

News, Insights & Trends Shaping the Education Industry

Table of Contents

- 1 Trends in Media Literacy Education: Part 1 of a 2 Part Series
- 1 Editors' Note
- 2 Future of Education Technology Conference: EdTech Highlights
- 3 Pearson Unaudited Q4 Results Show Strong Progress
- 5 Top Higher Education Stories with Continuing Impact in 2022
- 6 Kahoot! Group Achieves Growth in Q4
- 7 What is Media Literacy?
- 8 People Briefs
- 8 Partnerships and Acquisitions
- 9 News Briefs

Databank

- 4 Pearson Revenue by Business - Select Businesses
- 8 US Media Literacy Policy Update 2021
- 9 Stockwatch Chart

EMA Pulse

How to Identify Fake News in 10 Steps

- ✓ Do a Visual Assessment
- ✓ Identify the News Outlet
- ✓ Check the Web Domain
- ✓ Check the "About Us" Section
- ✓ Identify the Author
- ✓ Identify the Central Message
- ✓ Assess Spelling, Grammar, and Punctuation
- ✓ Analyze Sources and Quotes
- ✓ Find Other Articles
- ✓ Turn to Fact Checkers

Source: ProQuest.

FOCUS FEATURE

Trends in Media Literacy Education: Part 1 of a 2 Part Series

With this article, Education Market Advisor launches **Focus Feature**, a monthly in-depth article where your editors report on and analyze the implications of a critical trend that directly impacts your market strategy.

We're starting off our *focus feature* trends series with an examination of *media literacy*, a field that is rapidly gaining traction and is opening up new publishing opportunities for the educational market.

This special two-part *focus feature* report takes a deep look at how growing awareness of the need for media literacy is impacting the plans of states and school districts as well as which publishers are carving out a niche in serving current and anticipated demand for teaching media literacy.

See "Media Literacy" on p. 6

Editors' Note

Welcome to the premier issue of the newly named and designed Simba Information newsletter! We hope you like the refreshed and more up-to-date look.

Not only are we refreshing our design in 2022, we are refining our editorial focus, too. We will do this by reaching out to you to discover precisely what data, insights, and intelligence are most critical to you right now. We hope to better understand and serve the complex and fast-changing education market through your feedback.

As editors of the publication, we would, of course, be delighted to hear from you anytime. Please email us any comments, concerns, and most importantly, your suggestions as to what you'd like to see us uncover and report on in 2022 and as we advance.



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Future of Education Technology Conference: EdTech Highlights

Companies that attended the National Future of Education Technology Conference (FETC)-held this year from January 26-29 in Palm Beach, Florida- introduced a variety of new educational technology products.

The conference featured an Expo Hall that displayed new technology solutions aimed at addressing some of the pressing issues impacting classrooms, schools, and districts. FETC conference attendees were able to schedule meetings with the exhibitors to receive product demos and information through the event platform.

Among companies showcasing the new products were:

BrainPop—BrainPop (New York, NY), an educational technology company aimed at providing solutions to help students understand social studies, science, math, and other various subjects, introduced a new supplemental middle school science product called BrainPop Science. The product is meant to address the biggest shifts and challenges within the new science standards through customizable lessons. The “open-and-go” lessons are aimed at building background knowledge and developing deeper understanding of real science topics within the classroom. The lessons can be used either in a physical classroom or remotely.

ESL Library—ESL Library (Winnipeg, MB) introduced a new and improved collaborative platform for teachers and administrators and added a sharing feature to The Folders system. Educators can now share custom folders with other users in their group with the addition of the feature. The user is permitted to add any resource provided through the ESL Library and custom create resources and folders. This feature is aimed at helping members of the same school or district the means to collaborate to develop curriculum and unit plans.

Instructure—Instructure (Salt Lake City, UT) announced that Certica Assessment and Analytics Solutions (Wakefield, MA) have officially joined the Instructure suite of products and will now be part of Canvas LMS and MasteryConnect. Certica’s assessments, item banks, and learning analytics are being integrated into the Canvas learning management platform to create a streamlined K12 learning experience.

JAR Systems—JAR Systems (Bradenton, FL) specializes in Intelligent Charging, management, and security solutions for mobile technology. The company aims to solve the “at-the-desk” charging problem within the classroom. The company introduced the Active Charging upgrade for Adapt4 USB-C Charging Stations, which includes four power banks, adapters to connect older devices, and a USB-C charging station for power banks and mobile devices.

Newline Interactive—Newline Interactive (Allen, TX) introduced

the Newline Flex, an all-in-one touch monitor designed to increase desktop collaboration while reducing classroom cable clutter. The goal of the device is to allow teachers to reduce the cables needed to teach through the plug-and-play device. Teachers should be able to connect their school provided computer and use the built-in adjustable camera and microphone to aid in distance learning.

OverDrive Education—OverDrive Education (Cleveland, OH) introduced the Sora reading app to provide educators with a means for accessing student-level literacy data for title assignments and class text sets. Educators, with appropriate permissions will be able to see total reading time, reading sessions, progress and more. The ultimate goal of Sora is to provide educators with an understanding of student reading data to better inform reading instruction. The app is available in OverDrive’s Marketplace.

PikMyKid—PikMyKid (Tampa, FL) introduced an interactive Emergency Alert System that allows districts and school personnel to announce emergency information and obtain an immediate response. The system allows for proper protocols to be followed and messages to be shared and returned to every device within the assigned group. The system also allows the group to communicate internally to further provide immediate and accurate information and provides external alarm activation through the school on an “incident-specific” basis.

Terrapin—Terrapin (Swanton, VT) introduced three new products: Logo, The Robot Sports Camera, and The Bee-Bot Emulator.

- Logo is the original coding application for children that was developed by MIT. The version introduced at FETC provides the latest technology as well as many new features and capabilities. Logo works online and as a standalone program and includes the integrated control of Blue-Bot, Tuff-Bot, and InO-Bot robots with other features.
- The Robot Sports Camera provides a simple way to capture images and provide robots with vision. The camera allows users to compile still images or video of what the robot sees by using an included mount attachment.
- The Bee-Bot Emulator is a distance and remote learning tool that helps to build on students’ experiences by extending coding through working with the emulator at home. The emulator provides the user a choice of any of Terrapin’s learning mats as background and allows the user to use the Bee-Bot to travel over the learning mat. Destinations can be chosen through online directional buttons and allows the user to develop a plan for the Bee-Bot to follow.

VariQuest—VariQuest Design Software (Plymouth, MN) which produces visual learning tools, introduced the Engage Every Learner Content Update Fall 2020 expansion pack. This expansion pack provides over 2,500 new and updated

templates, cutouts, graphics, fonts, and health and safety, social-emotional learning, and sensory path layouts. These changes will help schools develop curriculum, school signage, and emotional support. There are over 22,000 content options available through VariQuest Design Software.

ViewSonic—ViewSonic (Brea, CA) introduced two products: the ViewSonic Viewboard Pen Display and Viewboard Notepad. The Pen Display is a 13.3-inch portable teaching device, while the Notepad allows users to take digitized notes in real-time.

For a full list of educational technology products that were introduced please visit: <https://blog.fetc.org/fetc2022newproducts/>

Pearson Unaudited Q4 Results Show Strong Progress

Pearson (London/Hoboken, NJ) reported strong progress in unaudited fourth quarter results on January 19, 2022, with full group sales up 8% and an expected adjusted operating profit up 33% compared to last year.

Andy Bird, Chief Executive, said, “We made great progress in Q4 and are delivering a strong full year performance, with sales growth and profit exceeding our original guidance. Led by a strong management team, we are repositioning the business, driving digital innovation and an increased focus on the consumer through the launch of Pearson+. We are well placed to build on this momentum in the year ahead and look to the future with confidence.”

The company growth in Q4 is attributed to strong performance in Assessment & Qualifications, continued momentum in virtual learning, greater performance in higher education, and growth in workforce skills performance, and English Language Learning (ELL).

Assessment & Qualifications

Pearson saw sales in Assessment and Qualifications, the largest business, up 18% following strength in sales for Professional Certification (VUE), Clinical, and US Student Assessment. VUE assessment volume grew to 16.8 million, a 30% increase, due to development of existing programs and new client launches.

Strong 46% growth in Pearson’s online proctoring service (OnVue) reflects continued demand for remote testing services and was a great contributor to the performance of Assessment & Qualifications. Sales in US Student Assessment were up 2% in Q4. The growth in US Student Assessment can be attributed to increases in VUE, a high-stakes testing computer-based exam platform. The growth illustrated in VUE testing is due to strong recovery from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and is a clear improvement from Q4 2020.

Virtual Learning

Virtual Learning sales were up 11% for the year with growth of 17% in Virtual Schools, (formerly known as Pearson Online and Blended Learning), driven by strong enrollment growth in the prior academic school year (2020-2021). Enrollment growth of 1% occurred in Online Program Management (OPM) an online degree platform through Pearson with customizable technology illustrating continued interest in virtual learning. OPM sales further illustrate virtual learning interest as the quarter showed an 8% increase in sales.

Interest in online program development continues. For example, OPM will continue to partner with Maryville University in Nursing until 2033, and Northeastern University has added new online master’s degree and certification options in Nursing and Healthcare. This interest carries into the Virtual Schools announcement of its first Connections Academy, a K-12 education program that offers online learning opportunities to aid in remote learning in the state of Virginia with enrollment beginning this year (2022).

Higher Education

Higher Education sales were down 5% for the year due to a 6% decline in US Higher Education courseware that was slightly offset by a 1% growth in courseware sales to the Canadian and UK markets.

Sales in Inclusive Access, a program that provides textbook access to all students on the first day of class with a discount of up to 70% off the cost of required course materials, continued to grow, rising to 18% in the 2020-2021 school year in not-for-profit institutions. The growth represents 16% of total US Higher Education Courseware revenue compared to last year’s 13% of revenue.

Lower international sales in Q4 were offset partially by growth in US Higher Education Courseware H2 sales (this illustrates growth in the current academic year). US Higher Education Courseware sales declined 9% due to a 6% decline in combined course per enrollment and overall enrollment and price pressures caused by the mix/shift from print to etext.

Workforce Skills

Sales in Workforce Skills increased by 6%, showing strong growth in GED and TalentLens, Pearson’s occupational testing platform that provides assessment products to recruit and develop workers. Growth in Business Technology and Education Council (BTEC) qualifications and Apprenticeships also contributed to the 6% growth in Workforce Skills.

Q4 revenue in Workforce Skills grew 13% overall, due in part to Pearson’s BTEC phasing benefit, via which the programs are provided through various levels.

English Language Learning (ELL)

English Language Learning (ELL) sales grew 17% for the full year spurred by a recovery in sales in International Courseware and the Pearson Test of English (PTE) following declines caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

PTE volumes grew 25% compared to 2020. Q4 sales of 21% were driven by strong performance in PTE in Australia and India as local COVID-19 restrictions were lifted. English courseware also showed growth as sales rebounded due to growth in international markets.

Outlook

Full company financial results will be announced on February 25, 2022.

Pearson +, a subscription service for digital textbooks, continues to grow with 2.7 million subscribers and is slated to continue growing along with interest in virtual offerings. This progress shows a strong expansion in paid subscriptions from MyLab and Mastering (teaching and learning platforms that allow users to access learning outcomes within selected curriculum) and is indicative of growing investments in virtual offerings.

Pearson Higher Education's flagship product, Revel an interactive reading and learning platform that provides students

Revenue by business - select businesses

£bn	2021	2020	Underlying change (%)*
Assessment & Qualifications	1.20	1.08	18%
Pearson VUE	0.53	0.47	19%
US Student Assessment	0.28	0.25	17%
Clinical Assessment	0.22	0.18	30%
UK & International Qualifications	0.18	0.17	3%
Virtual Learning	0.71	0.69	11%
Virtual Schools	0.45	0.41	17%
Online Program Management	0.26	0.28	1%
Higher Education	0.85	0.96	(5%)
US Higher Education	0.70	0.81	(6%)
International Higher Education	0.15	0.15	1%

*Underlying growth rates exclude both currency movements and portfolio changes. Unless otherwise stated, growth rates relate to the twelve-month period.

Source: Pearson's Full Year 2021 Data Sheet (unaudited).

a means of reading, practicing, and studying in a single sign-on experience has fully incorporated Pearson Learning Platform's capabilities. Features include streamlined access to all student learning management systems, which provide users with enhanced features and a new mobile design. Faethm—a workforce AI and predictive analytics company acquired by Pearson on September 7, 2021—is expected to further enhance Pearson's Workforce Skills capabilities.

Top Higher Education Stories with Continuing Impact in 2022

Early each year Simba selects and summarizes the top 10 stories published in the previous year that are deemed to be most significant and worthy of republishing. Significant stories, in this context, are those that identify trends expected to continue impacting specific companies and/or the educational market in 2022.

Some themes that emerged from this year's selection of the top 10 stories include:

- ongoing interest in and demand for digital content
- company reorganizations and restructuring based on continued merger and acquisition activity.

The Top Ten Stories of 2021

1. Vista Language Portfolio Acquisition:

Vista Higher Learning (Boston, MA) acquired John Wiley & Sons (Hoboken, NJ) world languages portfolio. The acquisition supplemented and diversified Vista's portfolio of language programs through the addition of 55 world languages. Vista's language learning solutions for K-12 and higher education were expanded through the acquisition. (EM 6/2)

2. McGraw Hill Revenue Impacted by Digital:

McGraw Hill's (New York, NY) digital billings in the last twelve months showed distinct growth in digital business, which reached more than \$1 billion in sales. By the beginning of the 2022 fiscal year, the publisher's digital offerings have overtaken its traditional offerings. Higher Education traditional print fell to 15% and K-12 traditional print fell to 56% in fiscal 2021. The decrease in traditional print revenue is evident of a market that is focused on digital growth. (EM 2/26, 7/2, 12/3)

3. Pearson Reorganization:

Pearson (London/Hoboken, NJ) acquired Faethm, a workforce AI and predictive analytics company. The acquisition was a key component of Pearson's learner and talent development strategy to provide learners with the skills they need through every life stage at school and work. This acquisition furthered the company's plan of operating in five new divisions (Virtual

Education, Higher Education, ELL, Workforce Skills, and Assessments & Qualifications) and to reposition Pearson as a consumer-facing company. (EM 3/12, 9/10)

4. 2U Revenue Growth:

Online management firm 2U (Lanham, MD) increased revenue 32% to \$232.5 million in the first quarter of 2020. This increase occurred in its Degree Program and Alternative Credential segments and was driven by growth in full course equivalent enrollments which positively impacted second quarter results (30% growth). Online learning platform edX (Cambridge, MA), a non-profit open course online platform founded by Harvard and MIT, entered into agreement to increase education-to-career pathways with 2U in November 2021. The agreement to provide more education-to-career pathways is expected to influence enrollment growth in 2022. (EM 5/21, 7/2, 8/13)

5. Chegg Changes in 2021:

Chegg (Santa Clara, CA) began updating platform offerings for educators and faculty in June 2021. The content provided on the platform augmented and enhanced the existing Chegg Study service. However, Chegg's Study step-by-step solutions have been found to be in violation of copyright law and fair-use according to Pearson. The lawsuit resulting from this violation may impact Chegg offerings in the years to come. (EM 9/24, 12/3)

6. Initiatives to Assist Students:

The College Board's *Trends in College Pricing and Student Aid* reports for 2021-2022 showed an average increase of 1.6% for in-state tuition and 1.3% for two-year public colleges. Seeing the increased stress caused by rising tuition costs for its students, the Alamo College District (San Antonio, TX) implemented a free textbook program to new and current student in its network of its five community colleges during spring and summer 2022. (EM 11/19, 12/3)

7. Dual Enrollment New Opportunity:

Dual enrollment offerings vary widely among schools and communities. K12 Private Academy (Herndon, VA), an online private college preparatory school, began undertaking changes to dual enrollment offerings to provide high school students with consistent access to over 500 online college-level courses state-wide. The course material was provided by the online classroom platform Stride (Herndon, VA) and by Acadeum (Austin, TX), an online course sharing platform. High school students enrolled in K12 Private Academy can apply the credits earned through online courses toward their GPA and graduation requirements at any participating higher education institution or other accepting schools. (EM 10/1)

8. Cengage Reorganization:

The first quarter of Cengage's (Boston, MA) fiscal year 2021, ending on June 30, proved to be a strong start to the year following sustained momentum in higher education and

workforce skills in the US. Cengage changed its name to Cengage Group during this time to, “symbolize the important role each business plays in our go-forward strategy,” according to the company. Cengage expects to continue to use its three-pronged growth strategy: aggressive adoption of digital content, increased ed2go workforce skill offerings, and synergy across technological distribution platforms. (EM 9/10)

9. BNED Revenues Up with Back to Campus Retail Sales:

Barnes & Noble Education (Basking Ridge, NJ) generated \$240.8 million in revenue during the fiscal quarter that ended in July 2021. Increased revenues were driven by strong expansion in retail sales (49.8%) and Digital Student Services (41.4%). Barnes & Noble Education expects positive results in fiscal year 2022. (EM 9/10)

10. Career Colleges:

The for-profit career college industry continues to adapt to shifting demands in the post-secondary landscape. Among the notable developments in the industry was the closure of Education Futures Group (Richardson, TX) and the renewal of strong oversight of the for-profit education sector by the Biden administration. This oversight was supported by the Federal Trade Commission which warned over 70 of the largest for-profit colleges that they would face hefty fines if they made misleading claims about job and earnings prospects. (EM 11/5)

Kahoot! Group Achieves Growth in Q4

On January 11, 2022, Kahoot! ASA (Oslo), a leading learning platform company, announced its fiscal results for the quarter ending December 31, 2021. The company achieved growth and increased customer activity in its last quarter. Revenue was up 126% for the quarter and 137% for the full year.

Clever, a single-sign-on platform acquired by Kahoot!, showed strong performance results for the first half of the 2021-2022 school year with over 60% of all U.S. K-12 Schools and 740 app partners using the single sign-on platform.

Kahoot! stated in the press release that it ended the quarter below its expectations due in part to instability caused by the omicron variant of COVID-19. Despite this, the company was able to reach more than 1.1 million paid subscribers across all company services.

Product Line News and Developments

Kahoot! released its fourth quarter trading update and detailed the growth and developments in each product line. Developments range from the incorporation of the company's 2021 acquisitions to increased subscription abilities in online offerings. The product lines detailed in the report are listed below along with the growth and developments that each experienced in the company's fourth fiscal quarter.

- **Kahoot! at Work**—Kahoot! at Work integrated Motimate (a mobile learning platform) and Actimo (an employee communication app) into the company suite of solutions aimed at empowering employee education, engagement with the audience, and enhancing company culture. Kahoot! 360 Spirit, a corporate communication platform, enhanced company Kahoot! at Work offerings with the launch of Kahoot! Courses, a course design platform aimed at engaging learners in product training, onboarding, and mandatory training.
- **Kahoot! at School**—Kahoot! at School expanded its offerings to teachers, students, schools, campuses, universities and districts. The new capabilities include tailored dynamic lessons, personalized Bitmoji classrooms, the ability to create collections, and printable Kahoot! handouts. Kahoot! EDU extended two features as well by adding Team Mode, a collaborative means of communication through Kahoot!, and Math Labs, which offers digital manipulatives to clarify abstract concepts in math instruction, by DragonBox.
- **Clever**—In 2022, Clever is focused on launching the click-to-buy App Store, international expansion, and on creating strong commercial-added growth for its large network. Clever is expected to maintain network growth on its single-sign-on platform while increasing commercial growth in 2022.
- **Kahoot! at Home**—Kahoot! at Home launched Kahoot! Kids and the new Kahoot!+ Study subscriptions to support learners at every age. The Kahoot! Kids app enables parents to become participants in the learning activities for their preschool and young learners. Kahoot! +Study enables higher ed students to engage in study, exam preparation, and community connection through its range of features.
- **Kahoot! Academy**—Kahoot! Academy launched the subscription service Kahoot!+ AccessPass a premium content subscription that provides access to a comprehensive library of content as well as ready-to-use resources on a large range of topics for all ages. The launch of the subscription service provides Kahoot! users with the ability to access material without advertisements through a monthly price of \$5 or an annual price of \$36 per year.

Media Literacy, cont'd. from p.1

The field currently presents three distinct market opportunities:

- texts and materials for teaching students in secondary and higher education
- professional development materials for teacher training
- texts for faculty at graduate Schools of Education

This month we provide background on why interest in teaching media literacy is rising and what leading states are doing in response.

Why Media Literacy Now?

Interest in media literacy instruction is increasing quickly among a wide range of educational planning stakeholders, including state legislators, school districts, school planning committees, advisory councils, and teachers themselves. Why is this happening now?

Erin McNeill, Executive Director of the Watertown MA based advocacy group Media Literacy Now (<https://medialiteracynow.org/>) told Education Market Advisor that: “We’re seeing a lot of momentum now with media literacy as we are all seeing the consequences of consuming mis- and disinformation.” She added that “lawmakers are recognizing that it is their job to set educational priorities for young people in their states and that media literacy is not ‘just one more thing’ but is essential today, and so lawmakers need to find a way to provide resources.”

The recognition of the importance of media literacy is nothing new – in fact UNESCO established media literacy as a global initiative back in the late 1970s. But today there is an increasingly urgent recognition that young people must be better prepared to distinguish fact from opinion, to identify credible information from misinformation, and to avoid getting triggered by malevolent content online. Forces driving this heightened concern include:

- recognition that the way algorithms and cultural differences are driving the way news and media are consumed has contributed to a politically polarized society detrimental to a working democracy
- the 2020 Facebook whistleblower’s Congressional testimony, which exposed how decisions by Facebook were causing harm:
 - Its algorithm was promoting posts containing misinformation, as well as those that incited anger and other negative emotions.
 - The company’s Instagram platform contributed to rising mental health problems among young people.
- the rise in online misinformation regarding the efficacy of methods for reducing the incidence or severity of Covid-19 including mask wearing and vaccinations

All of these forces have created a new imperative within the education community: how can media literacy be effectively taught to students so they can be “inoculated” from misinformation, disinformation, and pernicious online information?

Media Literacy Education in the United States

As mentioned above, new forces are creating momentum to accelerate media literacy instruction, but the United States has been a laggard in this field. Countries that are leaders and either require media literacy in their school’s curriculum, or made

What is Media Literacy?

What exactly is media literacy? If you ask five people, you will likely get five different answers. There are, in fact, multiple definitions. Further complicating the matter is that there are several closely related literacies. See the box below for a guide on how to distinguish and understand these overlapping literacies:

The Forms of Media Literacy

- *Media Literacy.* An umbrella term that includes all the below literacies. The National Association of Media Literacy Education (namle.net) defines media literacy as “*the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, create, and act using all forms of communication.*”
- *News Literacy.* How to understand and analyze news sources and news content.
- *Data Literacy.* The ability to read, work with, analyze, and communicate with data.
- *Information Literacy.* How to understand all forms of information one encounters, with a special emphasis on deciphering and analyzing the range of information resources a student may encounter when performing academic research.
- *Digital Literacy.* The ability to understand and effectively navigate the embedded characteristics, functions, and messages of digital information. (A variation of Digital Literacy is *Digital Citizenship*. This kind of instruction is typically less about media literacy and more about acceptable and unacceptable online behaviors, particularly the harms of cyberbullying.)

Another term that is often used along with discussion of these literacies is **Critical Thinking**. A good way to understand the connection between the two is that media literacy instruction provides students with the ability to think critically about the media.

A wide range of educators play a leading role in creating, teaching, and advising how to teach these skills. Among them are librarians, journalists, secondary and higher education instructors, school media specialists, and media industry professionals.

other inroads include Finland, Estonia, and Ukraine. In those countries, the ability to identify misinformation is considered a national security issue. Sweden and Norway are also leaders in media literacy. Canada, with a notable history in teaching media, is another country that for years has emphasized the importance of media literacy in the classroom.

Why is the US lagging behind in this initiative? Several barriers have impeded growth. Foremost among these are:

- The US must come to an agreement on educational standards and curricula 50 times, on a state-by-state basis, while other countries have a single federal agency to apply curricula and educational standard changes across the nation.
- Very few teachers have the necessary background knowledge to teach media literacy. Hence the need for teacher training, and funding for such training, is a critical preliminary step.
- There is no “room” in the daily classroom schedule. Teachers are already overwhelmed trying to fit everything that must be taught – especially, of course, topics that will be measured in standardized tests – into the standard school schedule.
- Misunderstandings about what media literacy is, media literacy is not ideological nor political, but the ability to decipher messages and think critically about information.

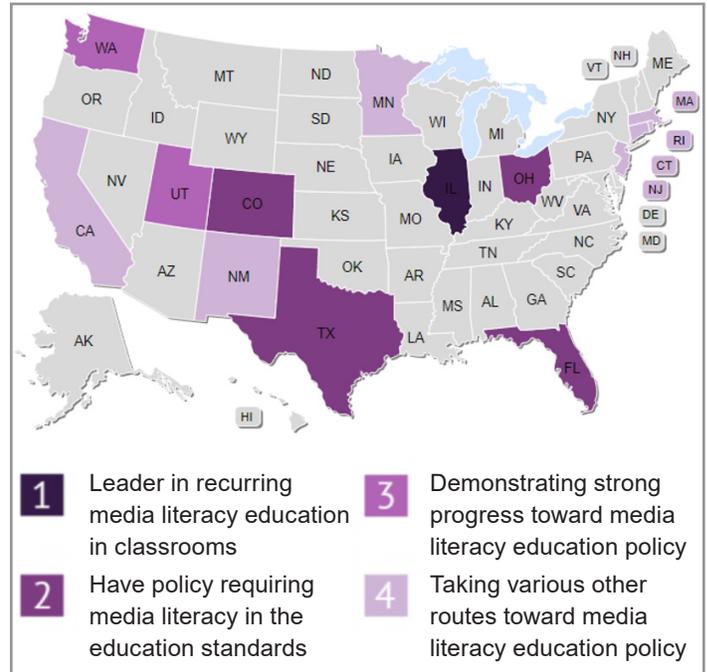
State Initiatives

Despite these formidable barriers, certain states have made notable progress in advancing media literacy among their populations. According to the “US Media Literacy Policy Update 2021” report published by Media Literacy Now, the following states are leaders in creating media literacy policy and are ranked by the strength of their actions:

1. Illinois
2. Colorado, Florida, Ohio, and Texas
3. Utah and Washington
4. California, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico and Rhode Island

See the graphic at the top of the next column that identifies what each of those states have been doing in their media literacy policies.

- Illinois leads the list because, according to the Policy Update “it is the first state to require that media literacy is taught in the classroom.” Other notable state initiatives include those of:
- Washington, which passed a bill requiring education leaders to convene a group of experts to identify issues and barriers to introducing media literacy to the classroom
- New Mexico, which passed a law that funded teacher professional development in media literacy
- Rhode Island, which last summer performed a survey of educators’ perspectives on media literacy (A summary of the survey results is available on the state’s [Media Education Lab website.](#))



Source: US Media Literacy Policy Update 2021.

Up Next

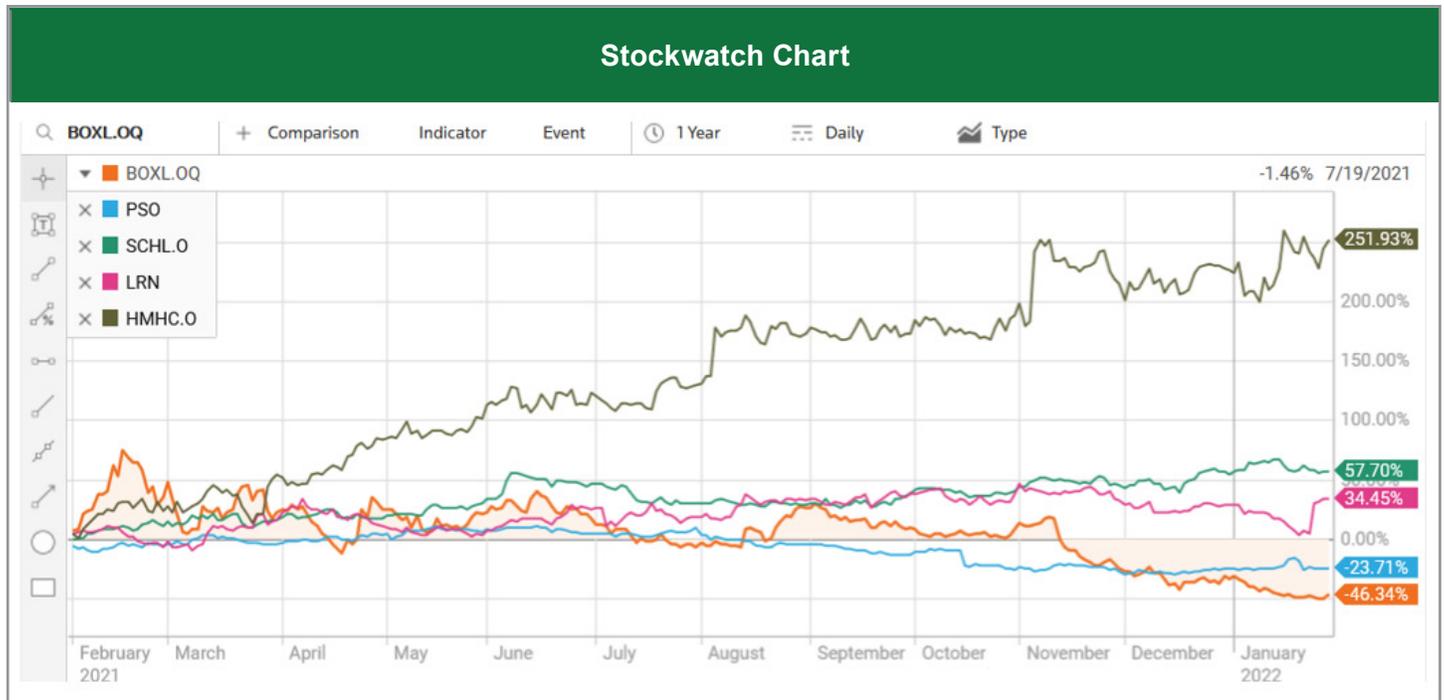
What has been the response of educational instructional publishers to this movement? One publisher, Routledge, has been making particular inroads in addressing the need. In next month’s issue, we will conclude this feature by examining Routledge’s strategy, what other publishers have been doing, identify leading textbooks, and address other larger implications for the industry, including the impact on testing.

People Briefs

- ▶ On January 27, 2022, **7 Mindsets** (Roswell, Georgia), the leading provider of online social-emotional learning (SEL) curriculum and professional development, announced the addition of three executives to the senior leadership team. The executives named were Lawrence Baird Chief Product Officer; Meg Roe Senior Vice President of Marketing and Communications; and Remington Fairlamb Chief Revenue Officer.

Partnerships and Acquisitions

- ▶ **Tools 4 Reading** (Oklahoma City, Oklahoma), a literacy tool resource for reading instruction, announced the acquisition of **The Reading Teacher’s Top Ten Tools** (Oklahoma City, Oklahoma), an online reading course. Dr. Mary Dahlgren, Founder and President of Tools 4



Note: The stocks with symbols are: Boxlight (BOXL.OQ), Pearson (PSO), Scholastic (SCHL.O), Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (HMHC.O), and Stride (LRN).

Source: Reuters.

Reading who has 25 years of experience in the field of education, said of the decision, “The addition of Top Ten Tools perfectly aligns with Tools 4 Reading’s commitment to offer solutions that empower educators with the knowledge and resources necessary to ground reading instruction in the science of reading, Dr. Glaser’s (founder of Top Ten Tools) passion for teaching reading comes through abundantly clear in her course. This is the perfect fit for the Tools 4 Reading family.”

Tools 4 Reading has focused on developing practical training and tools to help educators bridge the gap between science and reading. The resources that are provided are founded in research, easy to implement, and designed specifically to improve literacy instruction. Top Ten Tools is International Dyslexia Association accredited. The online courses provided by Top Ten Tools are designed to enable educators to provide quality reading instruction through immersive courses based in the science of reading. The acquisition will aid Tools 4 Reading in developing more immersive materials and tools for educators to aid in literacy instruction.

- ▶ **VHS Learning** (Boston, Massachusetts) announced on January 25, 2022, that it will continue partnership with four educational organizations that have been with the company for twenty or more years. The schools,

districts, and consortiums helped to pioneer VHS Learning’s online programs. “In 1996 we were awarded a U.S. Department of Education Technology Innovation Challenge Grant. Online learning was in its infancy, and we worked closely with a small group of innovative schools who helped us establish a strong foundation for the work we do today,” said Carol DeFuria, President and CEO of VHS Learning. “Without them, our program could not have grown to its current size, serving students in all 50 US states and 63 countries around the world. This year marks our 26th year of operation, and we want to recognize these forward-thinking partners who are true pioneers in online education.” The four partners are: Anna High School from Anna, Ohio, Catholic Independent Schools from Everett, Massachusetts; Montgomery County Intermediate Unit from Norristown, Pennsylvania; and Nipmuc Regional High School from Upton, Massachusetts.

News Briefs

- ▶ **Kahoot!** (Oslo, Norway), the global learning platform company, announced that Simplified and Traditional Chinese are now supported on the Kahoot! web platform and mobile app through iOS and Android. This language addition enables Kahoot! to provide access to over a billion Chinese speakers. In the past

year more than one million sessions on Kahoot! were hosted in Chinese around the world. Eilert Hanoa, CEO at Kahoot!, said of the addition, "Chinese is one of the most spoken languages in the world. Today, approximately 16% of the world's population speak it, which means a huge opportunity for Kahoot! to enhance the learning experience of millions of users worldwide. With the addition of Simplified and Traditional Chinese, we are making our platform more accessible for educators and students, businesses and lifelong learners who want to unlock their full learning potential through playful learning." This change will further enable Chinese users to access classroom, at home, and workplace sessions around the world.

- **Vector Solutions** (Tampa, Florida), the leading provider of training and software solutions for educational institutions, was named to the [2022 GSV EdTech 150](#), (San Diego, California) a list of the world's most transformational growth companies in digital learning. "As the global pandemic continues to drive learners online, more and more companies are innovating in the digital learning space making it increasingly competitive for companies to make the top 150," said Luben Pampoulov, Partner at GSV Ventures,

in a GSV press release. "We evaluated over 3,000 companies globally this year. The way GSV sees it, Ed is on The Edge, and increasingly more companies have the ideas, know-how, and talent to transform the world and provide all people equal access to the future. We know these companies are well-equipped to help us achieve that goal, and we look forward to watching them do so." All companies were evaluated according to revenue scale, revenue growth, user reach, diverse geographics, and margins profile. Companies on the GSV EdTech 150 list serve three sectors: Lifelong Learning, Higher Education, and K-12, with Vector identified as serving all three sectors.

- **LINQ** (Wilmington) received strategic growth investment from **Welsh, Carson, Anderson, & Stowe** (New York and San Francisco) on January 12, 2022. WCAS is a private equity firm that focuses on technology and healthcare. WCAS joins **Banneker Partners** (San Francisco), the existing backing partner, to further help in the acceleration of LINQ's growth and enhance the Company mission. LINQ provides K-12 schools and state agencies a software platform that enables administrators to improve tracking and record keeping through an integrated suite of solutions that cover a range of services from student services to state nutrition.

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