



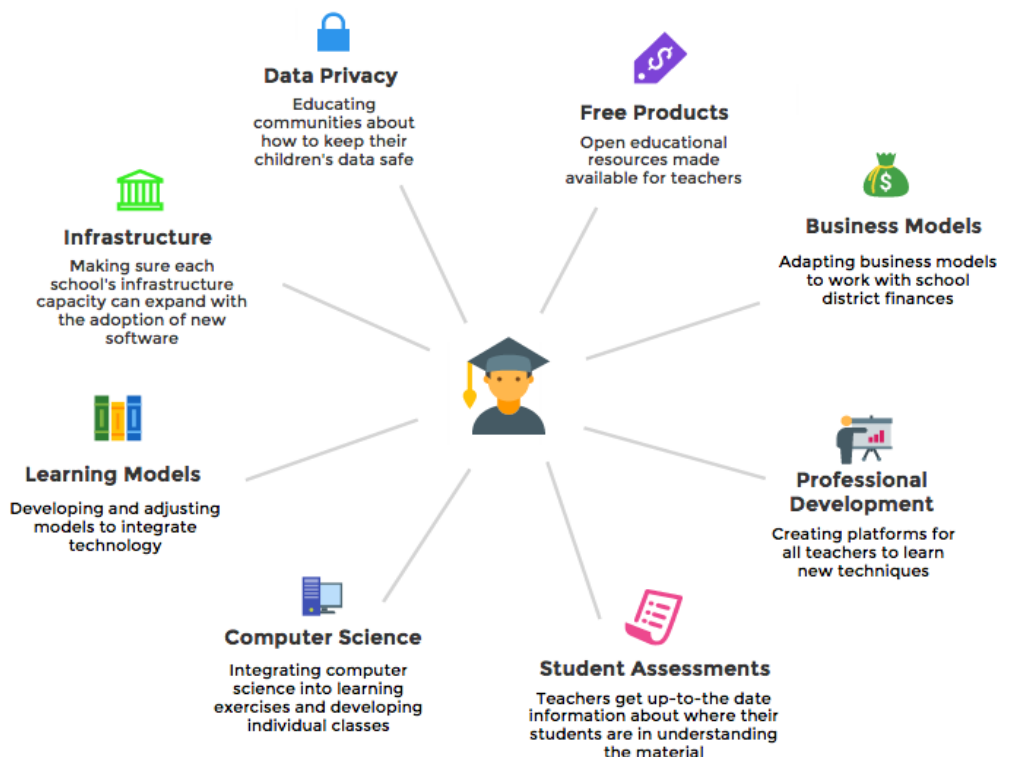
## Ed Tech Panel

**Panelists:** Marc Suidan, *PwC*, Diane Tavenner, *Summit Public Schools*, Mike Sego, *Facebook*, Muhammed Chaudhry, *Silicon Valley Education Foundation*, Kathy Gomez, *Evergreen School District*  
**Moderator:** Barbara Means, *Center for Technology in Learning*

There is no doubt that integrating technology into the classroom is necessary; as technology becomes pervasive in society, technological proficiency increasingly becomes a requisite for both the modern citizen and employee, regardless of industry or walk of life. In response to this growing need, education technology – the integration and use of computer technology, both hardware and software, to enable learning across all disciplines and curricula – is receiving increased attention and investment. **In the last 5 years K-12 Ed Tech funding has increased 5x**, culminating in 2015, when K-12 Ed Tech funding reached an all-time high of \$741 million. Schools are also becoming more responsive to advances in Ed Tech; **coding and computer science are entering the core curriculum in the seven largest US districts.**<sup>1</sup>

The effective use of technology in education can improve and deepen learning in a number of ways. The dissemination of knowledge can enable personal learning and facilitate learning experiences that are more engaging and relevant to each student's passions and empower out-of-school learning. In a famous study, referred to as "Blooms 2 Sigma problem," showed that **students that received one-on-one tutoring performed two standard deviations higher than their peers who were taught in conventional methods**. With a limited supply of teachers, access to videos and tutorials can stimulate one-on-one teaching with all students while the teacher is focusing on a student; students could even use software to ask their peers for advice. Through the wide array of devices Ed Tech can encourage multiple models of pedagogy and expand project-based learning. Access to relevant data will improve teacher effectiveness, **helping educators to identify and address student performance through real-time, personalized assessments**. Perhaps most significantly, Ed Tech can promote greater equity among all learners by closing the digital divide – creatively using and creating technology – and making content widely and easily available.<sup>2</sup>

In only the past couple years, there have been significant changes to the technological infrastructure in school districts nationwide. In 2013, only 30% of school districts met proper internet connection guidelines for students; whereas, **in 2015, 77% of school districts met internet connection guidelines**. Schools are also supporting broadband expansion with hardware expansion, with made-for-school chromebooks accounting for more than 50% of all mobile devices purchased by US schools; coupled with 75% of teens reporting they have access to a smartphone, an increasing number of students are able to connect to the internet at school and access web-based education software. The federally supported e-rate program as well as clarifying



industry for other federal funds – such as those tied to IDEA and ESSA – to be used for infrastructure and training purposes has also helped lighten the financial burden on schools upgrading their broadband connectivity.<sup>3</sup> These huge steps in infrastructure laid the groundwork for an explosion of development in software.

There are, however, substantial challenges to the successful and effective integration of technology in the classroom. Ed Tech is a **fairly new and rapidly growing and evolving space**. This has resulted in a general **lack of information and data about effectiveness and impact of new technology** and how to best leverage tech for engaging learning. Districts and companies also have to make sure that the relevancy and usefulness of the product doesn't fade to within the time of implementation. Additional challenges to integrating technology can include limited resources to train teachers, inadequate infrastructure, and data privacy. Teachers are already self-learning and self-implementing with varying degrees of success and sophistication with their own individual classrooms, but effectively harnessing and maximizing the technology requires significant time to train teachers to use and successfully integrate Ed Tech into the classroom. There is also the perception that kids today are already too involved with technology and that bringing it into the classroom will create a distraction.<sup>4</sup>

With dedication and strong partnerships between the public and private sectors, however, these challenges are surmountable. And while technology will not solve all issues of structural inequity in our educational system – nor should we expect it to – its effective use could be one of the single greatest steps in that direction that we can take.

## About the Featured Partnerships

### Summit Public Schools and Facebook – A New Personalized Learning Platform

Summit Public Schools developed the Personalized Learning Platform to help students set and track goals, learn content at their own pace, complete deeper learning projects and reflect on their experiences. Summit partnered with Facebook to improve the platform and to expand it to 19 other schools in 2015. These schools received professional development to adapt personalized learning to their communities and in return provided feedback on the platform for Facebook and Summit. In the first year of the Summit Basecamp program, schools made encouraging progress. Teachers, students and families embraced personalized learning and reported that it had a positive impact on their lives. More than 100 new schools have joined the Summit Basecamp program for the 2016-17 school year.<sup>5</sup>

### Silicon Valley Education Foundation, PriceWaterhouseCoopers and Evergreen School District – iHub

The Learning Innovation Hub (iHub) connects Ed Tech entrepreneurs, educators and researchers to facilitate collaboration and product feedback. Entrepreneurs have direct access to their customers and use their valuable insight to further improve their products as it best fit teaching and learning needs. In partnership with PwC, SVEF provides free Ed Tech assessments to school districts in Santa Clara and San Mateo County. Together, we have created a comprehensive tool to assess districts and their journey in leveraging Ed Tech across the district. The premiere event is Pitch Games, where edtech startups get to pitch directly to education leaders, winning teams are connected with the iHub network to develop their product.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.edsurge.com/research/special-reports/state-of-edtech-2016>

<sup>2</sup> <http://tech.ed.gov/files/2015/12/NETP16.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.edsurge.com/research/special-reports/state-of-edtech-2016>

<sup>4</sup> <http://svefoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/PwC-on-Leveraging-Technology-in-the-Classroom-2014-Paper-2.pdf?target=blank>

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/10/technology/facebook-helps-develop-software-that-puts-students-in-charge-of-their-lesson-plans.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/10/technology/facebook-helps-develop-software-that-puts-students-in-charge-of-their-lesson-plans.html?_r=0)

<sup>6</sup> <http://svefoundation.org/ihub/>

