



The AI Readiness Report

January 2026

19,300+

Educators

1.15M

Students Reached

178

Trailblazer Fellows

13

States Citing Framework

Kicking off 2026, AI in K-12 education has dominated headlines with policymakers, educators, and researchers spotlighting both opportunities and challenges. From new statewide education requirements (e.g., Ohio requiring schools to adopt a formal policy on the use of AI (info below)) to trend reports identifying AI as the top state edtech priority, stakeholders are wrestling with how to govern, fund, and scale AI use responsibly. National surveys and teacher voices have underscored urgent needs for professional learning and clear implementation frameworks as AI tools become more common in schools, while thought leaders continue to call for ethical, equitable integration. These developments mark a pivotal moment for funders ready to support strategic investment in AI literacy, teacher capacity, policy development, and student-centered innovation.

This has also been a pivotal moment for aiEDU. This week we published the digital version of our 2025 Impact Report. A few highlights from the report include impacting 19,300+ educators and reaching 1.15 million students across the country. Additionally, we've secured 23 active district and school partnerships, 178 Trailblazer Fellows completed the program, 13 states cited aiEDU's AI Readiness Framework, and 7,600+ educators downloaded our curriculum and resources. Make sure to read the full report for more data, case studies, teacher spotlights, and event highlights.

Finally, as we are growing nationally, so is our aiEDU team with two new hires this month, including Jessica Jackson, Senior Lead for Professional Learning, and Kristen Kayser, Senior Lead of Midwest Programs.

Funder Spotlight

aiEDU has recently partnered with Amazon to provide AI Readiness training to community partners in New York City, NY, and Montgomery County, MD in Q1 2026. Additionally, aiEDU is leading a train-the-trainer program (Spark the Future) with

Amazon's Future Engineer Teacher Ambassadors (19). Spark the Future trains educators to facilitate the Teach for Tomorrow course (aiEDU's asynchronous, virtual training) within their school, district, and community. Upon completion of the program, each trainer receives 30 licenses to aiEDU's online training platform to launch their own training within one year of the completion date.

Opportunities in the Field



Applications for the 2026 Trailblazer Fellowship cohort are open for all educators to submit an application. The Trailblazer Fellowship is aiEDU's premier AI Readiness program that provides teachers the space and network to learn and build their own AI readiness skills and shape aiEDU curriculum with feedback from the classroom. The fellowship is a 10-week commitment with synchronous sessions, asynchronous activities, a \$875 stipend, and a certificate of completion.

Applications open Sunday, January 25 and close Sunday, February 8.

Thought Leadership & Advocacy

New Partnership with ETS

A new partnership with ETS was announced in January that combines ETS's global expertise in assessment, measurement, and research with aiEDU's innovation in curriculum design, educator preparedness, and professional development. Guided by a shared commitment to safety, privacy, fairness, and transparency in AI design and deployment, together our organizations will build the tools, knowledge, and pathways to empower students, educators, and policymakers to thrive today and tomorrow. Key collaboration areas include: research and measurement, educator professional development, and policy and systems engagement.

Ohio

At the end of 2025, The Ohio Department of Education & Workforce announced a requirement for Ohio traditional public school districts, community schools, and STEM schools to adopt a formal policy on the use of artificial intelligence (AI) by July 1, 2026. To support this statewide initiative, the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce, informed by the work of the Ohio AI in Education Coalition, developed a model policy that schools may choose to adopt. The announcement names aiEDU's AI Toolkit for Ohio's K-12 school districts as the foundation for the model policy.



California

aiEDU has been collaborating with California State Senator Sasha Renée Pérez on SB 845 to expand and improve career technical education (CTE), work-based learning, and youth apprenticeship programs in high schools in California. Specifically, aiEDU has worked to emphasize the importance of AI Readiness in California's CTE standards. The bill has passed the Senate and will move to the Assembly for consideration.



AI Readiness in the News

The 74 (12/11/25): What Does AI Readiness Mean for Schools?

Politico (1/9/26): 5 Questions for Alex Kotran

aiEDU Blog (1/13/26): The AI Innovation Fellowship from aiEDU and the Urban Assembly

Press Release (1/15/26): Charting the Future: ETS and aiEDU Collaborate to Transform AI Literacy and Readiness in Education

Looking Ahead

February 2026

Burning Glass Institute and aiEDU report on how generative AI is reshaping the labor market and high school education

February 11

aiEDU attending Stanford Accelerator for Learning's AI + Education Summit 2026

Palo Alto, CA

2026 Funders

Amazon Booz Allen Hamilton Inc. Charter School Growth Fund Cognizant Google.org

J.M. Smuckers Company NetApp Northrop Grumman Foundation Okta

Patrick J. McGovern Foundation Pull Up Fund Raikes Foundation Salesforce Foundation

Stuart Foundation W.K. Kellogg Foundation

"The AI Readiness Report" is aiEDU's monthly newsletter for the philanthropic community to provide insights on our work, what we're hearing in the field, and the latest news on AI Readiness to share with your leadership and stakeholders as you see fit.

The AI Education Project (aiEDU) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, founded in 2019, that is devoted to ensuring all students are ready to live, work and thrive in a world where AI is everywhere.