



Education News And Notes



Getting Today's Students Ready For Success

(NAPSA)—The classroom necessities for today's students are drastically different from those of their parents. Wood pencils, slide rules and lunch pails are no longer the "have-to-have" school supplies. Instead, students are toting pens that write underwater, electronic calendars, and even multifunctional calculators that could tally the national budget.

Another difference: technology is more central to the education process. Computers and Internet access, which were present in just three percent of classrooms in 1994, had spread to 77 percent of classrooms by 2000, according to the National Center for Education Statistics at the U.S. Department of Education.

When it comes to ensuring children's success in school, though, the essentials for parents are still the same: encouraging children to read and write at home, setting aside time each day for kids to do homework, and creating a distraction-free study environment.

Giving students access to technology at home is another way for parents to help their kids make the most of their study time. Today's students need software tools that will help them complete more work in less time, more easily share information with others and incorporate Web content into their assignments, improving the quality of their work.

Families should look for integrated applications that offer the following:

- The ability to place relevant features and options at students' fingertips to help them work more independently
- Document backup and recovery tools that help guard against students' accidental loss of work
- Straightforward document-editing tools to help students incorporate teachers' and classmates' feedback
- Tools that make it easier for students to interact with the Web while they are working in a word processing, spreadsheet, e-mail or other type of application



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- Integration with instant-messaging and e-mail applications to help students readily communicate with each other and help parents stay in touch with their children's teachers and school administrators
- Built-in calendar and time-management features to help students plan and follow through with homework schedules
- Easily accessed reference materials that help students find current and relevant information for class assignments and school reports.

With this checklist in mind, one option to consider is Microsoft Office XP Standard for Students and Teachers. Priced at \$149, this edition of Office XP is available only to students and educators, and offers a significant discount over other versions of Office. For more information, please visit <http://www.microsoft.com/office/forstudents/>.

In addition, Microsoft Corp. has teamed with the National PTA to help parents and students by creating an online homework Web site at <http://www.microsoft.com/family/pta/?id=ptadetails> and a charitable program that will benefit PTA activities in communities nationwide. So with a little help from Microsoft Office for Students and Teachers and the work of the Parent Teacher Association, kids have an easier time getting ahead in the classroom.