

Sevenstar News

The Online Christian Curriculum

"Blended Learning" – Part of your curriculum?

One of the most significant things happening in education today is the introduction and use of a "blended learning" curriculum. Study after study is showing the positive attributes of having online resources as part of everyday classroom instruction. Supplementing existing instruction curriculum, personalizing instruction, and introducing online learning to students are just three of the many reasons some educators have included this type of tool into their instruction model.

What is "blended learning?" The following definition is taken from an iNACOL (International Association for K-12 Online Learning) report that addresses "blended learning" and the significant impact it can have on student education:

"...blended learning is combining online delivery of educational content with the best features of classroom interaction and live instruction to personalize learning, allow thoughtful reflection, and differentiate instruction from student to student across a diverse group of learners."

A Blackboard K-12 study highlighted in their November "eduvIEWS" Leadership Series publication reported that "in recent experimental and quasi-experimental studies contrasting blends of online and face-to-face instruction with conventional face-to-face classes, blended instruction has been more effective, providing a rationale for the effort required to design and implement blended approaches."

The study's main findings are noteworthy:

- Students who took all or part of their class online performed better, on average, than those taking the same course through traditional face-to-face instruction.
- Instruction combining online and face-to-face elements had a larger advantage relative to purely face-to-face instruction than did purely online instruction.
- The effectiveness of online learning approaches appears quite broad across different content and learner types.
- Online learning can be enhanced by giving learners control of their interactions with media and prompting learning reflection.

Click here to [read the report](#).

Wikibooks also has a featured book titled "[Blended Learning in K-12](#)" that provides a lot of good supporting material covering the evolution, designs, characteristics, and applications of this growing classroom asset.

Sevenstar encourages you to evaluate how “blended learning” might play a role in your school next year. Contact us to learn how our newest curriculum tool called “**Classroom +**” will engage your students with the world, right from the classroom. *We are accepting a limited number of teachers/schools to pilot this, this fall.*

Our Newest School Partners

Academy Christian School International Online, Pueblo, CO
Annapolis Area Christian School, Annapolis, MD
Calvary Christian School, Columbus, GA
Faith Academy School of Excellence, Norfolk, VA
Faith Christian School, Dixon, IL
Grace Academy, Marysville, WV
Heritage Christian Academy, Rockwall, TX
Oaks Christian School, Westlake Village, CA
Sierra Madre Christian Academy, Monterrey, Mexico
Southern Baptist Education Center, South Haven, MS
The Kings Academy, Seymour, TN

Here is how one school leader describes their experience thus far with Sevenstar:

“Capistrano Valley Christian Schools appreciates the partnership with Sevenstar in providing online learning education to our students. The online coursework option has developed into an important aspect of our instructional program. Our summer school program is built entirely on the online coursework materials. The flexibility that online coursework offers has solved several problems for students. An important feature of the program for us is the integration of a Christian worldview into the coursework. Online coursework is no longer a novel approach here at CVCS but has become another tool to use in meeting the needs of students.”

Dave Baker, Ed.D.

Head of Schools, Capistrano Valley Christian Schools

***Please don't hesitate to let us know how we can make online learning "another tool" in meeting your students needs.**

*****Is Outreach Part Of Your Fall Plans?*****

We at Sevenstar **thank you for your partnership** and for being a leader in online learning. We hope you have discovered Sevenstar curriculum and tools to be 21st century solutions to today's Christian education challenges. If this is the case, we encourage you to consider taking steps to expand your online options to students in and outside the walls of your school.

In the coming weeks, we at Sevenstar plan to make available additional tools and resources to assist you in your efforts to expand your ministry through online learning. In addition to **Classroom +**, our new tool for Web presence in the classroom, we will include documentation and presentations that highlight the benefits of online curriculum choices and the possibilities it may offer **to new and existing students.**

Not long ago, Dr. Beadle, our head of School, conveyed a message about leaving just \$100 dollars behind could mean a student not getting to the next level or a school leaving behind additional revenue. The same could hold true if schools don't look outside the

box of their present day student population. Today there are many children right in your community and even in your classroom needing access to courses and challenges not presently available. Whether it's AP classes, SAT/ACT preparation, English As A Second Language, Classroom WEB access or Dual Credit College courses, Sevenstar can be there to meet that need, if you're willing to promote its availability.

Look for a Sevenstar Challenge coming your way, and prepare to expand your ministry.

New Team Members

We want to recognize and welcome **Mr. Mark Cravens** to the Sevenstar team. As **our new chaplain** for students, teachers and partner school staff, we look forward to the wealth of experience and commitment to the 'Word' that Mark will offer. As a native of southern Indiana, Mark graduated from Union Bible College (pastoral ministry) and pursued pastorates in Alabama, Indiana and Ohio. Later he took on the challenges of Conference President of the Heartland Conference of the Bible Methodist Connection of Churches. In the spring of 2007, he graduated from the Cincinnati Bible Seminary (Pastoral Leadership), and now teaches Bible courses and serves as campus pastor at God's Bible School and College in Cincinnati. All along the way Mark has been blessed to have his wife Teresa by his side providing strength and support as well as raising two sets of twins (Jessica and Jacinda- 23, and Brittany and Bethany-17). Welcome Mark yourself if you get the chance at mcravens@sevenstaracademy.org and checkout his first devotional at the end of this newsletter.

Mr. Jonathan Bartolomeo has recently joined Sevenstar as **Instructional Designer**. In this role, Jon is going to do hands-on work with curriculum design, as well as additions, changes and developments in all of our courses. Jonathan recently moved from Cincinnati to Troy, MO but that just means more time in front of PC screen (which he loves). Jonathan was the IT Manager at God's Bible School for the past few years, and before that, he was an IT Assistant, Web Administrator, and Media Engineer for the college. In his free time he freelanced (What free time right?). He plans to be married this coming October to his college sweetheart and already admits to two things that helps all of us – he too has trouble pronouncing his last name, and he loves pouring over technology news and stories (our kind of guy). Welcome Jonathan at jbartolomeo@sevenstaracademy.org.

And The Winner Is!!!

As many may know, Sevenstar conducted a promotion during the 2009/2010 school year to encourage folks to sign up for this newsletter and establish themselves as a new member of the Sevenstar community. Well, we recently gathered all the names submitted through our website "Contact us" form this past school year and randomly chose the winner. Drum roll please...**Dr. David Roth** of the Christian Heritage Academy, Northfield, Illinois is the winner of an iPhone or Netbook (up to \$300).

And the Winner Will Be...

This coming school year we will continue to look for educators wanting to know how Sevenstar can partner with them to bring online learning to their classrooms. Invite your peers to use the "Contact Us" form on our website, or visit with us at conference and meetings this year to sign up for this newsletter and possibly win an iPad in 2011 .

Sevenstar Expands

We have been blessed, and we now have been given the opportunity to pass that blessing on to Catholic schools across the country. Pray for us as we continue our vision and provide quality online education that instructs the heart and mind of Catholic students. This new division will be called **Edified Online**.

Popular Courses for 2009/2010

You might be interested in knowing what Sevenstar courses had the most students enrolled this past school year (top 10).

Spanish I
Geometry
World History
American Government
Chemistry 1
American History
Latin I
English 11
Biology 1
English 10

Sevenstar Graduates

Earlier this month it was a privilege for Dr. R. Mark Beadle, Head of School, and Mrs. Kristin Bird, Principal, to award Sevenstar diplomas to:

Michael Dyer - Arlington Heights, IL

Nikkie Haines - Deerfield, IL (*Salutatorian)

Lakshmi Meyyappan - Penang, Malaysia (*Valedictorian)

Noelani Onsaga - Las Vegas, NV

Ms. Meyyappan addressed graduation attendees via a video from Malaysia, and stressed how "Learning online with Sevenstar... taught me just how much I could accomplish through my own determination."

And Noelani Onsaga, who traveled with her family to Cincinnati to attend the ceremony, highlighted the things she discovered about herself. "You should be self-motivated. My parents had to, you know, give me a little "encouragement" once in a while... but not really very much. I knew what I needed to do, so the responsibility was all mine. That's probably something that kids should have before doing this full time... a sense of responsibility."

We are very proud of each of the graduates, and will continue to pray for them as they move forward to their next challenge.

Thank You ACSI!!

The entire team at Sevenstar Academy would like to thank the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) for their support of the Member Benefit Scholarship Program this past school year. **As the program comes to a close**, we have seen many Christian schools be introduced to online learning and thus expanded their curriculum solutions for students. ACSI continues to make a difference for eternity in the lives of students and educators.

Sevenstar Webinars

Join us for one of our upcoming **Regional Webinars** for schools. Just click the link below and you will see a number of opportunities to learn more.

[Next Webinar for Schools](#)

Opportunity for Professional Development

Register now for iNACOL's Virtual School Symposium (VSS) Conference.

The Virtual School Symposium (VSS 2010) is November 14 – 16, 2010 at the Glendale/Phoenix Renaissance Hotel and Conference Center in Arizona. The theme of this year's Virtual School Symposium (VSS) is: "Online and Blended Learning: The Future of Education." Come learn about online and blended solutions in K-12 education using new instructional models, digital content approaches and technology tools for next generation learning. Register online at: <http://www.virtualschoolsymposium.org/registration.php>.

Online Learning On The Rise

*Our friend and former webinar speaker, **Michael Horn**, has a new (4 page) article that can encourage people that want to provide vision for educational change. You can read the executive summary as well as download the full policy brief by clicking here: [Virtual Schooling: Talking Points](#)

The article is here: http://www.innosightinstitute.org/innosight/wp-content/uploads/2010/04/PolicyBrief_VirtualSchool_HornMay10.pdf

***Fundraising Tips for Technology**: How a South Carolina elementary school secured an eye-popping set of technology tools.

*Nimble Press just released their report on **What Teachers Want: Grant Priorities**. They provided an analysis of Grant Wrangler traffic with the results of a survey of Grant Wrangler Bulletin subscribers. The report is free and useful for anyone who is designing a grant program or interested in helping educators who are seeking grants.

They found that, while some longstanding programs were suspended due to the recession, there are still millions of dollars in small grants and more and more teachers seeking them out. Grants and contests are a great way to raise brand awareness or get a product in front of teachers. The report is free for download from their site Nimble Net <http://www.nimble-net.com>.

*"Speak Up National Release: K-12 Students' and Parents' Data"

The dynamic profusion of emerging technologies, both in school and out of school, is propelling today's K-12 students to make new demands on their schools for a dramatically different kind of educational experience. Enabled, empowered and engaged, our students have a unique vision for 21st century education [...] You may view the latest post at <http://tank.thinkronize.com/2010/06/data-from-schools-and-students/>

***Video of the Week: Policy Experts Weigh-in on Virtual Learning** by NSSEA Policy experts Paul E. Peterson, Mike Petrilli, and Michael B. Horn discuss virtual learning policy issues that can maximize student achievement in the K-12 classroom. (Source: Education Sector). Posted in e-learning, video, ...The Education Supply Playground - <http://nssea.wordpress.com/>

***Hear firsthand what middle and high school students are saying** about their current educational experience, why online learning is effective for students today and how the relationship between teachers and students change with the addition of an online program. <http://www.eschoolnews.com/e/webinars/onlinelearning3.htm>

June Devotional (Mark Cravens)



Impressing or Impacting?

I can remember exactly where I was when I heard these life-changing words, "You can impress people at a distance, but you impact people up close." The class was on discipleship, and my seminary professor was trying to emphasize how important personal interaction was in helping to shape the lives of others. Immediately I began to make a mental list of those who had impacted my life the greatest, and in every case they were those who had touched my life through loving interaction.

Too often, we feel our greatest contribution is made through the lessons we teach or the brilliant lectures we present. But I am more convinced than ever that the real impact is made through loving, personal interaction with those we teach. The great preacher Charles Spurgeon once wrote, "Those who loved you and were helped by you will remember you when forget-me-nots have withered. Carve your name on hearts, not on marble." As a teacher and minister I never want to forget this, and trust that with God's help I will impact others for Christ.

The Scripture listed below demonstrates as well as any the "personal touch" Jesus used in ministering to others and impacting their lives.

"And he [Jesus] took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them."
Mark 10:16

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