**Top 5 Digital Transformation Trends In Education For 2020**

[Daniel Newman](https://www.forbes.com/sites/danielnewman/) Contributor

[CMO Network](https://www.forbes.com/cmo-network)

I explore all things Digital Transformation.

It’s that time of year again where we [take a look](https://www.forbes.com/sites/danielnewman/2018/11/13/top-5-digital-transformation-trends-in-education-for-2019/#4858b70f5d4d) at the top digital transformation trends in the coming year in several industries. First up: education. As we all know, the only thing constant in digital transformation is change. So, how have digital transformation trends in education changed as we move toward the coming decade? And what, if anything, has stayed the same? While education is continuing to evolve, based upon my experience as a learner, college instructor and researcher/author analyzing digital trends, the following are my top picks for not just technology trends but overall shifts in how we’ll be learning and connecting through technology moving forward.

**Customized Learning Experiences**

I have a friend in the private school sector who develops such customized learning experiences for her students that they are able to determine how they’d personally like to express their learning from each lesson—book report, song, art work, or even interpretive dance. Unfortunately, we can’t all send our kids to expensive private schools that put this much emphasis on personalized learning. One of the most maddening things for any parent with children in the public school system is the issue of standardized testing. As all parents and teachers know, all children have different ways of learning—[visual, auditory, kinesthetic, etc.](https://www.familyeducation.com/school/multiple-intelligences/learning-styles-visual-auditory-kinesthetic) New digital transformation trends in technology are going to make it easier for students of different learning types to learn in the way [most appropriate to them](https://www.swiftelearningservices.com/top-4-digital-transformations-in-the-educational-technology/), be it through interactive games, modeling tools, video production, etc. I can certainly see advanced analytics, AI and machine learning playing a role in analyzing individual student learning; although that may be a bit further off than next year.

For everyone considering the massive cuts to public education right now, I want to emphasize: it may not be that the *teacher* or school itself is providing an avenue to use these games for learning. However, new apps and software will make these learning avenues more accessible to students at home, etc.,which in turn will make their learning experiences that much more personalized.

**Accessibility**

Do we even need to learn to read anymore? With new digital transformation trends in technology, I’m beginning to wonder. The real answer is yes, of course, but it's a provocative thought to say the least.  One of the most amazing things to me about technology is that it’s making information and knowledge accessible, regardless of how well someone is able to read it. This is true for voice-to-text and text-to-voice transcription technologies that are especially helpful to students with dyslexia and other learning issues. There is also an increasing volume of information available in video and audio form, ensuring that learning is no longer limited by the easy ability to read. Huge!

Accessibility is improving in the geographic sense, as well. Not everyone is lucky enough to live in a great school district or near an amazing college. However, digital transformations trends in education are making it less and less important where you live. For instance, the child with dyslexia mentioned above may live in a rural area that provides little support for learning differences. However, video conferencing makes it easier for even the most remote students to get the specialized support they need.

**Internet of Things**

While the Internet of Things (IoT) may have yet to pay off when it comes to creating smart cities, it does hold tremendous potential in terms of creating smarter, more connected schools. On the obvious end, it’s helping save money in terms of [energy and lighting usage](https://elearningindustry.com/digital-transformation-in-higher-education-8-top-trends). But in a more obscure way, it’s also helping to keep schools and students safer and more connected. For instance, by using sensors to track traffic throughout the campus, schools may be able to determine where security features like lighting would benefit students and visitors. Using real-time communication tools, they can share homework assignments with parents so they can stay on top of less communicative children. These tools can also let parents know when their child is absent from class. Using time-stamp technology, they can alert parents and students when an assignment has gone missing. The bottom line is that the IoT has the chance to keep all of us more connected, engaged, and on our toes. And that’s always a good thing.

**Security**

With so many kids online, security is a huge priority for parents. In the past, we’ve relied on apps like [Securly](https://www.securly.com/). Still, the online world is such a wild mess of content that many parents still wonder how secure their child’s learning environment may be. In the next year, I think we’ll continue to see a push for more transparency and parental controls in online learning. We’ll also see a greater emphasis on things like digital credentialing through blockchain and two-factor authentication to ensure that all students are kept safe, wherever they may be accessing the content that fits their needs.

**Schools are strapped**

Obviously, one of the growing trends in education overall is a lack of funding. In fact, due to a growing distribution of pension funds in many states, that lack of funding is only going to continue to grow. For instance, in California, school districts paid 8% of their teacher payrolls for pensions in 2013. [By 2020](https://www.ppic.org/publication/financing-californias-public-schools/), that contribution will rise to 19%. This will force teachers, [who already spend a considerable amount](https://www.winknews.com/2019/07/16/teachers-how-much-do-you-spend-on-classroom-supplies/) of their own money on classroom supplies, into an even tighter corner and will have the potentially to increase the growing tech/educational divide. In the short term, I believe the outgrowth of new technologies and the ease with which even parents can create customized learning plans will lead to an increase in charter schools and homeschooling—completely [upending our definition of “education” overall](https://www.washtimesherald.com/news/virtual-schools-altering-landscape-of-hoosier-public-education/article_af48fda4-1277-5e73-81af-43f80825dd81.html).

We know learning needs to continue to evolve and that technology and tools can help to enable that. Our world is becoming a place where we can rapidly learn anything, and in many fields our experience is only a small part of our ability to learn and achieve. The future of education is exciting and scary. Schools and education must evolve to embrace new learning styles and technologies that can captivate students, while concurrently maintaining integrity of the knowledge in areas like literature and history that help create well rounded people. That should really be at the core of our change and digital transformation efforts in education.