

# PUBLISHER'S LETTER

## Class act taking shape

No doubt many of you have had a front row seat to the importance of technology when it comes to learning. Make that distance learning as our homes have become our classrooms and offices while we adjust to an unprecedented period in our society. Whether your children have Zoomed to connect with their teachers and schoolmates or you have turned to webinars as alternatives to flying somewhere for training in person, we all are getting a taste of the state of education technology.

I say “taste” because EdTech takes all shapes and forms. The companies to which we introduce you in this edition of TechConnect are just a sample of the variety that are now calling Arizona their home.

They are getting their share of a market that is on an upward trajectory. A recent Australian government study of the U.S. market—yes, Australia sees the potential of customers here—forecast the value of our nation's EdTech industry to be \$43 billion with more than 1,500 companies as of last year. Further, a timely report issued by multinational Grand View Research forecasts the global EdTech market to reach \$285.2 billion by 2027.

Other measures of value were revealed in studies included in an overview of the industry published by InvestmentBank.com:

- K-12 students attending schools with technological integration efforts showed an average increase of 94 points in SAT I test performance.
- Online collaboration among students was linked to a 20% overall reduction in disciplinary actions and dropout rates.
- There was an increase in respondents' teaching of higher education online courses from 30% in 2013 to 42% in 2017.



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So, what's to come with EdTech? The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Technology took a look in its crystal ball to predict the future of learning technologies. The expected trends include:

- Increased use of simulations so students can experience working together on a project without leaving their classrooms (or rooms, for that matter). For example, they can be involved actively in a situation that feels urgent, causing them to decide what to measure and how to analyze data so they can solve a challenging problem.
- Augmented reality (AR) to allow investigations of context and history. Students would use mobile devices with AR to support their “field” experience at a local historical site. In addition, the technology lets students view and experience the site from several social perspectives, and to view its structure and uses across time periods.

Our own Arizona Department of Education also is getting ready for a future filled with EdTech. The department has launched a workgroup to create revised educational technology standards for the state. Virtual meetings are underway for educators to work on the standards for adoption in March.

As you likely can tell, we are moving beyond education technology simply meaning having computers in class. Our students not only deserve more, they expect more. And through great expectations will come new ideas that will make lifelong learning a reality for generations to come. ■