

Superintendents Discuss Successes and Challenges

Each year CoSN convenes several discussions with the **EmpowerED Superintendents Advisory Board**. This year, during their May meeting, participants broke into small groups to share ideas about what has been successful and what challenges they see for the beginning of the 2022-2023 school year. Read on to see which of their ideas are relevant to your system/district as a K12 edtech leader.

The advisory board consists of more than 40 school leaders, and 15 organization leaders, and has more than 25 association endorsers from across the country. You can count on a variety of ideas and passionate discussions whenever the group gets together.

The last meeting posed two guiding questions for discussion and sharing. You are invited to use any or all their thoughts to start discussions within your own district!

What have you learned and how are you thinking about leveraging technology as you open school in fall 2022?

Pilot projects RULED!

Some districts put projects in place that ‘stuck.’ Clearly, there is not a one-size-fits-all for anything. Below is an overview of specific discussion points:

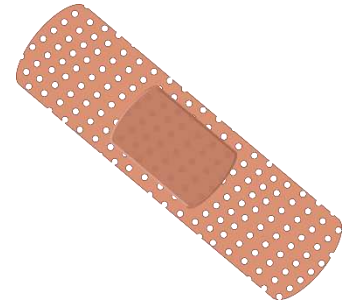
- Scaling what worked in one subject, into 1-2 more subject areas (think bite-size pieces)
- Choosing a small number of schools as “pilot schools”
- Leveraging how to change culture using more inclusive technology
- Figuring out what is the right role for VR in all this? Is there one?
- Dealing with real concerns – impacts of unions, teacher retirement bubble, technology fatigue (parents, learners, teachers, administrators) is time-consuming, but also critical.
 - Staff turnover is an issue now and will only get to be a larger issue as the population ages.



What strategies are you utilizing this summer to lead with innovation? How will you overcome the sense of inertia and desire to “return to normal”?

- Building an app focused on the “whole child” (example: Abre - <https://abre.io/>). Great community involvement and enthusiasm. It is a challenge to deal with situations where technology is demonized but is also - at the same time - viewed as “The Solution.”
- Vast differences between districts’ attitudes based on size/resources. Having some level of virtual will be a necessity.
- Considering an interdisciplinary skill set built for students so they can build their own dashboards.
- Trying Summer Camps
- Varying summer engagement – in person, virtual, combination

- Starting with what they are already doing so “new” does not feel so overwhelming
- States may allow for ‘community schools’ with longer daily hours
- Focus on “parent friendly!” Easier forms, more places for them to talk to other parents
- Actively integrating cybersecurity training for students/parents into the curriculum



Bottom Line: Rip the bandage off normal!

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About CoSN:

CoSN, the national association of school system technology leaders, believes that technology is an essential component of learning today, and is deeply committed to the use and distribution of technology in school systems. However, all technologies must be properly assessed for design and appropriateness in the modern classroom. Educators and companies alike must recognize and uphold their responsibilities to protect the privacy of student data.

Working together, educators and the private sector serve millions of students by providing them with the rich digital learning experiences and access needed to succeed in college, work and life. That partnership is critical to ensuring that students will have the tools necessary for success in the 21st century.

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