



Moonshots in Education: Blended Learning in the Classroom

By Esther Wojcicki, Lance Izumi, Alicia Chang

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Moonshots in Education explores digital and online learning in the classroom. It gives several models and examples of schools that are already implementing digital learning and what the success rate has been.

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- Rank: #944013 in Books
- Published on: 2015-01-30
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.25" h x .79" w x 7.52" l, 1.49 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 290 pages



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Editorial Review

About the Author

ESTHER WOJCICKI

Esther Wojcicki, known as Woj to her students, has never been interested in convention. So, when she left a career in newspapers to teach journalism at California's Palo Alto High School in 1984, one of the first things she did was to discard all of the traditional textbooks in her classroom. Since then her thought leadership on education as well as its intersection with technology has not only transformed the school where she still teaches, it has succeeded in grabbing global attention. Wojcicki, a scheduled speaker at DLDwomen, is credited with building Palo Alto High's journalism program from a small group of 20 students in 1985 to one of the largest in the nation with 600 students and six electives including three magazines, two television shows, one website and one video production class. Over the past 20 years, the publications have won Gold and Silver Crowns from Columbia Scholastic Press Association, the PaceMaker Award and Hall of Fame Award from National Scholastic Press, and best in nation from Time Magazine in 2003. That's not all: the school's online magazine was honored with two Webby Awards in 2005. All of this has earned Wojcicki a number of teaching awards. Most recently she was honored nationally on the U.S. s Digital Learning Day, as one of a small group of great teachers who use technology effectively in the classroom.

Invites to Paris and Singapore are not the norm for most U.S. high school teachers, but then again Wojcicki is anything but ordinary. She graduated from UC Berkeley with a B.A. in English and Political Science; received a secondary teaching credential from UC Berkeley, as well as a graduate degree from the Graduate School of Journalism at Berkeley. She also has an advanced degree in French and French History from the Sorbonne, and both a Secondary School Administrative Credential and a M.A. in Educational Technology from San Jose State University.

Her early thought leadership in education and tech caught the attention of the board of Creative Commons, a group devoted to allowing people to share their creativity and knowledge. Creative Commons offers a range of Open Content licenses, which makes sharing content legally on the Internet easier. As education moves on-line, a legal framework needs to be put in place so that course materials can be shared, explains Joi Ito, Chairman of Creative Commons and Director of the MIT Media Lab. Ito doesn't hesitate to sing Wojcicki's praises. She is full of ideas, is always going a mile a minute and is connected to everyone, he says, describing her as hyper-connected, hyperactive and hyper-practical.

LANCE IZUMI

Lance Izumi is Koret Senior Fellow and Senior Director of Education Studies at the Pacific Research Institute. He is the author of the highly praised 2012 book Obama's Education Takeover (Encounter Books), which details the centralization of education policymaking in Washington under President Obama.

Lance is also the co-author of the groundbreaking book Not as Good as You Think: Why the Middle Class Needs School Choice and co-executive producer of the award-winning 2009 PBS-broadcast film documentary Not as Good As You Think: The Myth of the Middle Class School. He also appears in Academy Award-winning director Davis Guggenheim's 2010 education film documentary Waiting for Superman, which was voted best U.S. documentary at the prestigious Sundance Film Festival.

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