


EdTech TOP 40

A Look at K-12 EdTech Engagement During the 2023-24 School Year





PLATFORM LEARN BY INSTRUCTURE

INSTRUCTURE

Table of Contents

Educational technology has become a cornerstone of K-12 education, playing a critical role in driving personalized learning and impacting student outcomes. Administrators, educators, and students increasingly rely on technology to facilitate and enrich the learning experience.

The EdTech Top 40 Report shares the latest on the use of digital solutions, tools, and resources in K-12 districts nationwide, as well as insights on usage trends and categorical rankings. We hope the K-12 community can use this information to gain context for their own edtech use and make more informed instructional, operational, and budget decisions. Additionally, edtech solution providers can leverage the insights from this report to better understand the learning landscape and align their product offerings to the evolving needs of K-12 organizations.

The findings of the EdTech Top 40 Report for the 2023-24 school year are based on:

57bn
INTERACTIONS

492k
EDUCATORS

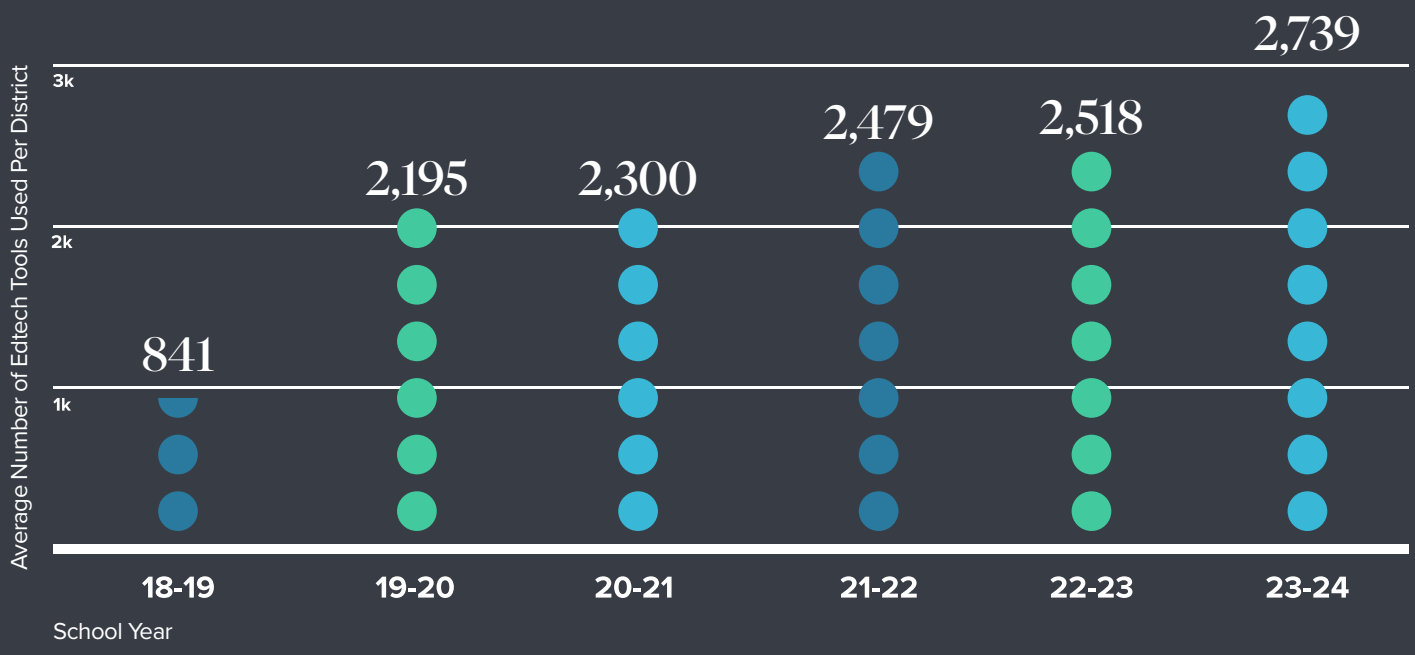
3.5m
STUDENTS

9,000
EDTECH PRODUCTS

The State of Edtech Engagement

Following the surge of edtech adoption in 2020, subsequent years have witnessed a gradual but continuous increase in overall edtech engagement, signaling that K-12 organizations have settled into and embraced new technology norms. Now, K-12 leaders need to focus on the strategic use of edtech, ensuring that the tools being leveraged in their organizations positively impact learning outcomes.

Tech-Enabled Learning: The New Norm



For the 2023-24 school year,[1] school districts accessed an average of 2,739 distinct edtech tools annually, an increase of 8% from the previous school year. An average of 1,436 tools were accessed each month during the school year, indicating districts are not using a consistent set of edtech tools throughout the school year.

When we look at the usage data by role, students are using edtech slightly more often than their teachers, accessing an average of 1,063 tools monthly versus 964 by their teachers. The number of unique edtech tools accessed by students and teachers also increased from last school year; on average, students accessed 45 tools during the 2022-23 school year, three more than the previous school year (42). Educators accessed an average of 49 tools during the school year (up from 42 last school year).

2,739

Average number of edtech tools accessed per school district over the entire school year

45 by students

49 by educators

Average number of unique edtech tools accessed per district over the entire school year

Regarding specific edtech tools, the Top 40 remain relatively consistent year after year. However, five new solutions are on the 2024 Top 40, some indicating the rise of AI-related technology. Both educator- and learner-focused tools have remained resilient as technology continues to play an increasing role in the teaching and learning experience. In the 2023-24 school year, 75% of tools accessed were educator or learner-focused.

In response to the findings outlined in the Edtech Top 40 Report, the following questions remain top of mind:

- As the average number of tools districts access steadily rises, how will organizations **effectively maintain the increasingly diverse ecosystem of tools** required to reach teachers and learners?
- Will the **demand for research-based edtech** push providers to build out their evidence base?
- How will the **ESSER funding cliff** impact technology investments, and will it result in the consolidation of edtech?
- As artificial intelligence gains traction, **will new tools disrupt the edtech landscape**, or will established providers innovate and partner to bring AI to the market effectively?

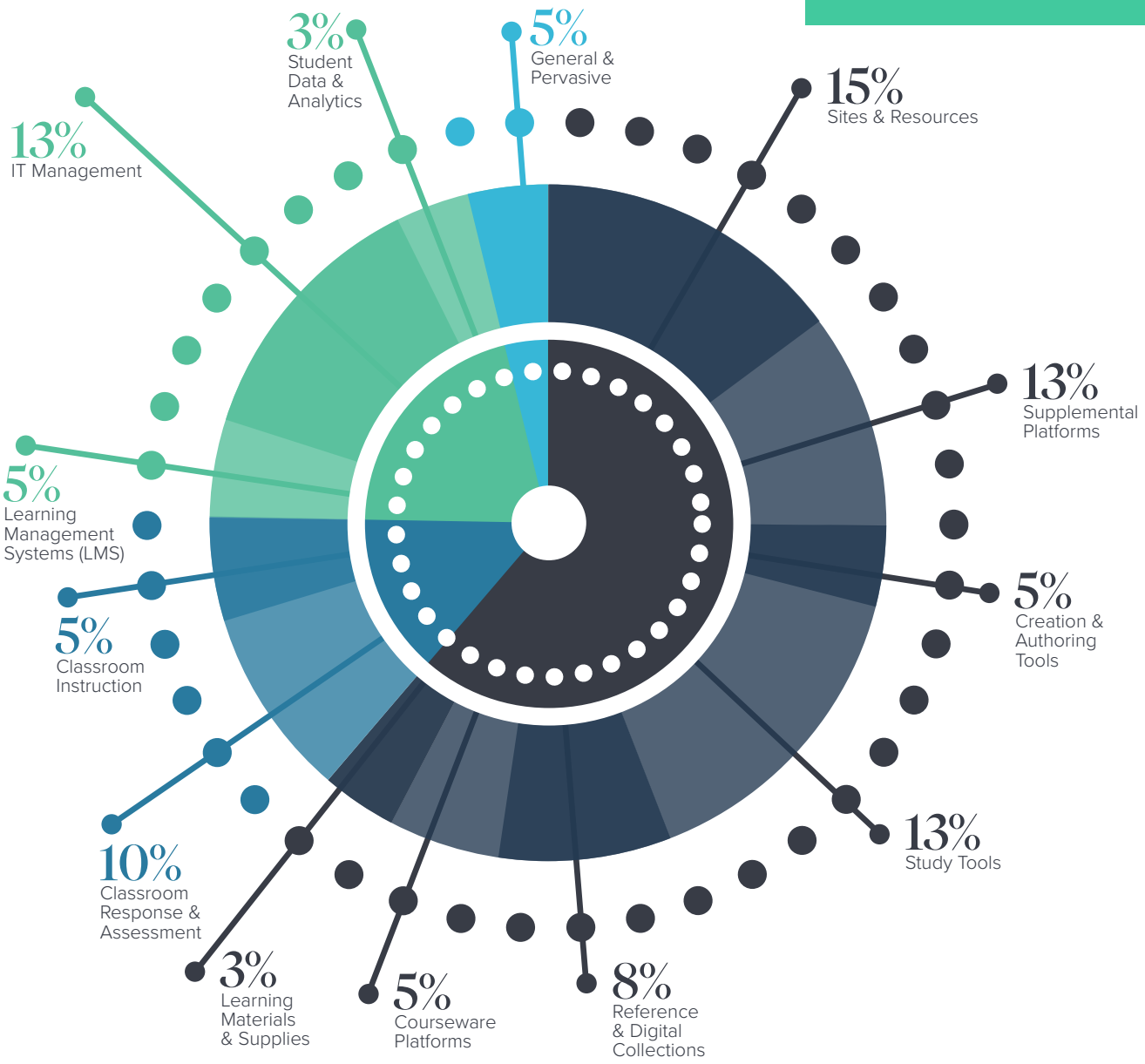
[1]For the purpose of this report, the 20223-24 is defined as September 1, 2023-May 31, 2024.

EdTech
TOP 40

The EdTech Top 40 represents the edtech solutions accessed by the most students and educators across the United States from September 1, 2023 and May 31, 2024, as tracked by LearnPlatform by Instructure.

The Breakdown of the Top 40 By Category & Purpose

All solutions included in the Edtech Top 40 are classified by category and purpose. Products are categorized as being primarily learner-focused, educator-focused, organization-focused or general and pervasive.



60%

Learner-Focused Solutions

Tools in this category are generally used by individual learners—with individual self-determination—during various learning processes both in and out of the classroom. Activities of study, creation, research, and games all fall into this category.

15%

Educator-Focused Solutions

These products are primarily used by educators to support the teaching and learning process, including activities and engagement for multiple learners with some direction or alignment. Shared tools, assessment, planning and operational tasks in/around/between educators and students are in this category.

20%

Organization-Focused

Products in this category are used by organizations to serve groups of educators and learners. These tools are generally used to align, support, and manage operations of multiple learning environments. Activities of administration, operations, technical support, finance, and learning management all fall into this category.

5%

General and Pervasive

Tools categorized as general and pervasive are not exclusive to education settings, but are broadly available consumer technologies that are used in education for multiple and generic purposes. Examples include video conferencing, email/calendar platforms, cloud storage, etc.

EdTech TOP 40

ABCya!
Learner-Focused, Sites & Resources

Adobe*
General & Pervasive

Blooket
Educator-Focused, Classroom Response & Assessment

Canva
Learner-Focused, Creation & Authoring Tools

Canvas LMS
Organization-Focused, Learning Management Systems

ClassLink
Organization-Focused, IT Management

Clever
Organization-Focused, IT Management

Code.Org
Learner-Focused, Supplemental Platforms

CoolMathGames
Learner-Focused, Sites & Resources

Desmos
Learner-Focused, Study Tools

EdPuzzle
Educator-Focused, Classroom Instruction

Encyclopedia Britannica
Learner-Focused, Reference & Digital Collections

Epic!
Learner-Focused, Supplemental Platforms

Gimkit
Educator-Focused, Classroom Response & Assessment

GoGuardian
Organization-Focused, IT Management

Google Classroom
Organization-Focused, Learning Management Systems

Google Workspace for Education
General & Pervasive

Grammarly*
Learner-Focused, Study Tools

History.com
Learner-Focused, Sites & Resources

i-Ready
Learner-Focused, Courseware Platforms

IXL Learning
Learner-Focused, Courseware Platforms

Kahoot!
Educator-Focused, Classroom Response & Assessment

Kami
Educator-Focused, Classroom Instruction

Khan Academy
Learner-Focused, Supplemental Platforms

Math Playground
Learner-Focused, Sites & Resources

Nearpod
Learner-Focused, Supplemental Platforms

NYTimes.com
Learner-Focused, Reference & Digital Collections

Panorama Education*
Organization-Focused, Student Data & Analytics

PBS*
Learner-Focused, Sites & Resources

PhET Interactive
Learner-Focused, Study Tools

Prodigy
Learner-Focused, Supplemental Platforms

Quizizz
Educator-Focused, Classroom Response & Assessment

Quizlet
Learner-Focused, Study Tools

Scholastic
Learner-Focused, Learning Materials & Supplies

Scratch*
Learner-Focused, Creation & Authoring Tools

Securly Filter
Organization-Focused, IT Management

Study.com
Learner-Focused, Study Tools

Weebly
Organization-Focused, IT Management

Wikipedia
Learner-Focused, Reference & Digital Collections

YouTube
Learner-Focused, Sites & Resources

* indicates the solution is new to Edtech Top 40 list.

indicates that the solution has ESSA Evidence

Edtech Rankings By Solution Purpose

In addition to the top 40 most-accessed edtech solutions, we dive deeper into the rankings of certain solutions designed specifically for education use, including learning management systems, courseware platforms, supplemental platforms, classroom response & assessment tools, study tools, and sites and resources.

Top 5 Learning Management Systems

Products classified as learning management systems (LMS) are an all-in-one platform for teaching and learning. An LMS provides school districts with a centralized platform for course management, content authoring and delivery, reporting grades and data, and communication between students, teachers, families, and administration.

1. Google Classroom
2. Canvas LMS
3. Schoology
4. Savvas Realize
5. Seesaw

Top 10 Courseware Platforms

Courseware platforms include solutions in which an entire set of curriculum products have been selected and taught in a sequence to be foundational and comprehensive towards a set of learning goals.

1. i-Ready
2. IXL Learning
3. McGraw Hill
4. Amplify
5. Lexia
6. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (HMH)
7. DeltaMath
8. ReadWorks
9. CK-12
10. XtraMath

Top 15 Supplemental Platforms

Solutions in the supplemental platforms category enable students to actively engage with educational content through different subjects, topics, purposes and modalities, with or without a firm course progression, providing targeted supplement to their learning process.

1. Epic!
2. Nearpod
3. Prodigy
4. Khan Academy
5. Code.org
6. BrainPop
7. Azure Lab Services
8. TypingClub
9. CommonLit
10. Typing.com
11. Newsela
12. Nitro Type
13. PebbleGO
14. Duolingo
15. NoRedInk

Top 10 Classroom Response & Assessment Tools

The classroom response & assessment category encompasses diagnostic tools used to provide ongoing feedback to educators, allowing them to adjust their teaching methods based on a student's learning style and ability.

1. Kahoot!
2. Blooket
3. Quizizz
4. Gimkit
5. Pear Deck
6. SurveyMonkey
7. Mastery Connect
8. 99Math
9. Breakout EDU
10. Pear Assessment

Top 10 Study Tools

Study tools provide student users with resources to prepare for assignments and assessments, as well as tutoring and other aids for studying that help students learn or reinforce specific knowledge or skills.

1. Quizlet
2. Desmos
3. Study.com
4. PhET Interactive Interactive Math & Science Simulations
5. Grammarly
6. Brainly
7. SparkNotes
8. Gale Academic OneFile
9. Mathway
10. Course Hero

Top 10 Sites & Resources

This category includes content used by students as a resource in learning.

1. YouTube
2. Coolmath Games
3. PBS
4. ABCya!
5. History.com (History Channel)
6. Math Playground
7. Quora
8. ExploreLearning
9. National Geographic Kids
10. Ducksters

Takeaways and Action Items

Edtech engagement data surfaced in this report highlights what we know is true: tech-enabled learning is here to stay. While the number of tools available to and in use at school districts continues to grow, it's time for school districts to stop being overwhelmed by edtech and, instead, start building highly intentional ecosystems of products to meet their institutional and learner needs. While tasks related to edtech management and decision-making have traditionally been daunting, districts now have access to resources and technologies to improve these processes, evaluate the effectiveness of tools, identify gaps, and invest in solutions that align with district goals. Moving forward, the focus should be on fostering a culture of continuous improvement and innovation, where technology is seamlessly integrated into education, leading to better student outcomes and more efficient school operations.

Centralize Tech To Streamline Management and Create A Tailored Experience

With educators and students using so many tools in and out of the classroom, district leaders need to consider the scale, efficiency, and effectiveness of their tech. Centralizing where and how you manage edtech can have a considerable impact; rather than using a large collection of technologies for very specialized purposes, districts need to build ecosystems rich with the key technologies that are critical in driving learner outcomes. Leveraging your learning management system (LMS) as the core of your edtech ecosystem can streamline your approach to edtech management.

The LMS is the hub of teaching and learning in most organizations, where staff and students are already engaged daily. In fact, 90% of teachers and students access one of the top five learning management systems featured in this report— and have consistently for the last five years.[2] By prioritizing edtech tools that effectively integrate with your LMS, you can create a digital learning environment where educators and students spend less time figuring out how to launch, access, and navigate individual edtech tools and more time engaged in meaningful instruction.

Building your ecosystem around an extensible LMS—and making integration a requirement— helps create standardized criteria for vetting new edtech tools, ensures compliance, sets clear expectations for staff as to what tools they can request, and minimizes potential duplication of tools that serve the same purpose. By understanding your organization's most used edtech solutions and maximizing the use of their LTI integrations, your LMS becomes the single entry point for most of the tools needed to facilitate equitable and effective learning experiences.

In many organizations, the Learning Management System (LMS) serves as the day-to-day hub of online teaching and learning, and by extension, edtech use. To highlight the power of LMS Integration, here are some of the most-accessed LTI tools within Canvas LMS:

Google
Teach Every Child Connector
Kami
IXL Learning
McGraw Hill
Nearpod
H5P
DeltaMath
Edpuzzle
Vista Higher Learning
Zoom
Proctorio
Microsoft
Canva
Discovery Education

[2] Based on whether a user from the district sample accessed Canvas LMS, Google Classroom, Savvas Realize, Schoology, or Seesaw during the school year.

Action Items for K-12 Leaders:

Understand which of your most used tools integrate with your LMS to architect a more centralized ecosystem.

Consider the best user experience for your teachers' and learners' unique needs.

Prioritize LMS integration when making edtech purchasing and implementation decisions.

Action Items for EdTech Leaders:

Identify where your users are and prioritize LMS integrations that will enhance their edtech ecosystems and help to expand your customer base.

Prioritize and invest in outstanding user experiences when developing LMS integrations.

Ensure the highest standards of data privacy and security for your users by upgrading existing LTi integrations.

Rely on Evidence to Make Decisions

With more edtech tools being accessed by teachers and students than ever before, district leaders need to be intentional about what outcomes they hope to achieve with individual tools and what criteria they use to drive the continuous evaluation of their impact. It's essential for school districts to rely on evidence-based decision-making to ensure their technology investments adhere to industry standards and are effective, safe, and equitable for all students.

School districts now have unprecedented access to evidence—including staff feedback, empirical data, data privacy and security credentials, accessibility and interoperability certifications, and reputable research—and must use that information to create digital ecosystems that improve teaching and learning instead of detracting from it. Since evidence can come in many forms, leaders need to consider quality, quantity, recency, and context when using evidence to make decisions.

ESSA-aligned research is a critical and required component of evidence-based decision-making. When it comes to research, the ESSA framework provides an approachable model educators can use to find research-based edtech, from brand-new and innovative solutions with compelling implementation approaches to established tools with empirical research in various authentic education settings. Increasingly, school districts are looking for ESSA-aligned research as part of their vetting processes; to reflect that demand, we've indicated which solutions in the Top 40 have published research that has been validated as meeting ESSA evidence-based standards.

32% of the tools on the 2024 Edtech Top 40 have published research that is aligned to ESSA

"With finite time and funding, it is incumbent upon education systems to verify the effectiveness of technological tools before purchase and adoption, and during classroom implementation."

-2024 National Educational Technology Plan

The Evidence Report aggregates data from some of the industry's most trusted third-party organizations that provide publicly accessible evidence across key domains—including privacy, interoperability, research, and effectiveness.

Action Items for K-12 Leaders:

Look for ESSA studies conducted or vetted by a third-party, What Works Clearinghouse certified research group when evaluating edtech tools. Remember to consider the recency and context of each study.

Partner with edtech providers committed to evidence-based solutions; inquire about their ongoing commitment to building an evidence base.

Evaluate your edtech's effectiveness by leveraging data to measure progress toward intended learning outcomes.

Action Items for EdTech Leaders:

Build a foundation of ESSA evidence and continue to invest in evidence-based solutions.

Partner with school districts to take an evidence-informed approach to product development.

Demonstrate your product effectiveness with validated third-party evidence from a What Works Clearinghouse certified research group.

Embrace and Account for Emerging AI Technologies

As K-12 districts build and optimize their edtech ecosystems, it's essential that the systems not only address immediate needs but are also sustainable over time. The ability to scale, the flexibility to meet the changing needs of the organization and its learners, and the openness to adapt to emerging technologies, including AI, are all critical characteristics of impactful ecosystems.

AI's swift emergence and integration in edtech is revolutionizing how we teach and learn. At this point, it feels inevitable that a significant portion of technology tools will incorporate AI to some extent in the coming years. The possibilities opened up by these tools are vast, but their sheer capability and pace at which they are developing also brings risk, particularly concerning privacy, equity and bias. As the education landscape evolves rapidly and teachers and students spend more time using AI-based tools, district leaders need to understand these tools, ensure that they are safe, and find ways to evaluate their effectiveness.

District leaders must prioritize developing comprehensive AI policies that address ethical considerations, data privacy, and ensure that AI tools are used responsibly and transparently, mitigating risks associated with bias and inequity. Additionally, incorporating AI into the district's technology vetting process is essential in integrating such tools into your edtech ecosystem. This means evaluating AI tools and features not just for their innovative capabilities, but also for their alignment with educational or organizational goals, compliance with privacy standards, and evidence of effectiveness in enhancing outcomes.

Action Items for K-12 Leaders:

Establish clear policies for AI usage that address ethical considerations including bias, privacy and transparency, and ensure stakeholders understand the guidelines for using AI in an educational setting.

Integrate AI thoughtfully by choosing tools that align with your educational goals and enhance teaching and learning without replacing human interaction.

Provide ongoing professional development for educators to effectively incorporate AI into their teaching practices and guide students in using AI ethically and responsibly.

Action Items for EdTech Leaders:

Develop AI solutions that are backed by robust research and proven to improve educational outcomes.

Prioritize data privacy and security by implementing rigorous measures that protect student information, and be transparent about how data is used and safeguarded.

Engage with the K-12 community to understand their challenges and needs, and design AI tools that are user-friendly and truly beneficial to teaching and learning.

In Closing

Technology will continue to revolutionize education. Now more than ever, school districts need to think about their edtech ecosystem holistically and ensure the products they invest in are grounded in evidence, integrate seamlessly, and are safe, equitable, and effective for all students. At the same time, edtech providers must develop solutions that address the diverse needs of schools, offer robust support, and demonstrate measurable impact on student outcomes. By fostering strong partnerships between districts and edtech providers, we can create a more cohesive and efficient educational environment where technology truly enhances learning for every student.

If you'd like to receive research updates or have questions about this report, please contact us at evidence@instructure.com.

Methodology

Findings are based on the analysis of de-identified data from September 1, 2023 to May 31, 2024. Data was collected using LearnPlatform's browser extension, which is freely available to any U.S. education organization.

The EdTech Top 40 2023-24 Report reflects a total of more than 57 billion data points from education organizations utilizing LearnPlatform's browser integration, including 4,075,629 individuals (492,849 educators and 3,579,317 students). The synthesis examined quantitative data on product usage during the designated time frame from the LearnPlatform for Educators and LearnPlatform for Students browser extensions; specifically web traffic for digital tools utilized. In some cases, the data includes central logins that could be used to access multiple edtech solutions. Analysis, tools and reports are compliant with all federal and state student data privacy laws, including FERPA, COPPA, CIPA and PPRA. The EdTech Top 40 is based solely on quantitative analysis. No marketing, advertising or qualitative insights were used.

The number 2,739 (average for the year) was calculated based on the average number of products accessed by school districts per month between the designated time frame.The 436 school districts in this sample were selected due to their average monthly user base during the time period: These were the districts with an average of at least 50 educator and 1000 student users per month during the school year. Any changes or increases in the average number of edtech products accessed from year to year in the EdTech Top 40 may be influenced by sample size, participant distribution, additional tools tracked and distribution of edtech tools accessed.

The average total number of products accessed by an individual educator (49) and individual student (45) during the period of September 1, 2023 to May 31, 2024 was calculated by taking the average of the distinct edtech tools accessed by each individual user, educator or student, in our sample during the time period.

Instructure conducted a synthesis of publicly available research on ETT40 solutions by visiting provider websites and Google Scholar and (a) confirming whether solutions have available research and (b) determining if this research has been verified as meeting ESSA evidence requirements by a review from one of the following third-parties: Digital Promise, Evidence for ESSA, LearnPlatform by Instructure, and/or What Works Clearinghouse. This information was compiled in June 2024 and reflects the available evidence at that time. In the time between compilation and publication, the information may have changed.

The top LTI tools used within Canvas was determined by aggregating LTI launch data based on key information gleaned from LTI names and launch domains.

For questions about the data included in this report, please email evidence@instructure.com.

INSTRUCTURE

Powering the World's Smartest Classrooms.

Instructure, the maker of Canvas LMS, is an education technology company dedicated to elevating student success, amplifying the power of teaching, and inspiring everyone to learn together. The Instructure Learning Ecosystem, comprised of several products serving K-12, higher education, and professional education, supports tens of millions of educators and learners worldwide, making learning more personal and student success more equitable.

Learn more at instructure.com/k-12.