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EdTech Startup SkoolAide Changes Name, Expands Platform

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Photo Credit: Paul Bradbury, Getty Images

By Courtney Gabrielson

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A local startup has made some major changes.

SkoolAide, the local company that develops goal-setting software for high school students, has changed its name to ["Ascend."](#)

The name better reflects the startup's goal of encouraging "upward movement" in both the customers who use its software and the organization itself, the company said.

"We realized that while many of the goals our student users are setting are academic, many of them fall into different categories — health, financial literacy, wellness, and more, which falls in line with our intention to support the whole person, not just grades on a report card," said CEO and co-founder Reg Gabriel in a release on the move.

The new moniker also addresses the company's expanding vision, having added mentoring services to its list of partnerships in January. Inspired by a particularly enlightening Techstars workshop, the team realized that while high schools would be a good customer for their offerings, they were failing to consider additional relationships with mentoring organizations. From there, the team's focus was on developing user views within its platform and what markets it could tap into. The result was partnership with mentoring organizations in metros like Raleigh-Durham and Charlotte.

"We want all of the people and organizations we serve to feel empowered through using our platform," said Christine Nicodemus, COO and co-founder.

The addition of mentorship entities to the platform wasn't the only change. Ascend debuted elements like a strengths assessment, college and career search interfaces, task management modules and more.

These new elements aim to maximize the tool's impact as students develop and track goals and outcomes and mentors provide guidance to their students on Ascend's software.

"We see the potential for our platform to serve people in helping them overcome challenges, stay focused on their goals, and reach their desired outcomes," said Nicodemus. "Our ultimate goal at Ascend is to provide a digital platform that can help people move above and beyond the circumstances they were born into by creating goals, facing their hurdles as challenges that build knowledge and perseverance, and by connecting with a network of caring and helpful individuals."

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