

Microsoft introduces new tools for hybrid learning

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In honor of National Teacher Appreciation Day in the United States, Microsoft has announced the release of several learning tools designed to support both teachers and students in a hybrid in-person, online

educational environment amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to the company, 82 percent of educators agree that the lockdown has actually helped improve online [educational technology](#). Moreover, such technology has also encouraged educators to adapt to an online teaching style.

As schools implement an online learning approach toward a post-pandemic future, several important elements have come into consideration to build out the best tools and teaching methods possible: safety, security skills focus, student centricity, scalability and [social learning](#). Microsoft has developed their [new tools](#) with these aspects in mind, including goals for online learning environments, feedback tools, analytics, and immersive, inclusive experiences for learning complex material.

As an example of the new educational tools released, Microsoft cites Reading Progress, a software [tool](#) designed to customize the learning experience and foster student success. Another such tool is Group Assignments, helping teachers to manage the organization and allocation of group tasks to their students.

Overall, the mission remains to use technology to enhance the learning experience despite locational obstacles such as mandatory remote education. Since the start of the pandemic, technology leveraged in the classroom has become a normal part of daily education spanning all grades across American schools.

In fact, a recent YouGov survey conducted by Microsoft has reported that 71 percent of K-12 educators state they laud technology for facilitating the teaching process. Indeed, as reports have shown a slight decline in [reading skills](#) for some students due to the transition to the hybrid learning, Microsoft has developed the Reading Progress tool in

order to both help educators assess their students' reading progress and support students in advancing literacy skills at their own pace. Even better, this tool is completely free to use.

Now, educators can utilize Reading Progress to save time, visualize the reading progress of their students and interact independently with students using both audio and video. Furthermore, the Reading Progress tool provides a comprehensive view of analytics on students' improvement with reading. Finally, the tool helps educators conserve time by quickly creating both individual and group assignments, accurately and rapidly reviewing assignments with built-in auto-detect features to check for errors and select any segment of the recording in question to review preferred parts of [student](#) submissions.

So far, thanks to such learning technology, Microsoft reports that educators feel that the education process no longer faces significant obstacles due to location and timing.

More information: Holzapfel, B. "Teachers: Thank You for Inspiring Students in Their Learning." Microsoft EDU, 4 May 2021, [educationblog.microsoft.com/en ... ts-in-their-learning](https://educationblog.microsoft.com/en-us/teachers-thank-you-for-inspiring-students-in-their-learning)

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