Learning Platforms Solution for K-12

INDUSTRY SOLUTION PLAYBOOK
MICROSOFT PARTNER CONFIDENTIAL

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SOLUTION PLANNING GUIDANCE IN THIS PLAYBOOK

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About this solution

**Note:** For K12 ETF Modern Teaching & Learning conversations, use the Learning Platform solution playbook to integrate digital transformation and solution selling into your account plan.

**Overview**

**Learning Platform Solution for K12**—helping school systems transform their teaching and learning systems into personalized, accessible, and scalable experiences - enabling better learning outcomes for all.

We live in a world where technology is ubiquitous. Although statistics vary around the world, a vast majority of families now have a mobile device, and young children are spending more time using their devices than ever before.

In the U.S., the time children ages 8 and younger spent engaging with screen media on mobile devices, such as a smartphone or tablet, has tripled since 2013, from 15 to 48 minutes a day, according to a Common Sense Media national survey. [https://www.commonsensemedia.org/sites/default/files/uploads/research/csm_zero8eight_fullreport_release_2.pdf](https://www.commonsensemedia.org/sites/default/files/uploads/research/csm_zero8eight_fullreport_release_2.pdf)

In South Korea, about 72% of children owned a smartphone by ages 11 to 12, and they would spend up to 5.4 hours a day on them, according to a study published last year in the journal *Computers in Human Behavior*. [https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0747563215300467](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0747563215300467)

In this technology culture, kids are entering schools as digital natives and are accustomed to consuming information through the lens of technology. Believe it or not, kids don’t discern between the virtual and physical world. It is assumed that most physical environments should have a digital twin, a virtual replica of the physical environment. The parts of a classroom: teachers, paper, pencils, curriculum are all expected to be made available virtually. Kids want and expect to have access to learning spaces and learning opportunities inside and outside the classroom - equally. Technology’s impact on teaching and learning environments presents challenges for K-12 school leaders.

- Provide flexible learning options for unique and diverse learners
- Manage higher student to teacher ratios, with limited classroom time
- Get students “future-ready” for a modern world
- Ensure safe and secure access to student data for everyone

**Learning systems that engage students for better learning outcomes**

School leaders looking to enable better learning outcomes for students can leverage new technologies to transform learning systems, making education more engaging and inclusive by staying current with technology trends such as mobile learning, cloud-based solutions, touch screens and interactive user interfaces that are mobile-friendly.

Teachers know that there is no one-size-fits-all solution. In today’s world, more than one billion people worldwide live with some form of disability and more than 100 million of them are children. However, this statistic only illustrates a portion of students affected by accessibility in the classroom every day. We must still consider students affected by ethnic origin, social origin, poverty, and status. A personalized approach to learning means every student is supported to learn in a way that suits their needs. Every student matters.
Empower teachers to transform classroom time

Teachers have developed knowledge through experience that each student is unique in the way they learn, but with growing class sizes and limited hours, they are relegated to using more generic methods of teaching. School leaders can help empower teachers to transform the learning experience in their classroom by leveraging modern learning technologies and analytics tools to gauge each student’s needs, how they are progressing, and if they are engaging in the lessons – then have an opportunity to more quickly intervene where additional support or unique teaching methods are needed.

With new learning environments, where assessment is part of the curriculum and teachers have the information they need for each student at their fingertips, classroom time can be transformed, allowing teachers to focus the majority of their time on teaching and learning activities.

Keep parents and educators engaged with real-time data

In some cases, technology has been slow to develop in school systems, and decentralized IT decision making has introduced a variety of systems where students, educators, and parents go for information. Modern learning platforms help connect the entire digital ecosystem ensuring students, educators, partners, counselors, and other administrative staff have safe and secure access to the same information needed to support student learning.

Parents don’t want to wait until conference week to hear there is something they can be doing to help their child with their learning. They don’t want to wait two weeks before an alert pops up that their child isn’t turning in homework. Engage parents with a suite of tools to monitor student progress and communicate with teachers. Real-time notifications alert parents to new grades and attendance as well as important class announcements and reminders. Interactive calendars provide a big-picture view of student workloads, meaning parents can help students stay on track and manage their time. Parents can easily access important documents like IEPs, and private communication channels enable one-on-one correspondence with teachers to discuss student progress and growth.

Teachers can communicate with parents seamlessly, and parents can access their child’s information, such as grades, attendance record, class schedule, and upcoming homework to have a more hands-on approach to their child’s education.

All on the Microsoft platform, with partner solutions

At Microsoft, we are enabling institutions to offer their students and educators a complete end-to-end connected Learning Platform Solution. The Learning Platform Solution continues to evolve, delivering emerging and relevant content that accommodates the changing needs of teachers and students. With a combination of the power of Microsoft Azure, Office 365 apps, and front-end partners applications - this solution looks at a school system holistically, to provide tools such as modern cloud platforms, AI and machine learning, and scalability, to modernize teaching and learning systems and provide a more flexible learning experience for their students.

Whether you are looking to replace your current LMS, or simply looking for ways to extend or enhance your learning technology, Microsoft solutions and products can help you get to the next step in your journey toward digital transformation.

Business challenges and solution benefits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges</th>
<th>Benefits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Modern learner expectations</td>
<td>Immersive and engaging learning experiences infuse curriculum with video content, polls, instant messaging, and social interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High student to teacher ratios with limited classroom time</td>
<td>Modern teaching and analytics tools gauge each student’s needs, how they are progressing, and if they are engaging in the lessons – and more quickly intervene where additional support is needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity of learner population</td>
<td>Personalized learning opportunities provide every student access to learn in a way that suits their needs – because every student matters.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Technical Overview

Learning Platform Solution opportunities can involve the following products and technologies:

**Replace Learning Management System with these top Microsoft Partner applications**

- Edsby K12 LMS
- PowerSchool LMS Unified Classroom
- Canvas K12 LMS
- Moodle K12 LMS

**Shift to the Cloud**

Shift existing LMS to the Cloud for analytics and scalability

- AI and Machine Learning
- Active Directory
- Media Services
- Storage

**Extend Functionality**

Extend the functionalities of LMS with Office 365

- School Data Sync
- Forms
- OneNote
- OneDrive
- Stream
- PowerPoint Skype Broadcast

**Additional tools that complement LMS**

Empower teachers, parents, and staff with data and communication tools

- Power BI
- Microsoft Teams
- Flipgrid
Reference architecture

Below is a sample architecture for the Learning Platform Solution.

Augment with tools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Office 365</th>
<th>Power BI</th>
<th>Immersive Reader</th>
<th>Translator</th>
<th>Flow</th>
<th>FIPGROD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Extend functionality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forms</th>
<th>OneNote</th>
<th>OneDrive</th>
<th>Microsoft Graph</th>
<th>Stream</th>
<th>Microsoft Teams</th>
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</thead>
</table>

Shift to the cloud

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AI &amp; Machine Learning</th>
<th>Active Directory</th>
<th>Bots</th>
<th>Media Services</th>
<th>School Data Sync</th>
<th>Storage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Security and compliance considerations

1. **Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)**: HIPAA imposes on our customers that may be “covered entities” under the law security, privacy, and reporting requirements regarding the processing of electronic protected health information. Microsoft developed Office 365 to provide physical, administrative, and technical safeguards to help our customers comply with HIPAA. We offer a HIPAA Business Associate Agreement (BAA) to any customer. For more information about the HIPAA BAA, visit the [HIPAA/HITECH FAQ](#).

2. **Data processing terms**: We provide customers with additional contractual assurances through our data processing terms regarding Microsoft handling and safeguarding of customer data. By agreeing to these terms, we commit to over 40 specific security commitments collected from regulations worldwide. The robust commitments in our data processing terms are available to customers by default.

3. **Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA)** requires U.S. federal agencies to develop, document, and implement controls to secure their information and information systems. Federal Risk and Authorization Program (FedRAMP) is a federal risk management program that provides a standardized approach for assessing and monitoring the security of cloud products and services. The [FedRAMP/FISMA FAQ](#) describes how the Office 365 service follows security and privacy processes relating to FedRAMP/FISMA.

4. **ISO 27001**: ISO 27001 is one of the best security benchmarks available in the world. Many products in Office 365 have been verified to meet the rigorous set of physical, logical, process and management controls defined by ISO 27001:2013. This also includes ISO 27018 Privacy controls in the most recent audit. Inclusion of these new ISO 27018 controls in the ISO assessment will further help Office 365 validate to customers the level of protection Office 365 provides to protect the privacy of customer data.

5. **European Union (EU) Model Clauses**: The EU Data Protection Directive, a key instrument of EU privacy and human rights law, requires our customers in the EU to legitimize the transfer of personal data outside of the EU. The EU model clauses are recognized as a preferred method for legitimizing the transfer of personal data outside the EU for cloud computing environments. Offering the EU model clauses involves investing and building the operational controls and processes required to meet the exacting requirements of the EU model clauses. Unless a cloud service provider is willing to agree to the EU model clauses, a customer might lack confidence that it can comply with the EU Data Protection Directive’s requirements for the transfer of personal data from the EU to jurisdictions that do not provide “adequate protection” for personal data. The EU model clauses FAQ describes the Microsoft regulator-endorsed approach for the EU model clauses.

6. **ISO 27018**: Microsoft is the first major cloud service provider to be independently verified as complying with ISO 27018, which establishes a uniform, international approach to protecting the privacy of personal information stored in the cloud. Our compliance with ISO 27018 means that we only process personal information in accordance with customer instructions, we are transparent about what happens to customer data, we provide strong security protections for personal information in our cloud, customer data will not be used for advertising, and we inform customers about government access to their data.

7. **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**: FERPA imposes requirements on U.S. educational organizations regarding the use or disclosure of student education records, including email and attachments. Microsoft agrees to use and
disclosure restrictions imposed by FERPA that limit our use of student education records, including agreeing to not scan emails or documents for advertising purposes.

8. **Statement on Standards for Attestation Engagements No. 16 (SSAE 16):** Office 365 has been audited by independent third parties and can provide SSAE16 SOC 1 Type I and Type II and SOC 2 Type II reports on how the service implements controls.

9. **Gramm–Leach–Bliley Act (GLBA):** The Gramm–Leach–Bliley Act requires financial institutions to put processes in place to protect their clients' nonpublic personal information. GLBA enforces policies to protect information from foreseeable threats in security and data integrity. Customers subject to GLBA can use Office 365 and comply with GLBA requirements.

10. **Health Information Trust Alliance (HITRUST):** The Office 365 team, in partnership with an independent assessor, has completed an assessment to evaluate our compliance with HITRUST. Viewed as an important standard by U.S. healthcare organizations, HITRUST has established the Common Security Framework (CSF), a certifiable framework that can be used by any and all organizations that create, access, store, or exchange personal health and financial information.


**Partner ecosystem**

Microsoft service partners can provide additional assistance to help customers customize their Learning Platform Solutions according to their needs. For example, by helping migrate Linux infrastructure required to run the Learning Platform Solutions from on-premise to the public cloud. The following table lists ISVs and SIs with current end-to-end solutions, active projects, and/or customer references.

**Associated revenue potential**

Revenue associated with Learning Platform Solutions varies widely and depends on a) the extent to which the Learning Platform Solutions is migrated to Azure and b) the size of the installation. Most institutions can begin experiencing the benefits of a Hybrid Cloud Learning Platform today free-of-charge by integrating their Learning Platform Solutions with the Microsoft Graph, allowing them to extend their on-premise Learning Platform to the cloud by using their existing Office 365 Education tenant along with associated Azure Active Directory free SKU.

Meanwhile, some customers will want to go “all-in” as it relates to their hybrid infrastructure. The table below gives an idea of what the opportunity can represent. Please note that in a large educational institution many departments will have their own Learning Platform Solutions infrastructure representing a large opportunity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Platform</th>
<th>Price per Year*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1k Users 200 Concurrent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Platform</td>
<td>$4.5K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Platform w/Database</td>
<td>$13.5K</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Estimates are based on D3 V2 - Linux -Standard-4 Core-14 GB RAM virtual machines, Clear DB database service, Zone 2 bandwidth, GRS Storage and Backup, and include Azure Support.
Sales guidance

Customer targeting

K12 school system leaders for teaching and learning include District Leaders, Principals, Educators, Teachers, Curriculum Developers, and Learning Technologists. They can benefit from the Learning Platforms Solution in a variety of ways.

- Happy with their current LMS, but looking for ways to enhance or scale
- Happy with their current LMS and looking for additional tools to augment for teachers and students
- Not happy with their current LMS and looking for an entirely new solution

Microsoft Education has products and technologies designed to replace or complement learning systems depending on customer need.

The target customer roles are the following: line of business (LOB) titles, and the CTO or IT director who provides the infrastructure to support the Learning Management function.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decision Maker</th>
<th>Primary Challenges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| IT Decision Makers | • Limited budget.  
|                   | • Pressure to not only purchase the right devices but buy into the right technology ecosystem.  
|                   | • Demands for consolidation and cost reduction.  |
| District Leaders | • Improving student outcomes while managing shrinking budgets, technology challenges, and compliance mandates.  
|                  | • Streamlining coordination with back office and educators, and enabling effective collaboration among teams and educator communities.  |
| Educators / Teachers | • Need to be trend/tech savvy but priority is on building/maintaining great teaching skills.  
|                     | • Focus must be on enabling learning – can be a distraction to simply overlay technology onto the learning process.  |
| Curriculum Developers/Learning Technologists | • Building for tomorrow with today's dollars and tools.  
|                                               | • Reaching more learners in more engaging ways.  
|                                               | • Keeping content and curriculum fresh and relevant.  |

Overview of sales cycle

A typical sales cycle for Learning Platform Solutions can be 6–12 months. It can be substantially shorter if the customer already has a working knowledge of Azure. In this case, engaging with school leaders to determine how Azure might impact the Learning Platform Solutions engagement will drive the project toward clearer business outcomes.

Competitive positioning

- **Innovative Classroom Tools**: Office 365 Education suites include popular and differentiated digital tools loved by both teachers and students: OneNote Class Notebook, Learning Tools, Whiteboard, Sway, Microsoft Teams (classroom experiences, PLC, and Staff teams), and Office Mix.
- **Accessibility**: Office 365 wants to make it easier for every student and teacher to author content that is fully accessible and helps create an inclusive learning environment. Inclusive design is integrated in our engineering culture, and we keep creating new ways to enable students and teachers with disabilities to create, communicate, and consume content from any device.
• **Collaboration:** Only Office 365 delivers a robust collaboration solution that meets the needs of diverse groups of students or teachers (whether that’s generational, geographical, functional or workstyle) and provides the option to collaborate as a team across applications through Office 365 Groups.

• **Intelligence:** Only Office 365 is built on the Microsoft Graph which uses machine learning to infuse intelligence into each application to connect students, educators, and information faster. Office 365 also delivers powerful visualizations and insights to enrich the learning experience with Power BI and Excel.

• **Trust:** We work hard to balance privacy and innovation to protect students in the digital world. We have over 10 years of cloud experience and make strong commitments around safeguarding customer data, backed by a 99.9% uptime financially-backed SLA. Office 365 is secure & compliant, manageable, extensible, and always up to date with ongoing cloud updates.

### Conversation guidance

#### Probing questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Probing question</th>
<th>What to listen for</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What is your online learning strategy today?</strong></td>
<td>Whether or not the customer is already using a Learning Platform today. If they are not, suggest one of the partner LMS options where it can easily be run in the cloud (and a dev/test environment can be setup in minutes).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How are your teaching and learning systems flexible and responsive to the needs of all various types of learners?</strong></td>
<td>Understand if the customer is using the right products to support a wide range of learners. If not, offer suggestions to solutions such as Immersive Reader, Microsoft Teams, and Flipgrid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What Learning Platform are you using today? Is it open-source, proprietary, or homegrown?</strong></td>
<td>If open source or homegrown – there is a high likelihood that the Learning Platform can be migrated to Azure (assuming self-hosted). If proprietary, you will want to understand if the customer is self-hosting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Do you have multiple Learning Management Systems in your district or school system?</strong></td>
<td>Decentralized IT decision making has introduced a variety of systems where students, educators, and parents go for information. Our solutions can help connect the entire digital ecosystem ensuring students, educators, partners, counselors, and other administrative staff have safe and secure access to the same information needed to support student learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Is your current Learning Management System hosted on premises or partner hosted?</strong></td>
<td>Understand if the customer is using a SaaS based LMS that is hosted on their behalf (such as Canvas) or if they are self-hosting their LMS on-premises (for example, Moodle). If partner hosted lead with integration options with Microsoft Graph. If self-hosted focus, lead with an on-premise to Azure migration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What challenges do you have with your existing Learning Management System?</strong></td>
<td>Listen for if the customer sites availability, performance, scale, concurrency etc. as a pain point. If so the opportunity is ripe for Azure. Ask if there’s ways in which you think Office 365 capabilities might help? For example, to foster conversations (Teams) or to help students communicate more effectively with Professors (Skype for Business).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Do you have any plans to migrate your Learning Management System to a public cloud provider?</strong></td>
<td>If the customer says yes – dig deeper and find out which one. Understand timing, key decision makers, as well as what will be determining factor (i.e. partner availability, cost comparison, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Objection handling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objection</th>
<th>How to respond</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We are happy with our current Learning Management System.</td>
<td>That’s great! You don’t need to replace it. We look at a Learning Platform as more than just an LMS application. We have a lot of options for how you can integrate your LMS with other technology investments you have made, as well as additional 1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; and 3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; party apps that can extend teaching and learning capabilities to modern learners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moving to the cloud sounds like a lot of work, and potentially risky.</td>
<td>We have several happy customers running their LMS in Azure. With that being said, we are not advocating for moving everything to the cloud at once or using the cloud for your production LMS environment. For example, you might decide that doing dev/test workloads for your LMS make more sense to be done on Azure. Alternatively, if you want to go with a production environment you might want to begin by implementing a cloud-based authentication mechanism for your LMS, such as Azure Active Directory, or only or look at migrating your database.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migrating my LMS to the cloud might require too many adjustments, and take a long time to realize any benefit.</td>
<td>While it’s true that benefiting from some gains of the cloud might require you to make significant changes to take full advantage of gains from PaaS services such as caching, in many cases your LMS can be run as IaaS in an environment that mimics/resembles your on-premises environment. The latter would already let you benefit from advantages of IaaS such as a strong SLA, and easy scale-out capabilities. Over time you could gradually look at PaaS services such as managed database services etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is Microsoft telling me to get rid of my LMS solution to use their own proprietary one?</td>
<td>No absolutely not. Microsoft does not offer a 1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; party LMS. Rather we are looking to assist you in migrating your existing LMS from an on-premises environment to a Public Cloud environment such as Azure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m currently using a partner hosted LMS solution and I’m happy with it. Why would I change?</td>
<td>(If the customer uses Office 365). Are there any capabilities that you see in Office 365 that might be made stronger in the partner solution? For example, if the partner’s LMS has a calendar – would that calendar be made better if it were possible to keep it in sync with your Outlook calendar, and edit it from your Outlook mobile app?</td>
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</table>
## Supporting content

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Related customer-ready resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Solution content</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask your Microsoft contact for any available customer-ready content, such as a presentation, brochure, and telesales guidance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other related customer-ready resources</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Edsby K12 LMS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• PowerSchool LMS Unified Classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Canvas K12 LMS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Moodle K12 LMS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Garfield Preparatory Academy</td>
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For any questions, please join the conversation on Yammer or contact solution owner, Joe Brazier along with your partner account manager.