



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

Future of Education – Foresight on a Strategic Issue for Government

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Importance of the issue

- **For VA – education benefit – how may it have to change?**
- **Dept of Education – mission to “promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence”**
- **Military Services – major investment in PME and military-related education benefit programs**
- **Dept of Labor – mission to “ ... advance opportunities for profitable employment,” in a knowledge economy**
- **Dept of Justice – mission to “ ... provide federal leadership in preventing and controlling crime”**

For every agency: Your future workforce will have been educated in a system very different from the one we grew up in ... What will their skills, abilities, work-styles, expectations be? How will we attract and retain people who were developed in the education system of the future?



Approach we are employing

Month 1

Frame the Environment

- Define question
- Define key drivers
- Identify sources
- Select foresight method
- Initial brainstorm

Month 2

Research and Analysis

- Brainstorm sessions
- Interviews
- Secondary research
- Workshop
- Engage stakeholders

Month 3

Define the Future

- Additional interviews
- Develop paper
- Engage stakeholders

DEFINING THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION



Project Stage



Execution Steps



Progress Review



Deliverable



The future of education?

KnowledgeWorks Forecast 3.0

A Glimpse into the Future of Learning

In the future...

These changes point the way toward a diverse learning ecosystem in which learning adapts to each child instead of each child trying to adapt to school.

"School" will take many forms. Sometimes it will be self-organized.

Learning will no longer be defined by time and place — unless a learner wants to learn at a particular time and in a particular place.

Learners and their families will create individualized learning playlists reflecting their particular interests, goals, and values.

Those learning playlists might include public schools but could also include a wide variety of digitally-mediated or place-based learning experiences.

Whatever the path, radical personalization will become the norm, with learning approaches and supports tailored to each learner.

Educators' jobs will diversify as many new learning agent roles emerge to support learning.

A wide variety of digital networks, platforms, and content resources will help learners and learning agents connect and learn.

Some of those tools will use rich data to provide insight into learning and suggest strategies for success.

At the same time, geographic and virtual communities will take ownership of learning in new ways, blending it with other kinds of activity.

As more people take it upon themselves to find solutions, a new wave of social innovation will help address resource constraints and other challenges.

Diverse forms of credentials, certificates, and reputation markers will reflect the many ways in which people learn and demonstrate mastery.

Work will evolve so rapidly that continuous career readiness will become the norm.

For KnowledgeWorks' full forecast on the future of learning, see *Recombinant Education: Regenerating the Learning Ecosystem* knowledgeworks.org/strategic-foresight



Drivers of the future of education

Economics of education

What are the costs for the future models for education and what is the value of education in the workforce?

Technology in education

What are the new innovations that enable the future of education?

Workforce demands

What are the key skills and work-styles for the future economy that will change how people learn and work?

Policies and laws

How will policies and laws encourage or impede growth in education



“Factoids from the future”

- **Economics of education**

- By 2030, annual public tuition will be \$44,047. The total cost for a four-year degree will be more than \$205,000
- The number attending college for at least a year will need to rise to 86% by 2025 to keep the Bachelor’s-degree-to-high-school wage premium at 46%
- If current borrowing patterns continue, student debt levels will reach \$2 trillion in 2025 – today’s \$1 trillion in outstanding student loan debt will lead to total lifetime wealth loss of \$4 trillion for indebted households

- **Workforce demands**

- By 2016, 350 million workers will be using their Smartphones in the job
- Projected 29% growth in STEM fields between 2010-2020
- 3 in 4 jobs will demand higher entry level qualifications as the demand for “knowledge workers” grows -- only 42% of employers believe future grads will be adequately trained by their colleges or other pre-employment training
- Skills for 2020 – “sense-making, adaptive thinking, social intelligence, trans-disciplinarity, computational thinking, new media literacy, cognitive load management, design mindset, cross-cultural competency, virtual collaboration”



“Factoids from the future”

- **Technology and education**
 - By 2019, 50% of all high school courses will be delivered online
 - Personalized learning algorithms will be the de facto standard by 2025 in schools that continue the traditional academic learning approach
 - 53% in one survey of experts believe that by 2020 there will have been significant advances in the adoption and use of gamification in education
 - By 2020 there will be countless MOOC accreditation models in use globally
- **Policies and laws**
 - Increased role of for-profit and nonprofit organizations as empowered interest groups in the political arenas that determine education policies
 - “End of exceptionalism“ – education more like other domestic-policy areas vice consigned to single-purpose governance structures
 - New rating system will use access, completion, and affordability metrics to rank colleges and universities and tie Federal money to the ratings
 - The number of mobile students and transnational education arrangements will grow significantly by 2020



Synthesis → hypotheses

Economics:

- High outcome value from education investment will demand more multi-dimensional degrees and education
- Cost-driven disparities in access to education will diminish significantly
- High cost of traditional education will drive students and institutions to innovative learning/teaching methods

Workforce demands

- Increased dynamic and collaborative learning methods and tools will result in employees demanding similar conditions in their work environments
- Employers in most fields will require much higher skill levels and multi-dimensional skills in employees at every level

Technology

- Tech innovations will enable many more to engaged in the teaching/learning process
- Technology innovations will enable highly personalized learning and ability to assess and measure performance
- Technology will blur the line between social and skill development and reduce the role of schools in both

Policies

- The balance of power in setting policy will change from few and governmental to many; multi-sector; maybe multi-national
- Education policies and policies in other areas (economic, equal opportunity, etc) will be increasingly desynchronized



Cross-impact analysis

	Economic Hypth.1	Economic Hypth.2	Economic Hypth.3	Workforce Hypth.1	Workforce Hypth.2	Tech Hypth.1	Tech Hypth.2	Tech Hypth.3	Policies Hypth.1	Policies Hypth.2
Economic Hypth.1										
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Workforce Hypth.1										
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Discussion – Implications?

- **For your agency?**
- **For government?**