IAO

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ACCREDITOR

FEATURED

EDUCATION TRENDS TO LOOK OUT FOR IN 2021

→ **What is Nano Learning**

→ **How does virtual reality work?**

→ **Is online schooling going to increase**

Teachers Share How Education Will Change in 2021

TOP **EXCLUSIVE**
7 **EDTECH TRENDS WATCHLIST 2021**

Editor's Note

After 2020, people are really looking forward to 2021 as the year that will help them achieve all the goals that were left incomplete due to the pandemic.

While the threat of coronavirus has not disappeared entirely, it has lowered considerably due to the production of vaccination. Front line workers, especially in education are being vaccinated so we all can return to a new normal, but what will it look like?

Educationists and experts have gathered once more to decide the future of learning and to test different systems to see which one would be more effective. Right now, the world of education is in a hybrid state but the constant rise in the shift towards online education cannot be ignored either.

In our new issue of IAO's Accreditor, we look at the different aspects of what the new year can hold for us and how has January changed things in the spectrum of education.

"The beginning is the most important part of the work."

Jeff Wright, Editor in Chief

CONTENTS

What to expect from this year?

2020 has seen a lot of challenges in the field education, with the massive transition being the one to online learning. Applications and software that were previously reserved for virtual schools were now being employed by all the institutions worldwide and it is likely that we will see a continuation of this trend in the upcoming year as well.

We always expect things to change whenever a new year rolls around; though it's hard to imagine anyone saw it coming just how much things would change in 2020. Over the past few months, we've seen education evolve and adapt in new ways, and now that we've learned to always expect the unexpected, we know that 2021 will likely continue the pattern.
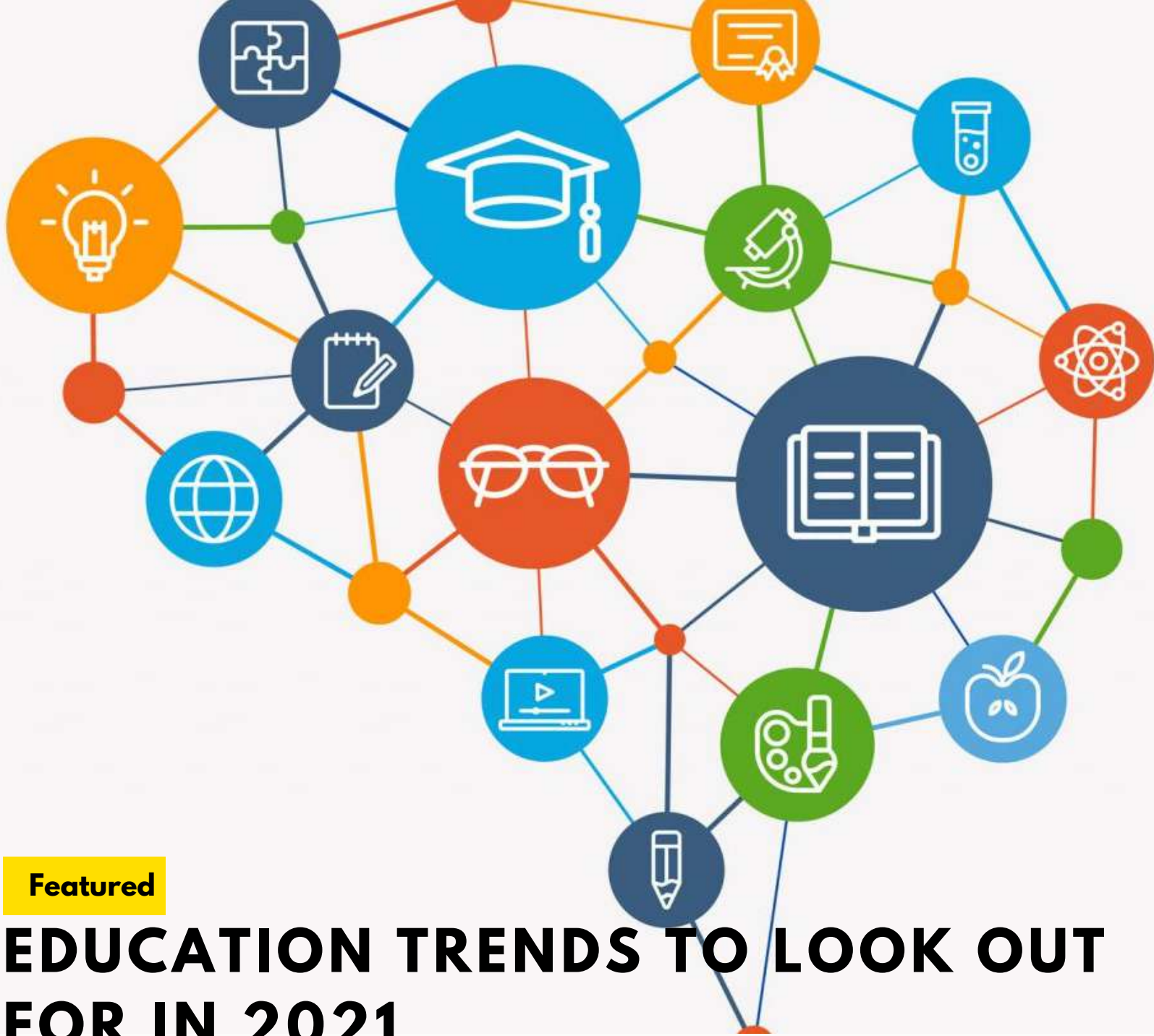
TOP 7 EDTECH TRENDS WATCHLIST 2021

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Educational Technologies became central to the delivery of education across the globe. In 2021 the use of educational technology will continue to increase and faculty and students will expect it to continue to improve; the genie is out of the bottle.

EDUCATION TRENDS TO LOOK OUT FOR IN 2021

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1. Nano learning

Most educationists, after thorough observation, have pointed out that the increased screen time has added to the stress of most students and teachers. This was an alarming issue even before the pandemic but with the switch to online education, the numbers skyrocketed and now we are looking at major deterioration in health conditions. To solve this issue, nano learning has been introduced by the experts to capture the attention of screen users to boost their productivity.

2. Virtual Reality

Artificial Intelligence has already made the process of learning intriguing and with VR, more and more students will find it easier to comprehend the content being taught. The technology requires a headset that projects digital images and sounds, making it easier for teachers to communicate beyond their classrooms.

Furthermore, the instructors can also use the feature of gestures to indicate their point more clearly.

3. Practical Learning

This might sound ironic, given the circumstances but with AI, project-based learning is not only possible but also a viable option for students in 2021. Most classrooms have been operating virtually and this has minimized the interaction between students. Thus, with practical group activities, class engagement will increase and students will develop skills like critical thinking and group management.
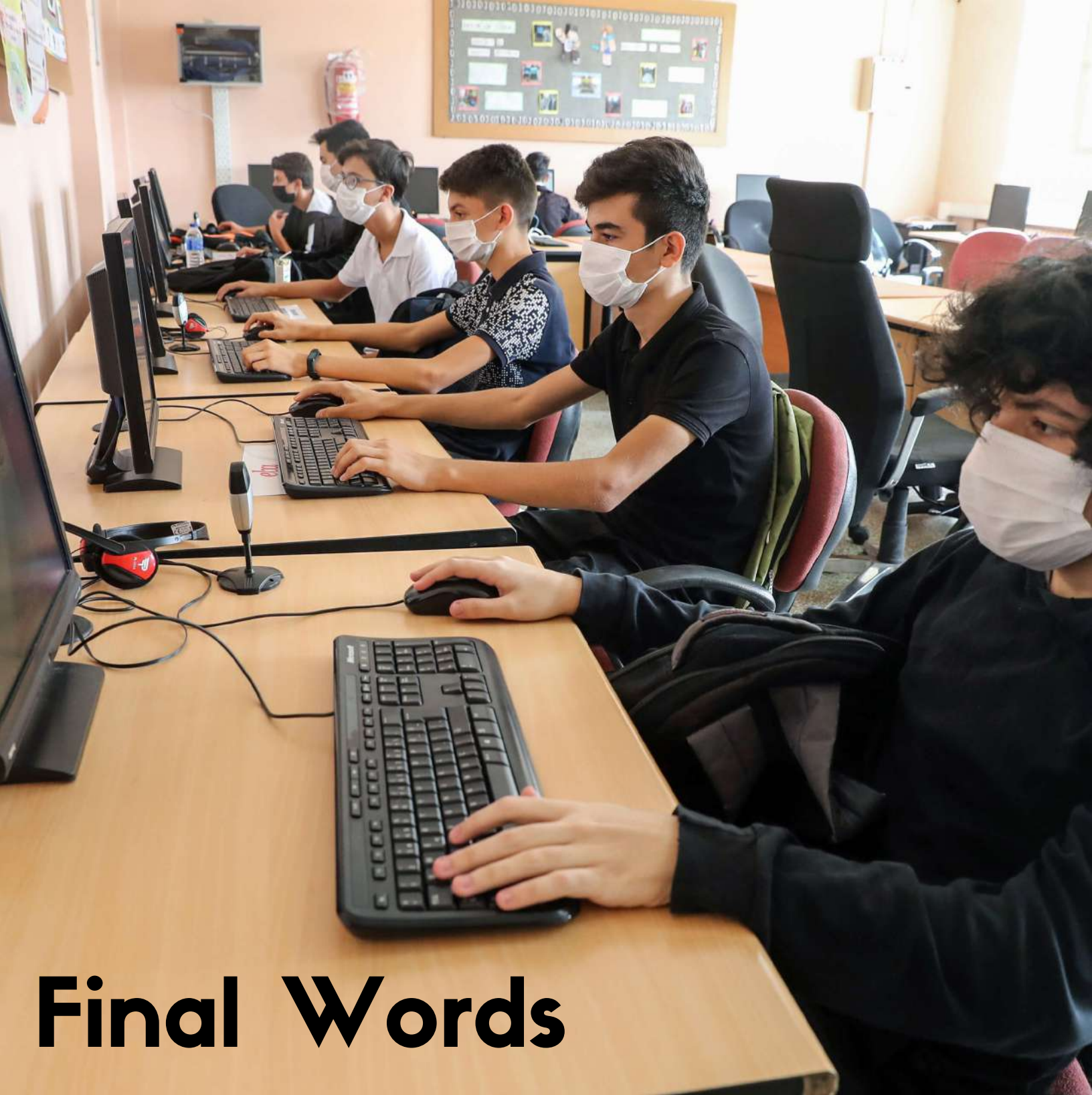
4. Real-life Situations

One thing that the coronavirus has emphasized is that we need our younger generation to be more than ready for any crisis, lest a situation like 2020 arises ever again. For this, educationists are revamping the curriculum to integrate more real-life problems so the students can get firsthand experience on how to deal with the problems. This can be done virtually by organizing visits to public offices or a guest speaker could be invited once a month who can relate their life experiences for inspiration.

5. Online Learning

This mode was chosen out of necessity but that does not mean that the use of online education was not on the rise before 2020. Every year, thousands of institutions introduce this medium as it removes the concept of location and makes education accessible. With 2020, the popularity achieved new heights. It is likely that in 2021, online education will continue because not only does it lower the cost, it also makes learning quite flexible.

Final Words

2021 holds new wonders for us and the field of education will most definitely see new mediums of learning because of the shift to hybrid phase. Even though all the countries that have been successful in keeping the number of infections lower have already begun traditional school, online learning will always remain the safety net. The institutions are well-equipped to deal with any crisis in 2021, in case things go south.

Teachers Share How Education Will Change in 2021

We always expect things to change whenever a new year rolls around; though it's hard to imagine anyone saw it coming just how much things would change in 2020. Over the past few months, we've seen education evolve and adapt in new ways, and now that we've learned to always expect the unexpected, we know that 2021 will likely continue the pattern. Certain teachers were asked the question, "how do you see K-12 education changing in 2021? What are some of the positive changes you see on the horizon? What are some of the potential challenges?"

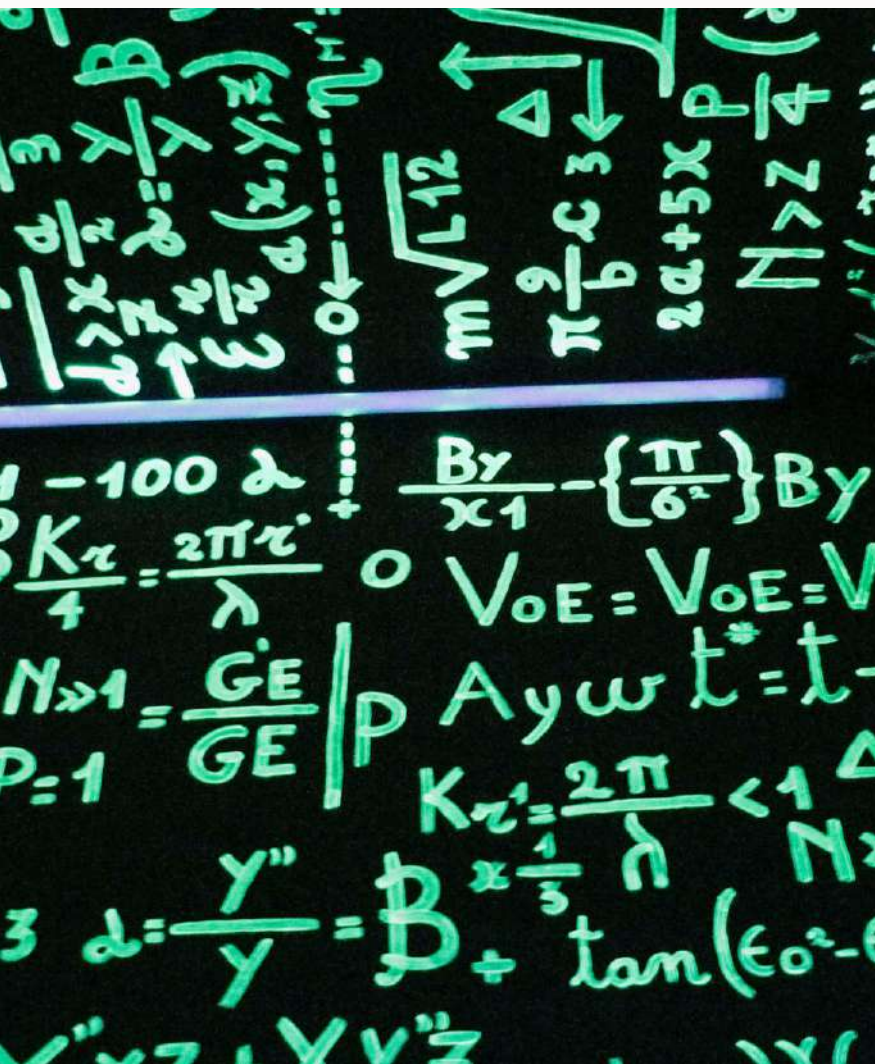Here are just a few of the thoughtful and provoking responses we received:

1. LETA. F

"A positive is that I've seen so many families bonding together, playing games, and just enjoying each other. Distance learning is difficult for our special needs, so the family time is so important for them. Challenges: returning to school and getting back on the school schedule. A lot of our students are used to sleeping in or going to bed later and this can cause a huge challenge with schedules."

2. JUDITH G.

"I am a preschool instructional coach. I see the future as more programs available virtually for teachers and for parents. I know that many educators have had a fast course on technology. I see offering teachers a virtual meeting room with resources available at their fingertips. I feel this pandemic should have made everyone more organized and focused on what is important in education and how to reach families. There will be an appreciation of the social-emotional time that we have when we can connect together in the classrooms. Some of the meetings have been accomplished virtually which I hope continues for staff to enjoy those professional development days at home if possible"

3. DARLENE F.

"One of the positive things that has happened this year is the students' abilities to grasp using the technology so well. One of the challenges has been getting them to do the work and turn it in to the teachers. I see both continuing into the next school year."

4. HANNAH W.

"As a positive, I see that students are becoming much more independent with technology and are receiving access to new resources through technology. For a potential challenge in 2021, it may be difficult to continue to come up with new ways to continue student engagement through remote learning."

5. NATHAN C.

"Some of this year's challenges has allowed kids to discover more responsibility, as well as independence. In contrast, it has provided opportunities for students to dodge the "radar" for completing quality assignments. Plenty of room for professional development to choose from!"

6. KATHRYN F.

"I am a middle school counselor and working a lot with students who are REALLY struggling with isolation and are just mad/sad about current situations. We have not closed our schools this academic year (we're hybrid), and I think that is the most positive thing of all looking into 2021. I am grateful we can all still be together and teach our students in person and stay healthy."

7. BRIANNA B.

"I am a first-year teacher, and this year has been nothing short of challenging, that's for sure. There are grandparents learning Zoom just so they can help their grandchildren with remote learning. Parents are spending more quality time at home with their kids helping them learn. Teachers and administrators are working more together now than I have seen in the past. It's truly amazing how difficult times really bring everyone together."

8. STEPHANIE A.

""Students are becoming more independent and are able to go at their own pace. A challenge is going to be discovering new ways to continue engagement through remote learning."

9. KAMI R.

"One positive change that I've seen in my students is them appreciate time with each other even more! It's a challenge to catch students up when they've missed so much school, but they're all working hard!"
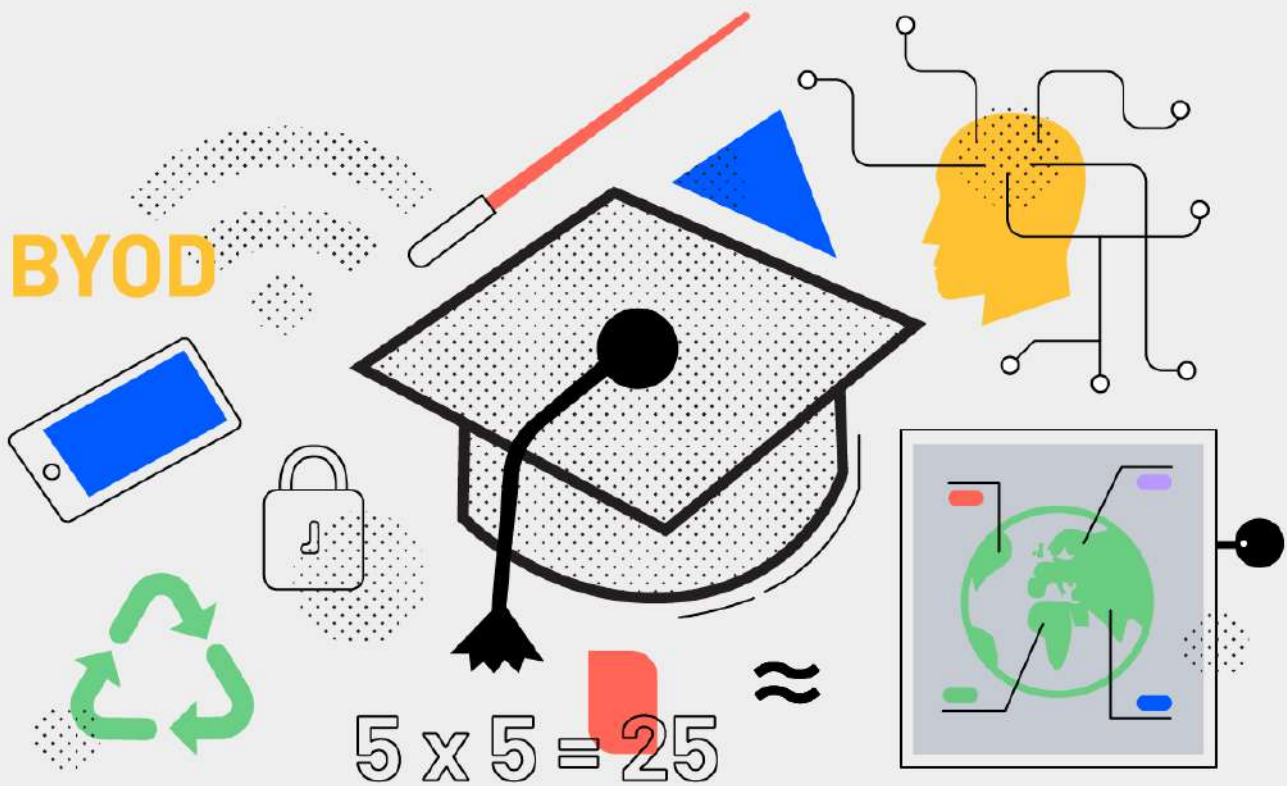
10. BARB P.

"A positive is that I think both students and teachers were reminded of how much they need and miss one another when they can't be together in the classroom. I think this has led to a new found appreciation for each other."

11. KATIE W.

"The students have really taken the new classroom procedures due to COVID very well. I see students becoming more flexible and understanding. They are becoming more versed in technology and more independent overall. I implemented new routines in my classroom and I plan on reusing my ideas even when this COVID pandemic is behind us."

Top 7 EdTech Trends Watchlist 2021

As we round out 2020 and look forward to 2021, it would feel silly not to mention that in 2020 we saw an incredible increase in education technology use across the world due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Educational Technologies became central to the delivery of education across the globe. In 2021 the use of educational technology will continue to increase and faculty and students will expect it to continue to improve; the genie is out of the bottle.
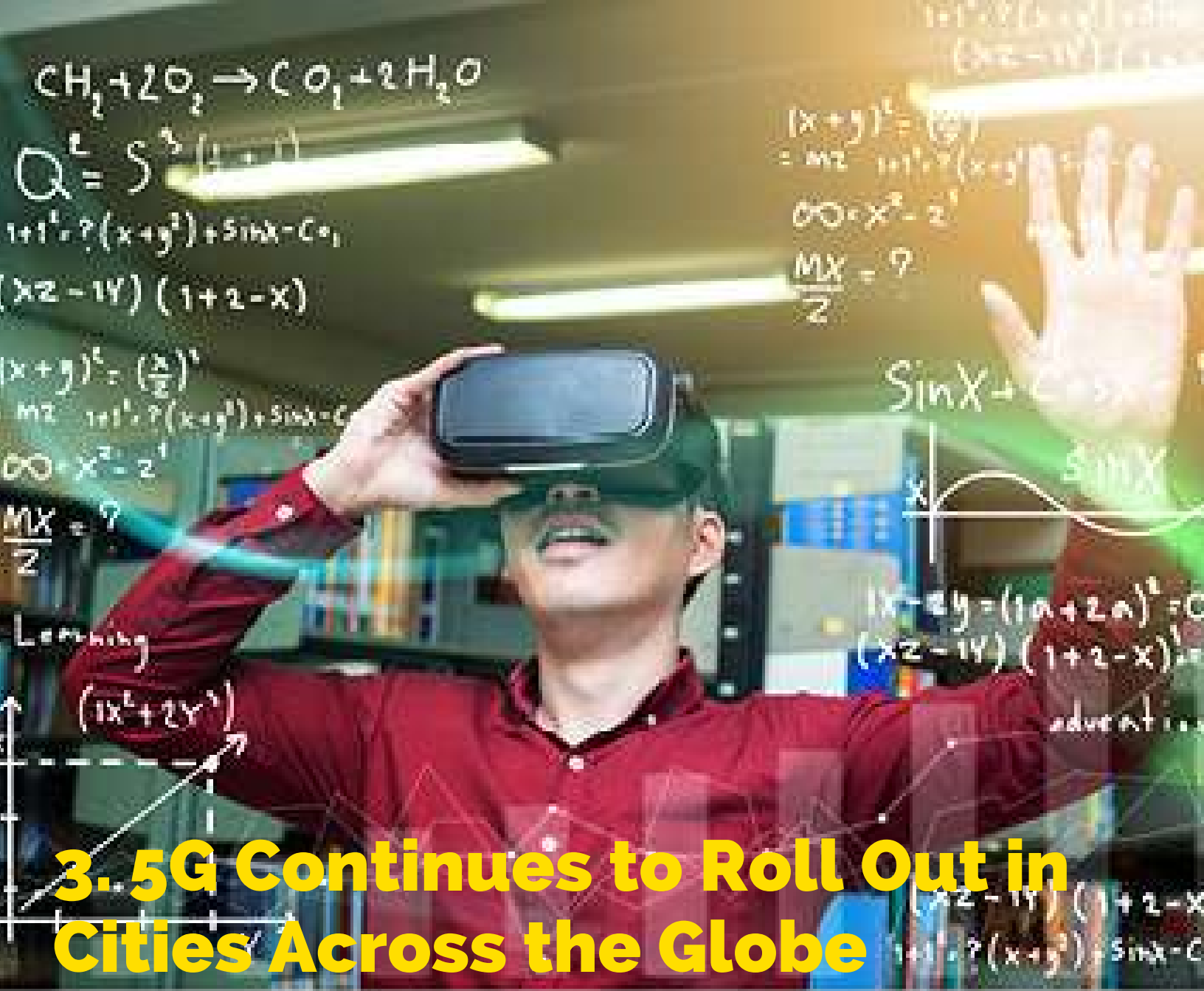
1. Mandatory Human-Computer Interaction

In 2021 we'll need continued advances in human-computer interaction (HCI). Touchscreens, already a staple of the mobile computing era, became the medium for a visit with your doctor. Advances in voice recognition expanded the accessibility of audio and video materials in real time when students needed as much support as they could get to overcome new obstacles to learning. Augmented reality and virtual reality enhanced the workforce development opportunities in compliance with public health recommendations. Robots supported the expanded need for delivery services.

2. The Movement of Curriculum and Materials to the Web

As we have seen with the BU BULB project, and as COVID-19 has shown us, educational materials are rapidly moving online where they can be accessed by all without the inconvenience of lugging around large and expensive textbooks. This is already done in countries like Estonia and South Korea, where materials have been online for several years. The advent of digital textbook rentals and resources makes the switch to online textbooks the logical next step in moving higher education forward. The hope is that this will also lead to a reduction in textbook costs for students, especially when instructors utilize "bundled" textbooks. We suspect the trend for 2021 will be the logical movement of more materials to the web as the pandemic continues.

3. 5G Continues to Roll Out in Cities Across the Globe

The 5th generation of cellular network technology has delivered faster speeds, lower latency, and more reliable connections for compatible devices. Gartner Research notes that despite the pandemic, spending on 5G doubled in 2020 to $8.1 billion and expects the US to see 95% coverage in major markets by 2023. This increased coverage and growing infrastructure promises faster speeds for all kinds of devices. Of particular interest is the evolving 'Internet of Things' (IoT) market, which should see significant growth as network speeds increase and latency decreases.

4. Digital Whiteboard Tools & Progressive Web Apps

Interactive online whiteboards (such as Google Jamboard and Zoom Whiteboard etc.) allows instructors to incorporate fun digital aspects into their lectures and are increasingly used in blended classrooms for synchronous collaboration. May whiteboard platforms allow a variety of plugins and integrations too for added functionality.

With more than 500 screens of various sizes in the market, low cost Progressive Web Apps continue to gain popularity this year by offering users a unified experience with providing the same interface in the browser as of the native app installed on the device without requiring users to download the apps. This also eliminates need for the user to learn more than one interface – an experience that could otherwise frustrate users.

5. XR Development 2020 and Beyond

The coronavirus outbreak has prompted many to adopt social distancing, requiring more non-contact solutions. The partnership of 5G cellular technology and AR/VR can power these practical applications across various industries. Areas such as healthcare, virtual concerts, museums and even home design have adopted VR to bring these experiences to life.

However, the effects of coronavirus have slowed down the purchase of several services and devices originally planned. According to Virtualreality News, "The short-term outlook for virtual (VR) and augmented reality (AR) may be a struggle, according to strategy analytics, but if organizations can ride out this wave, then the future looks bright."

6. Tools for Online Engagement

2021 has begun like 2020, with most teaching done remotely – through educational technology. Perhaps the biggest challenge in remote teaching is making sure students can still learn actively and have a sense of community. In 2021 I'm watching the tech tools that can help that happen: tools like Pronto, which brings the social-media chat style of Slack and Discord into education, and Kahoot, an easy and enjoyable way to have students respond to questions in real time. The use of G Suite tools like Google Docs continues to climb, especially among the K-12 students who soon become our freshmen. Google's Assignments tool makes it easier for faculty to grade papers in Docs, and to link them with Blackboard. It's still in beta for now, but we hope to see it come to BU before too long.

7. Virtual Reality in Education

The technological revolution has been permitting the use of new approaches in the teaching-learning process. One of the conducive technologies to the building of innovative tools for the education is the virtual reality, which offers tridimensional computer environments with advanced forms of interaction that can provide more motivation to the learning process. The great potential of virtual reality is exactly on these possibilities, not only through classes or physical objects, but also through the virtual manipulation of the target to be explored, analyzed and studied. With the virtual reality acting in the education, students can discover, explore, interact, and build knowledge about places and situations that they could never explore. In 2021, we can see this technology expanding to educational technology settings.

 Which tech do you have your eye on?

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