduce faculty size and still improve education. At Yeshivat He'Atid, for example, students spend 40 minutes of every 80-minute rotation in a small instruction group that provides much closer engagement between teachers and students. According to Rabbi Gralla, this new metric more accurately measures the benefit teachers provide their students.

USING DATA TO ASSESS STUDENT PROGRESS

Yeshivat Noam in Paramus, New Jersey, has been able to better personalize its sixth-grade curriculum, and use class time more efficiently, because of the data generated through the online portion of the class. Through a pilot program in sixth grade, a student watches a *gemara* video for homework on the iPad he received at the beginning of the year. He fills out a quiz as soon as he arrives at class. Because of the quiz, the teacher sees how each student answered every question and turns that information around for use during that very same class period. Students are grouped based on their incorrect answers so the teacher can provide direct instruction relating to that material.

Using data to communicate the success of your blended learning effort to stakeholders

Schools are taking the focus on data in their classrooms and spreading it throughout the school. Yeshiva High Tech has incorporated best practices in budgeting and financial planning by creating a five-year budget projection. Head of School Rebecca Coen says that its budget plan allows school leadership to think strategically about expansion and whether to reallocate unspent revenue. By regularly measuring progress against its longer-term plan, Yeshiva High Tech can ensure it remains financially responsible until enrollment is high enough to make the school sustainable.

As a pilot effort (either as a course or an entire school), your school should regularly survey stakeholders about their experience with the new model: how it benefits/detracts from their work, whether students feel more motivated to learn, if parents understand how it benefits their children, etc. That data is just as critical as the information teachers receive about student progress in determining whether to continue investing in blended learning.

¹³ Khan, "Let Us Use Video to Reinvent Education," TED (2011).

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Here are some more examples of how your school can use the data generated by blended learning to monitor its progress and communicate that success to your stakeholders.

Parents: Students spend more time in school than they do with their parents. As such, parents must feel that they can rely on teachers and administrators to care for and educate their children. A school that was “just like the school I went to” can be a comforting place for parents, even if it may not be the best setting for today’s learner. Data harvested through blended learning can help parents understand its impact on their children and turn a potentially skeptical group of stakeholders into enthusiastic advocates.

Board: As with any new project, your board should work with your head of school to set metrics for your blended learning effort. The data generated by blended learning’s online component will provide your lay leadership with the information it needs to regularly track the progress of the effort, determine whether it meets your school’s needs, and understand its resource requirements.

Funders: Donors who see the benefits to students, and the potential for a more efficient financial and educational model, will understand the many ways blended learning can impact your school. That informed perspective may encourage them to continue supporting your blended learning effort. Implementing a cutting-edge educational model also can attract new donors who might not otherwise invest in your school.

HOW AN INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGICAL EVOLUTION PROVIDED PARENTS WITH ESSENTIAL DATA

Implementing blended learning has not been a one-step process for The Epstein School. It was part of a systemic transition to a more technology-rich environment. Head of School Stan Beiner says that the school is now beginning to use data to track student performance and ensure that software and programs are effective educational tools. Based on the school’s experience during its first year of implementation, it is hiring a specialist to focus on this area.

Beiner says that parents are very pleased with the model and actually have pushed for more blended learning. Now that parents are on board, it is much easier for the school to incorporate new blended learning offerings. Conversations about gaming, online learning, and furnishing that support this model now are seen as part of the innovative process.

Consider the cost to your school and families

To accommodate the additional devices we had to upgrade our facility, and hire a director and assistant director of technology.”—*Rabbi Tavi Koslowe, Assistant Principal, Judaic Studies, Middle School, Yeshivat Noam*

In either model school, costs associated with blended learning are similar to any new technology-based educational enhancement. These include: purchasing hardware and software (either borne by the school, or passed on to parents as increased tuition or a BYOD program); training for teachers to use the new tools; outside experts to consult on the transition; and time for evaluating the impact of the project.

There are two cost factors to consider: (1) What expenses are involved in implementing blended learning? and (2) Will your school save any money by investing in this technology?

Model 2: Adding blended learning to existing schools

A recent study that focused on existing public schools that moved to a blended learning platform resulted in an interesting conclusion. Blended learning, the study revealed, can save as much as \$1,100 per student.¹⁴

This study actually may understate the potential savings for Jewish day schools. First, the study assumes that blended learning schools are “unlikely to experience any cost savings in terms of reduced administrative expenses.”¹⁵ The Model 1 school administrators interviewed for this paper cite smaller administrations as one of the clearest cost-saving opportunities that Model 1 schools offer. Second, the study did not estimate much cost savings in student-support services. Model 2 schools already have been able to save money in that area: Yeshivat Noam, for example, has been able to spend less on remediation because advanced and struggling students now can be better supported through in-class instruction.

In the short term, blended learning courses often can lead to increased costs. Stan Beiner, Head of The Epstein School, says that “cost is not a consideration” when his staff think about technology and blended learning. “Technology is just a tool for providing better education.” The Epstein School avoided some of those costs by requiring students to purchase their own devices, so long as the computers, tablets, or laptops met certain technical specifications. At the same time, though, Epstein had to hire additional technical support staff and invest in more professional development to train its teachers on how to use blended learning to maximize the experience for students. And parents still had to pay for the new devices. Despite the added costs, parents so far have been very supportive of the new model.

¹⁴ Battaglino, et al. “The Cost of Online Learning,” Thomas B. Fordham Institute (April 2012).

¹⁵ *Id.*

A LOW-COST BLENDED LEARNING PILOT

At Chicagoland Jewish High School (CJHS), Academic Dean Bruce Scher says that “every program that benefits student learning begins with teachers.” So when the music teacher wanted to implement a new practice model for the jazz band, Scher was able to find the \$34 per student it took to purchase a new software program. The program allowed students to practice at home, accompanied on the computer by the same instruments they would hear when playing with the full band. These practices also were recorded, so the teacher could monitor each student’s progress and would know exactly what to cover at the next class. Students have told Scher how much more they enjoy the new model, and the teacher has seen substantial improvement in student performance since the program was implemented.

CJHS found an inexpensive way of implementing blended learning. This early success has shown the board some of blended learning’s potential, and has encouraged CJHS to consider infusing more resources into the model.

Model 1: Establishing new blended learning schools

According to Mark Nordlicht and Jeff Kiderman at the Affordable Jewish Education Project, AJE funds Model 1 schools because “[o]ur current yeshiva day school network leaves the vast majority of families priced out of yeshiva tuition, or left with little remaining income for savings or for worthy charities.”¹⁶

AJE, which has helped found Tiferet Academy, Westchester Torah Academy, and Yeshivat He’Atid, was established for the express purpose of reducing Jewish day school tuition, and it identified blended learning as the most effective model for providing an excellent education at a lower cost. Yeshiva High Tech and PCLC also were created to provide a low-cost, high-quality day school education. There is some data to suggest (and funders are betting heavily on the theory) that blended learning schools are fundamentally less expensive than traditional schools due to the need for fewer faculty, administrators, textbooks, and out-of-class support services.

All told, Jeff Kiderman says that AJE considers several factors when opening

a new school: cost of tuition; facility rentals; building capacity and maintenance; administrative staffing structure; teacher salaries; cost of consulting services; anticipated number of classes and enrollments; and hardware and software. These initial costs may run from \$300,000 to \$500,000.

¹⁶ Nordlicht & Kiderman, “Embracing Innovation In Yeshiva Education,” *The Jewish Week* (December 24, 2012).

Many of these expenses would exist in any new school, and many will become part of the ongoing annual budget. The unique investment is in the size of the staff, the expertise of the consultants, and the immediate investment in technology. Tuition is expected to cover 100% of the operating budget, while schools still have to fundraise to cover any financial aid they offer. Because of the differences in each of the categories listed above, each Model 1 school has a different sustainability level, but all within the range of 200 to 250 students.¹⁷

Are the costs and cost savings in Models 1 and 2 truly different?

There are two differences between Model 1 and 2 schools. The first is how transition-to-blended-learning costs will be covered over the time it takes to reach sustainability: Model 1 schools are receiving institutional funding while they attempt to increase enrollment to reach their breakeven points, while Model 2 schools must bear the brunt of the expenses through their current budgets even as they change their culture class by class.

The second difference is the amount of time a school might need to cut costs using blended learning. While a Model 2 school, for example, also could move to a model with fewer faculty, as Dr. Jones says, "it is easier to start a new school and hire a smaller number of faculty than it is for an existing school to lay off a substantial percentage of its teachers." This is particularly true if the teachers have been part of the school and its community for years or even decades.

Clearly, blended learning implementation costs and cost savings can vary substantially, and it will take time to see which costs or cost savings are sustainable. Again, more research into the effect of blended learning on day schools will provide a more focused picture of its impact.

¹⁷ *Because only a few blended learning schools have opened so far (as of March 2013), actual cost for these expenses is very case-specific. The variation in costs also accounts for the range of breakeven enrollments. As these schools mature and more schools open or switch to a blended learning model, we may see more standardization.*

Engage stakeholders through a common vision and unified effort

Teachers are driving the evolution [to blended learning], because without their buy-in, it becomes an uphill battle.”—Bruce Scher, *Academic Dean, Chicagoland Jewish High School*

It is one thing to add a smart board to a traditional class or take computers from a central lab and put them in every classroom. But changing an educational model and adjusting the very way teachers interact with their students is a massive undertaking. Both Model 1 and Model 2 schools have had to **engage stakeholders, particularly teachers, through a common vision and unified effort**, either to help build an entirely new school or to get them to accept a sea change in a venerable institution.

EMPOWERING TEACHERS WITH BLENDED LEARNING

In 2010, Michal Oshman, co-director of The Binah School, convened a team of like-minded educators from local high schools and universities to craft a 24-week pilot program with after-school courses in Judaic studies, group process and literature, math, service learning, and design. The pilot launched that year, and the feedback from teachers, students, and parents was overwhelmingly positive. That experience encouraged Oshman to begin the process to open a new day school and recruit students. The Binah School opened in 2012 with 10 students and expects to double enrollment to 20 students in 2013.

The Binah School focuses on building a team-oriented culture at every level, including board, faculty, and even students in all aspects of the educational process. This is reflected in its administrators—who are all part-time and often teach classes—as well as its pedagogical approach, in which students of different ages work together in multiple subjects. Oshman says that teachers are energized by the opportunity to differentiate instruction and provide input into the school’s administration. While some of this is necessary due to the small enrollment, Oshman says that even at its intended capacity of 60 students, the school still will integrate students across grades to ensure that relationships throughout the school remain close and teachers can better personalize their instruction.

What don't we know?

One of the biggest challenges in evaluating blended learning schools and courses is their newness. Even non-Jewish schools implementing these models have only been doing so for a few years. In early assessments, those schools have shown strong positive results in early assessments: For example, the KIPP: Empower Academy increased the number of students reading at "proficient" or "advanced" levels from 36% to 96% in a single year.¹⁸ However, there has been no opportunity for longitudinal evaluation because the model hasn't existed for very long.

It is also unclear what the long-term impact will be on teachers. So far, blended learning schools report that their teachers are very happy with the new model, despite larger classes. Will that positivity last over several years? The blended learning schools, with their rotational, project-based models, seem to be set up to combat the challenges a larger class presents, but only if teachers are well-trained and supported throughout the process. Will the schools continue providing enough support as staff inevitably turns over and the excitement of being part of a new school fades?

Finally, can blended learning help a school develop a student's Jewish identity? As noted earlier in this paper, surveys of 22,000 day school parents demonstrate that the primary reason parents recommend their child's Jewish day school to other parents is that the school supports the Jewish development they desire for their child.¹⁹ Will the rabbi-pupil relationship be affected by blended learning's reliance on technology? Will blended learning impede efforts to convey *hashkafah* (religious belief system or outlook) or inculcate *middot* (Jewish virtues)? If blended learning can make it easier to support Jewish identity development, it may be a powerful tool for building parent satisfaction and potentially enrollment.

Jeff Kiderman is regularly asked about the impact of blended learning on Jewish identity. His response is to explore to how Jewish identity formation is being measured in traditional schools. "What characteristic of traditional schools results in strong Jewish identity? The immersion in Jewish life? Being surrounded by Jewish peers? Positive Jewish role models? Excellent teachers? In terms of a research-based comparison, I don't think we have enough information on Jewish identity building in traditional schools at this point to be able to properly compare them to blended learning schools. But I can state unequivocally that all of those elements are critical components of our blended learning day schools as well."

¹⁸ Bernatek, et al. "Blended Learning in Practice: Case Studies from Leading Schools featuring KIPP: Empower Academy," Michael & Susan Dell Foundation (September 2012).

¹⁹ Held, "Learning from Parent Voices: How to Turn Positive Perception into Enrollment Growth," PEJE and Measuring Success (2013).

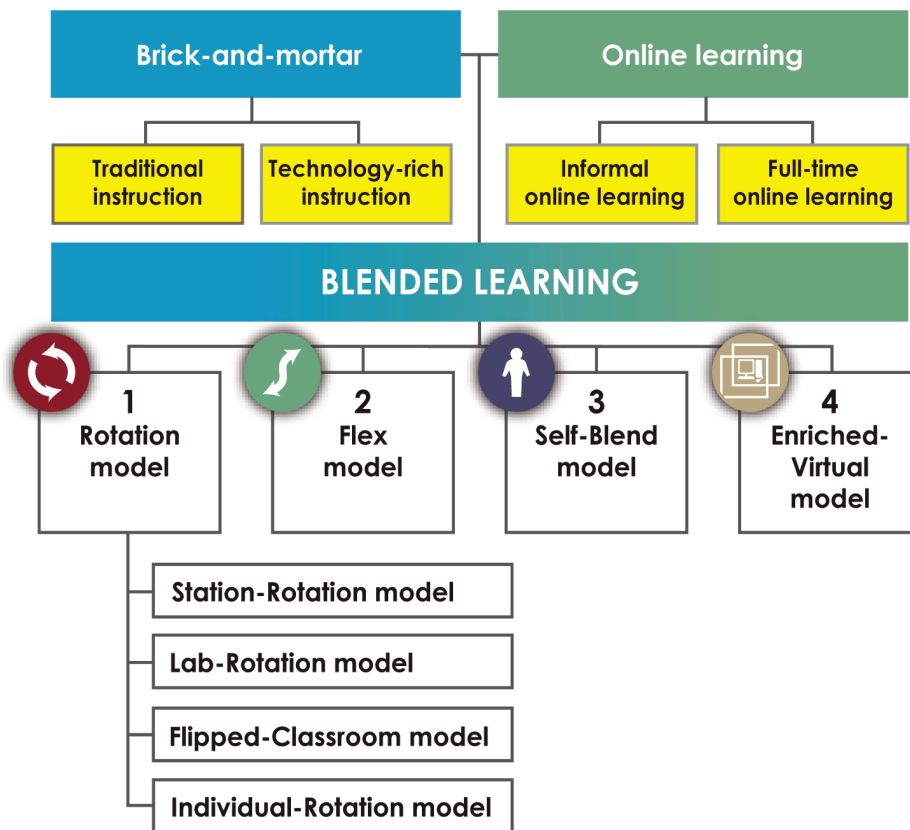
Summary

- **Focus on educational outcomes.** In the short term, your school probably will not be able to save money by implementing blended learning. But if it can improve the educational quality, parents may be more inclined to take a risk on a new school or let their children be part of an experimental classroom in a traditional school.
- **Take advantage of blended learning's capacity for generating data.** With quicker access to more student data, a blended learning environment can allow teachers to better differentiate their instruction and demonstrate student progress to parents, donors, and other stakeholders.
- **Consider the cost of blended learning to your school and your families.** Professional development, facility upgrades, and new staff may all be necessary to implement blended learning. Cost savings may only appear after a few years of running the new model.
- **Engage your stakeholders through a common vision and unified effort.** If your board, teachers, and parents are not supportive, no number of tablets or laptops will allow your blended learning effort to succeed.
- **Blended learning is very new.** Blended learning provides a lot of data on which to evaluate its educational outputs, but it has not been in use long enough to enable the field to measure long-term outcomes, particularly in building Jewish identity and maintaining low costs. Schools should be vigilant about tracking their graduates' progress and make sure to highlight successes to parents and donors.

Blended learning is a disruptive innovation in education and particularly so in the Jewish day school world. It is also just one example of how pedagogical tools can be used to address affordability. With a clear plan, constant evaluation, and effective communication, your school can determine whether blended learning will more effectively educate its students and, perhaps, lower costs.

Appendix A

The Innosight Institute lays out the categories for blended learning models:²¹



²¹ Staker & Horn, "Classifying K-12 Blended Learning," Innosight Institute (2012).

Appendix B

MODEL 1 SCHOOLS – New schools whose curricula and class structure are grounded in blended learning

Name	Contact	Type	Students	Ratios	Goals
The Binah School Sharon, MA	Michal Oshman Rina Hoffman Co-Directors MOshman@thebinahschool.org RHoffman@thebinahschool.org (781) 806-0460	Middle & High school (Grades 7-12)	10	Student: Faculty 2:1* Student: Admin. 3:1*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project-based approach to Torah education Address multiple ways students learn Add experiential education to formal school setting
The Pre-Collegiate Learning Center of New Jersey East Brunswick, NJ	Lauren Arieve Gellman, Director director@pclcnj.com (732) 387-2693	High school (9-12)	20	Student: Faculty 1:1** Student: Admin. 4:1**	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher is a facilitator/mentor, not an instructor
Tiferet Academy***	Rabbi Avraham Sacks Head of School RabbiSacks@tiferet.org (516) 515-0219	Elementary (opening fall 2013)		Student: Faculty TBD Student: Admin. TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher is a facilitator/mentor, not an instructor Address multiple ways students learn
Westchester Torah Academy Westchester, NY	Rabbi Rami Strosberg Head of School RStrosberg@WestchesterTA.org	Elementary (opening fall 2013)	TBD	Student: Faculty TBD Student: Admin. TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create personalized learning experience Differentiation for purposes of student engagement Create environment of experiencing learning
Yeshiva High Tech Los Angeles, CA	Rebecca Coen, Head of School RCoen@YeshivaHighTech.org (310) 556-0663	High school (9-12)	57	Student: Faculty 11:1** Student: Admin. 29:1**	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a brick-and-mortar home school Teacher is a facilitator/mentor, not an instructor Differentiation for purposes of student engagement
Yeshivat He'Atid Bergenfield, NJ	Rabbi Netanel Gralla Head of School RabbiGralla@yeshivatheatid.org (201)374-2272	Elementary (PreK-2)	116	Student: Faculty 8:1 Student: Admin. 39:1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create personalized learning experience Differentiation for purposes of student engagement Create environment of experiencing learning

* All 8 teachers at The Binah School are part time; 3 also act as administrators.

** All but one of PCLC teachers and faculty are part-time.

*** After research for the White Paper was complete it was announced that Tiferet Academy would merge with Hebrew Academy of Long Beach in September 2013, rather than open as a Model 1 school.

MODEL 2 SCHOOLS – *Traditional schools implementing blended learning in specific courses*

Name	Contact	Type	Students	Ratios	Goals
Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School Rockville, MD	Ginger Thornton Director of Instructional Technology GThornton@cesjds.org (301) 692-4960	K-12	1,300	Student: Faculty 9:1 Student: Admin. 60:1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide students tools to access information in class and real world ▪ Use technology to strengthen teacher-student relationship
Chicagoland Jewish High School Chicago, IL	Bruce Scher Academic Dean BScher@cjhs.org (847) 470-6700	High school	162	Student: Faculty 14:1 Student: Admin. 41:1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Differentiation for purposes of student engagement ▪ Provide teachers with more tools for active learning
The Epstein School: Solomon Schechter School of Atlanta Atlanta, GA	Stan Beiner Head of School SBeiner@epsteinatlanta.org (404) 250-5600	Preschool- 8th grade	536	Student: Faculty 8:1 Student: Admin. 33:1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide students tools to access information in class and real world ▪ Use technology to enhance classroom experience
Yeshivat Noam Paramus, NJ	Rabbi Tavi Koslowe Assistant Principal Judaic Studies, Middle School Tkoslowe@yeshivatnoam.org (201) 261-1919	Elementary	800	Student: Faculty 5:1 Student: Admin. 53:1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Differentiation for purposes of student engagement ▪ Use technology to enhance classroom experience

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