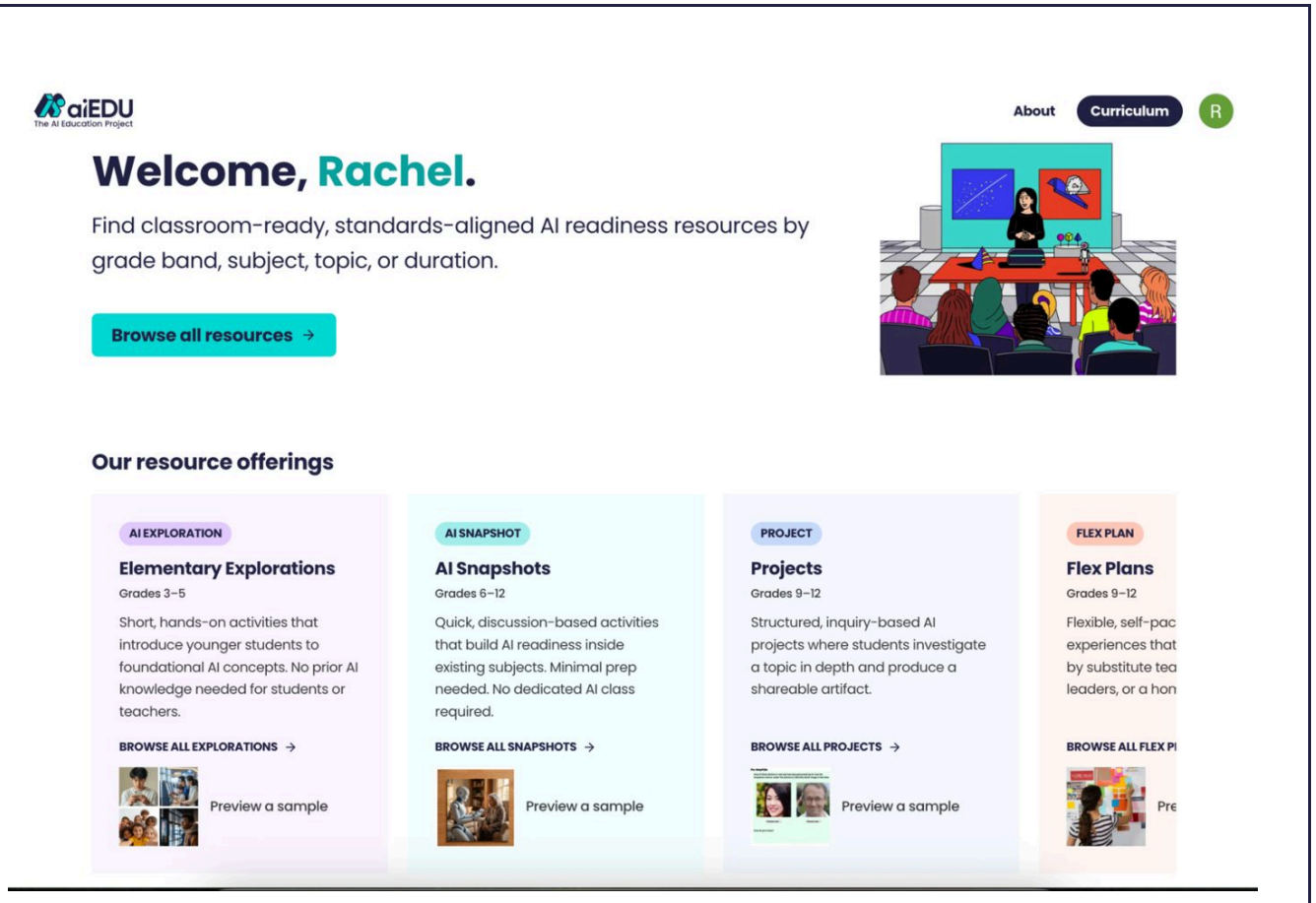
The AI Readiness Report

October 2026

October was a launch month. aiEDU's **new curriculum portal** went live with all of our free K–12 AI readiness resources in one place. A week earlier, the fall Trailblazer Fellowship kicked off with 145 educators from 40 states building their AI Readiness skills.

In this edition, we cover the curriculum portal launch and how educators are already using it, who this fall's Trailblazers are, how Spark the Future is growing in Idaho and nationally, and more.

Just Released: The aiEDU Curriculum Portal



On October 13, aiEDU launched **curriculum.aiedu.org**, **a free library of 97 K–12 AI readiness resources** that teachers can browse by grade, subject, and time needed. Three new resources launched with it: an AI Snapshots collection for grades 6–12 on **The Human Advantage**, and two 18-lesson middle school social studies learning journeys, **Ancient Greece** and **Civil War and Reconstruction**, co-designed with educators at DREAM Charter School in New York City. A key learning outcome for students from the snapshots is that the habits historians use to judge a source are the same ones they need to judge an AI output.

Early signals are strong. In launch week, 327 new accounts were created and resources were downloaded 870 times.

One more note on the portal. It was built in-house by aiEDU staff using AI-assisted development, and it is the first product built that way to go through full engineering review and public release! It is a small example of what we mean when we say every educator can build.

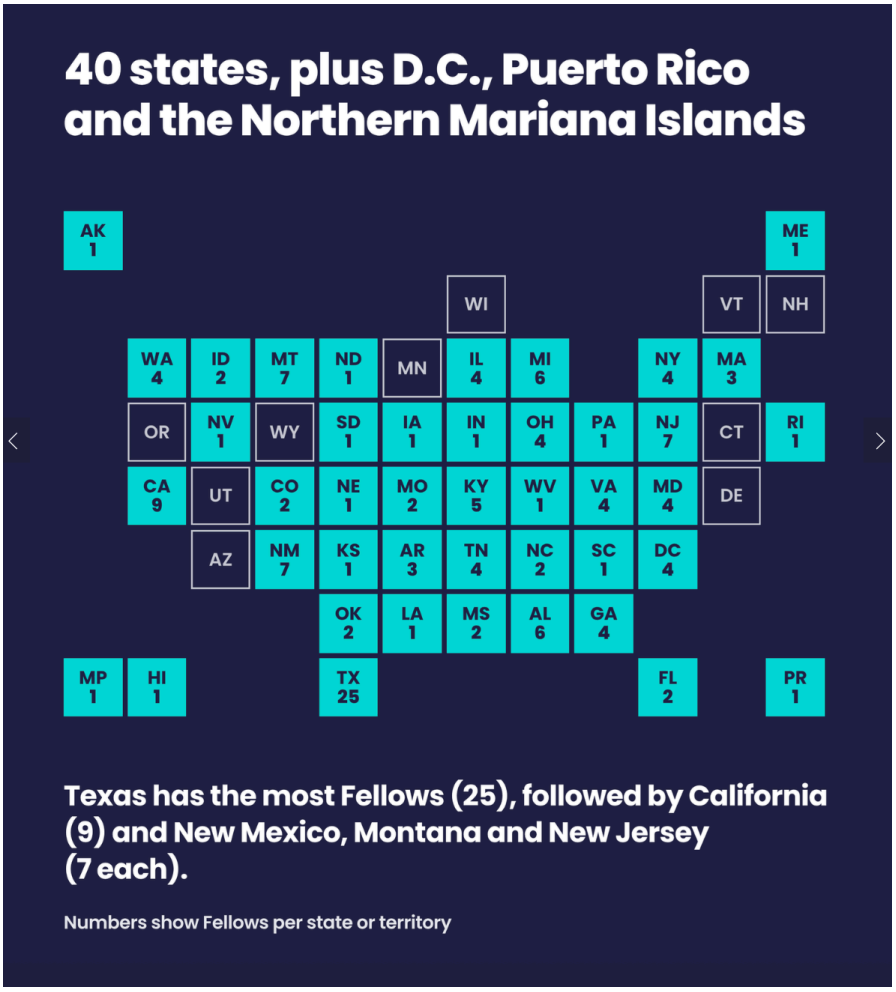
Program Spotlights

Fall 2026 Trailblazers: 145 Educators, 40 States

Earlier this month, we introduced the fall 2026 Trailblazer Fellows. There are 145 educators from 40 states, plus Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico, and the Northern Mariana Islands, selected from 460 applications. They are organized into five cohorts: National (grades 3–12), Texas (grades 3–12), Humanities and Literacy (grades 6–12), Computer Science (grades 6–12), and Elementary (grades 3–5).

The typical Fellow has taught for 15 years, and one in three has taught for 20 or more. Nearly two-thirds teach in Title I schools, and almost half teach in schools where more than three-quarters of students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch. They teach science, English, math, social studies, career and technical education, and special education. Most came in with a healthy dose of skepticism. As one Colorado science teacher put it, students need enough subject knowledge to “catch a wrong answer,” not just prompting skill.

The fall cohorts are made possible with the support of Google.org, Booz Allen, the Walton Family Foundation, and Leidos, in partnership with the Raspberry Pi Foundation and Quill.org. Over 12 weeks, Fellows test project-based AI literacy lessons with their students and give feedback on our curriculum. The cohorts wrap in early December. **Meet the fall 2026 Trailblazers.**



Spark the Future: National and Idaho Cohorts Underway

Spark the Future, our train-the-trainer program for AI literacy champions, launched its second national cohort on October 6. After the first national cohort in June, we opened 30 seats for the fall, including three scholarship seats, plus team pricing for districts that enroll three educators for the price of two. We will also be offering our second statewide Spark the Future cohort in Idaho due to support from Micron. The Idaho statewide cohort is offered at no cost to roughly 40 teacher, school, and district leaders in partnership with the Idaho Department of Education.

AI Exploration Community with Silicon Schools Fund

On October 8, aiEDU and Silicon Schools Fund kicked off this year's AI Exploration Community in Oakland. The cohort includes 34 educators and leaders from nine school and network teams. They are working with us from now through May 2027 to plan how they will bring AI readiness to their students. This is the second year of our partnership with Silicon Schools Fund. Last school year's seven-month cohort, which ended with an AI Exploration Community Demo Day for more than 100 educators, shaped what we chose to focus on this year. The kickoff included team reflection and planning time. Khushali Narechania, from our learning team, noted how carefully teams worked through the balance between teaching students safe AI use and letting students use the tools to learn.





Thought Leadership & Advocacy

Alex on BBC Newsday



On September 29, Alex joined BBC Newsday with Steve Lai to discuss the public debate over slowing down AI development and what it means for schools. His argument: the conversation about whether labs should slow down has skipped the part that reaches a fourteen-year-old, and three-quarters of states have published guidance while few have funded the thing that actually changes a classroom, a trained adult standing in it.

Ohio: Full-Day AI Workshop with the State's STEM Hubs

On October 5, aiEDU partnered with the Northeast Ohio, Akron, and Northwest Ohio STEM Hubs of the Ohio STEM Learning Network and the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce for the first Northern Ohio AI Workshop, a free, full-day event attended by nearly 100 educators at Bowling Green State University's Firelands campus. Kristen Kayser led two two-hour Vibe Coding 101 workshops, the day's featured sessions as part of the Ohio DEW partnership. Kelsey Gillespie of Perkins Local Schools, an alum of aiEDU's Trailblazer Fellowship, led a breakout on her Trailblazer experience. Next year's workshop is already set, and aiEDU is invited back.

On the Road: DC and Rural Indiana

On October 7, Jessica Jackson and Lange Luntao led sessions at the Capital AI Education Collective's AI Education Leadership Summit at Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C., sponsored by EmpowerK12. Jessica led Vibecoding 101, an introduction to building with AI. Lange and Lindsay Jones of CAST led Vibecoding + UDL, on rapidly building more inclusive learning tools. Some attendees were already building their own. One junior at the University of the District of Columbia vibecoded a tool that shows riders which Metro car will put them closest to the escalators, a natural fit for CAST's focus on accessibility.



On October 10, Lindsay Berger joined a FullScale Symposium panel in Indianapolis, "Rural AI in Action: Lessons From Four National Cohorts," alongside Megan Benay and Ashley Fellows of FullScale, Aidan O'Donnell of Accelerator, and Scott Frauenheim of LEAP Innovations. The four cohorts took different approaches. Some focused on system change and others on classroom practice, and some brought in community voice while others did not. The lessons from rural communities were largely the same across all four.

Opportunities for Educators

AI for a Better Community: K–12 Teacher Vibe Coding Workshop

Thursday, November 12, 3:00–4:00 p.m. PT / 6:00–7:00 p.m. ET. This 60-minute session introduces vibe coding, or building with AI, where participants use natural language instead of traditional programming to build working digital tools. Educators will use data they choose to share, collect, or explore to create something useful for themselves, their classroom, or their school community. Through a guided build, they will go through the full creation cycle and leave with a working prototype. Participants will build technical and process skills for building with AI and identify concrete ways to apply their own context and knowledge when using it. This workshop is supported by the Gates Foundation. **Register here.**

AI Readiness in the News

- **Influential Women** (9/27/26): Annie delos Santos-Jones, a Spark the Future participant, **From Product to Process: Rethinking How We Grade Writing in the Age of AI**
- **The Beacon** (9/29/26): **Northern Ohio STEM Hubs Partner with State Leaders for Hands-On AI Workshop for Educators**
- **BBC Newsday** (9/29/26): Alex interviewed by Steve Lai on the **AI slowdown debate and schools**
- **aiEDU Blog** (10/9/26): **145 Educators Across the U.S. Begin aiEDU's Fall 2026 Trailblazer Fellowship**
- **aiEDU Studios Podcast** (10/15/26): Justin Steele, founder of Kindora and formerly Google.org — **Raising Kids Who Build, Not Kids Who Outsource to AI**

Looking Ahead

November 3–4

Emma at Google.org's AI for Learning Forum

New York, NY

November 5–6

Lange and Rachel hosting Vibe Coding workshops with Booz Allen

Washington, DC

November 8

Alex in Boise for announcements with Micron on AI Readiness in Idaho

Boise, ID

November 18

Christian at Stanford Accelerate Learning Impact Summit

Stanford, CA

November 18

Alex and Khushali at Generation Thrive

Oakland, CA

2026 Funders

Amazon	Ballmer Group	Booz Allen Hamilton Inc.
Charter School Growth Fund	Cognizant	Gates Foundation
Google.org	The J.M. Smucker Co.	Leidos
Micron Foundation	NetApp	Northrop Grumman Foundation
Okta	Patrick J. McGovern Foundation	Pull Up Fund
Raikes Foundation	Salesforce Foundation	Stuart Foundation
Walton Family 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.