

Hold orientation both online and on campus

As you transition back to school for the 2020 2021 school year, you face a range of new learning scenarios. You have to flexibly accommodate remote learning, in person instruction, and combinations of both.

Microsoft is committed to helping you navigate these challenges, so we've put together a handful of resources to help with orientation and other back to school events. Are there resources you need that we haven't provided? Leave us a comment and let us know.



Considerations for orientation

Below are some issues you may be considering at each stage of orientation.

Before orientation

How will you ramp up faculty and students on new tools?

How will you set students up with the technology they need?

Are there any key materials students need to have as the school year begins?

How will you ensure inclusivity and accessibility for all students, while maintaining security?

During orientation

What size of orientation events do you need to hold, and will there be external participants?

Do you need to host campus-wide events like leadership addresses?

How will you engage with students outside of sessions and get a pulse on their social and emotional adjustment?

Beyond orientation

How will you help students socialize and plug into the campus community?

How will you continue to engage students and personalize learning after orientation?

Orientation roadmap

Click on each step for more information.

Before orientation

[Prepare instructors and admins for orientation](#)

[Set students up with the tech they need](#)

[Connect students to resources and services](#)

[Ensure a foundation of security and accessibility](#)

During orientation

[Hold orientation sessions via Teams meetings](#)

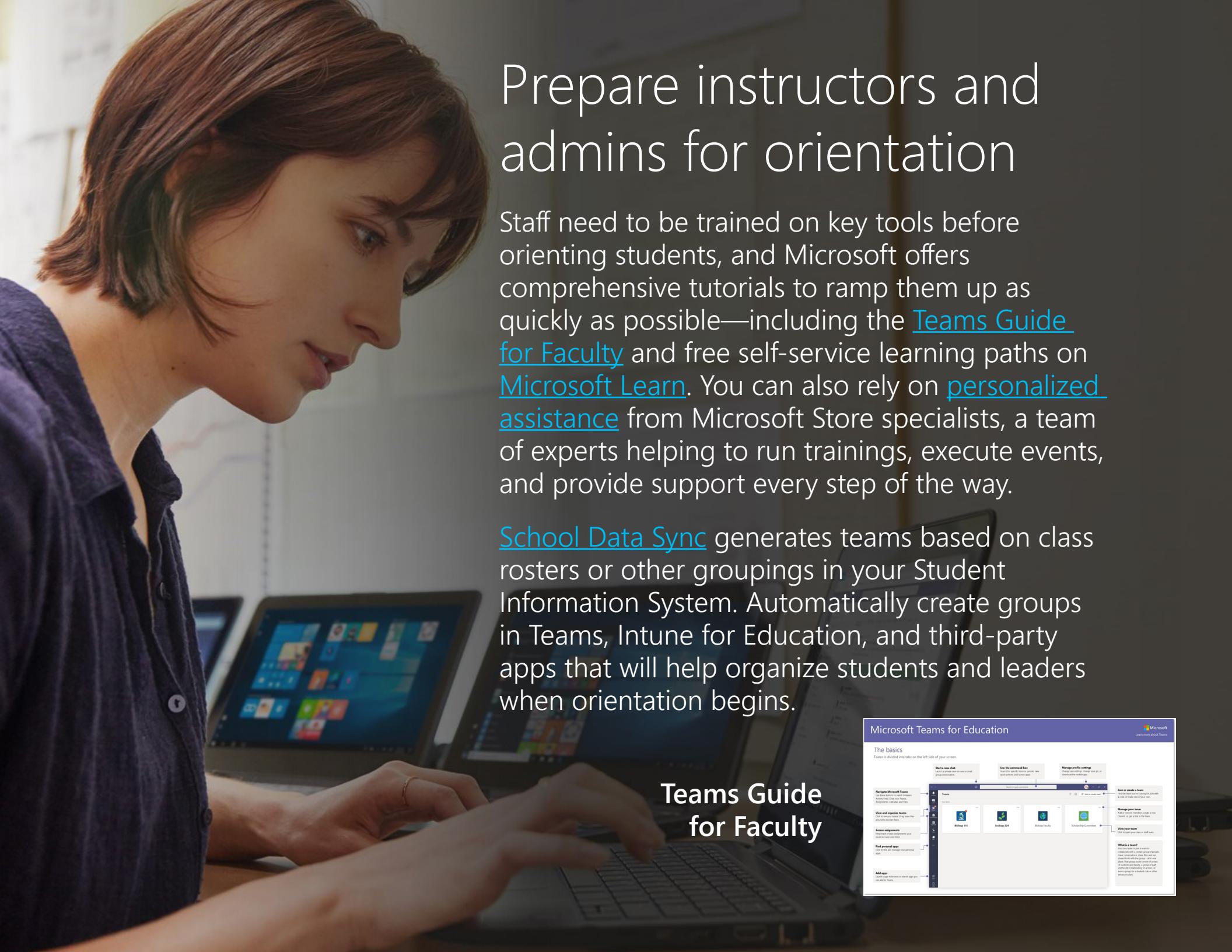
[Host larger sessions via Live Events](#)

[Stay engaged with students outside of sessions](#)

Beyond orientation

[Help students plug into the community](#)

[Personalize the educational experience](#)

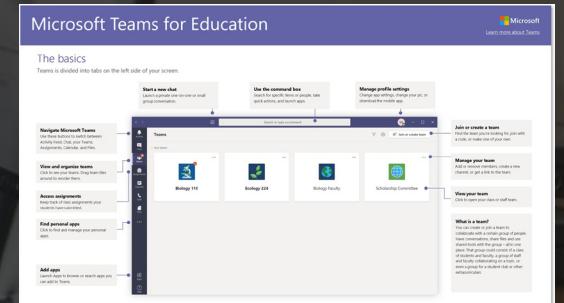
A photograph of a woman with short brown hair, wearing a dark blue corduroy jacket over a white shirt. She is looking down at a laptop screen, which is visible in the foreground. The background is slightly blurred.

Prepare instructors and admins for orientation

Staff need to be trained on key tools before orienting students, and Microsoft offers comprehensive tutorials to ramp them up as quickly as possible—including the [Teams Guide for Faculty](#) and free self-service learning paths on [Microsoft Learn](#). You can also rely on [personalized assistance](#) from Microsoft Store specialists, a team of experts helping to run trainings, execute events, and provide support every step of the way.

[School Data Sync](#) generates teams based on class rosters or other groupings in your Student Information System. Automatically create groups in Teams, Intune for Education, and third-party apps that will help organize students and leaders when orientation begins.

Teams Guide for Faculty



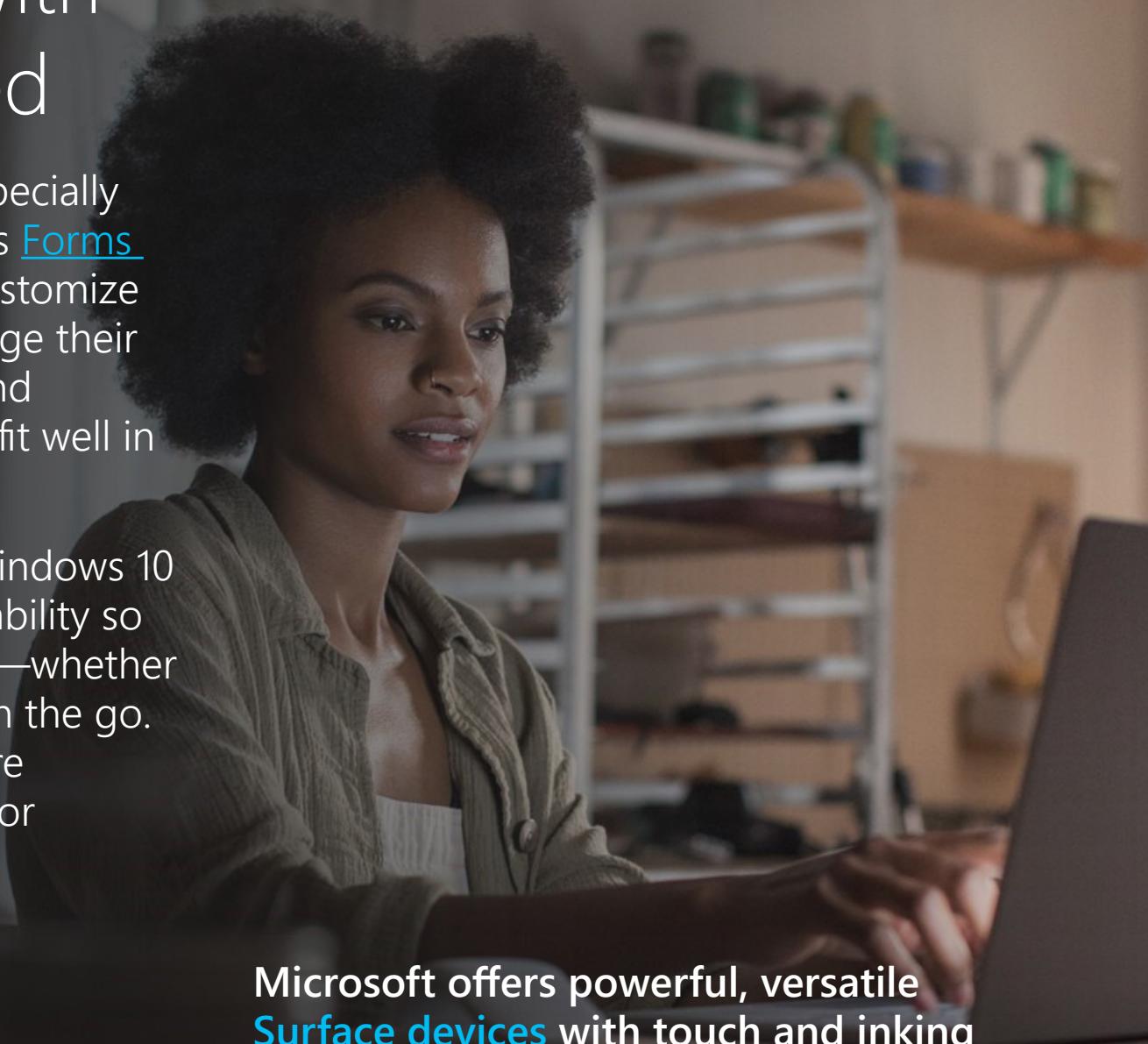
Set students up with the tech they need

Device and Internet equity are especially important for hybrid learning. This [Forms template](#) is available for you to customize and send to students, to help gauge their needs in relation to technology and Internet access. The survey could fit well in your orientation materials.

Microsoft also offers affordable Windows 10 and Surface devices with LTE capability so that students can stay productive—whether they're on campus, at home, or on the go. Visit the [Education Store](#) to explore accessible, highly secure devices for students, faculty, and admins.



Microsoft offers powerful, versatile [Surface devices](#) with touch and inking for more experiential and accessible learning, plus LTE options so students can connect from anywhere

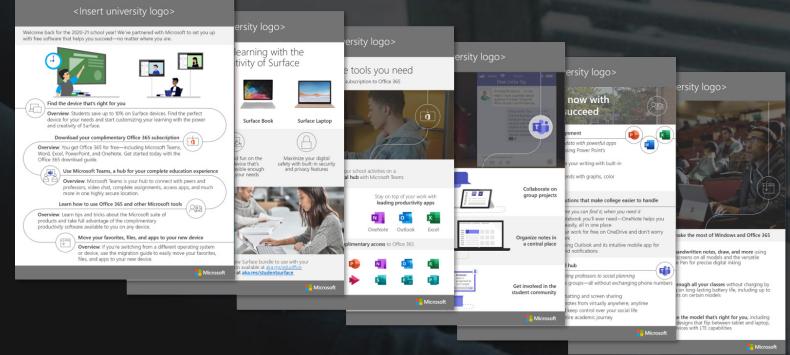


Connect students to resources and services

Send out the [Back-to-School](#) Kit to give students detailed instructions on downloading and using Microsoft 365, including Teams as a central collaboration hub that provides a holistic educational experience. The kit provides student discounts for Surface devices as well.

Connect students to Microsoft's [student resources portal](#) for helpful tutorials and templates. There are also courses on [Microsoft Learn](#) and [LinkedIn Learning](#) tailored for students—whether they want to practice the productivity tools they'll be using in their daily lives or get a head start on cutting-edge digital technologies.

Back-to-School Kit



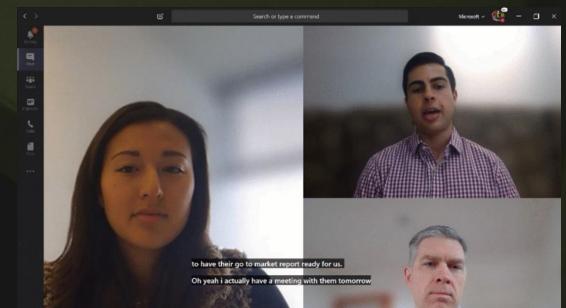
A photograph of a person with dark hair, wearing a white t-shirt and blue jeans, sitting in a black power wheelchair. They are facing away from the camera, looking at a silver laptop computer which is open on their lap. The laptop screen displays what appears to be a video conference interface with multiple small video feeds. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

Ensure a foundation of security and accessibility

Microsoft is dedicated to keeping your virtual orientation environment safe. Teams includes rich privacy controls for meetings—[define roles](#), [moderate conversations](#), prevent interference from unwanted attendees, and [monitor consent](#) for recording. And it's built on a trusted cloud platform that defends data and identities.

Microsoft also offers free, comprehensive, built-in accessibility tools to help include all learners. Just a few examples include [live captions](#) and transcription with translation, [Accessibility Checker](#) to ensure accessible resources, [Immersive Reader](#) to make reading and writing inclusive, [dictation](#), and [Focus Assist](#).

Live Captions in Teams



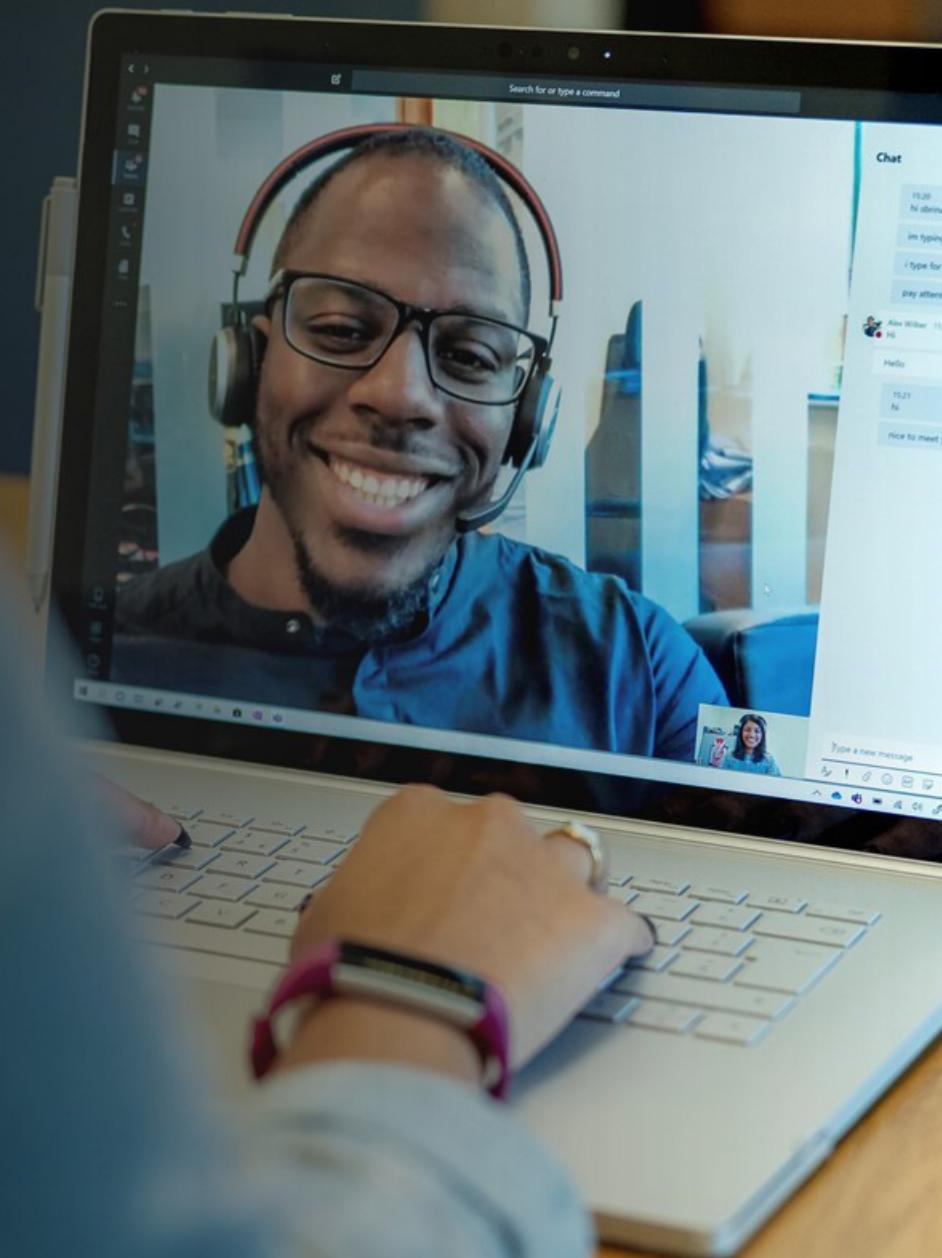
Hold orientation sessions via Teams meetings

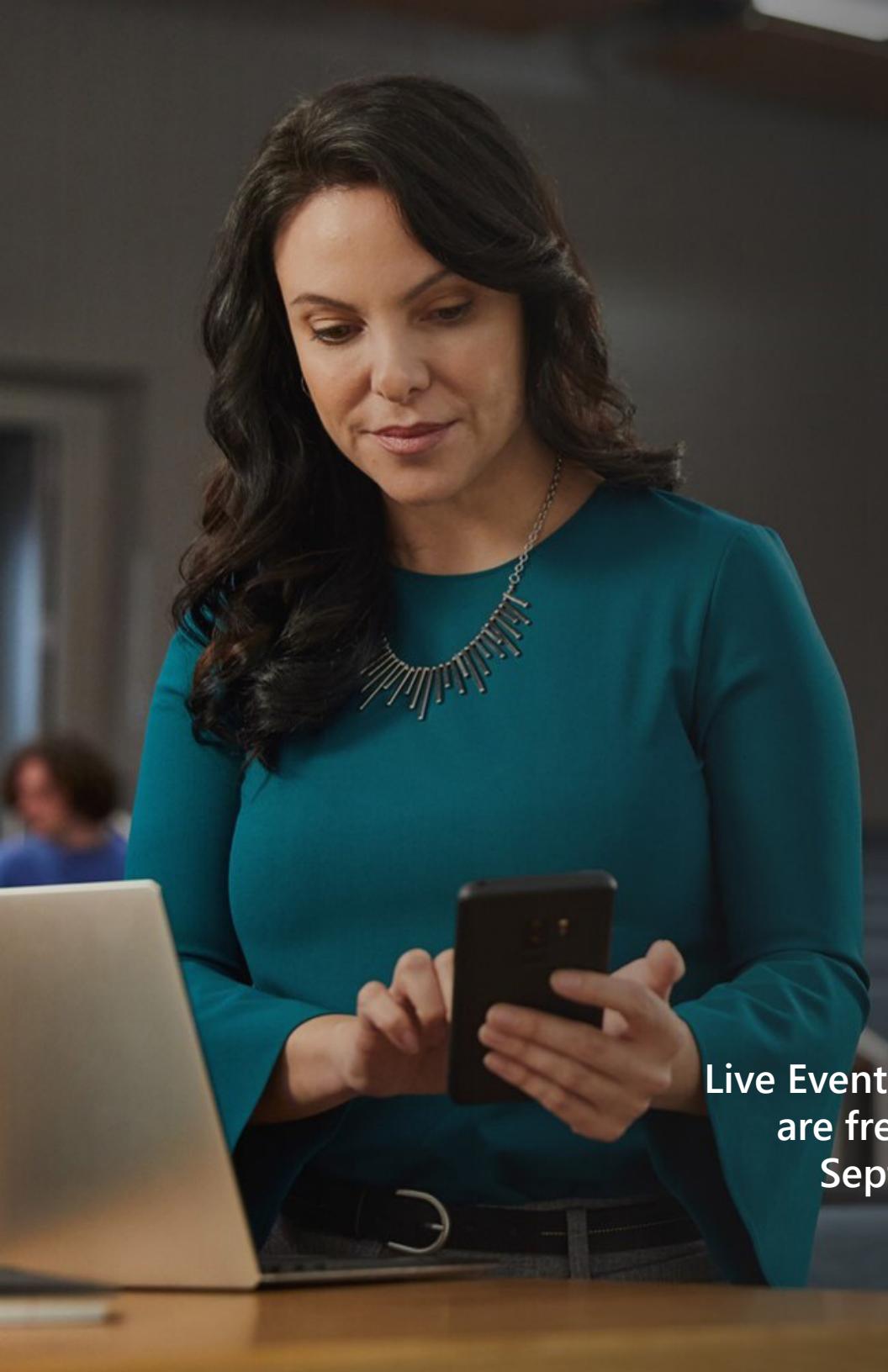
[Microsoft Teams](#) is a hub for digital learning—both synchronous and asynchronous—with all your apps in one place and [integration with your LMS](#). One leader can run a simultaneous session for socially distanced on-campus students and for remote students watching the stream from home. [Meetings](#) support up to 1,000 attendees, and Teams includes robust controls for [guest access](#).

Available free for Education users as part of Microsoft 365, Teams offers [many new features](#) to keep students engaged during sessions, including [screen sharing](#) for presentations, hand-raising, meeting chat, pre-recorded videos with [narration](#), innovative [views](#) like Together Mode, and more. Breakout rooms are coming in Q4 of 2020.



Together Mode



A professional woman with long dark hair, wearing a teal long-sleeved top and a necklace, is seated at a desk, looking down at her smartphone. A laptop is open to her left. The background is blurred.

Host larger sessions via Live Events

If you need to address a group of over 1,000 participants at once, you can use the [Live Events](#) feature in Teams. Live Events support up to 20,000 attendees, plus captions to ensure the session is accessible for everyone.

Note that Live Events do not include the same participatory features as regular Teams meetings; attendees cannot speak, chat, or raise their hands. Rely on Live Events for broad addresses—like a welcome from your principal or university president—where participation is less crucial.

Live Events in Teams
are free through
September 30



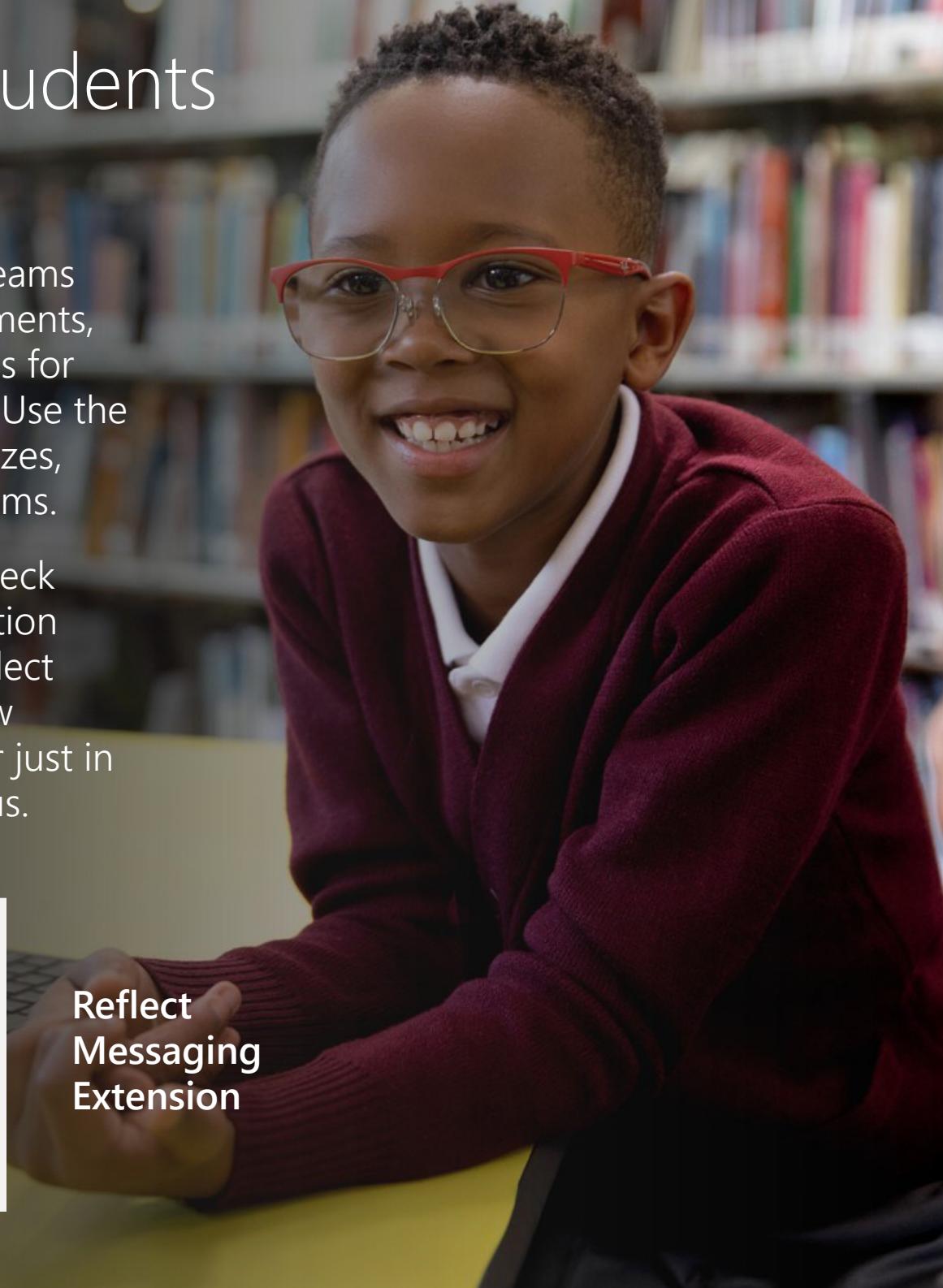
Stay engaged with students outside of sessions

In addition to live orientation sessions, Teams makes it easy to upload and share documents, presentations, videos, and other materials for students to complete on their own time. Use the [Assignments tab](#) to assign readings, quizzes, and more with set deadlines for class teams.

Teams also offers features to help you check in on students outside of regular orientation events. For instance, you can use the [Reflect messaging extension](#) to ask students how they're feeling about a particular issue or just in general. You can make results anonymous.

The screenshot shows two instances of the Microsoft Teams Reflect messaging extension. The top instance displays a poll titled "How did you feel about this week?" with five emoji options: 😊, 😃, 😄, 😐, and 😔. The bottom instance shows a sentiment analysis chart with a color-coded legend: green (8), light green (10), yellow (4), orange (3), and red (2). A "View reflections" button is visible at the bottom of the chart.

Reflect Messaging Extension



Personalize the educational experience

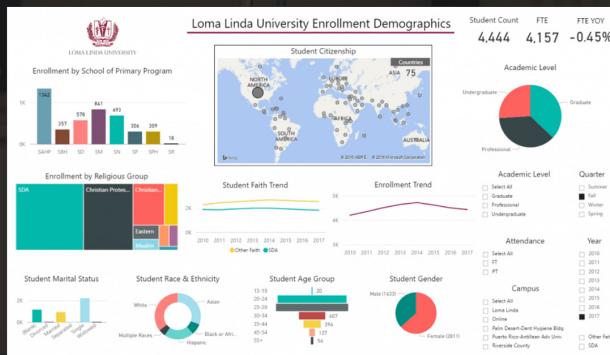
Microsoft's Power Platform can help you tailor orientation or instruction to every student's needs.

[Integrated with Teams](#), Power Apps and Power

Automate enable you to quickly create low-to-no-code apps and flows to simplify classroom tasks, provide engaging mobile tools, and much more.

[Power Virtual Agents](#) offers customizable chatbots to answer students' questions using AI.

You can also view [Class Insights](#) in Teams and visualize data about students' grades, accomplishments, and more through Power BI. Check out the [Microsoft Education Blog](#) to read about how schools have used Power BI to bolster student success.



Enrollment Demographics in Power BI



Help students plug into the community

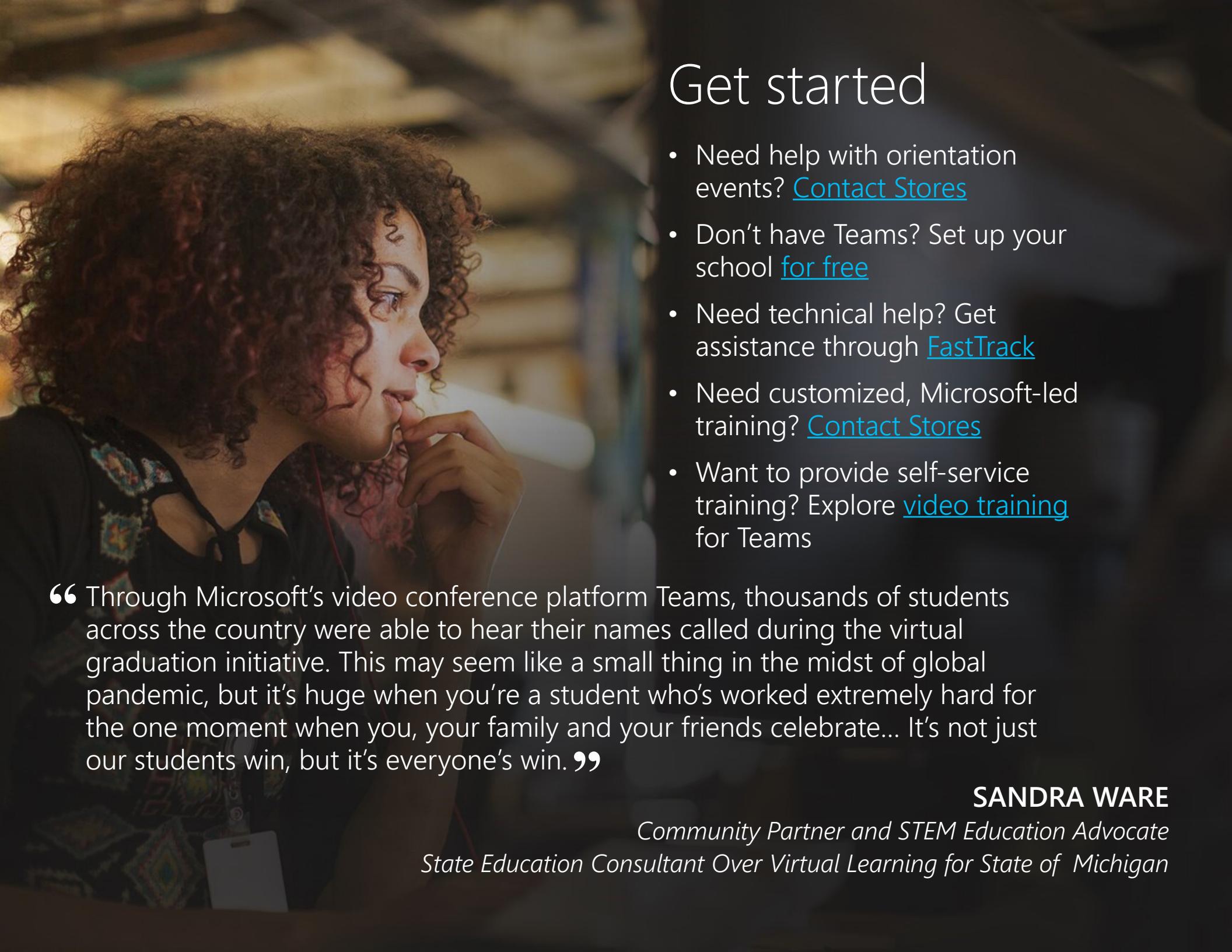


Socializing is many students' major concern as they start school, and it can be even more stressful in remote situations. Teams allows students to [create their own teams](#) for whichever groups they choose—from clubs to student government to social circles. IT retains control over naming, permissions, retention, and [other governance issues](#).

Also consider setting up meet 'n greet sessions for students to virtually get to know each other. A group leader can easily share a set of icebreaker questions to get the conversation rolling. Or students can make their voices heard through [Flipgrid videos](#) integrated with Teams through the [Flipgrid connector](#).

Video Responses in Flipgrid



A close-up photograph of a woman with dark, curly hair. She is looking slightly to her left with a thoughtful expression, her hand resting near her chin. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be a library or study area with bookshelves.

Get started

- Need help with orientation events? [Contact Stores](#)
- Don't have Teams? Set up your school [for free](#)
- Need technical help? Get assistance through [FastTrack](#)
- Need customized, Microsoft-led training? [Contact Stores](#)
- Want to provide self-service training? Explore [video training](#) for Teams

“ Through Microsoft’s video conference platform Teams, thousands of students across the country were able to hear their names called during the virtual graduation initiative. This may seem like a small thing in the midst of global pandemic, but it’s huge when you’re a student who’s worked extremely hard for the one moment when you, your family and your friends celebrate... It’s not just our students win, but it’s everyone’s win. ”

SANDRA WARE

*Community Partner and STEM Education Advocate
State Education Consultant Over Virtual Learning for State of Michigan*

A professional photograph of a man in a laboratory setting. He is wearing clear safety glasses and a white lab coat over a dark shirt. He is looking down at a task, possibly a piece of equipment or a sample, with a serious, focused expression. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be laboratory equipment.

Resources

- [Accessibility Infographic](#)
- [Back-to-School Kit for Students](#)
- [Back-to-School Visual Explainer for IT](#)
- [Security Infographic](#)
- [Teams Guide for Faculty](#)
- [Technology Access Form for Students](#)

“ During the transition to distance learning, Teams Meetings and Live Events helped us stay connected at every level, from class sessions to staff meetings and town halls for students and employees. Being able to meet, collaborate, and engage with each other and students in a rich virtual environment will remain critical as we head into the new school year and beyond and continue to adapt to the times, as SUNY Empire has done since 1971. ”

KYLE ADAMS

*Assistant Vice President for Communications and Marketing
SUNY Empire State College*