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# AI FOR LEADERS: CREATING THE CONDITIONS FOR AI READINESS

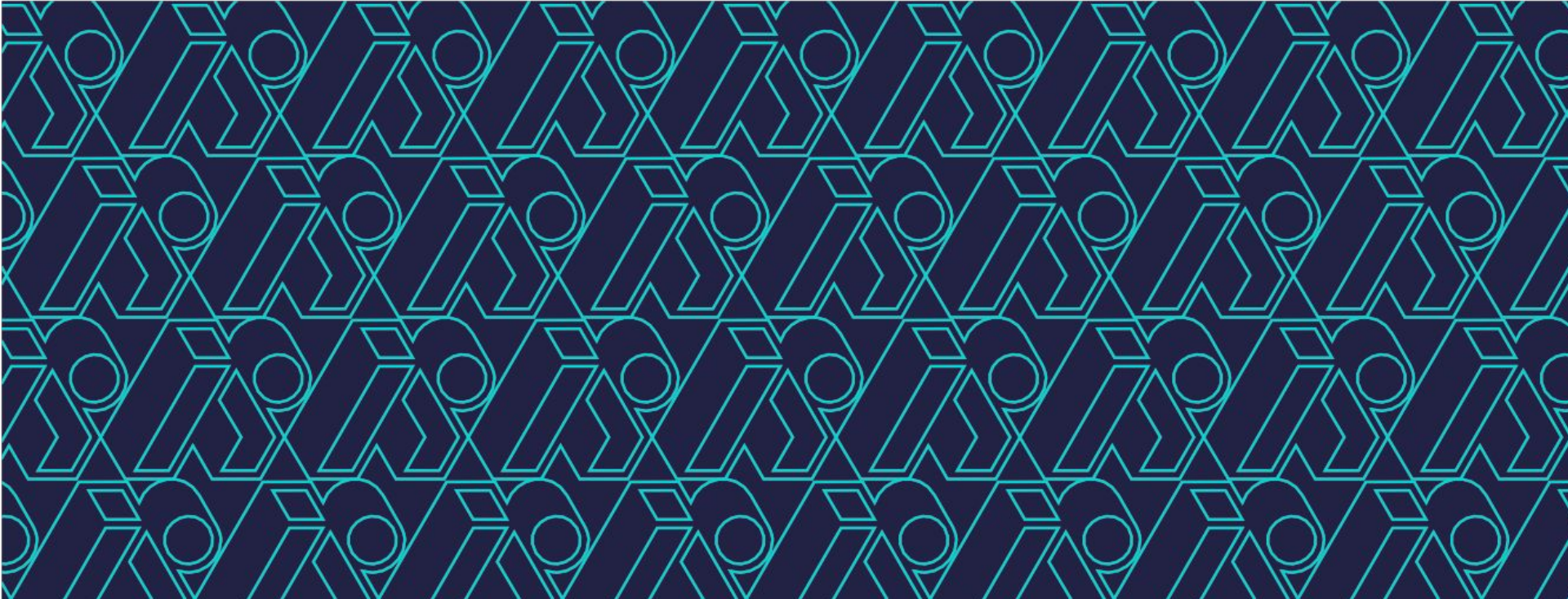
**Presenters:**

**Kristen Kayser**

Senior Lead, Midwest Programs

aiEDU

**INDIANA EARLY  
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# **AI for Leaders: Creating the Conditions for AI Readiness**

# Getting To Know Me



**Kristen Kayser**

**Sr. Lead, Midwest Programs,  
The AI Education Project (aiEDU)**

**Background:**

- HS math and AVID teacher
- Mastery Learning Specialist, Cleveland Metro
- HS principal, Cleveland Metro
- College Board, Midwest State & District Partnerships

# Getting To Know Us

## Our Mission

**The AI Education Project (aiEDU) is a non-profit devoted to making sure that all students are ready to live, work and thrive in a world where AI is everywhere.**

We work with education systems to advance AI literacy and AI readiness through high quality curriculum, professional development, and strategic partnerships with states, school districts, and other systems.





# Session Objectives

- 1 Understand what AI Readiness is and the current landscape
- 2 Use aiEDU's District AI Readiness Rubric to assess your system's current state.
- 3 Learn aiEDU's process for developing district-level AI guidelines and policy.
- 4 Leave with one concrete next step to strengthen your system's readiness.



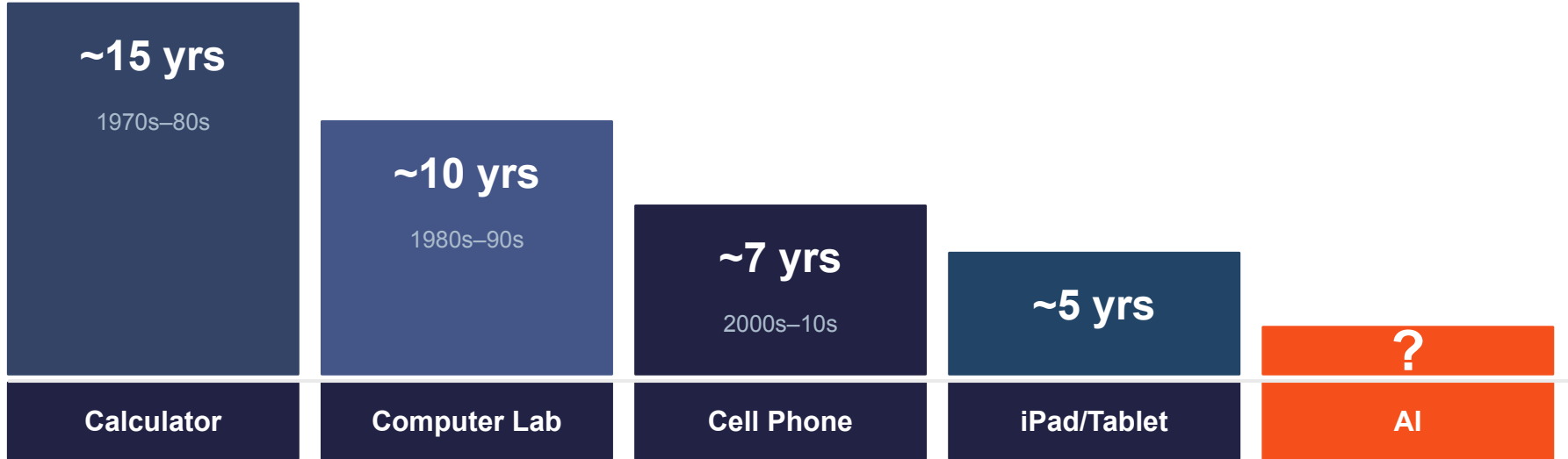
**01**

# **The AI Landscape for District Leaders**



# Every other technology gave teachers time to adapt.

AI didn't.



*Decade-long debate before widespread classroom use. Policy came first.*

*Schools had years to plan, train, and build infrastructure.*

*Years of 'no phones' policies before schools figured out the right approach.*

*Rollout was gradual. Districts had time to pilot, evaluate, and decide.*

**The technology changed three times before the policy meeting was scheduled.**



# The workforce is already feeling it.

ETS Human Progress Report, 2025

## 65%

**of Gen Z workers**

Fear of Becoming Obsolete (FOBO) — worried about staying relevant as AI reshapes their field

## 60%

**of all employees**

report anxiety about their professional relevance — this is not a youth trend. It's workforce-wide.

## 46%

**have never been taught**

to detect biased or subjective information — the exact skill AI demands most from human reviewers

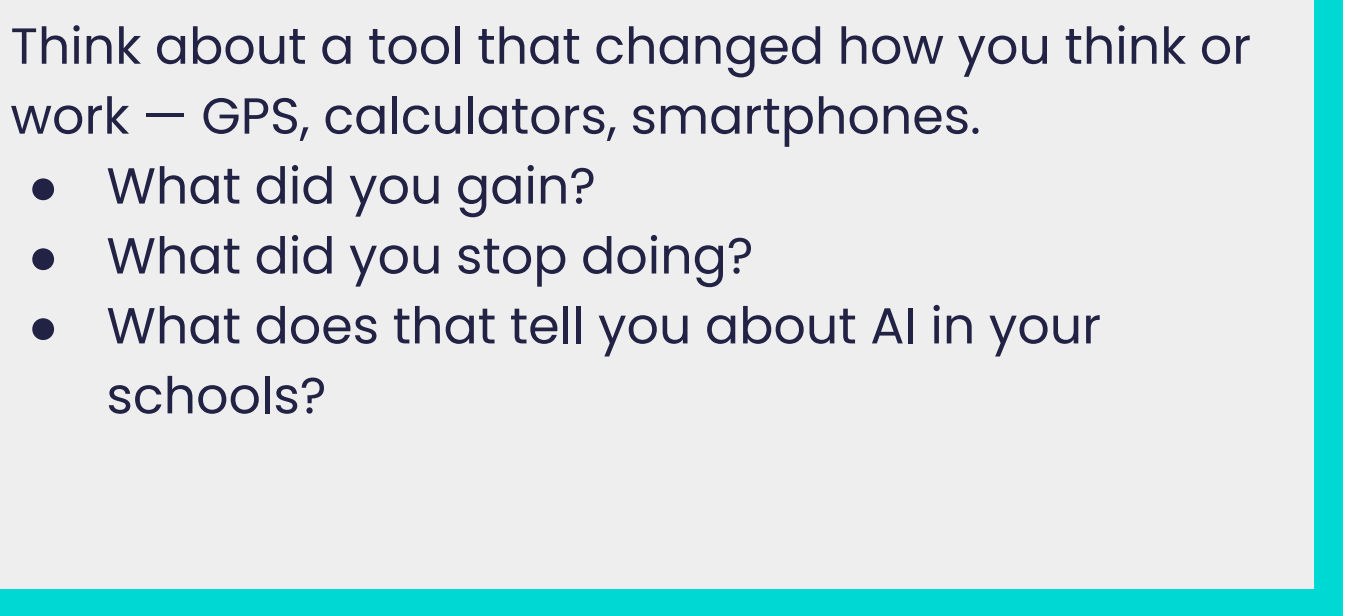
McKinsey projects 27–30% of working hours automated by 2030. For students who are sophomores today, that's their first job.



# Discussion



Think about a tool that changed how you think or work — GPS, calculators, smartphones.

- What did you gain?
  - What did you stop doing?
  - What does that tell you about AI in your schools?
- 



# The cognitive bar is rising — not falling.

“Execution can be automated.  
Thinking cannot.”

Which Skills Matter Now? (aiEDU & Burning Glass Institute, 2026)



## Automation exposure raises the bar

Skills most exposed to AI automation now demand deeper conceptual understanding — not less. AI handles the execution layer; humans must supply the judgment layer.



## Day-one expectations have shifted

New graduates are expected to arrive with advanced skillsets from day one. Entry-level no longer means entry-level thinking.

#1

## AI/digital literacy is the top skill gap

33% of workers across 14 countries named AI and digital literacy as the single most important skill they need right now. (ETS, 2025)

# Why Does AI Readiness Matter for District Leaders?

## Thriving in an AI-Powered Workplace It's More Than Learning the Tools.

The World Economic Forum's Four Futures for Jobs in the New Economy: AI and Talent in 2030 (2026) shows that technical AI skills are critical—but **human skills, adaptability and lifelong learning** are what will future-proof our success.



Four Futures for Jobs  
in the New Economy:  
AI and Talent in 2030  
2026

### Top 10 Skills on the Rise by 2030

(% increase in importance)

1	AI and big data	+73%
2	Networks and cybersecurity	+41%
3	Creative thinking	+40%
4	Resilience, flexibility and agility	+39%
5	Curiosity and lifelong learning	+36%
6	Leadership and social influence	+34%
7	Technology literacy	+30%
8	Empathy and active listening	+28%
9	Analytical thinking	+26%
10	Environmental stewardship	+24%

Nearly

**40%**

of workers' core skills are expected to change by 2030.

**63%**

of employers say skills gaps are a major barrier to business transformation.

Source: WEF, Four Futures for Jobs in the New Economy: AI and Talent in 2030 (2026)

### What This Means for Students & Workers

Success in an AI-powered workplace will come from a balance of **technical fluency and uniquely human strengths**.



#### Technical AI Skills

AI and big data, technology literacy, networks and cybersecurity

FOUNDATIONAL TOOLKIT



#### Cognitive Skills

Creative thinking, analytical thinking, curiosity and lifelong learning

DRIVE PROBLEM SOLVING & INNOVATION



#### People Skills

Leadership and social influence, empathy and active listening

BUILD TRUST, COLLABORATION & IMPACT



#### Adaptability

Resilience, flexibility and agility

THRIVE THROUGH CHANGE



### Our Challenge & Opportunity

AI will transform every job—but people with the right skills will shape the future of work. Let's build the skills to thrive.



#### Keep Learning

Build skills that evolve with change



#### Work with AI

Use AI as a partner to amplify impact



#### Stay Human

Lead with curiosity, empathy and purpose





# 18%

**of K-12 teachers receive formal guidance on AI use**

## 60%

of teachers already use AI for work

## 34%

receive no guidance at all

## 48%

receive only informal guidance

*Gallup/Walton Family Foundation, "Teaching for Tomorrow," May 2026 (n=2,069 public school teachers)*



# Why Does AI Readiness Matter for District Leaders?

*"It is difficult to think of a major industry that AI will not transform."*

— Andrew Ng, Computer Scientist & Global Leader in AI

## Economic Imperative

AI is rapidly transforming all career sectors — AI readiness is essential for all students, regardless of pathway.

## Critical Judgment Matters

Relying on AI alone risks error, bias, and diminished thinking. Students need to know when to use AI, when to question it, and when to turn it off.

## Leadership Role

District leaders set the conditions that shape how teachers and students engage with AI. That's why your readiness matters first.



**02**

# AI Readiness



**AI literacy**

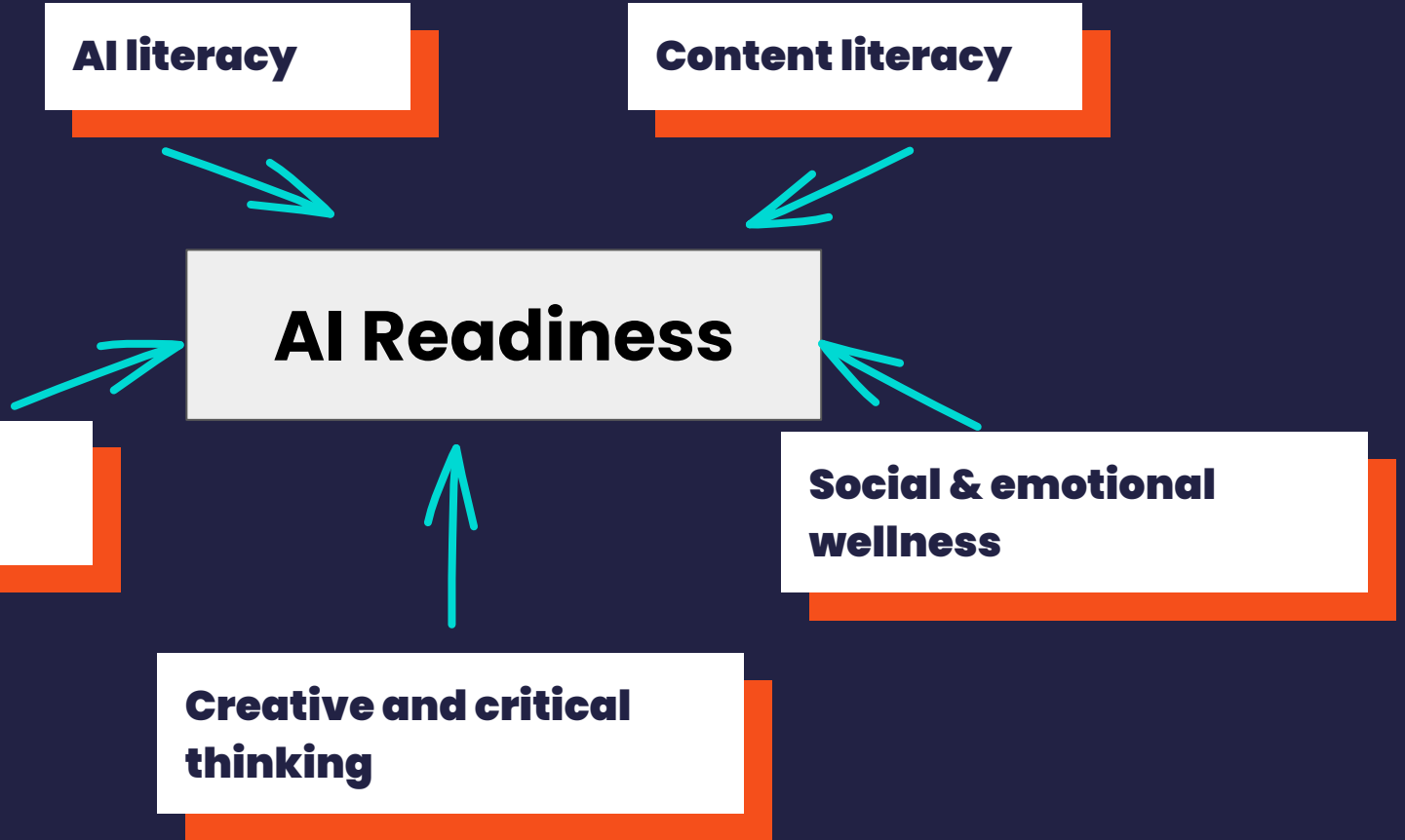
**Content literacy**

**AI Readiness**

**Media & civics  
literacy**

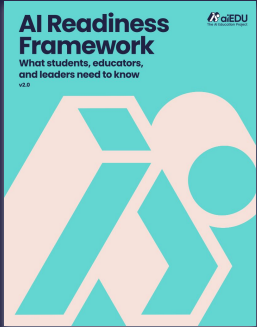
**Social & emotional  
wellness**

**Creative and critical  
thinking**





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## AI Readiness

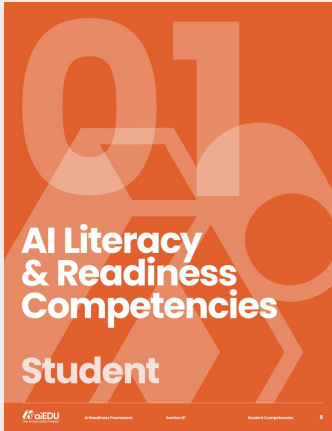
aiEDU defines AI Readiness as the knowledge and capabilities needed to apply one's human advantage with evolving technology.

A person is AI ready when they can leverage the combination of core content knowledge and durable skills like critical thinking and collaboration alongside AI to achieve their life and career potential.

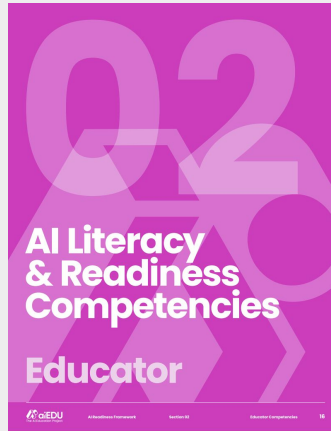




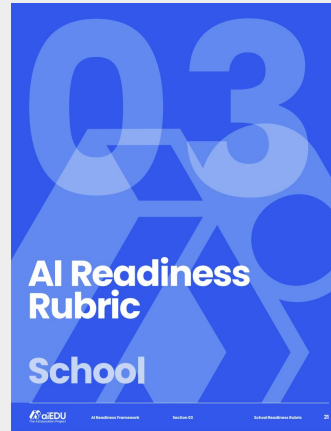
# This framework has **four parts**



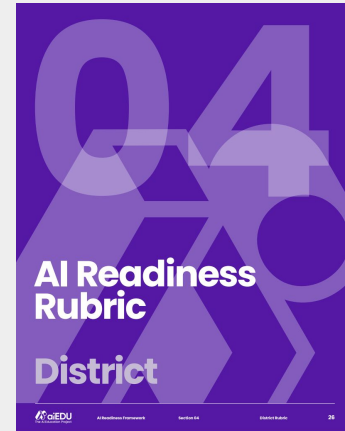
Concrete skills students need to build AI literacy and readiness across all subject areas.



Knowledge and skills educators need to teach and support student AI literacy and readiness.

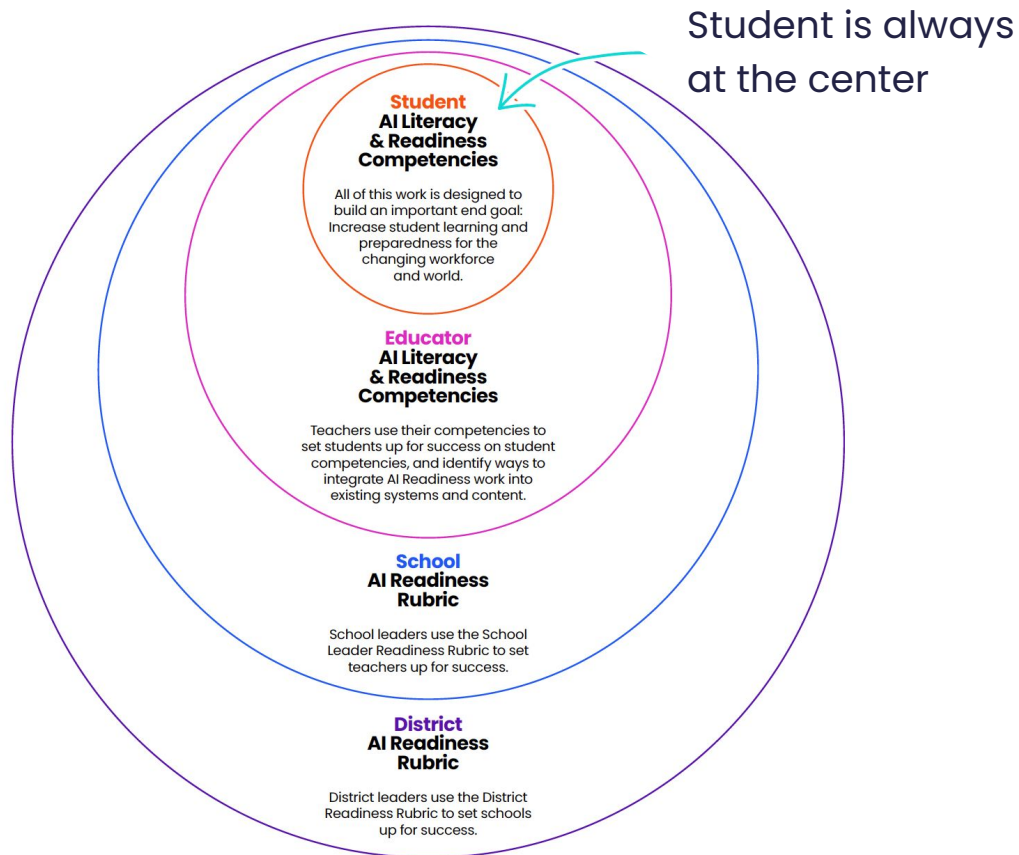


Guidance on what schools can do to align their approach to system-level readiness.



Guidance on what districts must do to prepare for AI use and cultivate AI readiness across their systems.

<https://bit.ly/4r14ITZ>





# STUDENT AI Literacy & Readiness Competencies



## Know Your Basics

- A. Define & Identify AI systems
- B. Use AI tools safely and effectively
- C. Develop core content knowledge



## Be a Critical Thinker

- A. Determine responsible use of AI
- B. Identify and address AI biases
- C. Examine AI use and outputs



## Lead with the Human Advantage

- A. Build emotional intelligence
- B. Apply creativity and Interdisciplinary thinking
- C. Be a life-long learner



# **EDUCATOR** AI Literacy & Readiness Competencies



## **Know and Model the Basics**

- A. Build foundational knowledge of AI
- B. Build pedagogical knowledge of AI literacy and readiness skills
- C. Identify, describe, and apply district AI policies



## **Foster and Model Critical Thinking**

- A. Critically evaluate the use of AI tools in teaching & learning
- B. Model critical evaluation of AI tools used in teaching and learning
- C. Collaboratively iterate and refine AI use with colleagues



## **Lead with the Teacher Advantage**

- A. Create opportunities for students to build emotional intelligence
- B. Model and create opportunities for students to apply creativity and interdisciplinary thinking
- C. Create opportunities to support life-long learning



# SCHOOL AI Readiness Rubric



## Connect District Vision to School Implementation

Vision for Student AI Readiness  
Vision for School AI Use  
Vision for AI Use in Instruction



## Galvanize Stakeholders

Context Gathering  
Communicate and Educate



## Set Conditions through Policy & Operations

Guardrails  
Processes



## Enable Teaching & Learning

Instructional Leadership  
Observation & Coaching  
Instructional Materials  
Tool Selection for Instruction



**03**

# **District Readiness**



# Overview

## District AI Readiness Rubric

The District Readiness Rubric is a tool to support **district-level leaders** in creating equitable and inclusive Systems AI Readiness that ensures all students, teachers, and staff have the opportunity to meaningfully engage with AI Readiness skill-building as well as gain access to district-approved AI tools.

District leaders can use this rubric to **assess their level of AI Readiness across key criteria in five domains**. These criteria outline essential actions to set up school leaders to successfully implement AI Readiness plans in their schools, which in turn will support building student, teacher, and staff AI Readiness competencies



## Audience

### **District Leaders**

To support conditions that allow school leaders to implement AI readiness



# District AI Readiness Rubric



## Develop Equitable Vision for AI Readiness

Vision for Student Readiness  
Vision for System AI Use



## Develop a Strategy

Vision for AI Use in Instruction  
Set Strategy  
Plan for Change



## Set Conditions through Policy & Operations

Guardrails  
Processes



## Galvanize Stakeholders

Context Gathering  
Engage and Learn  
Communicate and Educate



## Enable Teaching & Learning

Capacity Building  
Instructional Materials  
Departmental Alignment  
Tool Selection for Instruction

# Independent Reflection: District AI Readiness Rubric

## District AI Readiness Rubric

Domain	Level 1 Demonstrate Commitment	Level 2 Invest & Implement	Level 3 Deepen & Iterate
<b>Develop Equitable Vision for AI Readiness</b> <small>See aiEDU AI Readiness Student Competencies for student outcomes</small>	<b>Vision for Student Readiness</b> Identify AI Readiness points of connection and gaps in existing district student outcome goals (e.g., examining the Portrait of a Graduate in the world of AI)	Develop and share clear student outcome goals that incorporate AI Readiness (e.g., reimagining the Portrait of a Graduate in the world of AI)	Embed AI-ready student outcome goals in student assessment structures and have a process established for reporting on and revising student outcome goals
<b>Develop a Strategy</b> <small>See aiEDU AI Readiness Educator Competencies for teaching specific competencies</small>	<b>Vision for System AI Use</b> Vision for System AI Use: Define AI Readiness competencies for all district roles; define vision for AI use and integration across district systems	Create and implement aligned support for developing AI Readiness competencies across all district roles; pilot AI use integration in systems across the district	Embed AI Readiness competencies in existing performance management systems or structures; embed system-wide AI use training and ongoing evaluation of efficacy
	<b>Vision for AI Use in Instruction</b> Define criteria for AI use in instruction anchored in strong pedagogical practices	Pilot implementation of criteria for AI use in instruction for tool evaluation and instructional trainings	Expand and Iterate on implementation of criteria for AI use in instruction across instructional domains
	<b>Set Strategy</b> Review current strategic plan and change management; identify points of connection and possible challenges that AI Readiness presents	Identify places ready for innovation to pilot AI Readiness implementations (e.g., a particular school, a particular content area across multiple schools); implement pilots	Apply learnings from pilot implementations to expand AI Readiness implementation across all district functions; establish feedback loops to gather data on implementations
	<b>Plan for Change</b> Identify key people (i.e., leaders of areas of impact: operations, teaching & learning, programs) within the district to bring into the strategic planning	Establish and implement a formal structure (e.g., task force) for diverse stakeholder input on AI Readiness strategic plan and decisions on information flow going out of the district	Establish ownership of ongoing leadership of the formal structure that continues to meet to assess implementation, discuss issues that are arising with implementation, and make revisions/adjustments to the strategic approach that is timely and responsive

- Pick **ONE** Domain on the District AI Readiness Rubric.
- For that Domain, consider:
  - How does this domains align with your current priorities?
  - Which criteria in this domain are areas of strength for your system?
  - Which criteria in this domain are areas of growth?
  - What reflections do you have?

[bit.ly/4rI4ITZ](https://bit.ly/4rI4ITZ)



# Meta Moment: Whole Group

What reflections do  
you have?



## Develop Equitable Vision for AI Readiness

Vision for Student Readiness  
Vision for System AI Use



## Develop a Strategy

Vision for AI Use in Instruction  
Set Strategy  
Plan for Change



## Set Conditions through Policy & Operations

Guardrails  
Processes



## Galvanize Stakeholders

Context Gathering  
Engage and Learn  
Communicate and Educate



## Enable Teaching & Learning

Capacity Building  
Instructional Materials  
Departmental Alignment  
Tool Selection for Instruction



**04**

# Where to Begin

# A Proven Process for District AI Guidelines & Policy

*A repeatable path districts use to move from “no policy” to living guidelines.*

1

**Gather context** Audit current tools, practices, and stakeholder concerns.

2

**Galvanize stakeholders** Stand up a task force / steering committee — central office, school leaders, teachers, community.

3

**Draft equitable guidelines** Set guardrails and processes anchored in your vision for student readiness.

4

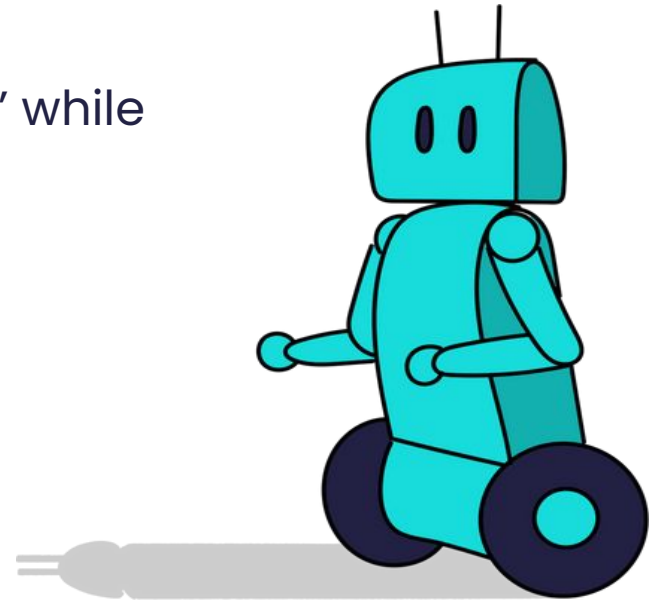
**Pilot & refine** Test in a school or department, gather feedback, adjust.

5

**Communicate & scale** Educate the full system and implement widely.

# Balancing Risk // Reward

- Find 'small wins' you can have at your district
- There are lots of ways to 'win' while mitigating risk



# Exploring Examples



Pick an example of AI Readiness in action with aiEDU to review in more detail. As you review, consider the following:

- How does this work align to the AI Readiness Framework?
- What resonates with the work you and your team are doing?
- What questions do you have?

## Examples:

- [Anaheim Union High School District. Domain 1: Develop Equitable Vision for AI Readiness](#)
- [San Diego Unified School District: Domain 2: Develop a Strategy](#)
- [Prince George's County Public Schools: Multiple Domains](#)



# Your Next Step

Returning to the domain you reflected on earlier:

**One growth area I want to move on:**

---

**One concrete action I'll take in the next 90 days:**

---

**Who I need at the table:**

---

**How I'll know it worked:**

---

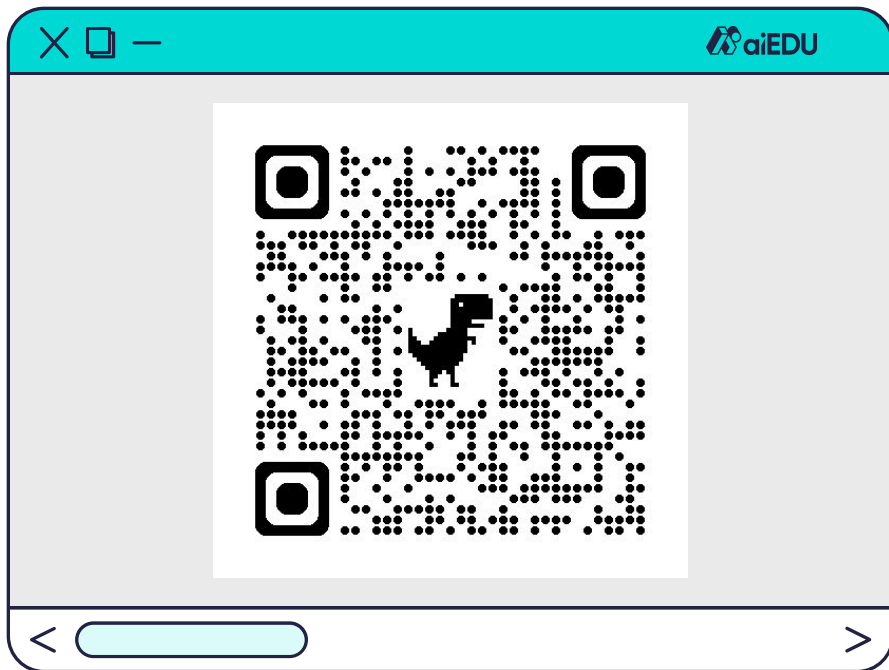


**05**

**Closing**

# Tell Us What You Think!

We'd love to hear your thoughts on how the session went and how we can make it even better. **Please take a minute to complete the brief survey below.**



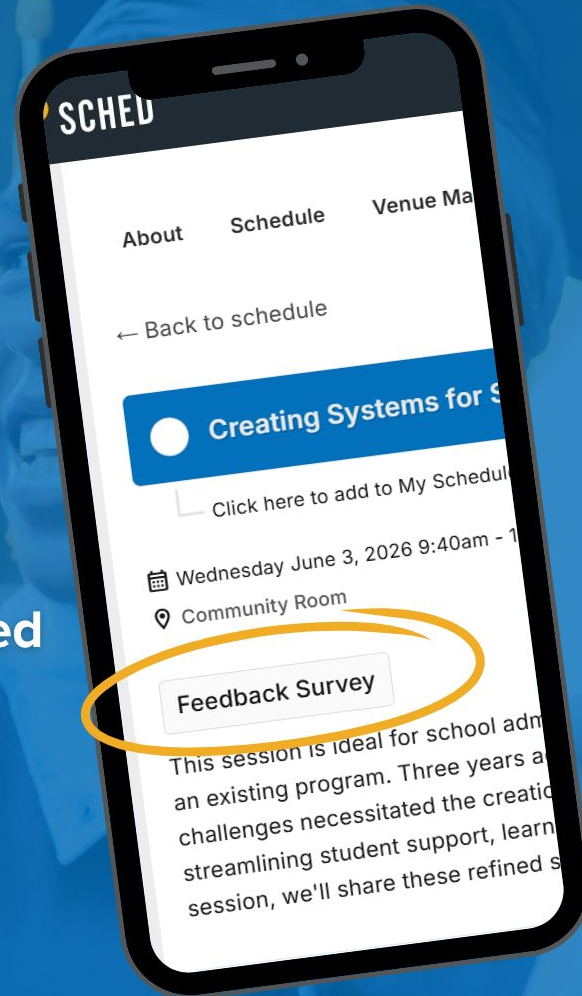
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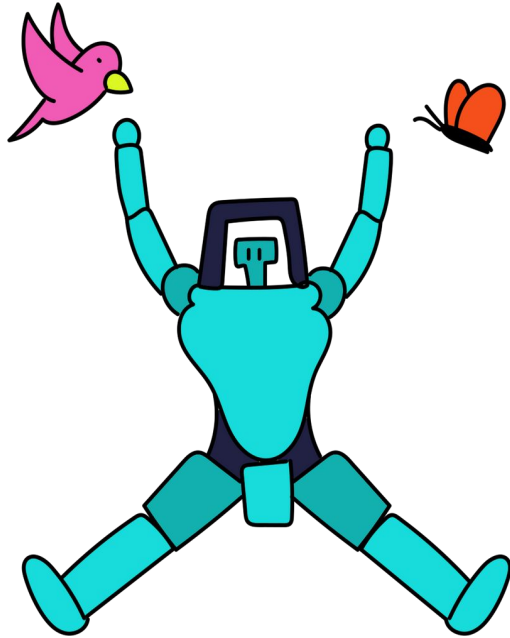
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## SURVEY REMINDER

Please complete a survey in Sched  
for each session you attend.



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**Say Hello!**

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**🔗 Learn More, Get More**

[aiEDU.org](http://aiEDU.org)



**Connect with me!**

