



Stanford eCorner

Teachers Test and Pitch New Technology

Jennifer Carolan, *New Schools Seed Fund*

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Jennifer Carolan, co-founder and managing director of the NewSchools Seed Fund, describes a shift in how schools are adopting education technology, from top-down implementation to teachers now testing out software and then pitching for license purchasing. Carolan was in conversation with serial entrepreneur and Stanford Consulting Associate Professor Steve Blank.



Transcript

Technology used to come to -- come into schools, innovation came in a car. So the salesperson would drive up and have some CD-ROMs and show the IT specialist Organ Trail or whatever the software was and the IT specialist would purchase that technology with - often without talking to teachers and without having any data on the efficacy of this product and then they would roll it out to the teachers, kind of top-down, force teachers to use it and that's the way technology was - came to our schools in the 1990s. But now, thankfully, the way it's happening is that these teachers are adopting the technology into their classroom, they are using it, they are understanding how it works with their students, they are getting efficacy data doing kind of mini research in their own classrooms and then they will kind of pitch their school leader to purchase the software license. Wow. That's a real shift. It's huge. It's like the difference between PCs entering the corporation versus mainframes being controlled by a single department and a CIO. Yeah, same ideas like consumerization of IT, right, like... That's a great insight. And - but have the entrepreneurs themselves changed, I mean do they all have the same vision that they had in the 1990s or are they more savvy, less savvy, same problems, different problems? So yeah, you saw two of them up there - I am biased, of course, but I think they are amazing like these entrepreneurs are - we have more entrepreneurs coming from engineering and from the consumer tech sector coming into education.