February 2022   *Author: Shelby G. Roberts*

Key Findings

- 93% of principals and 90% of teachers agreed that the blended learning model could benefit students.
- 90% of principals were likely to encourage their teachers to implement and 91% of teachers thought they would implement lessons using the blended learning model.
- 78% of teachers believed they have the necessary resources for implementation.
- Principals felt that teachers could face challenges implementing the model due to student technology issues, lack of time for planning, and could need more professional development.
- Teachers sighted students not having working devices, planning or implementation time constraints, and classroom management or student behavioral issues as common issues they would face.

ESSER Blended Learning Program Overview

Memphis-Shelby County Schools received Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds which aim to address the ongoing impacts that the Covid-19 pandemic has on K–12 education. A portion was allocated to fund classroom implementation of the blended learning model. MSCS partnered with Engage2Learn for community outreach and central office training. MSCS's Professional Learning Department delivered District-wide training to administration and teachers in February on how to use blended learning in the classroom.

Professional Development

Principal Training

Principals participated in professional development around blended learning during their Leadership Development Week in February 2022. After training principals completed an exit survey that consisted of a retrospective pre-post instrument. Principals were asked to rate their agreement to four items before and after they completed the training. They completed open-ended items as well. Ninety-eight (*n* = 98) principals completed the exit survey.
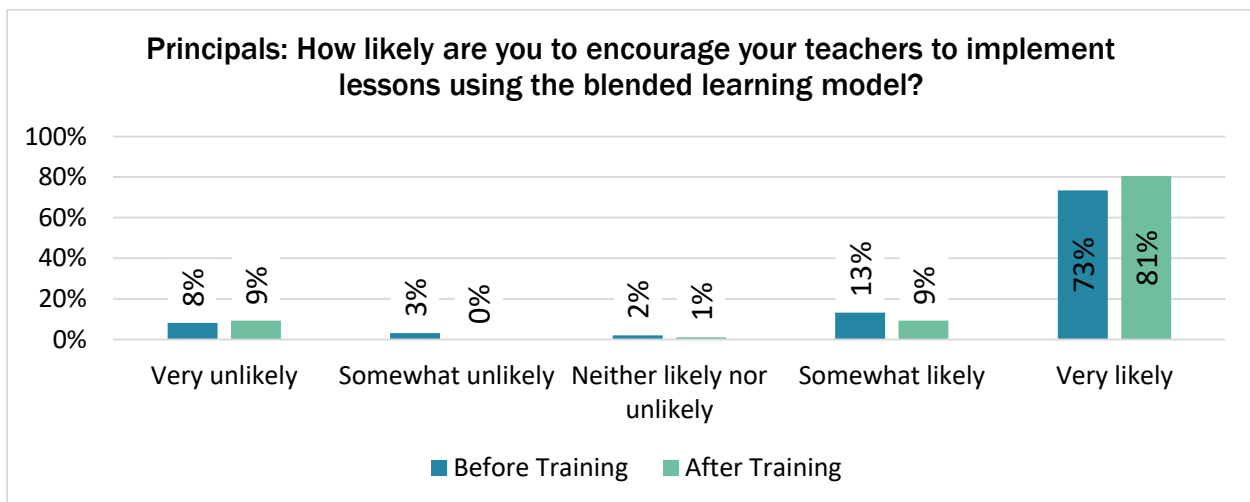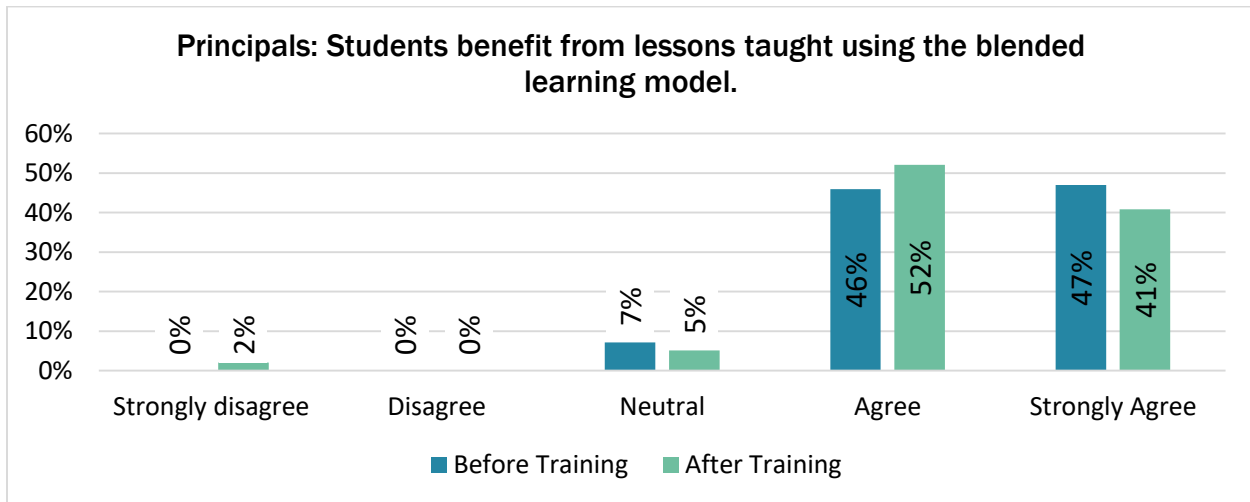
Overall, the principals held primarily positive attitudes toward the use of blended learning in their schools and by their teachers. It is worth noting, however, that after training some principals shifted from a strong positive to a more moderative positive view. For example, before training 47% of principals strongly agreed and 46% agreed that "students benefit from lessons taught using the blended learning model." However, rating their views after training only 41% strongly agreed with the statement and 52% agreed.

Eighty-eight percent (88%) of principals felt that had a thorough understanding of how teachers could implement blended learning using the station rotation model after training. This was a 5-percentage point increase from their feelings before training. Principals also showed a 6-percentage point gain after training on their feelings of having "the recourses

necessary to support their teachers" with implementation (81% before and 87% after training). After training 90% of principals were likely to encourage their teachers to implement lessons using the blended learning model. The full breakdown of responses is shown in the Appendix A.

Principals: Students benefit from lessons taught using the blended learning model.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Before Training	0%	0%	7%	46%	47%
After Training	2%	0%	5%	52%	41%

Principals: How likely are you to encourage your teachers to implement lessons using the blended learning model?

	Very unlikely	Somewhat unlikely	Neither likely nor unlikely	Somewhat likely	Very likely
Before Training	8%	3%	2%	13%	73%
After Training	9%	0%	1%	9%	81%

Principals also completed an open-ended item that asked them to list challenges they foresee when teachers implement blended learning in their classrooms. Seventy-two principals left feedback. They had three primary concerns which were 1) professional development for teachers, 2) student technology/devices, and 3) time. They expressed that teachers would need extensive training and PD in order to effectively implement this model. They also noted that some students don't have devices or the devices are broken which would make implementation challenging for teachers. Finally, they listed time to plan and implement as a major challenge teacher will face when implementing blended learning.
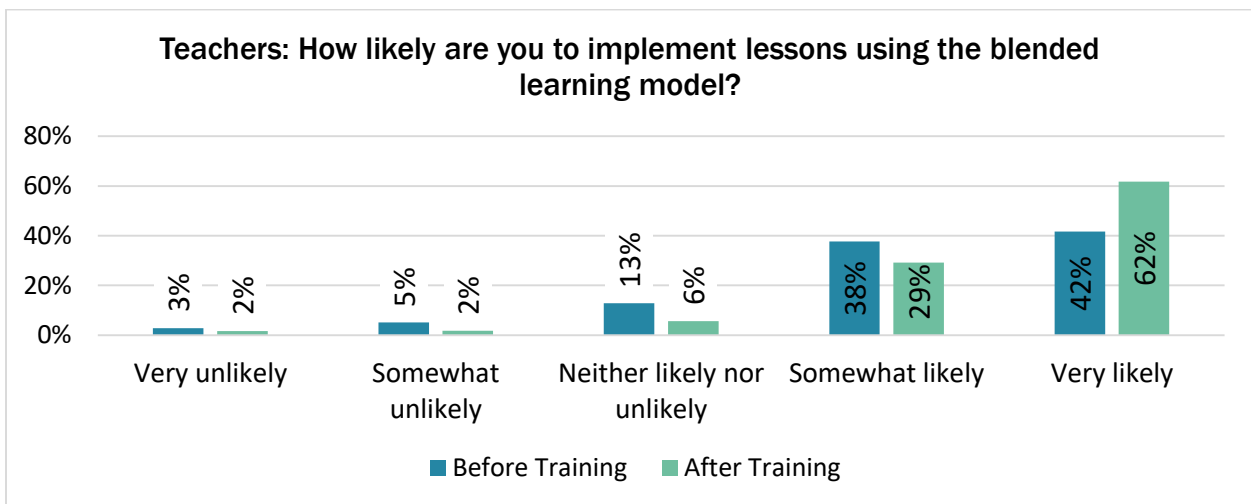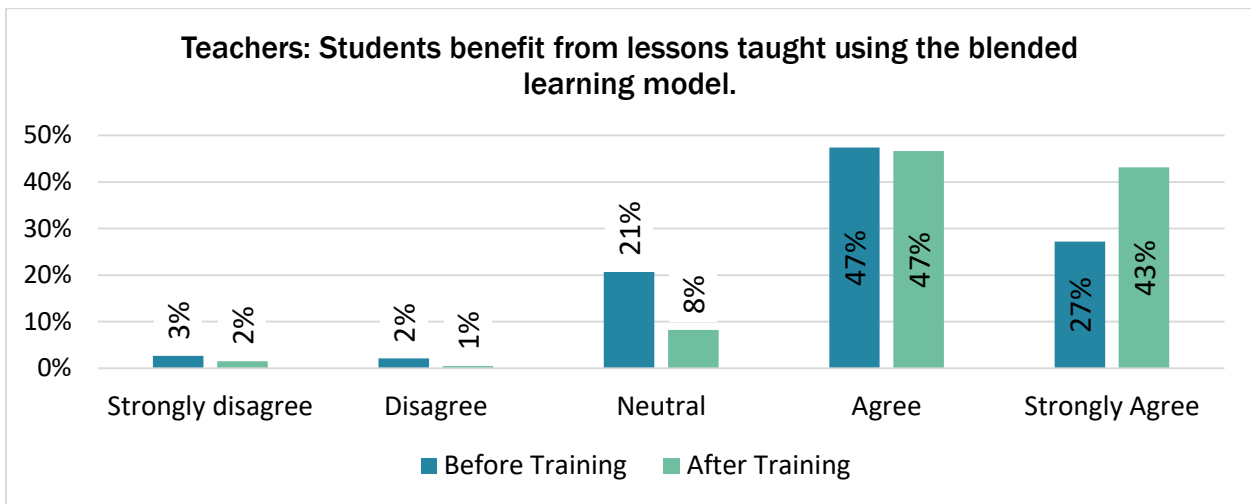
Teacher Training

Teachers attended the District Learning Development (DLD) day on February 21, 2022. A portion of the day was spent on professional development and training on implementing blended learning in their classrooms. A total of 2,996 teachers completed the retrospective pre-post instrument on blended learning on their exit survey. ELA teachers represented 40% of the respondents followed by math, science, other subject areas, then social studies (27%, 15%, 12%, 7%, respectively).

Overwhelmingly teachers reported positive responses to the items after training. Before training, 75% of teachers (n = 2,233) agreed that students could benefit from blended learning lessons. This increased to 90% agreement after training. Similarly, before training only 67% of teachers felt that had a thorough understanding of how to implement this type of lesson, but after training 89% felt they had a solid understanding. Overall, 91% of teachers said they were likely to implement a blended learning lesson. Additional data can be found in Appendix B.

Teachers: Students benefit from lessons taught using the blended learning model.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Before Training	3%	2%	21%	47%	27%
After Training	2%	1%	8%	47%	43%

Teachers: How likely are you to implement lessons using the blended learning model?

	Very unlikely	Somewhat unlikely	Neither likely nor unlikely	Somewhat likely	Very likely
Before Training	3%	5%	13%	38%	42%
After Training	2%	2%	6%	29%	62%

Teachers also completed an open-ended item about challenges they thought they might face when implementing blended learning in their classroom. Two thousand two hundred twenty-six teachers ($n = 2,226$) left feedback on challenges. Teachers primary envisioned challenges with students not having working devices with them, planning and implementation time, and classroom management or student behavioral issues.

Conclusion

Overall, both teachers and principals help positive attitudes toward the implementation of blended learning lessons. Both groups benefited from training, showing more positive responses after training. While teachers indicate they are likely to implement this instructional method in their classroom, they highlighted challenges they would likely face. The District should continue to support the 1:1 student device initiative so that students are able to fully participate in this format of instruction, and school administration needs to ensure that teachers have the time to plan effective lessons using the blended learning model.

Principal Data

Principal Responses to Survey Items					
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Students benefit from lessons taught using the blended learning model.					
Before Training	0	0	7	45	46
After Training	2	0	5	51	40
I have a thorough understanding of how teachers can implement blended learning lessons using the station rotation model.					
Before Training	0	2	15	58	23
After Training	4	1	7	57	29
I have the resources necessary to support my teachers when implementing blended learning lessons using the station rotation model.					
Before Training	0	8	11	56	23
After Training	2	6	5	51	34
	Very unlikely	Somewhat unlikely	Neither likely nor unlikely	Somewhat likely	Very likely
How likely are you to encourage your teachers to implement lessons using the blended learning model?					
Before Training	8	3	2	13	72
After Training	9	0	1	9	79

APPENDIX B

Teacher Data

Teacher Responses to Survey Items					
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Students benefit from lessons taught using the blended learning model.					
Before Training	80	63	620	1419	814
After Training	45	15	247	1397	1292
I have a thorough understanding of how to implement blended learning lessons using the station rotation model.					
Before Training	82	201	711	1331	671
After Training	37	33	270	1496	1160
I have the resources necessary to implement blended learning lessons in my classroom.					
Before Training	132	314	690	1267	593
After Training	90	190	376	1332	1008
	Very unlikely	Somewhat unlikely	Neither likely nor unlikely	Somewhat likely	Very likely
How likely are you to implement lessons using the blended learning model?					
Before Training	83	152	385	1128	1248
After Training	50	52	167	875	1852

Teacher Sample Sizes	
Subject	*n*
ELA	1197
Math	802
Science	437
Social Studies	210
Other	350