



States of the Union:

Rebuilding American Civics
for a Digital Republic



EDSAFE AI
ALLIANCE

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A PROJECT OF ICIVICS

FOREWORD:

RICK HESS, AMERICAN ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE

There are moments in public life when the familiar ideological reflexes are poorly suited to the challenges ahead. This is one such moment. The emergence of artificial intelligence (AI) poses profound questions about how we work, learn, and live together as citizens in a democratic society. The answers to these questions don't map neatly onto our partisan divides.

We've seen hyped technologies before. Some have delivered significant changes to American life, some have not. But AI may truly be different—not just in scale or speed, but in substance. It doesn't simply help us do things better, faster, or cheaper. It could very well reshape the way we think, communicate, and relate to one another. AI appears to represent an economic inflection point, but it could also very well herald a civic one. That means policymakers, educators, and school leaders need to be thinking not just about skills, standards, and use cases, but about the character of democracy, citizenship, and our civic institutions.

The last thing we need right now is vacuous calls for kumbaya rhetoric or digital citizenship slide decks. We need to face hard truths: there's a very real chance that AI will deepen our civic dysfunction and distrust. Our experience with digitization, smartphones, and social media is not reassuring.

Social media, once touted as a great engine of democratization and empathy, helped fuel hatreds and unravel a shared sense of truth. AI enables something even more potent: tools that can mass-produce agenda-laden falsehoods, mimic people's voices and identities, and ever more effectively seal individuals off from inconvenient facts or arguments. Unchecked, these forces can hollow out democratic life by corroding civil discourse, good-faith disagreement, and even the notion of a shared reality.

But the future is ours to shape. Wielded with wisdom and forethought, AI could do great things. The invention of the printing press fueled the Age of Enlightenment and meant that individuals were no longer dependent on teachers for access to information. Compared to that, the possibilities of AI are staggering. It universalizes access to tutoring and content in ways that were literally unimaginable just a generation ago. It makes it possible for personalized tutors and real-time tutorials that could combat civic illiteracy. (You thought *Schoolhouse Rock* was cool? Let's see what might be possible.) AI holds the potential to help youth be more informed, think more critically, engage more thoughtfully, and listen more generously.

AI is a tool. And like any tool, its utility depends on the skill and discipline of the hand that wields it. In the hands of thoughtful educators, technologists, and policymakers, AI may help students grapple with a heterodox mix of perspectives, analyze competing claims, and better understand those who see the world differently. It can give students access to voices across time and place; enable deep explorations of civic texts and historic dilemmas; and allow students to engage in the Constitutional Convention, the Supreme Court deliberations over *Plessy*, or White House debates about how to execute the post-9/11 War on Terror.

Seizing those opportunities requires good choices about how we use AI, shape curricula, train educators, and think about the civic purposes of education. The key question for every technology is how it actually changes what students and educators do (and the dirty secret is that most technologies haven't really changed these things very much at all). The introduction of AI means educators are increasingly asked to be curators of digital judgment and mediators of what's true. That raises significant questions for teacher training, curriculum design, assessment, and governance.

FOREWARD:

RICK HESS, AMERICAN ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE

In all of this, it's vital to remember the centrality of knowledge and content. In a world awash in information, it can be too easy for talk of "21st-Century Skills" to give the impression that "mere facts" just aren't important because "students can always look them up". This has always been nonsense, and the advent of AI makes it more nonsensical than ever. If they are to have a chance to navigate a world where it can be tough to tell what's real and what's not, it's vital that students have a clear grounding in the history, principles, and remarkable legacy of their nation.

When it comes to AI, it can be tempting to focus on the chin-stroking questions that dot Substack think pieces: Will AI wipe out half of white-collar jobs? Will it decimate colleges? What will AI relationships mean for the future of romance? These are big, important questions. But when it comes to schooling, we need to focus on whether our schools are preparing students not just to survive the age of AI—but to lead in it, as citizens of a free and self-governing society.

What follows is a thoughtful attempt to explore how states can tackle these challenges. It offers practical guidance for policymakers to approach AI not just as a challenge to manage, but as an opportunity to cultivate citizens, promote civic health, and strengthen our republic.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Joel Bird, a rambunctious kindergartener in West Virginia, lives out the principles of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness each day—often, to the chagrin of his parents, too passionately by running into the road without checking for cars.

Whether through a picture book or an art project, Joel will also likely hear the terms life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness in the classroom this year, as his school and state education system marshals resources to celebrate America's 250th birthday and how the aspiration to those inalienable rights transformed freedom and democracy movements domestically and abroad for generations that followed. When Joel is a senior in high school, West Virginia and states across the country will celebrate a different birthday, that of the US Constitution, which birthed the idea of "We the People".

Six years ago, when Joel was born, neither his parents nor most Americans could have foreseen the profound impact artificial intelligence (AI) would have on his future. This technology, with its capacity to clarify *and* distort, empower *and* exclude, connect *and* isolate, now significantly affects his fundamental freedoms and his ability to participate as part of "We the People."

Because AI's opportunities could be so transformative—drawing comparisons as near as the creation of the internet to as far back as fire—each nation must contend with what the technology means for its people. Numerous reports examine the economic implications of this technology; however, AI will have a broader impact than just the economy. It's an arrival technology, and will fundamentally reorder the way we work, live, and interact. In the realm of civics and society, it is already fundamentally influencing how people interact with one another, their leaders, and the core values that individuals in that nation aspire to. These implications are inherently civic in nature; they fundamentally affect the development of both young people's hearts and minds and the fabric of society. This report explores them in greater depth with the valuable contributions of experts in the field, educators, advocates, industry, and policymakers.

Because the American system—particularly when it comes to education—is grounded in federalism, this report especially is a calling in and invites state policymakers into both conversation and action: How will the decisions, guidance, supports, and investments you make in the academic life of Joel and his peers usher a renaissance towards America's highest values of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness for all? While each state may approach that question differently in terms of the levers pulled, a shared aim of answering that question affirmatively will dictate the core character of this nation for generations to come.

While depending on the state, policymaking authorities lie with different bodies, and contexts may dictate different approaches, we encourage the use of the following levers:

- **Strengthen** the integration of AI and AI literacy across all courses and ensure that integration centers the civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions that support the health of American democracy.
- **Fund** schools and districts to help them navigate this transition with learning experiences and resources that emphasize civic inquiry, media literacy, and digital citizenship.
- **Align** state standards to include data, AI literacy, and digital and media literacy, as well as responsible engagement with AI tools that help students understand these tools and use them to benefit their communities.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **Support** professional development in both pre-service and in-service settings that helps educators develop the knowledge, skills, dispositions, and behaviors needed to use AI to connect positively with their peers and communities, and to prepare their students to do the same.
- **Ensure** current and emerging assessments—including those using AI—provide actionable information on how students are progressing toward developing the knowledge, skills, dispositions, and behaviors essential for a healthy democracy.
- **Recognize and affirm** students, educators, and schools that excel in advancing uses of AI in ways that strengthen communities and the nation's democratic foundations.
- **Elevate** information literacy—including data literacy, media literacy, AI literacy, and related literacies—as foundational 21st-century literacies across all subjects and domains.
- **Collaborate** across states and sectors by establishing mechanisms for shared dialogue, coordination, and vision-setting on AI and civic competencies.

What ensues are deeper discussions, questions for policymaking bodies to deliberate, and suggested actions that states can take to ensure that the period between two American celebrations, the 250th birthdays of the Declaration of Independence and the US Constitution—or 13 academic years in Joel's life—lay the foundation for prosperous, free, and thriving communities, states, and a nation for generations to come.



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INTRODUCTION

'Many forms of Government have been tried, and will be tried in this world of sin and woe. No one pretends that democracy is perfect or all-wise. Indeed, it has been said that democracy is the worst form of Government except for all those other forms that have been tried from time to time..'

Winston Churchill, November 11, 1947

Churchill's sentiment has proven true for decades, as expanding democracies ushered in an era of wealth and individual rights for billions across the world. Following the rise of liberal democracies after World War II, people across the world became freer, safer, and wealthier. And yet, democracy, like its opposite, authoritarianism, has a key Achilles' heel—a core vulnerability that threatens its very foundation.

For authoritarianism, that heel is the free flow of information that empowers ordinary citizens to question the limitations and assertions of unimpeded power. For democracy, that heel is free speech, which gives rise not only to vigorous debate but also to the proliferation of misinformation that can undermine not only trust between leaders, institutions, and those they govern, but also the trust between the governed and their trust in each other. The scale and magnitude of this proliferation are what ultimately make AI a transformative technology, with the ability to impact society by creating and spreading misinformation and deepfakes, and by perpetuating its own biases, as well as the ability to counter these issues by quickly identifying misinformation and directing people to trusted information.

The key fulcrum is trust. Suppose people lose trust that their votes matter as much as their neighbors', that elected leaders act in the public's best interest, even those they disagree with, or that they can influence policymakers' decisions. In that case, our democratic experience begins to fall apart. Rebuilding and maintaining this trust is not only the responsibility of governments, institutions, and leaders, but also of our education system, which plays a crucial role in equipping young people with the knowledge, skills, and civic understanding necessary to maintain confidence in democracy.

These realities underscore the significant opportunities and challenges that AI poses to both modern democratic and authoritarian regimes. AI empowers more communicators and facilitates communication, reaching a broader audience with the potential to advance both greater transparency and increased mistrust.

It was social media that helped propel the [Arab Spring](#) from an insular conversation to a global movement that toppled long-standing authoritarian regimes from Libya to Egypt. Communication platforms have also been utilized to advance [propaganda and power surveillance](#) in countries such as China and Russia. Social media has buttressed their more authoritarian hold on power.

EROSION OF TRUST IN AI:

TRUST IN AI REMAINS DANGEROUSLY LOW. A 2025 WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM REPORT NOTED THAT ONLY 52% OF EMPLOYEES AND 62% OF BUSINESS LEADERS BELIEVE AI IS DEPLOYED RESPONSIBLY IN THEIR OWN ORGANIZATIONS, HIGHLIGHTING A MASSIVE TRUST DEFICIT THAT CAN BE EXPLOITED IN CIVIC AND SOCIAL CONTEXTS.

<https://www.weforum.org/stories/2025/09/ai-trust-crisis-public-private-partnerships/>

INTRODUCTION

In these and other cases, the impact of technology—the internet, smartphones, social media, and increasingly, AI—on the rise and fall of democratic institutions was not inevitable but the result of interconnected decisions made by companies that create products, the people who use those products, and the leaders who govern their use.

AI's impact on constitutional democracy demands a civically engaged, AI and media-literate populace so that youth impacted by the ideas in this report, policymakers, and the public are empowered to:

1. Positively inform companies and the decisions they make with AI,
2. Use the AI products that companies develop in community-affirming ways, and
3. Hold governments responsible for creating laws and norms that enhance prosocial, transparent, and positive uses of these products, such as the ability to discern truth from disinformation, engage in civic debates or disagreements, and other capabilities that inform and guide AI.

As Stanford educator [Sam Wineburg](#) has articulated in his research, there is a key difference between digital nativism and digital literacy. Young people are born into a world with pervasive access to technology, but the responsible use of technology is an acquired skill. Put another way, simple access to technology is not a replacement for discernment built through AI, data, and media literacy. If we want to center human agency in an AI-infused world, then empowering young people to develop critical inquiry skills and civic AI literacy is key for the long-term health of our democracy.

This report argues that states play a pivotal role in strengthening civic resilience by advancing AI literacy rooted in a core civic mission. We outline why this work is essential, examine current state-level AI education policies and practices, and present considerations for equipping young people with the skills necessary to flourish. Finally, we offer concrete actions, guiding questions, and case studies to support state policymakers in their work.

We also encourage the reader to reference the work presented in the CivxNow/Listen First 2024 report, [Uncharted Waters: Education, Democracy, and Social Cohesion in the Age of AI](#), as this report will build on those findings and apply them to the state level. We believe that with state leadership and a commitment to education, democracy can continue to endure for at least another 250 years in America—not because it's flawless, but because it remains the most resilient form of government when supported by an informed and engaged citizenry.

Uncharted Waters: Education, Democracy, and Social Cohesion in the Age of AI examines the role AI plays in both challenging and supporting a high-quality civic education, defined as learning experiences that advance key knowledge, skills, dispositions, and behaviors essential for a thriving constitutional democracy. The report outlines educational considerations, practices, policies, and research questions that illuminate quality learning experiences through the development and expansion of AI technology while advancing core civic values, including ethical reasoning, commitment to social capital, and individual rights such as privacy. The underlying civic considerations in *Uncharted Waters* inform the work in this current publication.

THE NEED FOR ACTION AND THE RISKS OF COMPLACENCY

Generative artificial intelligence introduces new, transformative dimensions to how people will function in our democracy. For centuries, new technologies have brought about key shifts in how information is produced and shared (see [Appendix D](#) for broader discussion). Before the printing press, individuals would have isolated information shared by word of mouth from one person to the next. After the printing press, a select group of individuals had the means to communicate more broadly with people they wouldn't meet face-to-face.

The rise of broadcast television and other technologies amplified these realities, yet still didn't fully democratize who could be a communicator and with whom they could communicate. Social media and the internet changed that equation again, providing average people more opportunities to share both their views and perceptions of reality; it simultaneously elevated the power of leaders and influencers in reaching even more people.

Key Facts: Information Consumption in the Age of Technology

- **Decline in the power of traditional news sources, increase in power of influencers** - From the 1950s through the 1970s, the big three networks—NBC, ABC, and CBS—controlled 90 percent of the television market. The decline of network news consumption and the rise of “influencer news” consumption have been dramatic. For example, while all three major network news outlets had fewer than 9 million active viewers, the billionaire corporate leader and influencer, Elon Musk, has over 225 million followers on his social media platform.
- **Rise in digital news consumption** - [Pew Research](#) highlights that over the decades, the proliferation of news sources has been dramatic, expanding the number of sources through which people access information and placing greater emphasis on digital media, which is now how nearly 90 percent of the public accesses news.
- **AI's ascendance in proportion of digital content creation** - The rise of influencers and reliance on digital sources to access information further empowers AI, which relies heavily on digital access to transmit information. [Recent predictions](#) have highlighted that a large majority of internet content will soon be AI-generated.



The Promise and Peril of AI

AI In Real Time - Promise:

AI Scholars from [InspiritAI](#) work with Stanford alumni on socially impactful AI projects. Project highlights include using AI to create public art and creating better diagnostic systems for diseases like colorectal cancer.

AI In Real Time - Peril:

Students at [George Fischer Middle School](#) in Putnam County, New Jersey, used AI to create a manipulated video of school principal John Piscitella. The 37-second clip included racist slurs against Black students, calling them monkeys and saying they should be sent back to Africa, before using a racial epithet.

THE NEED FOR ACTION AND THE RISKS OF COMPLACENCY

Until now, the ideas shared were tied to an individual or organization, who could be held accountable for the responsibility—or irresponsibility—of their views. AI has changed this paradigm. It no longer has to be a person communicating a view—the technology itself can create and disseminate a machine-generated perspective. It's no longer just people taking pictures and videos; a person could hide or obfuscate their identity and use AI to create social media posts, pictures, and videos—fake or real—[fundamentally affecting](#) a shared view of what is fact vs. fiction. While these realities affect nations, they also affect states and regions within nations. States and regions that have some autonomy over their governments, including, without limitation, administering elections and educating their citizens, are facing a much more complex reality in sustaining public trust.

As the examples in the chart below highlight, AI's challenges and opportunities for democracies—local, state, and national—are not some futuristic projection from a sci-fi writer's imagination. They are practical realities that citizens, elected officials, and election administrators are grappling with today. Generative AI is used to help both stop *and* spread misinformation, help *and* hinder citizens from engaging with their elected officials and institutions, and deepen *and* undermine trust in each other. It is a story of promise and peril.

What's more, operating under the assumption that the foundations for these behaviors can be informed by learning, one can see how the way we educate youth today is a harbinger of the types of democracies and community relationships we will experience in the future. AI tools offer enormous promise. AI tools have expanded opportunities for neurodivergent students to communicate more effectively with teachers and school leaders, strengthened all learners' ability to [detect misinformation](#), and created more efficient ways to capture and elevate [young people's perspectives](#).

Research indicates that AI also contributes to young people [losing trust](#) in credible information, allows for the creation of deepfakes that [maliciously attack](#) school leaders, and allows for a new dimension of bullying, including [harassing their peers](#) with explicit, nude images. Because we want schools to reflect the communities and democracy students inherit, the outcomes states will experience will directly correlate with their capacity to promote positive engagement and take tangible steps to address the peril of this technology.

Decision-makers at all levels of education can take tangible steps to lay the foundation for a stronger democracy. They can engage young people across disciplines in wrestling with the [safe and ethical dimensions](#) of decisions relating to AI, yielding powerful inquiries; they can invest in assessments that leverage AI to gauge student progress on civic skills; and they can invite young people into the decisions they make. Our decisions relating to generative AI today will profoundly affect how people experience democracy and community for decades to come. They will profoundly influence young people's lives, making it all the more important to prioritize young people's voices in today's conversations.

“Seventy-two percent of teens have used AI companions at least once, and over half (52%) qualify as regular users who interact with these platforms at least a few times a month.”

Talk, Trust, and Trade-Offs: How and Why Teens Use AI Companions, Common Sense Media, July 2025.

THE NEED FOR ACTION AND THE RISKS OF COMPLACENCY

FOUNDATIONS OF CIVIL SOCIETY	POSITIVE EXAMPLES OF AI'S IMPACT	NEGATIVE EXAMPLES OF AI'S IMPACT
An Informed, Empowered Electorate	Interactive Voter Education Platforms: AI-enhanced voter guides personalize information based on voters' locations and concerns, making complex ballot measures and candidate positions more accessible.	Deliberate Misinformation: Campaign operatives use AI to generate misleading content about opponents, including fabricated images and false statements attributed to candidates that spread rapidly across social media platforms.
Public's Engagement with Leaders	Efficient Constituent Relations: US Congressional offices implemented AI systems to help sort, categorize, and respond to constituent communications, enabling representatives to better understand constituent concerns and improve response rates.	Distrust of Leaders: Several state legislators in the US reported instances where AI impersonated their identities using AI voice technology to contact constituents with false information about voting locations.
Social Relationships	Depolarizing Dialogue: Jigsaw (a unit of Google) was incorporated into several major news platforms by 2024 to help moderate comments and reduce toxic discourse, promoting more constructive conversation.	Personal Attacks at Scale: AI has been used to generate personalized harassment against public figures, particularly targeting female and minority politicians with tailored abusive content at scale.
Accessing and Evaluating Public Services and Funding	AI-Powered SNAP Modernization: The American Public Human Services Association (APHSA) is testing an AI-powered tool to help modernize SNAP's labor- and time-intensive process for frontline staff.	Biases in Predictive Analytics: Nevada adopted a machine learning-based predictive model to allocate education funding for students identified as "at-risk," incorporating demographic factors that reduced the number of students classified as at-risk by about 225,000 and significantly shifted how state funding was distributed to communities.

MOVING FORWARD ON THE WISDOM OF TWO SUPREME COURT JUSTICES

What is the responsible and inclusive way to approach these conversations in states? The answer to this question is both legal and ethical in nature. One place to start this conversation is with the ideas of two of America's legal giants: US Supreme Court Justices O'Connor and Brandeis.

It was Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, the first woman US Supreme Court Justice, who said that, "The [practice of democracy](#) is not passed down through the gene pool. It must be taught and learned by each new generation." O'Connor believed that an informed and engaged electorate was essential to making the most of the challenges and opportunities of a changing society—one that, during her tenure on the Court, was transformed by the arrival of personal computers, the internet, and the early stirrings of social media. It's why, upon leaving the Court, she went on to form [iCivics](#) as her legacy initiative, underscoring that the future of democracy, new opportunities arising from technology, and the teaching of civics were intertwined. Many students of law and government before and after O'Connor have similarly underscored this principle.

But what would be the most effective system to promote and govern civic learning opportunities for young people? Here, we point to the arguments of Justice Louis Brandeis, who, in his famous dissent in the 1932 case, [New State Ice Co. v. Liebmann](#), highlighted the role of states as laboratories of democracy. Brandeis knew that in a system of federalism established by our nation's founders, working within the constraints of rights afforded in the Constitution, states held the power and opportunity to experiment and that those experiments could make our democratic systems stronger.

Over time, this consideration has led to its own challenges, particularly in civil rights—while states are the laboratories of democracies, those laboratories must operate in a way that protects the individual rights of all people. Perhaps no issue more squarely touches the democracy laboratory idea—both its strengths and limitations—more than the function of education.

While there are commonalities across states—each state has teachers and schools, legislatures and chief executives—there are also many areas that are unique in each state. In some states, decisions around education are centralized, while others pride themselves on local control as a core virtue. Some provide authority to oversee learning standards to their state boards of education, others to legislatures, and others to neither. Some emphasize teaching local history or a specific discipline, while others do not. Based on a state's culture, norms, and histories, it is wise to approach each laboratory independently. Still, we can learn from general trends to inform how to move forward so that states collectively contribute to a thriving nation.

DESPITE PARTISAN DIVISION, A MAJORITY OF AMERICANS SUPPORT THE FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES OF DEMOCRACY, INCLUDING ADHERENCE TO THE RULE OF LAW, FAIR ELECTIONS, AND FREE EXPRESSION. A MARCH 2025 SURVEY BY THE RONALD REAGAN PRESIDENTIAL FOUNDATION FOUND THAT 69% OF AMERICANS AFFIRM THE VALUES IN THE CONSTITUTION.

Center on Civility and Democracy. (2025). Online survey on issues related to civility and democracy [Poll conducted by Pinkston].
Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation and Institute.
<https://www.reaganfoundation.org/center-on-civility-and-democracy>

STATES, AI, EDUCATION, AND DEMOCRACY: THREE FACTORS THAT INFORM OUR PATH FORWARD

If states—ideally or practically—are laboratories of democracy, what can they learn from each other in this moment? This section articulates the conditions that underlie challenges and opportunities influencing the intersection of education and artificial intelligence. Before reading this section, we encourage the reader to review the seven lenses we first articulated in this report's predecessor, *Uncharted Waters* ([see Appendix A](#)). Among other areas, these lenses focus on the ongoing ethical, practical, and pedagogical opportunities and challenges AI presents in preparing young people for success in our state's and nation's constitutional democracies. We weave these lenses throughout this section, which highlights both the broader political and social backdrop, informing the current AI education policy climate and the proactive policy measures states can take to make the most of it.



CURRENT STATE OF PLAY

Policies affecting education and AI will not occur within a vacuum. There are many considerations to ensure policymakers' approaches to this issue are effective. In particular, we highlight three factors in states that are of critical importance for policymakers approaching this issue:

Factor 1: The pace of legislative and policy considerations around AI is increasing.

State legislators and policymakers across the country are showing a growing interest in AI. According to the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), nearly 500 bills addressing AI were introduced in [2024](#), rising to almost 600 in [2025](#). Yet, only a small portion of these bills focused on K-12 education—just under 60 bills in 2024 and just over 80 in 2025—most early efforts concentrated on specific issues, such as elections or the workforce. By 2025, however, more states began to take a broader view, introducing legislation that addressed AI's impact across multiple sectors and tackling issues with cross-sector significance, such as student privacy. In October 2025, California passed the most sweeping set of AI and youth safety protections yet. Reflecting this trend, the State Education Technology Directors Association (SETDA) identified AI as the [top priority](#) for education leaders nationwide.

"We argue that many of today's educational challenges stem not from individual policies but from a broader conflict about the purposes of education. Without addressing purpose, many current reforms—however well intentioned—seem unlikely to succeed."

Stanford Social Innovation Review, "A Democratic Vision for Public Schools," Fall 2024

CURRENT STATE OF PLAY

Factor 2: States act through decentralized approaches.

Nevertheless, despite some states taking a more comprehensive approach to policy, states' approach to education policymaking, especially in AI education policy, tends to favor decentralized actions that empower local communities to make their own decisions. This is true for both legislative and administrative policies. Of the 25 states that have taken administrative actions, almost all take exclusively decentralized approaches such as creating task forces or developing toolkits, frameworks, and guidance documents. While this empowers states to address their students' needs in more personalized ways, it also carries challenges. A [recent analysis](#) by the Center for Reinventing Public Education found that when civic education is primarily controlled by local discretion, access to civic learning is uneven, constrained by politics, resources, and time pressures, with only 22% of eighth-graders scoring Proficient or above on the 2022 NAEP Civics Assessment.

The exceptions to a solely decentralized approach include Alabama, California, Colorado, Georgia, Louisiana, New York, Utah, Texas, and West Virginia, which take a blended approach of decentralized and centralized approaches to policymaking, such as outlining prohibited uses of AI in public education. While there are limitations in decentralized approaches to policymaking, there are also some natural advantages given this specific issue: Legislative policymaking is often a drawn-out process, and this technology is transforming rapidly.

Factor 3: Current policies around education and AI neglect education's role in a democracy.

As we mentioned previously, attention to AI policy is growing, but the focus on education remains limited. Even when education is addressed, few policies explicitly consider how AI impacts students' capacity to be engaged, informed participants in our democracy.

ONLY 22% OF U.S. 8TH GRADERS ARE AT OR ABOVE THE "PROFICIENT" LEVEL IN CIVICS, ACCORDING TO THE MOST RECENT NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS (NAEP). ABOUT ONE-THIRD OF STUDENTS SCORE BELOW THE "NAEP BASIC" BENCHMARK, SUGGESTING THEY CANNOT ADEQUATELY DESCRIBE THE STRUCTURE AND FUNCTION OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT. THIS GAP PERSISTS INTO ADULTHOOD.

A 2023 SURVEY FROM THE ANNENBERG PUBLIC POLICY CENTER FOUND THAT ONLY 5% OF AMERICANS COULD NAME ALL FIVE FREEDOMS PROTECTED BY THE FIRST AMENDMENT. FURTHERMORE, 70% OF RESPONDENTS IN A 2023 AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION SURVEY BELIEVE THE PUBLIC IS "NOT VERY INFORMED" OR "NOT AT ALL INFORMED" ABOUT HOW GOVERNMENT WORKS.

Annenberg Public Policy Center. (2023, September 14). Many don't know key facts about U.S. Constitution, Annenberg civics study finds. University of Pennsylvania. <https://penntoday.upenn.edu/news/many-dont-know-key-facts-about-us-constitution-annenberg-civics-study-finds>

American Bar Association. (2023, May 1). Survey: Public blames social media for civility's decline. ABA News. <https://www.americanbar.org/news/abanews/aba-news-archives/2023/04/survey-public-blames-social-media/>

The policies that do call for concrete actions tend to concentrate on narrower issues such as student data privacy, mitigating bias in large language models, establishing working groups to inform broader policy, or deploying AI for firearm detection in schools. There are, however, some bright spots (see text box).

Oregon's [*Generative Artificial Intelligence in K-12 Classrooms Guidance*](#) not only defines AI clearly but also underscores the importance of human decision-making, digital citizenship, and students' ethical engagement.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Suppose state policymakers acknowledge that this technology and the use of artificial intelligence have implications for the academic, emotional, and social health of their state's students, their state institutions, and the nation's democratic health. In that case, both action and inaction are active decisions. When we are ostensibly aware of what the implications of a lack of focus on media, AI, data, and information literacy have been in the political sphere with individuals of all or no political persuasion (i.e., the internet, digital devices, social media, etc.) and see the signs that young people and adults are using AI for both positive and destructive ends that tangibly impact democratic function, then not having a policy response is an active choice to say, 'The concern is valid but not sufficient enough for action.'

The good news is that positive options exist for those who choose to act. There is considerable experience and collective knowledge on policy actions that can have a tangible impact on student civic readiness; adopting and adapting this knowledge can significantly enhance states' approaches to AI.

For example, [recent research](#) has highlighted the value of inquiry as a core strategy in learning in the age of AI, ensuring that students have the skills to effectively interrogate information. In civic and history learning, the [Educating for American Democracy initiative](#), conceived by a diverse group of experts and funded by a joint grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Department of Education in 2020, emphasizes the importance of integrated, inquiry-driven history and civics education as a core tenet across K-12 education.

"Generative AI can mimic some of the work done by historians and history educators. This should not be mistaken for teaching or for learning. Far from rendering the discipline obsolete, generative AI may increase the demand for historians' specific skills as societies and workplaces navigate an increasingly complex information landscape."

American Historical Association, [Guiding Principles for Artificial Intelligence in History Education](#), August 2025

The inquiry-based approach pays dividends across disciplines. When teachers engage their students in lessons that focus on a core question, engage their students in evaluating real online content, feature real-time support and assessment, and integrate learning for teachers themselves, students are statistically more empowered and effective in interacting with online content.

These findings are reinforced by [recent research](#) by the News Literacy Project, among others, that practice in media and AI literacy education works in reducing the power of AI-generated misinformation. To put it succinctly, there is a problem on the horizon for states, and recent research and practice highlight that civic learning works as a meaningful solution. States don't have to start from scratch—they can build upon, not simply build anew. Many states have already taken up media and digital literacy efforts that can be built upon to address this new frontier.

A TOP GLOBAL RISK:

THE WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM'S
2024 GLOBAL RISKS REPORT
IDENTIFIED AI-GENERATED
MISINFORMATION AND
DISINFORMATION AS THE MOST
SEVERE GLOBAL RISK OVER THE
NEXT TWO YEARS, RANKING IT
AHEAD OF EXTREME WEATHER AND
INTERSTATE ARMED CONFLICT.

World Economic Forum. (2024). Global Risks Report 2024.
<https://www.weforum.org/stories/2024/02/emerging-global-risks-report-2024-crime-censorship/>

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The factors in the previous section highlight some key realities: decision-makers see AI as an increasingly important part of education policymaking, policies are focusing on local control, and there is room for growth. The additional good news is that even as policies aren't as explicit as some hoped, plenty of seeds exist to take meaningful steps in this arena. The decentralized approaches being taken by the majority of states (i.e., taskforces, standards and rubrics, and professional development) are seeds that provide excellent opportunities to address the civic dimensions of this technology if policymakers choose to take that direction. **AI's impact on democracy is not a future projection but a current reality that demands student learning and preparation for an AI-present and future.**

Data science and literacy can provide an ideal onramp for integrating civic learning, AI, and other disciplines. Perhaps no state has done more in this regard than [Virginia](#). In recent years, the Commonwealth has infused data literacy into its math standards, created independent data science standards, and worked with educators and schools to bring these ideas to life through new educational materials. This work laid the foundation for award-winning student interdisciplinary projects in state competitions. As AI fundamentally relies on data, text, and media, broader state efforts to strengthen media and data literacy highlight a 21st-century imperative to break down disciplinary silos and make practical connections to real issues affecting students' communities. Ultimately, state efforts like those in Virginia can go a long way to help students form a more ethical understanding of how technology operates and how it can be used as a force for good in communities and states.

States can make a significant difference by leveraging this and other knowledge of best practices. The [CivxNow](#) Coalition and [EDSAFE AI Alliance](#), through a task team of experts, educators, policymakers, and industry, have worked with and evaluated best practices to develop a [state policy menu](#). The elements of that menu can be adapted to provide eight concrete action opportunities:

1. **Strengthen** the integration of AI across courses and ensure that integration centers the civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions that support the health of American democracy.
2. **Fund** schools and districts to navigate this transition with professional development and learning resources that emphasize civic inquiry, media literacy, and digital citizenship.
3. **Align** state standards to include AI, data, and media literacy and engagement with AI tools in responsible ways that help students understand the tools and use the tools to ultimately benefit their communities.
4. **Support** professional development in pre-service and in-service settings that help educators develop the knowledge, skills, dispositions, and behaviors to use AI to connect positively with their peers and communities and prepare their students to do the same.
5. **Ensure** current and emerging assessments—including those using AI—provide actionable information on how students are progressing toward developing the knowledge, skills, dispositions, and behaviors essential for a healthy democracy.
6. **Recognize** and affirm students, educators, and schools that excel in advancing uses of AI in ways that strengthen communities and the nation's democratic foundations.
7. **Elevate** information literacy—including data literacy, media literacy, AI literacy, and related literacies—as a non-negotiable foundation for 21st-century learning across subjects and domains.
8. **Collaborate** across states and sectors by establishing mechanisms for shared dialogue, coordination, and vision-setting on AI and civic competencies.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

While only one of those actions explicitly emphasizes information and media literacy, all eight actions can be adapted to put states on a stronger trajectory for success in an AI-influenced world. We can emphasize more interdisciplinary civic learning that centers AI literacy in areas of computer science, the arts, STEM subjects, and English language arts while seeking to bring greater emphasis to areas of civics and social studies.

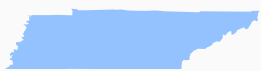
These actions can support professional development on interdisciplinary coursework that emphasizes civic media and information literacy, as well as assessments and accountability in these areas. States can recognize outstanding students and schools for contributions to AI and media literacy work through [civic seals](#) and other recognition programs.

A number of states have taken active steps to make an impact in this arena to benefit all their students, regardless of background. The chart below highlights some examples. We hold these and similar efforts up as tangible, constructive actions states are actively taking to advance this agenda through traditional mechanisms of standards, assessments, professional learning, and funding, among other policy instruments.



EDSAFE AI's *[Blueprint for Action: Comprehensive AI Literacy for All](#)* calls for integrating AI competencies across subjects and democratizing access to AI tools that enable individuals to create, test, and launch their own applications.

States Taking the Lead To Address AI Literacy



Tennessee:

Senate Bill 811 in Tennessee has taken aim at preparing young Tennesseans to be media and AI literate by directing the department to create curricula, “emphasizing the importance of evaluating information generated by artificial intelligence and understanding potential misinformation when using artificial intelligence.”



Illinois:

In Illinois, the state passed Public Act 102-0055 that amends the Illinois School Code to ensure that students in every public high school develop 21st-century skills in critical thinking and inquiry to navigate the increasingly complex information landscape.



Connecticut:

In 2024, Connecticut enacted legislation that provides for both professional learning and resources for “a model digital citizenship curriculum for grades kindergarten to twelve, inclusive, that may be used by local and regional boards of education.”

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

As state policymakers assess the best path forward, they can evaluate their authority and roles in different aspects of policymaking and their states' strengths and areas for growth. States can be at different decision-making stages depending on the policy. No state is perfect across all the highlighted lenses—all will have room for growth.

To self-assess and plan for growth, states should examine each opportunity and plan proactively for growth across four stages of development:

- **Stage 1: Status Quo** - Given that this is a new area of consideration in our society, many states would fall under what we would characterize as a general status quo: They are at the nascent stage of consideration around the ethical and civic use of AI in schools, with some neglecting to address its implications and others banning it altogether. (See example in [Appendix C](#))
- **Stage 2: Emerging** - When states get beyond the status quo, we might consider them emerging, a stage where policymakers are having early conversations or initiatives through task forces to learn and reflect in this area. (See example in [Appendix C](#))
- **Stage 3: Proficient** - This learning and reflection can begin to move states towards proficiency, a reality where they are not only considering the eight policies in the previous section but adapting them for an AI-infused future. (See example in [Appendix C](#))
- **Stage 4: Advanced** - For states that achieve proficiency, we encourage them to go deeper and move towards an advanced stage, where they fully integrate ethical AI use into education and ensure that conversations remain dynamic and evolving through feedback loops and cross-disciplinary efforts. We consider states advanced in this area as clearly articulating and applying their policies inclusively, accessibly, and transparently to fully consider the impact of using these tools in the community and beyond. (See example in [Appendix C](#))

While it is important for states to take this approach to policymaking in every area of policy, it is increasingly important to take this approach concerning generative AI, an area that is still so new in our society and holds such important implications for what it means to be human and civic in a 21st-century society and democracy. The chart in [Appendix C](#) highlights some examples for illustrative purposes. In the examples, we take some existing state administrative policies, classify them as status quo, emerging, and proficient, provide reasoning, and provide recommendations for how states can further develop their policies.

Because decisions relating to these policy considerations occur in different forums depending on the state (i.e., legislative committees, state education agencies, task forces, state board of education committees, etc.), we pose questions in [Appendix B](#) to help guide state consideration in these areas. Each set of questions aims to assess where states are on the issue (we characterize these questions as helping states *read the lines*), what circumstances will affect implementation of a policy (helping states *read between the lines*), and what policy actions the state can adopt (helping states *read beyond the lines*). We don't present these questions as exhaustive but as conversation starters for thoughtful policy consideration in a complicated and fast-changing area of decision-making.

CONCLUSION

We hope that this endeavor and resulting deliberations lead states to a thoughtful consideration of what it means to empower human flourishing in the 21st century. Indeed, what is education if not the process of making us more human? For thousands of years, across continents, cultures, and contexts, people have passed down knowledge, skills, and dispositions that support human development. The content passed down has changed over time, but a line of continuity threads through our purpose for education.

As we enter a new age where generative artificial intelligence intersects with education, we must develop legislation, policy, and administrative guidance that maintains this continuity in cultivating our humanity. This new era will facilitate unprecedented access to knowledge and carve out entirely new ways to engage with information. We are only at its beginning, and we are already able to identify an embrace of AI and communicate with this technology in ways that mirror having a personal tutor or colleague. In a sense, engagement patterns with AI demonstrate our desire to mirror a human connection.

Does the purpose of education change in this new era? It can't, if the purpose of education is to develop the person as a whole—empowering inquiry, connection, dialogue and discourse, empathy, and understanding. Education does much more than just transfer knowledge; it actively "builds" humans by shaping who we are, how we think, and how we interact with the world.

If education is the process of making us more human, then inquiry lies at its heart. It was Copernicus's inquiry that challenged the geocentric model of the solar system; Darwin's inquiry drove his theory of evolution; Enlightenment thinkers were guided by inquiry as they proposed new systems of democratic government. Inquiry stirred the abolition movement, propelled space travel, cured diseases, and even brought us generative AI. As AI becomes ubiquitous in our world, we must maintain our humanity. We must *think and feel*.

We must measure success in education and state policymaking by our ability to cultivate inquiry and other essential, uniquely human qualities—empathy, moral reasoning, creative problem-solving, among others—in students.

Democracy depends on it. The Greek *polis* gave us a vision for a self-governed community of people. This community is a democracy when the government's power comes from the people. Demos centers human beings in our system of government. To preserve and protect this system, we must cultivate thinking citizens. Centering inquiry-based education in an age of AI through meaningful civic AI and media literacy supports this aim.

As we consider laws to promote and curtail the use of AI in education, this discussion of cultivating our own humanity through inquiry guides conversation and legislative decisions. On one hand, students deserve to be equipped for the modern technological age they are growing into, and on the other, they deserve to be equipped with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that enable their own human flourishing. We hope that this report provides valuable tools and methods to strike that balance.

CONNECTING KNOWLEDGE TO ACTION:

**STUDIES SHOW A STRONG LINK
BETWEEN CIVIC KNOWLEDGE AND
CIVIC ENGAGEMENT. A 2023
SURVEY BY THE INSTITUTE FOR
CITIZENS & SCHOLARS FOUND
THAT YOUNG ADULTS WITH HIGHER
CIVIC KNOWLEDGE WERE MORE
LIKELY TO BE CIVICALLY ENGAGED,
WHICH IN TURN CORRELATED WITH
HIGHER LEVELS OF TRUST IN
INSTITUTIONS AND SATISFACTION
WITH DEMOCRACY.**

Institute for Citizens & Scholars. (2023). The civic outlook of young adults in America.
<https://citizensandscholars.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Citizens-Scholars-Civic-Outlook-of-Young-Adults-in-America-Executive-Summary.pdf>

APPENDIX A:

AI POLICY LENS

For these policy actions to succeed in states, state leaders must approach the issue thoughtfully. While some policies are promising, this is a new emerging policy area, and a one-size-fits-all approach may be neither appropriate nor practical. Not only do states face different political conditions and authorities over policymaking, but they also have different existing policies to build on.

The technology is changing so fast that a more nuanced approach will be more practically useful. In other words, while states can and should learn from each other's best practices, Justice Brandeis's urging that states serve as laboratories of democracy provides practical benefits to inform broader national success in this area.

As states approach these laboratory experiments, we encourage consideration of the seven lenses articulated in the report, [Uncharted Waters](#). Those considerations include:

- **Ethics** - The increased power and access to many technological tools will have transformational implications for the world students live in today and will inherit. Young people must have exposure to different tools and a voice in informing the tools under consideration, with exposure including learning and engaging in dialogue about the ethical use of such tools.
- **Learning Change** - Because technology evolves at an exponential rate and the flow of information persistently expands, ethical conversations about the use of tools and approaches to learning must similarly remain flexible and dynamic. Given that this is a new area of investment, we encourage states to prioritize funding pilot programs that support guided experimentation, paired with ongoing assessment and reflection to identify what works, what doesn't, and how practices can be improved.
- **Learning Primacy** - Because access to quality insights and misinformation has expanded exponentially, rather than recalling answers to closed questions, education must deliberately equip students with skills to process, analyze, evaluate, and interrogate information through deep inquiry.
- **Community Capacity** - Because, on the whole, human beings are drawn to reinforcing views and experiences both neurologically and through algorithms (i.e., through information, searches, virtual communities, etc.), education and educators must be intentional in offering opportunities for collaborative work across differences and empowering students to deepen their connections with others.
- **Relationship with Media** - Because individuals in our modern society are not simply passive consumers of information but active consumers and producers of various information, misinformation, and modes of media, education must prepare students in essential media, AI, and digital literacy skills.
- **Assessment** - Because more powerful search engines and AI tools can easily provide answers to test questions and even generate essays, developers and users of assessments will need to evaluate what knowledge, skills, and/or dispositions they are trying to measure and for what purpose, and then take steps to ensure that AI tools are used in ways that enhance rather than detract from validity. For instance, efforts to gauge content mastery might benefit from formats such as public presentations to teachers, peers, families, and communities.
- **Interdisciplinary Emphasis** - Because technological advancements have many common implications across disciplines (e.g., the need for information literacy, the reduction of human contributions to AI outputs that would have demanded basic disciplinary expertise, etc.), educators must collaborate across disciplines to reinforce learning with interdisciplinary relevance and coherence. *We cannot put too fine a point on this: digital literacy and its implications for preparation for democracy must become a cross-curricular, interdisciplinary imperative.*

APPENDIX B:

QUESTIONS FOR STATE POLICYMAKERS AND STATE POLICYMAKING BODIES

LENS	PURPOSE OF QUESTION	QUESTION
Ethics	Read the lines questions	What does it mean for the technology to be ethically implemented in classrooms and schools in the state? How are the ethical considerations of AI explicitly considered in the current state education policy?
	Read between the lines questions	Who was engaged in defining the ethical considerations?
	Read beyond the lines questions	Can the state create a rubric and grade for different AI products implemented to help provide transparency for local procurement and implementation decisions?
Learning Change	Read the lines questions	What is the state's current review process of AI policies?
	Read between the lines questions	Who is involved in decisions that evaluate the efficacy of a particular tool? Which educator voices, student experiences, and community needs are not represented in current review processes?
	Read beyond the lines questions	In what ways are or can civic considerations be incorporated into the review and evaluation process?
Learning Privacy	Read the lines questions	How do current state standards address deep inquiry, analysis, and evaluation skills in the context of AI-generated content?
	Read between the lines questions	Who are the current individuals engaged in review and evaluation conversations on the effectiveness of AI who are considering the ethical and civic dimensions of the technology?
	Read beyond the lines questions	How can the state ensure that assessment practices measure students' ability to interrogate AI-generated information rather than simply the consumption of that information?

APPENDIX B:

QUESTIONS FOR STATE POLICYMAKERS AND STATE POLICYMAKING BODIES

LENS	PURPOSE OF QUESTION	QUESTION
Community Capacity	Read the lines questions	How do our current policies incentivize AI to replace human interactions with teachers and peers, supplement those interactions, or empower them? How do we know?
	Read between the lines questions	Who in our state is considering AI strategies that supplement and empower deeper human interactions rather than simply using AI to develop a skill?
	Read beyond the lines questions	How are AI professional development opportunities emphasizing using AI as a tool to deepen the role of human and peer interactions?
Relationship with Media	Read the lines questions	What current state standards address students' roles as active producers of digital media in an AI-enabled world and the skills necessary to be responsible creators of digital media?
	Read between the lines questions	Are our current media literacy standards focused on addressing AI's implications for the consumption of media, the creation of media, both, or neither? How do we know?
	Read beyond the lines questions	Which state professional development and recognition programs help promote students' self-awareness as responsible and ethical media creators?
Assessment	Read the lines questions	What knowledge, skills, and dispositions are current assessments measuring in an AI-enabled environment?
	Read between the lines questions	Which assessment experts in the state can inform assessments incorporating civic skills within the statewide assessment regimen?
	Read beyond the lines questions	How can we empower educators with formative and summative assessment tools that provide meaningful and actionable information on students' levels of information literacy?

APPENDIX B:

QUESTIONS FOR STATE POLICYMAKERS AND STATE POLICYMAKING BODIES

Lens	Purpose of Question	Question
Interdisciplinary Emphasis	Read the lines questions	In what ways do current state standards across disciplines emphasize AI literacy, and in what ways do they emphasize responsible AI use?
	Read between the lines questions	Which disciplinary experts informing state education standards are skilled in making connections to ethical AI use?
	Read beyond the lines questions	How can our state promote standards alignment, professional development, educational resources, or some combination thereof that reinforces ethical use of AI?

APPENDIX C:

STATE POLICY EXAMPLES

The chart below provides some examples for states to consider how to develop and improve their education policies in ways that create more robust investments in their institutions and the health of their democratic systems. They are grounded by the following classifications that we presented in the [Policy Recommendations](#) sections of this report.

LENS	STATE POLICY EXAMPLE	HOW POLICY IS CLASSIFIED AND REASONING	ADVANCING TO THE NEXT STEP
Ethics	Arizona Generative AI guidance highlights different standards around ethics.	Based on the standards outlined, Arizona's policy might be considered somewhere between emerging and proficient. It defines the dimensions of ethical implementation, such as avoiding bias, misinformation, etc. However, the focus is largely on how students consume AI-generated information, not on how they're producing it.	To reach a fully proficient standard, Arizona's policy could articulate how the state takes the next step by articulating AI literacy standards across disciplines and helping evaluate AI use cases across disciplines. Presently, the document provides more guidance on computer science, but this guidance could be richer around other disciplines. The state could also implement some of the key recommendations in the document, specifically recommendation 2, holding edtech companies to ethical standards, and recommendation 3, prioritizing new literacies.
Learning Change	Delaware has a continuous review and version history for policies around generative AI.	Based on the standards outlined, Delaware's guidance falls between the status quo and emerging criteria. It highlights the importance of a more dynamic policy and considerations around ethical use that address bias. Still, it does not provide guidance on specific actions and examples to inform districts reassessing their policies.	Delaware's policies could provide more concrete hypothetical or practical examples of districts and schools achieving a specific outcome that underscores standards of ethics or digital citizenship and suggest—and include concrete examples of—actions districts should take would strengthen this document.

APPENDIX C:

STATE POLICY EXAMPLES

LENS	STATE POLICY EXAMPLE	HOW POLICY IS CLASSIFIED AND REASONING	ADVANCING TO THE NEXT STEP
Learning Primacy	Virginia's Governor, Glenn Youngkin, created an executive order that calls on different state agencies to help ensure the future workforce has the skills to succeed in an AI-infused world.	Based on the standards outlined, we deem this policy to be the status quo. While the executive order explicitly calls out the ethical use of AI, its focus on skills is limited to workforce skills.	To meet an emerging criterion, this policy could establish a requirement that, in addition to preparing Virginia's students for the future workforce, students should also understand the ethical and unethical uses of the technology and the implications of this learning on Virginia's communities. Implementing that consideration would get the policy to a proficient or advanced level.
Community Capacity	Washington's Human-Centered AI Guidance for K-12 Public Schools highlights technology as a tool to foster greater collaboration and deepen relationships among students.	Based on the standards outlined, we deem this policy proficient because it highlights the collaborative use of technology among students and their peers throughout the document.	To take this proficient policy to an advanced level, the state must consider how this policy is connected to other policies around, for example, assessments, curriculum, materials, and professional learning.

APPENDIX C:

STATE POLICY EXAMPLES

LENS	STATE POLICY EXAMPLE	HOW POLICY IS CLASSIFIED AND REASONING	ADVANCING TO THE NEXT STEP
Relationship with Media	California's guidance focuses on students and schools, not just using AI to consume media, but to produce it.	Based on the standards outlined, California's guidance on AI can be deemed proficient because it helps articulate a vision of learners working with AI and using it to design systems to solve challenges, build reasoning skills, and consider the societal impact of AI.	Ensuring the state takes this proficient policy to an advanced level could involve connections to other policies, such as affirming positive uses of AI through the state's seals of civic readiness, professional learning, and providing funds to help schools and districts engage in positive experimentation. The guidance articulates that the CDE is committing to supporting AI-focused professional learning in accordance with the State Superintendent of Public Instruction's professional learning initiative—it is to be determined whether that initiative explicitly addresses the civic dimensions of AI.
Relationship with Media	Mississippi has begun to provide guidance to LEAs on using AI to support formative assessments.	Based on the standards outlined, Mississippi's guidance can be deemed emerging because it begins to paint a picture of how AI can be integrated into the development of formative assessment. However, it does not explicitly guide LEAs to use these formative assessments for assessing civic skills and dispositions.	Mississippi can provide additional guidance on the types of skills AI should be used to assess and suggest tools that support educators in formatively assessing civic skills and dispositions, such as media literacy and curiosity.

APPENDIX C:

STATE POLICY EXAMPLES

LENS	STATE POLICY EXAMPLE	HOW POLICY IS CLASSIFIED AND REASONING	ADVANCING TO THE NEXT STEP
Interdisciplinary Emphasis	The New York state media literacy toolkit provides a guide for educators to advance media literacy.	Based on the standards outlined, New York's toolkit can be deemed proficient because it defines media literacy as an interdisciplinary approach to navigating the complexities of the 21st-century information environment.	To take this policy to the next level, New York could pair this work with current work in assessments, professional development, and other key policy areas.

APPENDIX D:

TRANSFORMATIVE COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

Era	Who communicates?	Who is reached?
Pre-printing press	Individuals in close proximity to each other; leaders to some extent	One's immediate neighbors and family, with great effort, the broader public
Post-printing press	Individuals with access to the printing press, primarily those who are wealthy, religious leaders, and political leaders	People who could afford to purchase mass-printed text, with great effort, the broader public
Mass media (television and newspapers)	Editors and those they provide access to	Larger percentages of the public who consumed the media
Internet	Anybody who can create a social media account or other web-based platform (blogs, websites, etc.)	Everybody with access to the internet
AI	Anybody who owns a cell phone and has data to connect with others who have access to technology.	Everybody with access to the internet, cellular service, or a landline.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Supported by the [EDSAFE AI Alliance](#) and [CivxNow](#), this report was made possible by the diverse perspectives and expertise shared via virtual workshops held in August 2025, and through capturing feedback on the draft report. We would like to acknowledge the invaluable contributions of the educators, higher education and school administrators, parent and civic advocacy organizations, researchers, and industry, who participated in the workshops and provided subsequent feedback.

Please note that the views expressed in this report are not endorsements made by organizations.

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Citation for the Report

EDSAFE AI Alliance and CivxNow. States of the Union: Rebuilding American Civics for a Digital Republic. October 24, 2025.

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