Blended Learning

What is it, what did we learn about it during the pandemic? And how can we use that learning outcome to better meet the future?

Bio

- Phillip Kaspersen
- Advisor at education department in Agder County administration since 2010
- Working closely with schools in Agder county on digital literacy, systems administration, GDPR and lately AI

Agenda

- Definition

- Different models

- Advantages and challenges

- Some questions answered

- Experiences from the pandemic in Agder county

- What lessons can we take today?

What is Blended Learning?

- A formal education program in which a student learns
  - at least in part through **online learning**, with some element of student control over time, place, path, and/or pace
  - at least in part in a **supervised school-setting** away from home;
  - and the different methods used in the course or subjects are linked together to create a seamless and comprehensive learning experience
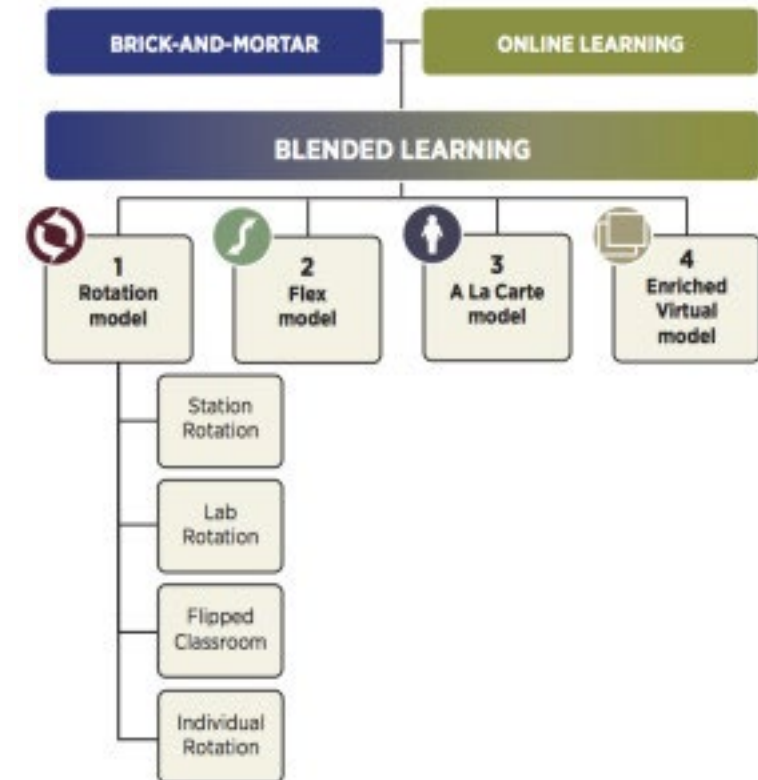
Why Blended Learning?

Customized Learning

Online learning offers individual data, timely feedback, and flexible pathways.
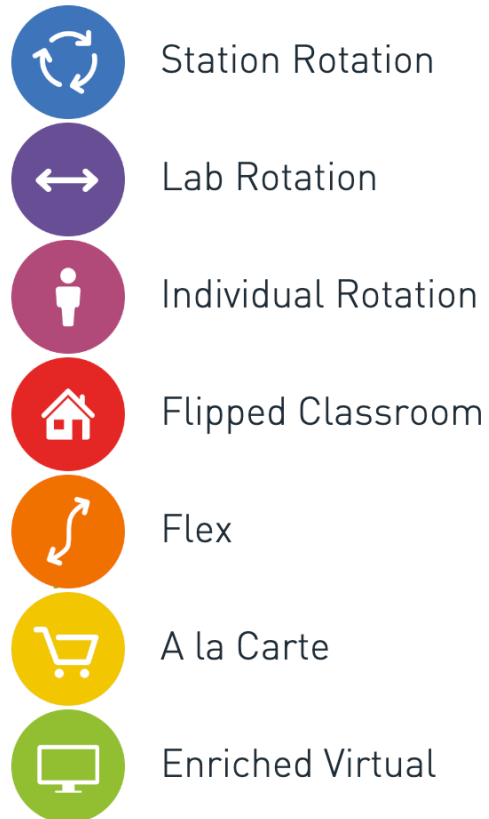
Competency-based Learning

Control over pace means students advance based on mastery, not time.

Anytime, Anywhere Learning

Technology opens up a world of opportunities and allows students to reach beyond the classroom.
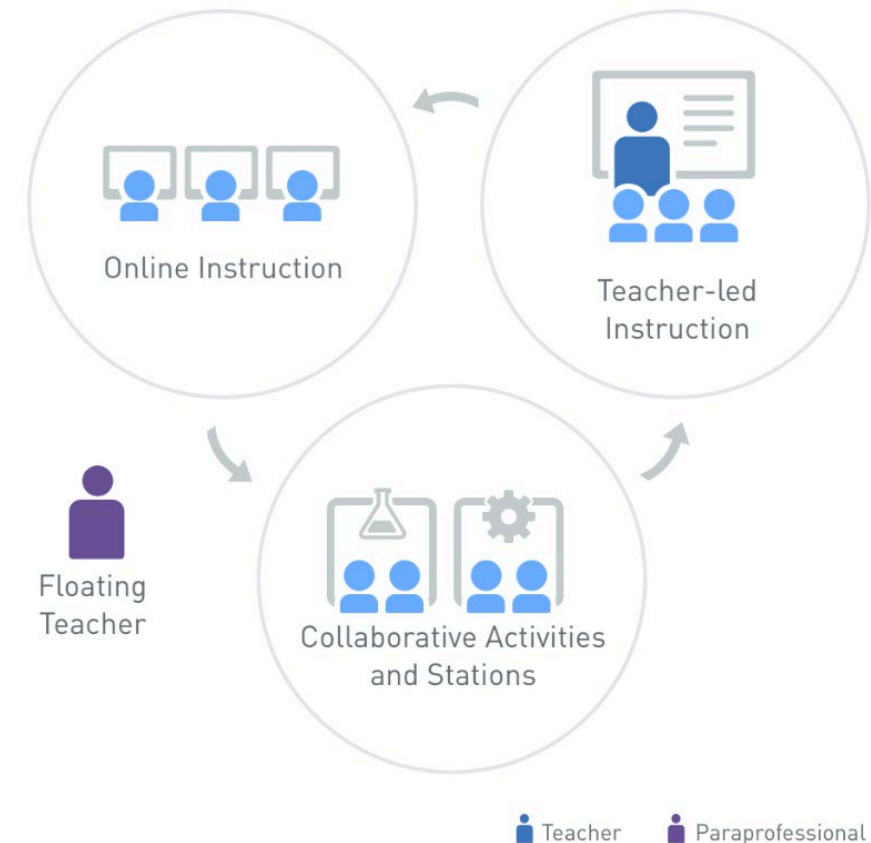
Models of blended learning

Station Rotation

Lab Rotation

Individual Rotation

Flipped Classroom

Flex

A la Carte

Enriched Virtual

- https://www.christenseninstitute.org
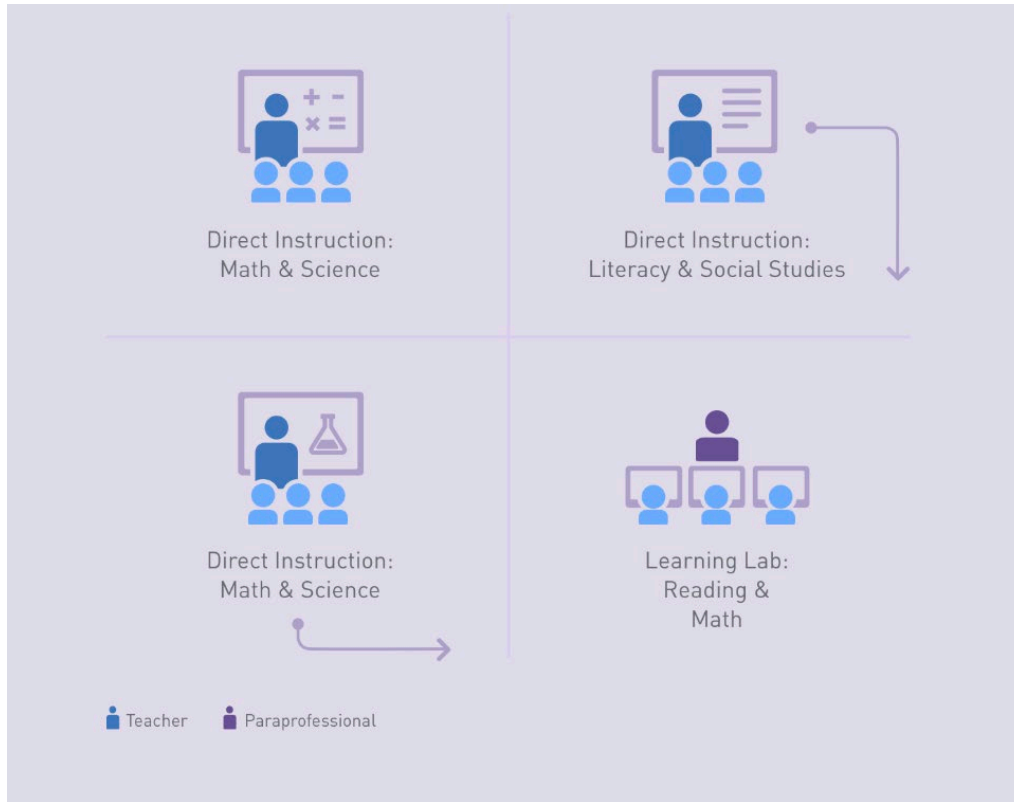
- https://www.blendedlearning.org

AGDER
fylkeskommune

Station Rotation

- Allows students to rotate through stations on a fixed schedule, where at least one of the stations is an online learning station.

- Most common in elementary schools because teachers are already familiar rotating in «centers» of stations.

Online Instruction

Teacher-led Instruction

Floating Teacher

Collaborative Activities and Stations

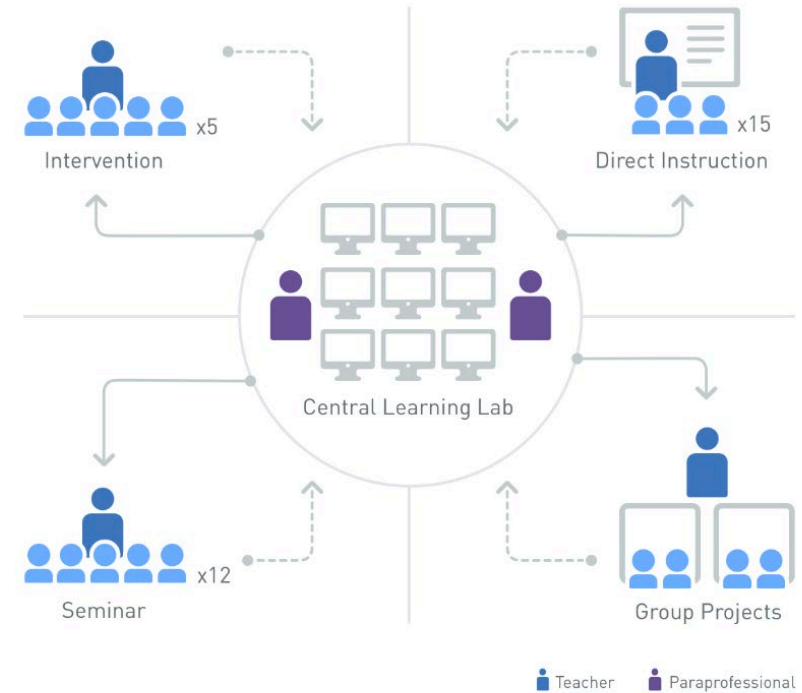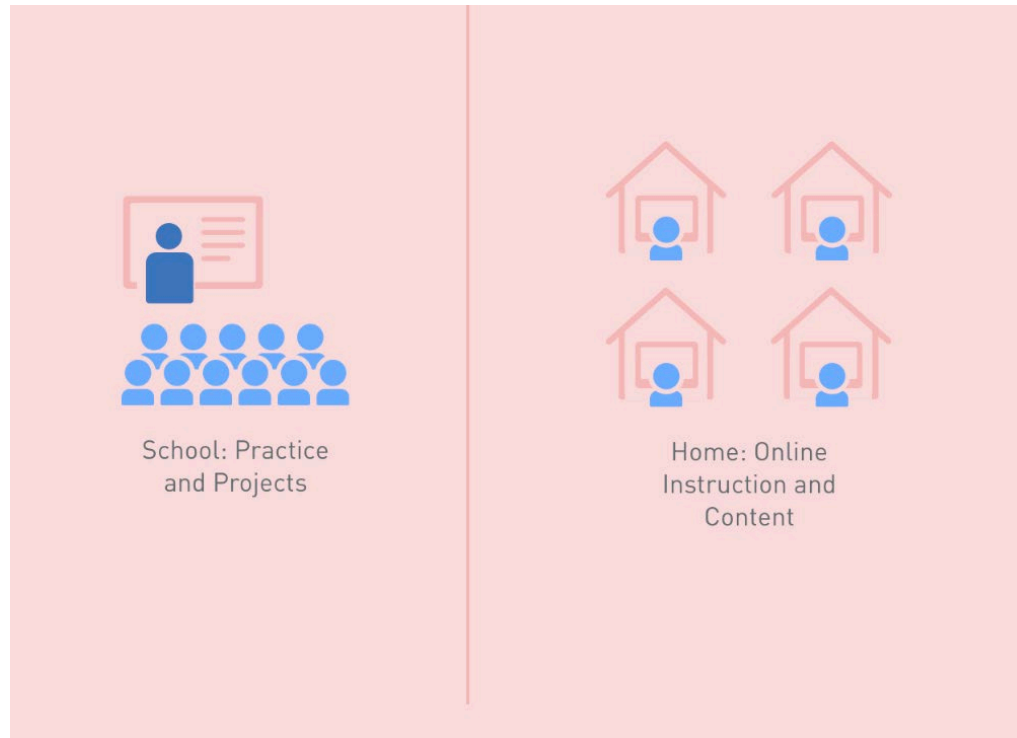Teacher   Paraprofessional

AGDER
fylkeskommune

Lab Rotation

- Allows students to rotate through stations on a fixed schedule (as in Station Rotation).

- Online learning occurs in dedicated computer lab.

- Allows for flexible scheduling arrangements with teachers and other professionals, and enables schools to make use of existing computer labs.

AGDER
fylkeskommune

Individual Rotation

- Allows students to rotate through stations, but on individual schedules set by a teacher or software algorithm.

- Students do not necessarily rotate to every station; only to the activities scheduled on their playlists.


Intervention ×5

Direct Instruction ×15

Central Learning Lab

Seminar ×12

Group Projects

Teacher Paraprofessional

Flipped Classroom

School: Practice and Projects

Home: Online Instruction and Content

- Flips the traditional relationship between class time and homework.

- Students learn at home via online coursework and lectures, and teachers use class time for teacher-guided practice or projects.

- Enables teachers to use class time for more than delivering traditional lectures.

AGDER
fylkeskommune

Flex Model

- Lets students move on flexible schedules among learning activities acording to their needs.

- Online learning is the backbone of student learning in this model.

- Teachers provide support and instruction on a flexible, as-needed basis while students work through course curriculum and content.

- Can give students a high degree of control over their learning

A La Carte

School

Online Teacher
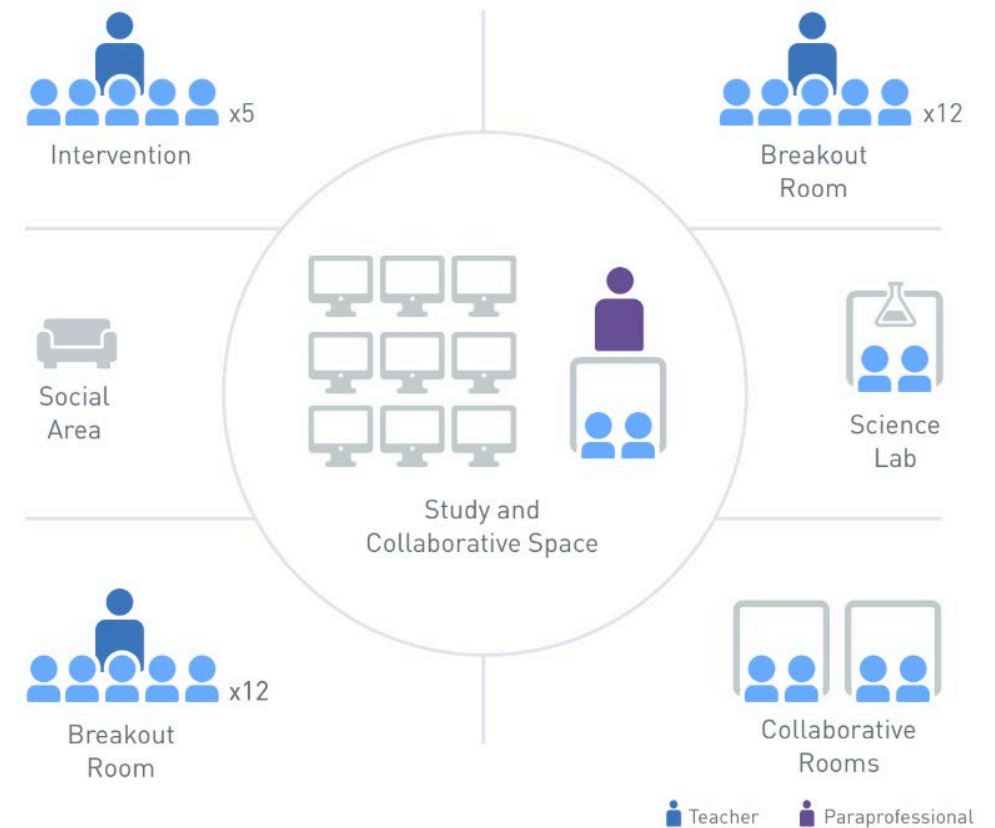
Learning Lab

Home
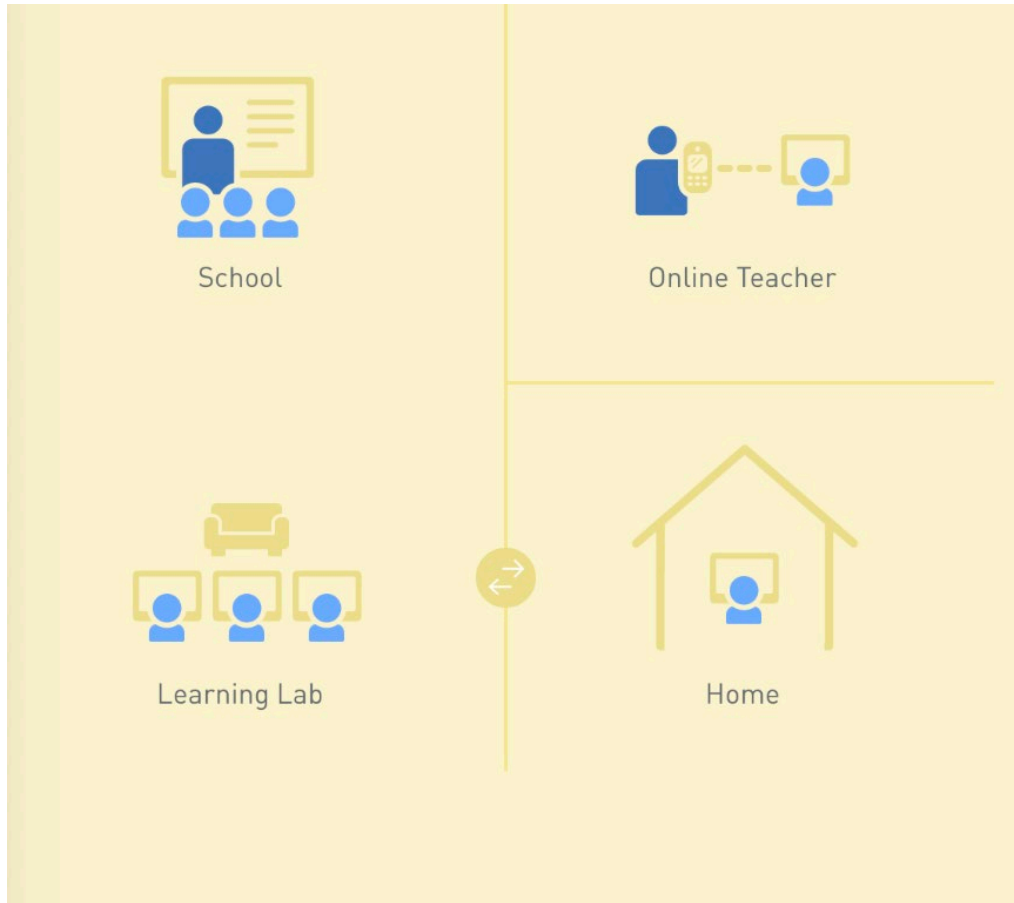
- Enable students to take an online course with an online teacher, in addition to other face-to-face courses.

- Can be a great option when schools can´t provide particular learning opportunities, making it one of the more popular models in blended high schools.

Enriched Virtual

- An alternative to full-time online school that allows students to complete the majority of coursework online at home or outside of school, but attend school for required face-to-face learning sessions with a teacher.

- Usually don`t require daily school attendance.

School: Face-to-face Supplementation

Home: Online Instruction and Content

AGDER
fylkeskommune

Advantages of blended learning

- Increasing student **engagement** and **motivation**

- Enhancing student **autonomy** and **self-regulation**

- Providing more **personalized and differentiated instruction**

- Improving student outcomes and **retention**

- Reducing costs and environmental impact?

AGDER
fylkeskommune

Challenges of blended learning

- Requires adequate **infrastructure** and **resources**

- Demands more **training and preparation** for teachers

- Raises issues of **quality, equity and access**

- Necessitates more **communication and collaboration** among stakeholders

- Evaluating the effectiveness and impact of blended learning

- Challenging for students who are not good at **self-regulation**

Some questions

- What technological and infrastructural prerequisites are there for implementing a blended learning model?
  - Reliable internet access
  - Adequate digital devices for both teachers and students
  - Learning management system (LMS) to facilitate online learning components
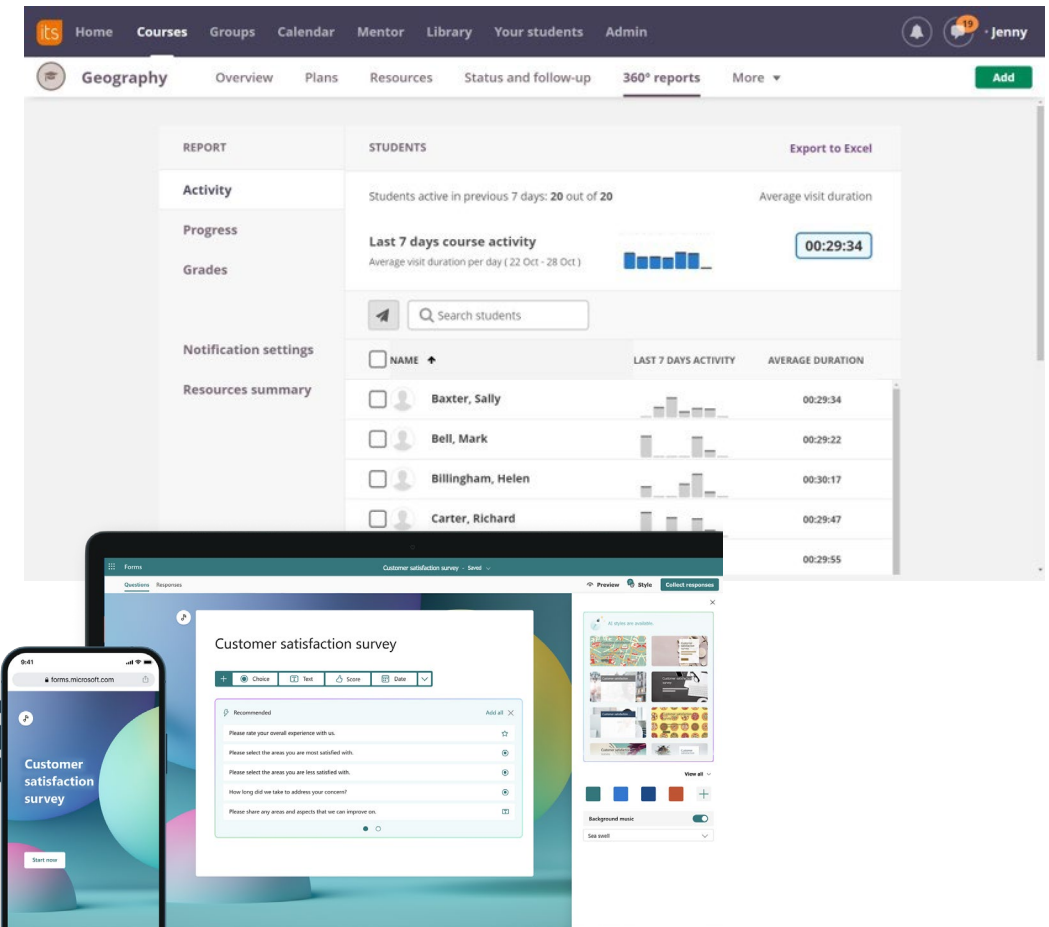
Some questions

- How can schools support teachers in transitioning to blended learning methodoligies?
  - **PD opportunities** focused on digital literacy and blended learning strategies
  - Providing **ongoing technical support**
  - Encourage a **culture of collaboration** among teachers for **sharing** best practices

AGDER
fylkeskommune

Some questions

- What metrics or indicators do we have to evaluate the effectiveness of a blended learning program?
  - Student engagement levels
  - Performance and achievement data
  - Completion rates for online modules
  - Student and teacher satisfaction surveys
 - Improvements in digital skills

Some questions

- How can schools ensure **equity** in access to the resources required for blended learning?
  - Providing necessary **devices** and **internet access** to students who lack them
  - Creating **accessible content** for students with disabilities
  - Various forms of support and intervention for students who may struggle with the online components

AGDER
fylkeskommune

Some questions

- How can school leaders involve parents and the community in blended learning processes?
  - Communication!
  - Informational sessions
  - Regular updates through newsletters and social media
  - Create opportunities for feedback

AGDER
fylkeskommune
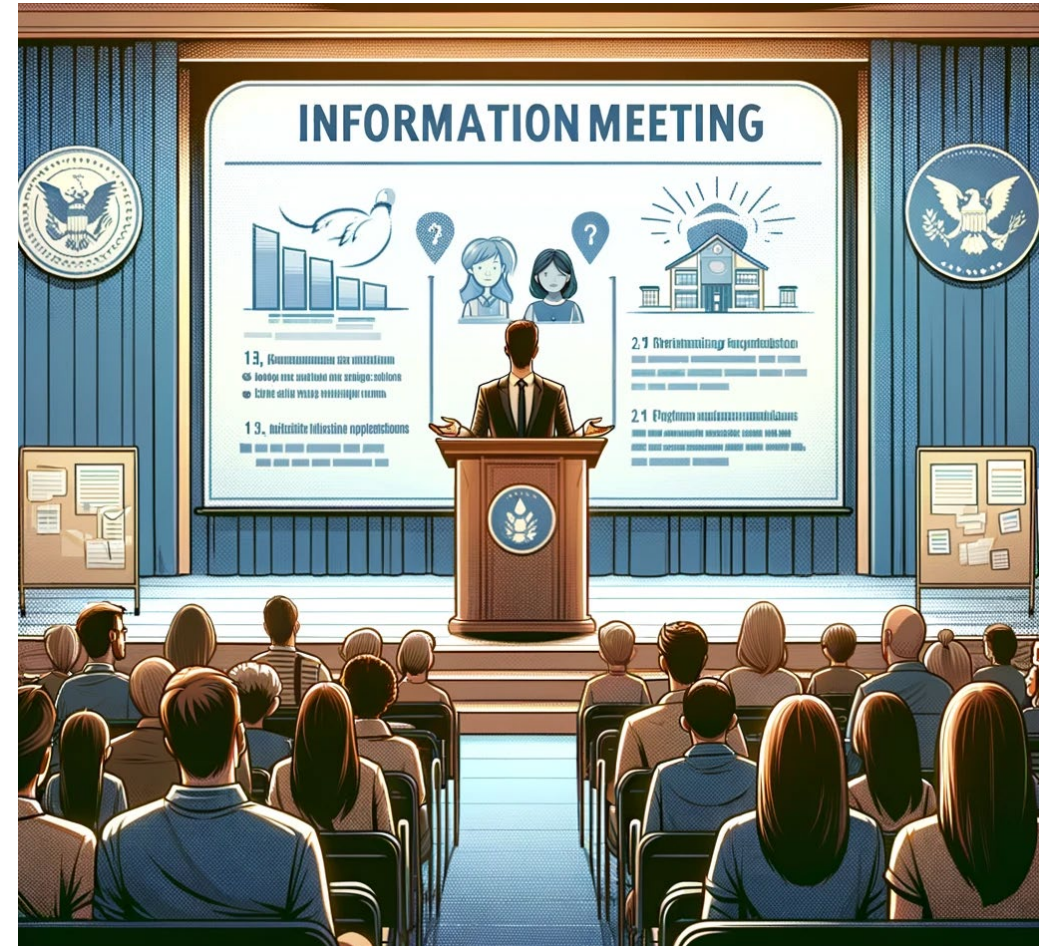
Some questions

- How can we address potential challenges and criticisms of blended learning?
  - Ensuring equitable access to technology
  - Offering comprehensive **professional development**
  - Continuously monitoring and adjusting the learning process to keep it **interactive** and **student-centered**

Experiences from the pandemic

- Rapid transition to online learning platforms
  - Schools quickly adopted LMS to facilitate remote teaching and learning. Agder county already had an LMS in place (since 2006).
  - Load issues, but quickly resolved
  - LMS became the backbone of our blended learning approach, allowing for distribution of materials, assignment submission and communication.

**Bruken av Itslearning har økt med 500 prosent. Det skaper store problemer. – Svært uheldig.**

– Svært uheldig, sier Bjørn Lyngedal, utdanningsdirektør i Vestland fylke.

Publisert: 24. mars 2020

its Hjem Fag Grupper Kalender Mentor Bibliotek Dine elever SkoleArena Fravær Læring

Oversikt   Planer   Ressurser   Status og oppfølging

Oops, noe gikk galt...

Vi beklager, men det har oppstått noe uventet som forhindrer oss fra å vise siden du ba om.

Forsøk på nytt. Hvis problemet fremdeles er der, bør du kontakt itslearning-administratoren.

For at vi skal kunne gi deg bedre hjelp, ber vi deg legge ved følgende referanse når du kontakter itslearnings brukerstøtte:

960a8401-7f9d-473b-82e1-889f4422c0ea

AGDER
fylkeskommune

Experiences from the pandemic
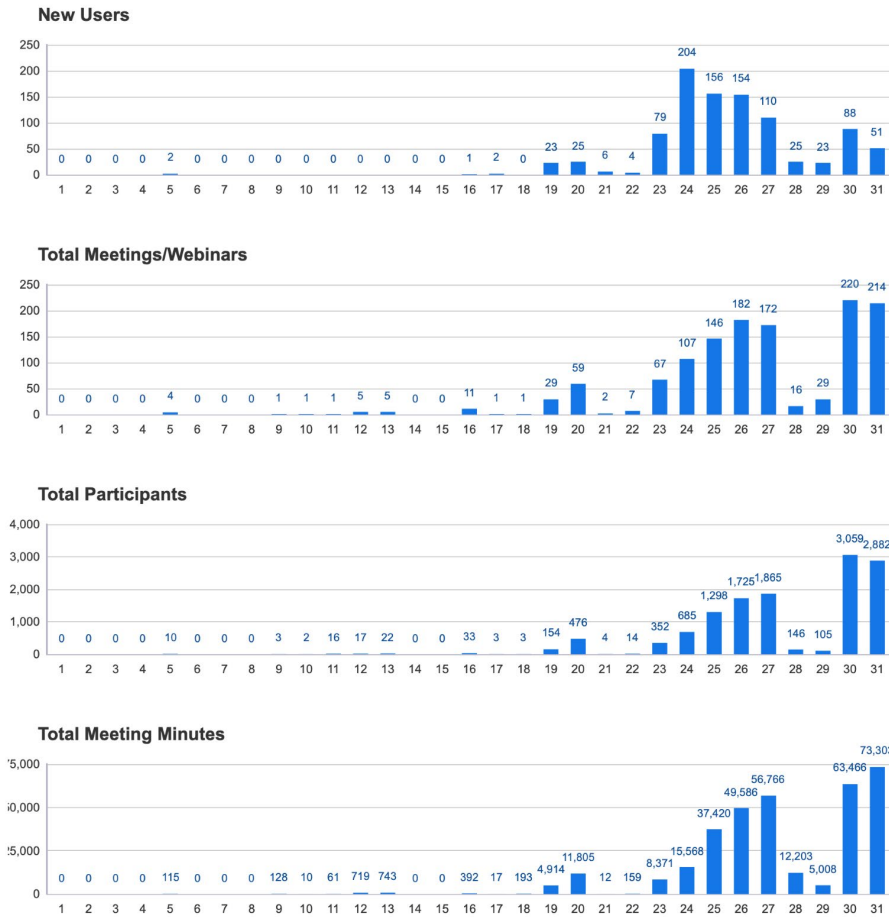
- Use of videoconferencing tools
  - Lacking tools to begin with.
  - Had to rapidly strike a deal with Norwegian distributor of Zoom, which was quickly implemented and adopted. This helped maintain a sense of classroom community and allowed for direct instruction and feedback.
  - Zoom integrated with our LMS (itslearning)
  - Some challenges with videoconferencing
    - Some teachers just translated lectures to Zoom and let students work with tasks individually or in groups afterwards. Not engaging!
    - Students did not use cameras, so difficult for teachers to know if «anybody was even there»

AGDER
fylkeskommune

Experiences from the pandemic

- Flexible scheduling
  - To accomodate the varied needs of students and families dealing with pandemic-related challenges, schools often adopted more flexible scheduling. This allowed students to learn at their own pace and time, with synchronous (live) sessions scheduled at convenient times or recorded for later viewing.

AGDER
fylkeskommune

Experiences from the pandemic

- Diversified content delivery
  - Educators relied on a mix of synchronous (live online classes) and asynchronous (recorded lectures, online assignments and discussions) teaching methods. This approach provided flexibility and ensured that students could access learning materials regardless of their schedule.

AGDER
fylkeskommune

Rethinking assessment

- How do you make sure the students don´t cheat on unsupervised assignments? (Who has written their text?)

- One example of solution: «**Vivas**»
  - Student is given a set of tasks to solve within a given time frame
  - Teacher schedules a time for conversation. The student has to explain one of the tasks for the teacher, and the teacher will ask him or her to elaborate. The student does not know which task the teacher will ask him to explain.

Professional development for teachers

- The schools invested in PD for teachers. Training focused on effective online teaching strategies, use of digital tools and ways to engage students remotely.
- NB! This was probably the part we didn´t handle well enough, for different reasons. We have the technical means of delivering PD, but we seem to lack the organizational skills to make it happen...)
- Example: We have the tools to allow for student-centered teaching, but there was way too much difference in how teachers adopted these new tools (too much oneway communication and students working alone with tasks)

Experiences from the pandemic

- Enhancing digital equity
  - The pandemic highlighted the digital divide
    - Students in Agder have devices, but not all had good enough internet access at home
    - Governments responded by providing mobile data packages to ensure all students could participate in online learning

Experiences from the pandemic

- Parental and community involvement
  - Schools increased communication with parents and guardians, offering guidance on how to support their kids learning at home
  - Community resources were also mobilized to support students, including public libraries and community centers offering wi-fi access or study spaces

AGDER
fylkeskommune

Experiences from the pandemic

- Continous feedback and adjustment
  - Frequent feedback from students, parents and teachers to identify challenges and areas for improvement. This **feedback loop** led to rapid adjustments to the blended learning approach
  - **Schools adapting and innovating in real-time**. Despite challenges, this period demonstrated the potential of technology to support flexible, accessible and personalized learning, offering lessons that continue to shape educational practices beyond the pandemic.

What lessons can we take today?
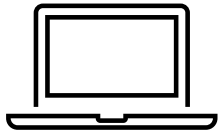
Investing in infrastructure

Ensure universal access to reliable internet and digital devices for all students and teachers to prevent learning disruptions and address the digital divide

**Continuous professional development**

Provide ongoing training for educators in digital pedagogy, online content delivery, and the use of educational technology

Building resilient education systems

Develop comprehensive policies and frameworks that incorporate blended learning as a core component of the education system, not just a temporary solution in times of crisis

What lessons can we take today?
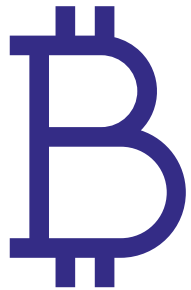
Enhancing digital equity

Prioritize initiatives that promote digital equity, including subsidizing internet access, providing devices to students in need, and developing accessible learning materials for students with disabilities.

Fostering a culture of innovation

Encourage innovation in education by supporting educators in experimenting with new technologies and pedagogical approaches and by sharing best practices within and across educational institutions.

AGDER
fylkeskommune

What lessons can we take today?

Planning and preparedness

Create detailed contingency plans for education that can be quickly implemented in response to future disruptions, including clear guidelines for transitioning between in-person and remote learning
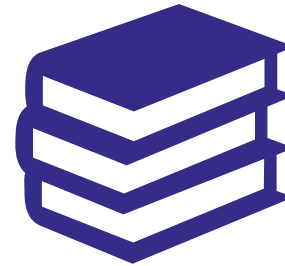
Supporting mental health and well-being

Recognize the psychological impact of disruptions on students and educators by providing comprehensive support services and incorporating well-being into the curriculum.

AGDER
fylkeskommune

What is the most important aspect?

- **Relations**
  - Learning is more than transfer of information
  - Good relations are fundamentally important to create an inclusive and effective educational experience that promotes both personal and academic growth
  - **Blended = best of both worlds**

Takk for oppmerksomheten!

AGDER
fylkeskommune