



ONLINE EDUCATION TRENDS REPORT

2026



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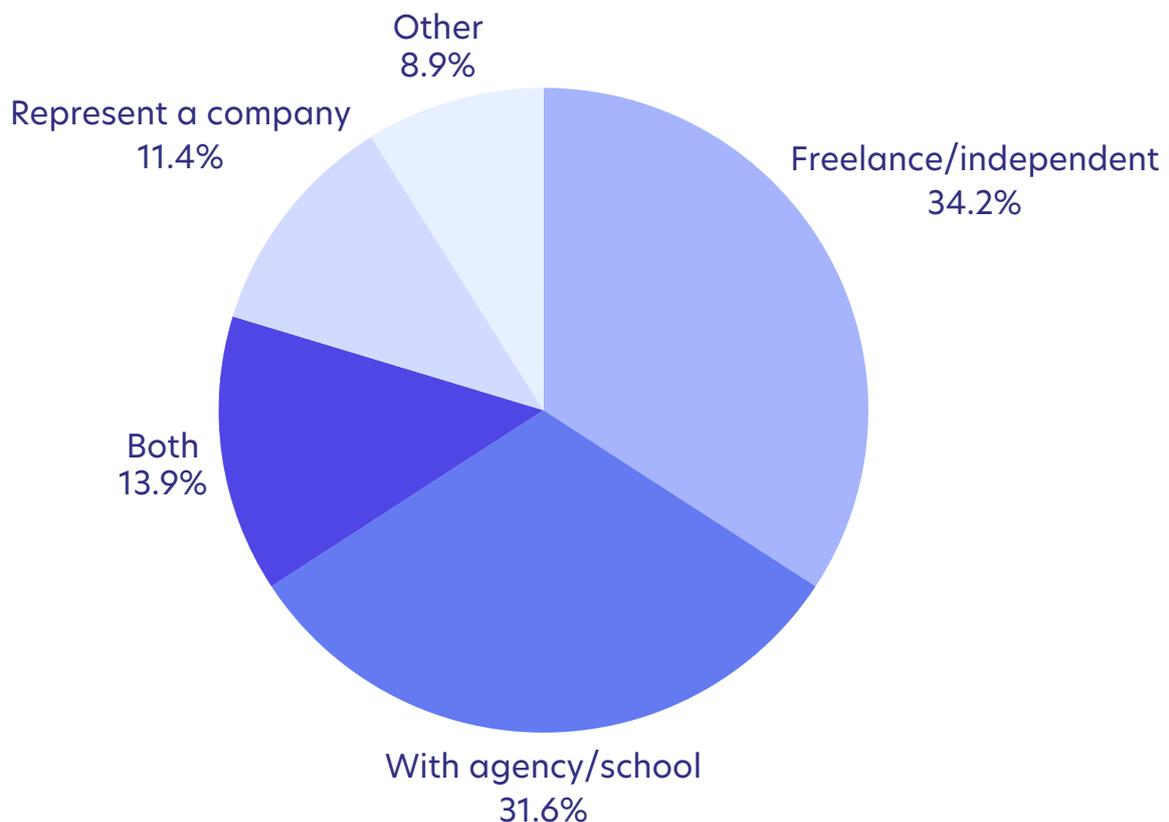


Methodology and Sample

The respondents of the 2026 survey represent a diverse group of educators and education industry professionals. This year's respondents were almost all **tutors/teachers (91.1%)**, while the rest represented **schools or tutoring companies**.

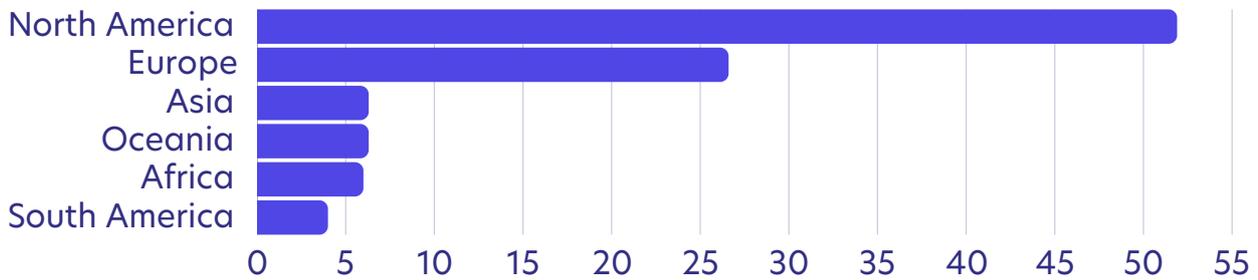
Roles of Respondents

31.6% of tutors teach for an **agency/school only**; **34.2%** are **freelance/independent**; **13.9%** are **both freelance and signed to agencies/schools**; and **11.4%** both represent a **tutoring company and teach**.



Geographic Location

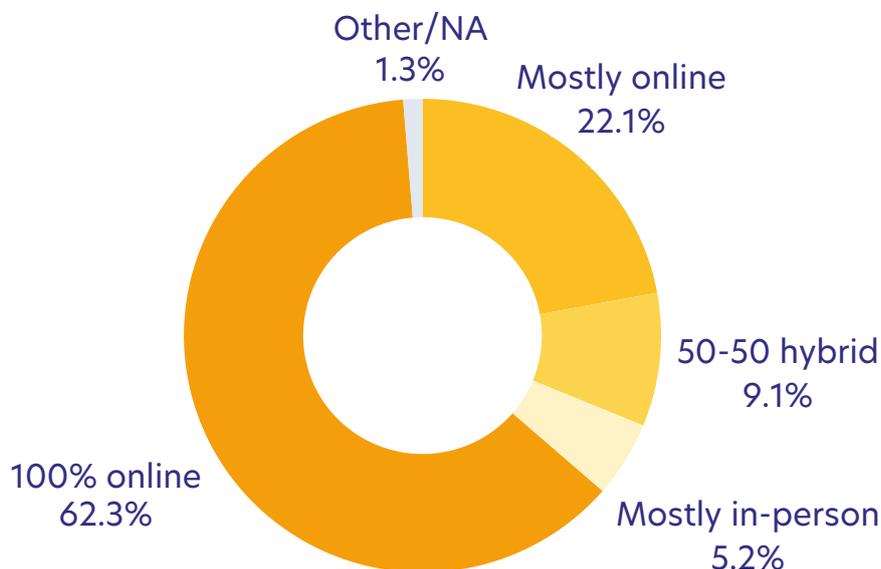
About **half (51.9%)** of the respondents reside in North America, with Europe (**26.6%**) in second place.



Teaching Format

Almost two-thirds of respondents teach **exclusively online (62.3%)**, while the next-biggest segment teaches **mostly online (22.1%)**.

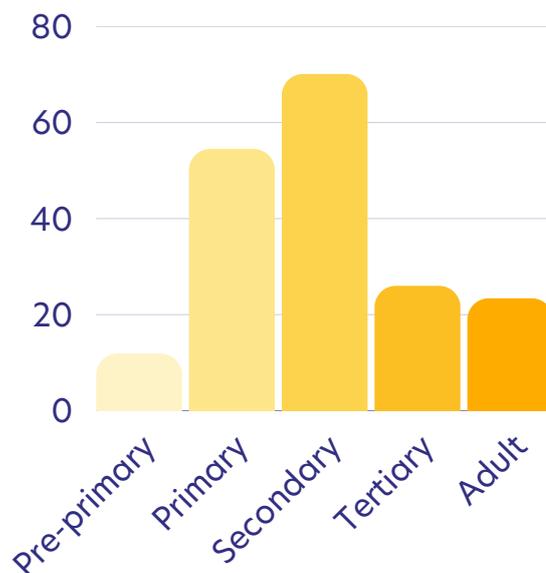
Only **14.3%** teach **online and offline**, and an even **smaller portion** teach **mostly in-person**.



Age Groups

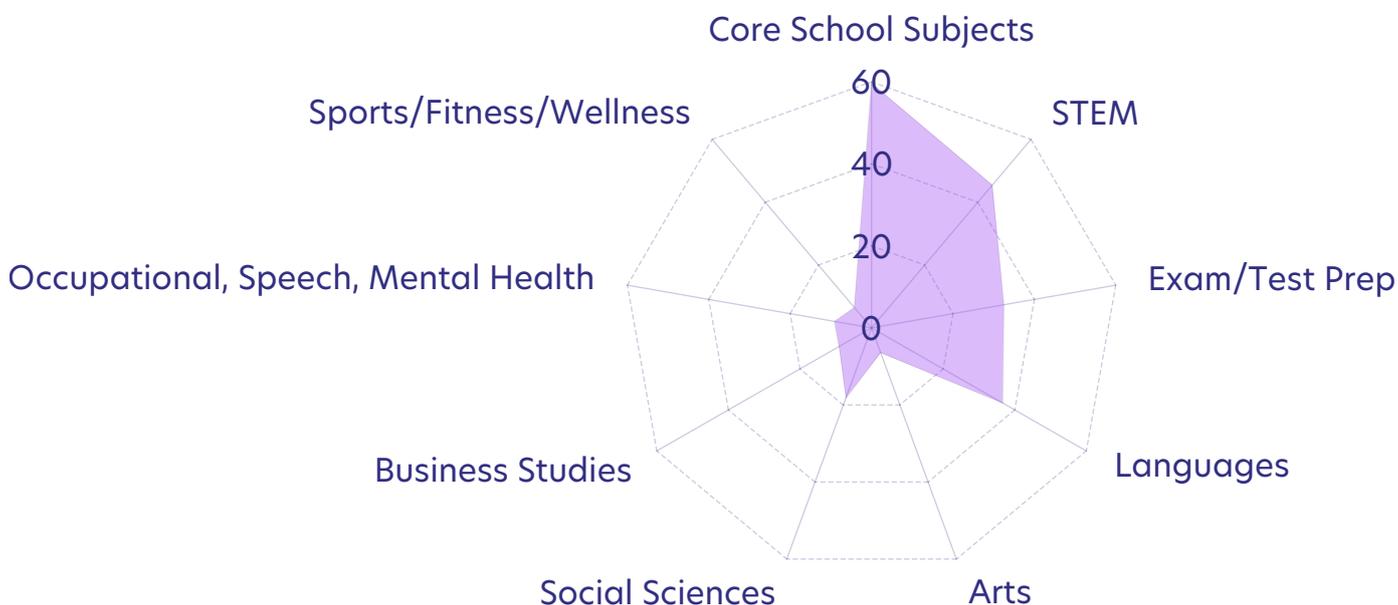
The majority teach **secondary (70.1%)** and **primary (54.5%)** levels, with some representation in **adult education (23.4%)** and **tertiary (26%)**.

Pre-primary teaching was the least common (11.7%).



Subjects

Subjects taught are clustered around **core school subjects (59.7%)**, **STEM (45.5%)** and **test prep (32.5%)**, with **languages** making up another significant chunk (**27.3%**). Most other subjects are smaller segments.



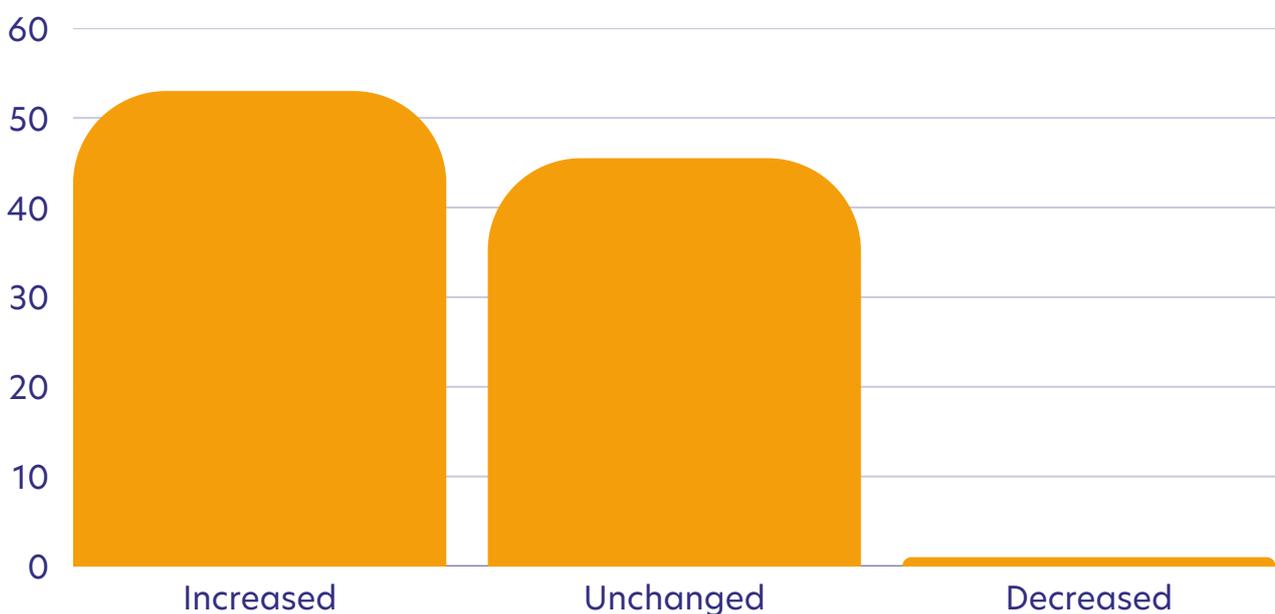
Virtual classroom usage is still rising

Just over half of respondents (**53.2%**) **report increasing their use of virtual classrooms** in the past year. This suggests that online education is not just stable: it's still expanding, and educators are continuing to **invest in virtual delivery** rather than reverting to in-person instruction.

53.2% report **increasing their use of virtual classrooms** in the past year. **45.5%** reported the same usage, and only **1.3%** indicated a decrease.



 **Did your virtual classroom usage increase, decrease or stay the same this year?**



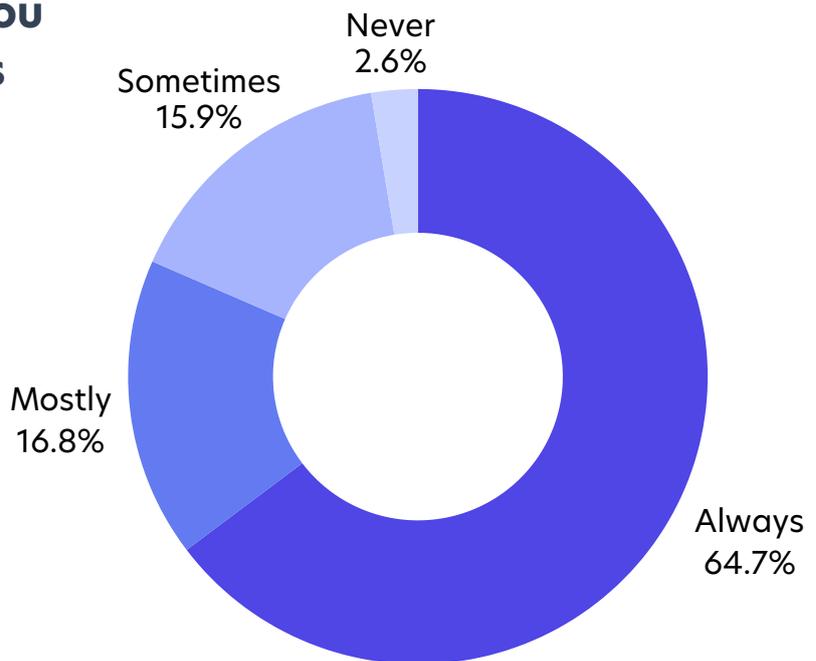
Digital tools are now the default, not an add-on

63.3% say they **always incorporate digital tools** (whiteboards, breakout rooms, gamification, etc.) into teaching.

The baseline expectation for online teaching has shifted from “video call + worksheets” to a more interactive classroom stack. Platforms and educators alike are optimizing around participation, visibility, and feedback loops.



 **How often do you use digital tools when teaching?**



Virtual learning is improving learner engagement

An overwhelming majority (**83.1%**) indicated that **specific tools or features improve student engagement** when using virtual classrooms.

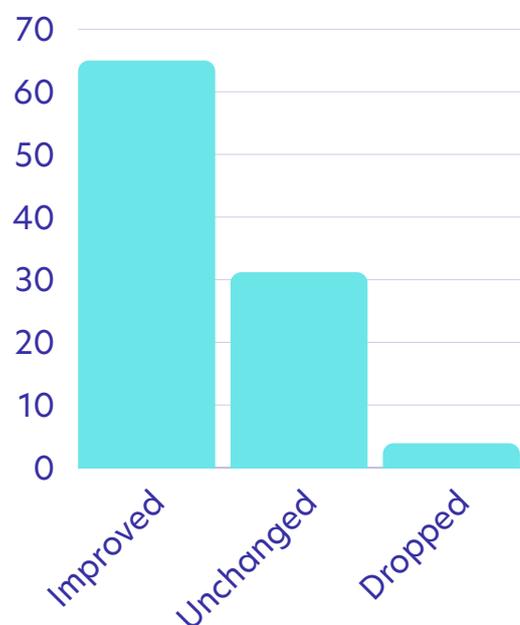
Almost two-thirds (**65%**) of respondents indicated that **student engagement improved** with the use of virtual classrooms, with **29.9%** indicating engagement “improved a lot”.

This is a clear signal that online education is no longer the “good enough” solution of the pandemic era, but a **credible, high-impact learning environment in its own right**.

Do digital tools improve student engagement?



Did student engagement improve when using virtual classrooms?

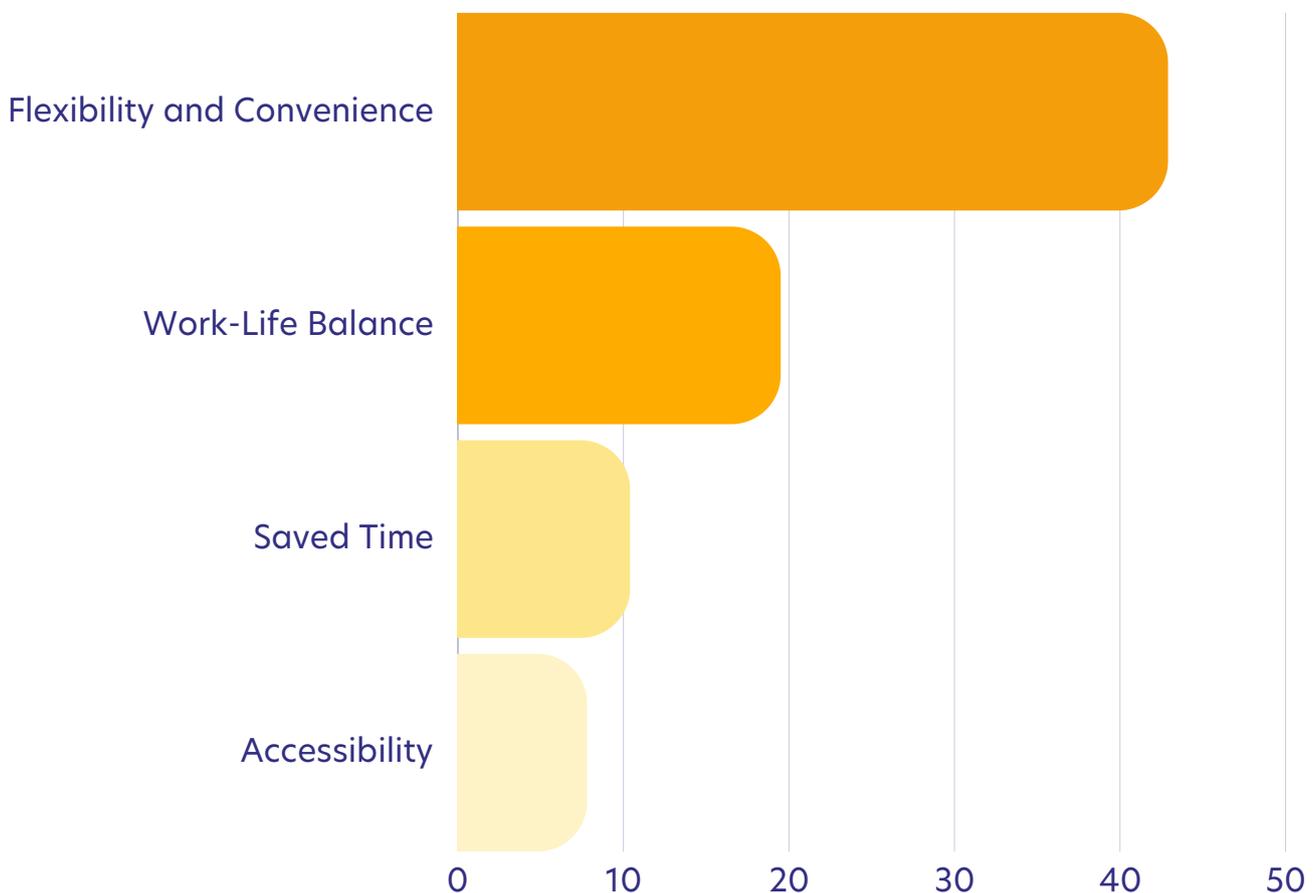


Flexibility remains the core benefit of online teaching

“Flexibility and convenience” (42.9%) is the most valued benefit of online teaching. The next-biggest perceived benefit is “work-life balance” (19.5%) followed by “saves time” (10.4%) and Accessibility (7.8%).



 What is the main benefit of online teaching?

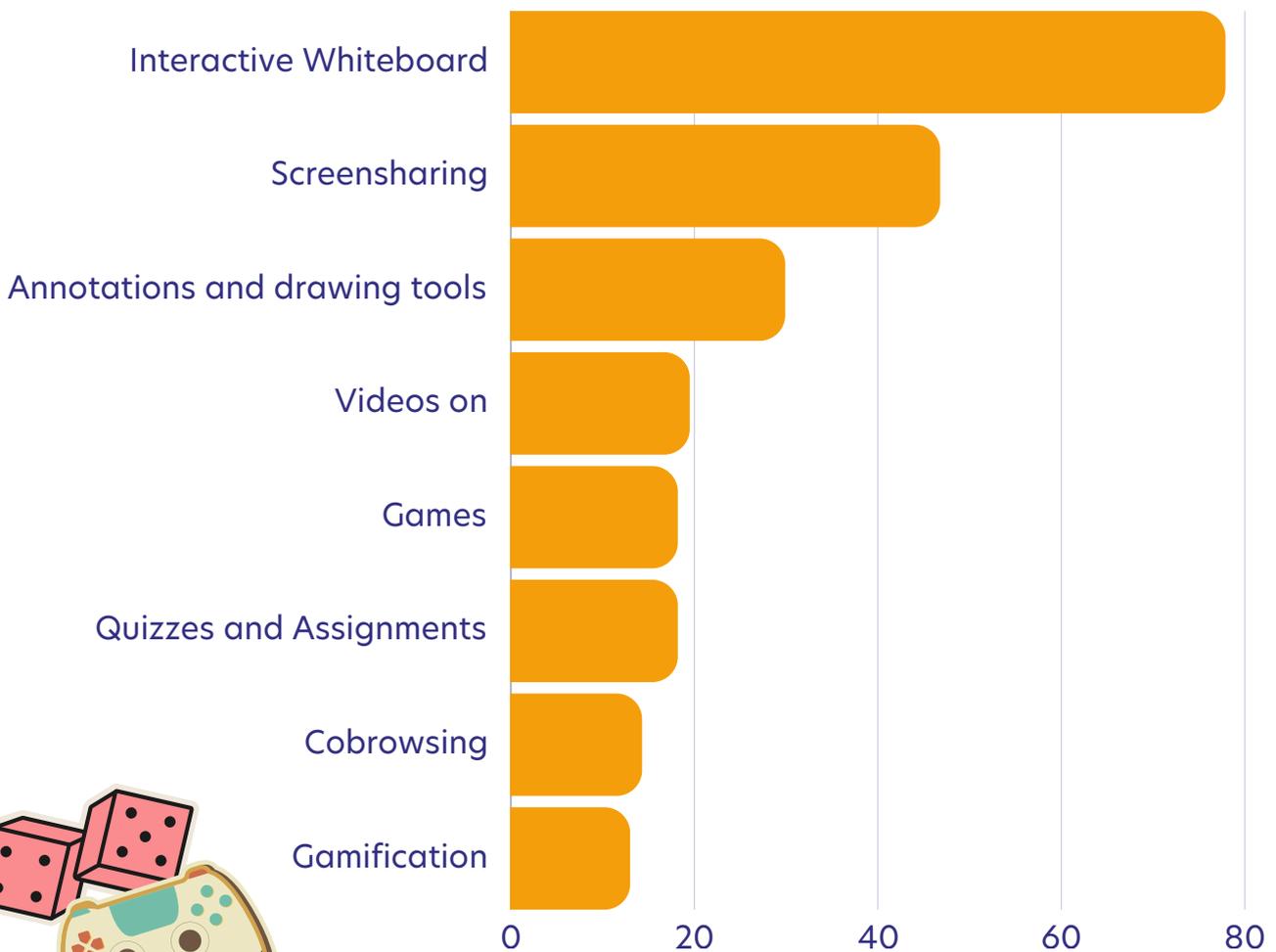


Engagement drivers are interactive and visual

When educators were asked which features most improved engagement in their lessons, **the interactive whiteboard stood out, with 78%** of respondents selecting it.



Which tools improve engagement the most?

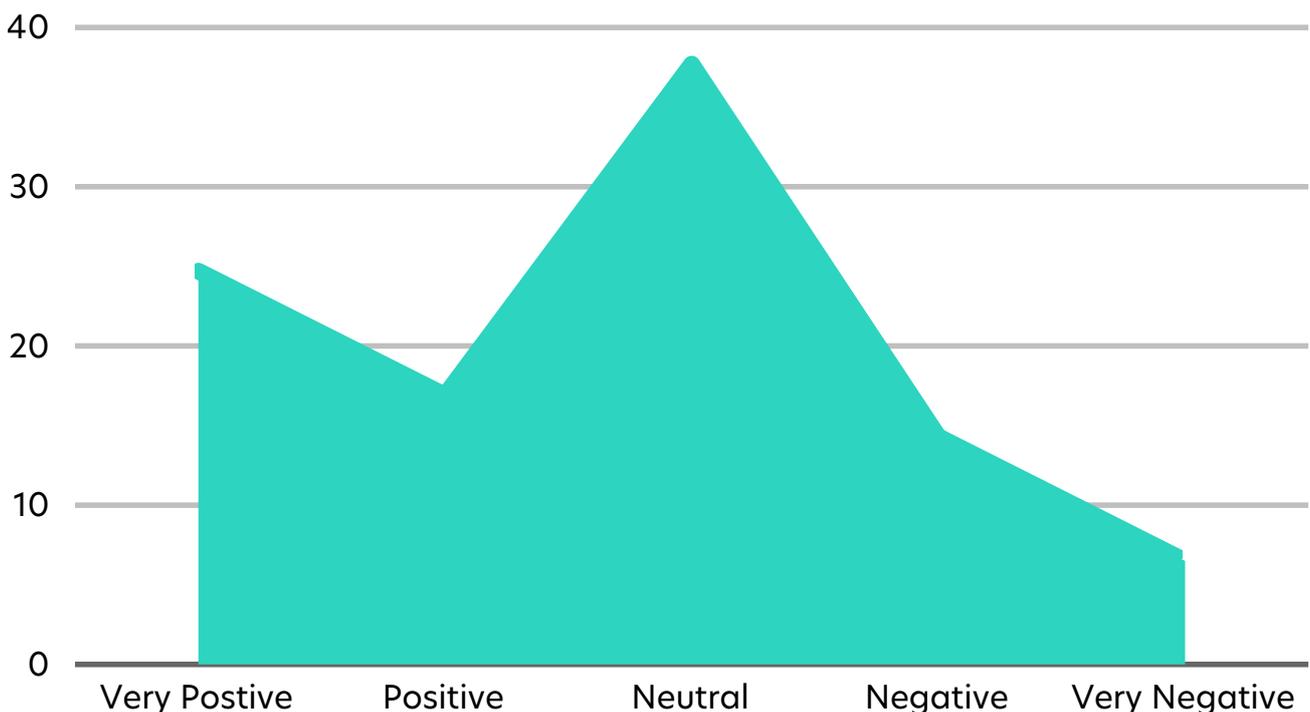


AI tools are widely used...

31.6% of respondents believe that the **increased use of AI will be the most significant change** in education by the end of 2026.

While there are mixed attitudes towards AI in education, **most respondents report positive (37.7%) or neutral (41.6%) sentiment**. Only **17.8% have a negative attitude towards AI** in education, and of those only **6.5% report a strong negative attitude**.

 **How do you feel about AI in education?**



AI tools are widely used... and are being embraced



What AI tools are you using?

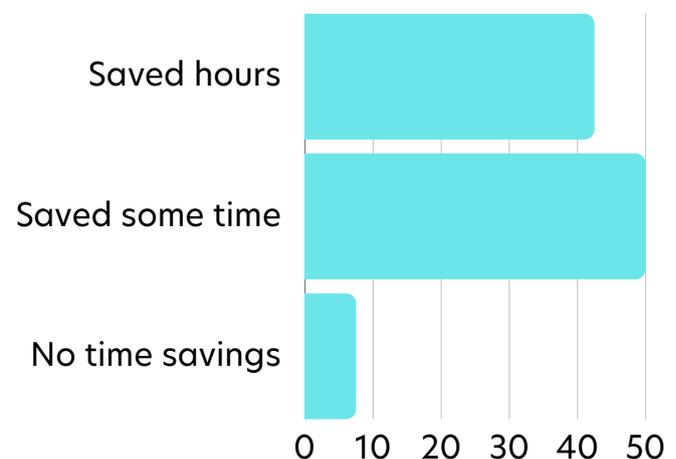


When asked which new tech they were embracing, the majority mentioned **AI tools**, with **ChatGPT, Claude, and Copilot** getting the most mentions.

Many of the reported uses of AI were for generating **lesson plans** and saving time on administrative tasks.

AI isn't changing what educators do. Rather, it's changing **how fast and how smoothly they do it**. A massive **42.7%** reported that this tech was saving them "**hours every week**", while a further **50% stated that it was saving minutes to an hour** a week. Only **7.5%** reported **no time savings**.

How much time is the tech you're using saving you?



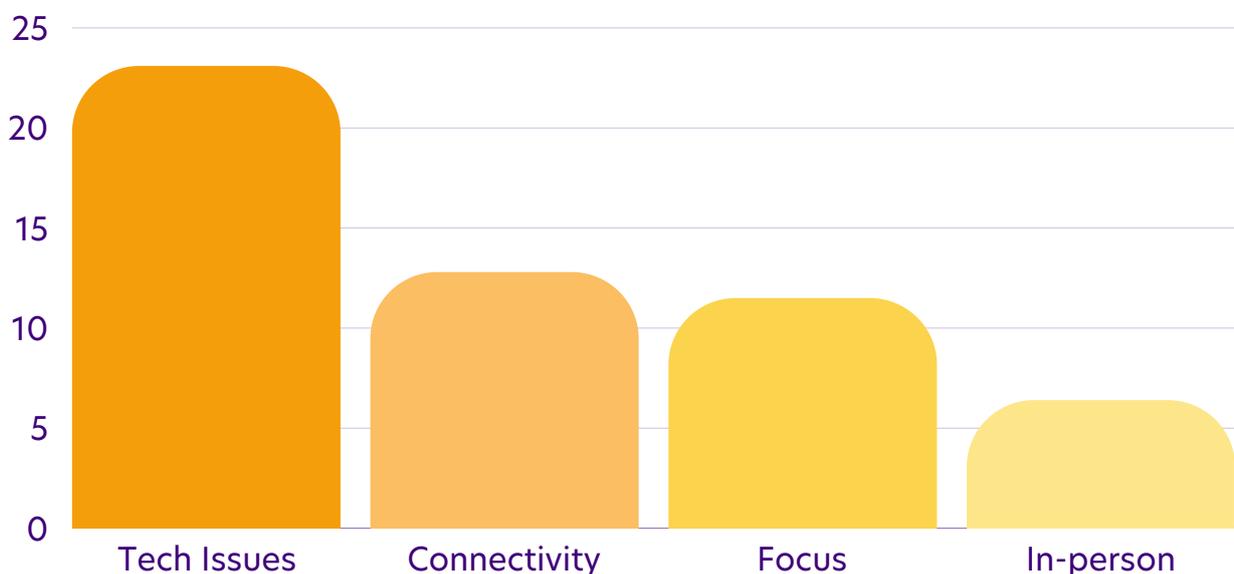
The biggest barriers are practical, not philosophical

The single greatest obstacle educators encounter when teaching online is **tech issues (23.1%)**. These are usually related to basic troubleshooting, such as granting permissions and ensuring the correct audio devices are used. A further **12.8% report connectivity issues as the biggest challenge**.

11.5% say student focus is the biggest issue, and **6.4% say that it is easier or better to teach in person**.



 **What is the biggest challenge in online teaching?**



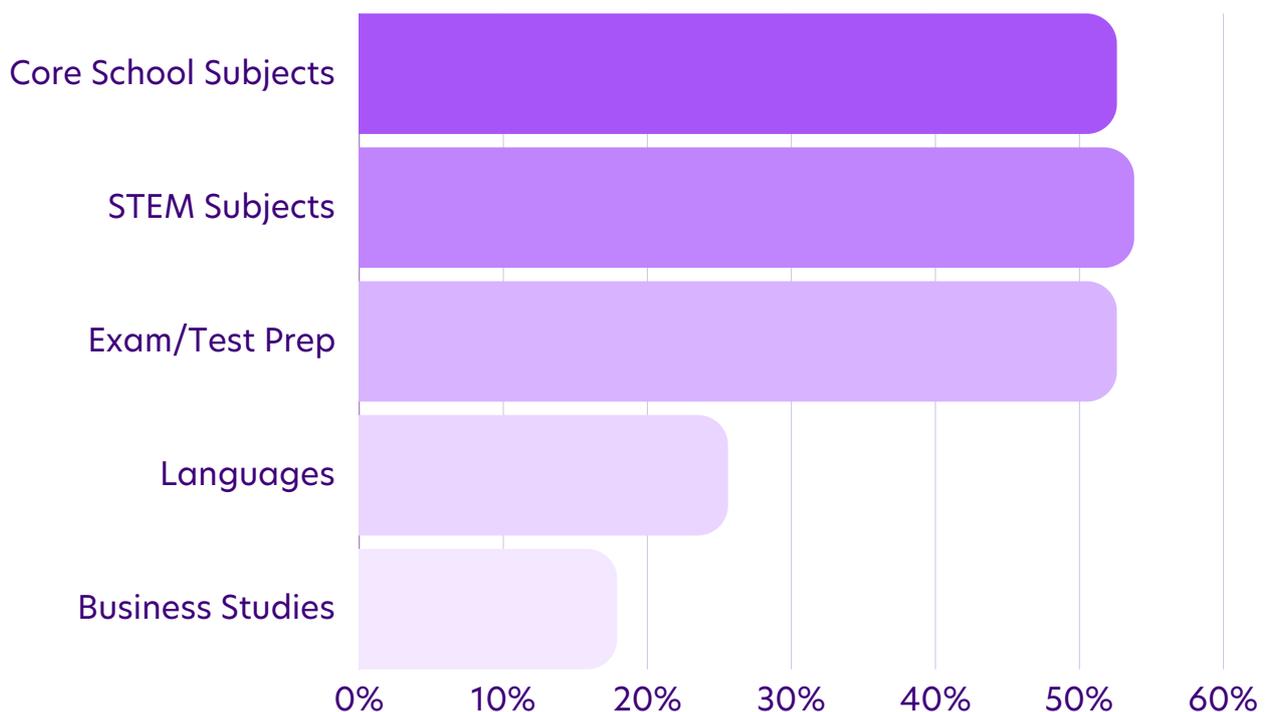
Demand for test prep and languages are on the rise

Educators anticipate the most growth in three subjects/areas, namely **Core School Subjects (52.6%)**, **STEM Subjects (53.8%)**, and **Exam, Test, or Assessment Prep (52.5%)**.

Some respondents also expect growth in demand for **Language learning (25.6%)** and **Business Studies (17.9%)**.



 **What subjects do you expect to grow in demand this year?**



Recommendations for Success in 2026



1.

Prioritize interactive teaching workflows

Invest in tools and habits that increase learner participation like whiteboards, structured activities, visible thinking etc.

2.

Make time savings repeatable

Standardize lesson templates, reusable resources and lightweight admin flows to save educators' time.

3.

Design for real-world constraints

Invest in backup power, be proactive about common trouble-shooting issues, and use user-friendly tools designed for teaching online.

4.

Follow the demand for skills

Test prep and languages appear to be growing; educators can align offerings and marketing accordingly.