



Building AI Literacy for Inclusion in STEM: Recommendations in Action in OST Settings

September 29, 2026



National Girls
Collaborative
Project

AMD
together we advance_

 **Ingenia**
LEARNING

STEM NEXT
OPPORTUNITY FUND

NGCP Vision

The vision of the National Girls Collaborative Project is to **support and create STEM experiences** that reflect the world we live in.



National Girls
Collaborative
Project

AMD
together we advance_



Ingenia
LEARNING

STEM NEXT
OPPORTUNITY FUND

NGCP Resources

National Webinars

- o Offered regularly on relevant topics. Speakers include educators, researchers, authors, and diverse STEM professionals

Monthly Newsletter

- o National events, STEM resources for girls and youth, professional development opportunities for educators, and research and reports

NGCP Website

- o Exemplary Practices pages on Engaging Girls in STEM and Access and Equity, blog posts, and statistics and research related to girls and women in STEM



INSPIRING CURIOSITY FROM EARLY CHILDHOOD TO BREAK GENDER STEREOTYPES
THE NATIONAL GIRLS COLLABORATIVE PROJECT PODCAST

NGCP Podcast: Inspiring Curiosity from Early Childhood to Break Gender Stereotypes

In our first episode, we explore the crucial role of early childhood experiences in shaping girls' interest and engagement in STEM



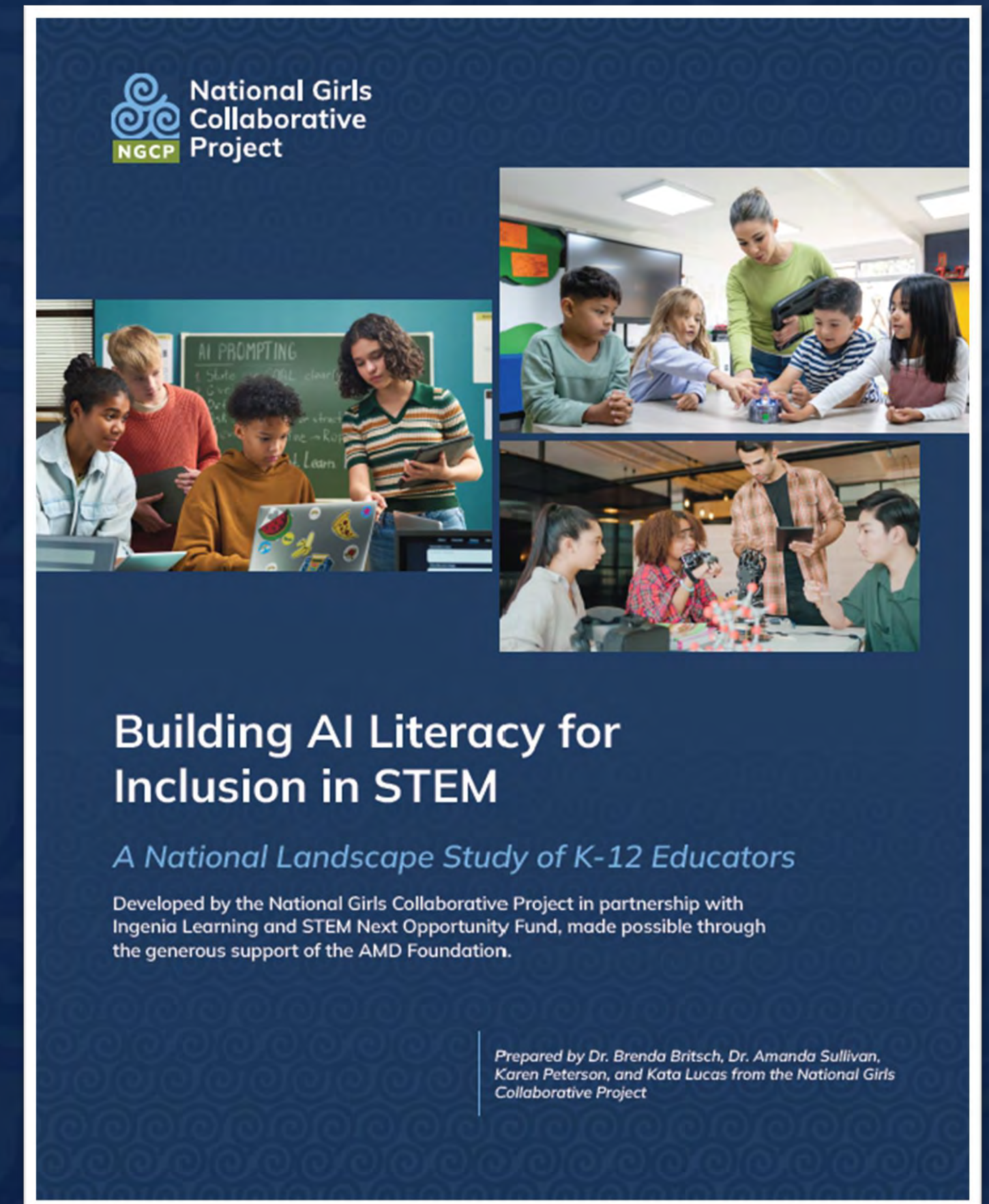
5 Ways to Be an Ally to Girls in STEM

5 Ways to Be an Ally to Girls and Women in STEM

If you think of gender equity in STEM as a "women's issue" we encourage you to think again!

Building AI Literacy for Inclusion in STEM

- A national initiative designed to better understand the current state of AI literacy across STEM learning environments.
- Developed by NGCP in partnership with Ingenia Learning and STEM Next Opportunity Fund, made possible through the generous support of the AMD Foundation.
- Today's webinar is the second in a three-part series on AI Literacy



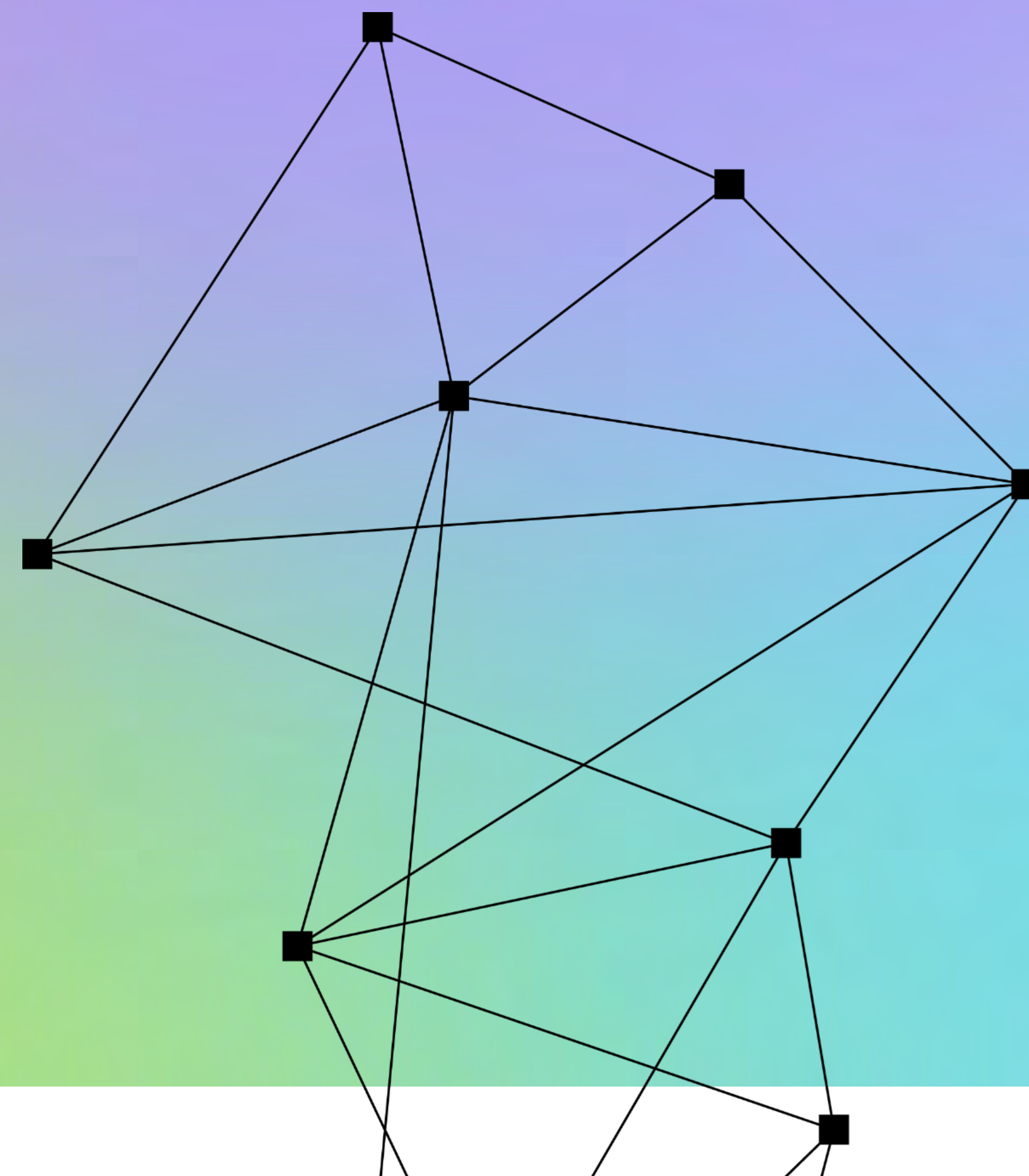
STEM Next

- STEM Next is a national nonprofit leading the movement to make the power of STEM discovery available to all young people through afterschool and summer programs.
- STEM Next's systems-based approach has engaged more than 15 million young people in STEM across the nation — and they're on a mission to excite 20 million more by 2030.
- Learn more: <https://stemnext.org/>



Building AI Literacy for Inclusion in STEM

Recommendations in Action in OST
Settings



Our Speakers Today



Camsie McAdams
Director, Institute for a
STEM Ready America
STEM Next Opportunity
Fund



Heather Jameson
Strategic Initiatives
Lead
Montana Afterschool
Alliance



Kelli Shrewsberry
Chief Innovation Officer
TECH CORPS

STEM NEXT
OPPORTUNITY FUND

A National Nonprofit Scaling STEM Learning

Exciting 20 million more young people in STEM



Our Mission

Making out-of-school STEM opportunities a reality for millions of young people to help them thrive in STEM and beyond.



Our Vision

Every child has STEM opportunities that inspire curiosity, innovation, and the critical thinking skills for whatever comes NEXT.

Agenda

Welcome and Context Setting

Framing the Opportunity: Insights from Opportunity AI

Field Spotlight: In-the-Field Educator Training on AI Literacy

Field Spotlight: Developing Ecosystem-Level AI Literacy Guidance

Panel Discussion

Q&A and Closing





Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Understand the importance of equitable access to AI literacy in OST environments.
2. Identify actionable strategies for training OST educators on AI tools and concepts.
3. Learn how to adapt and implement statewide or regional AI literacy guidance for local ecosystems.
4. Access key insights and lessons learned from STEM Next's multi-state Opportunity AI initiative.

Role of OST in AI Literacy

Why AI Literacy in OST?

Preparing youth for a future shaped by artificial intelligence



AI is shaping the future

From TikTok algorithms to Chat GPT, AI is everywhere in young people's lives, influencing how they learn, connect, and create. It will shape their futures, careers, and communities.



OST is Uniquely Positioned

Afterschool and summer programs offer flexible, hands-on, interest-driven learning that makes AI exploration engaging and accessible for all youth.



Youth-Centered Experiences

OST environments allow youth to experiment, ask questions, and connect AI concepts to their own lives and passions in creative, low-stakes ways.



Career Readiness

As AI reshapes the workforce, OST helps young people see how AI skills translate into real opportunities and future career pathways.

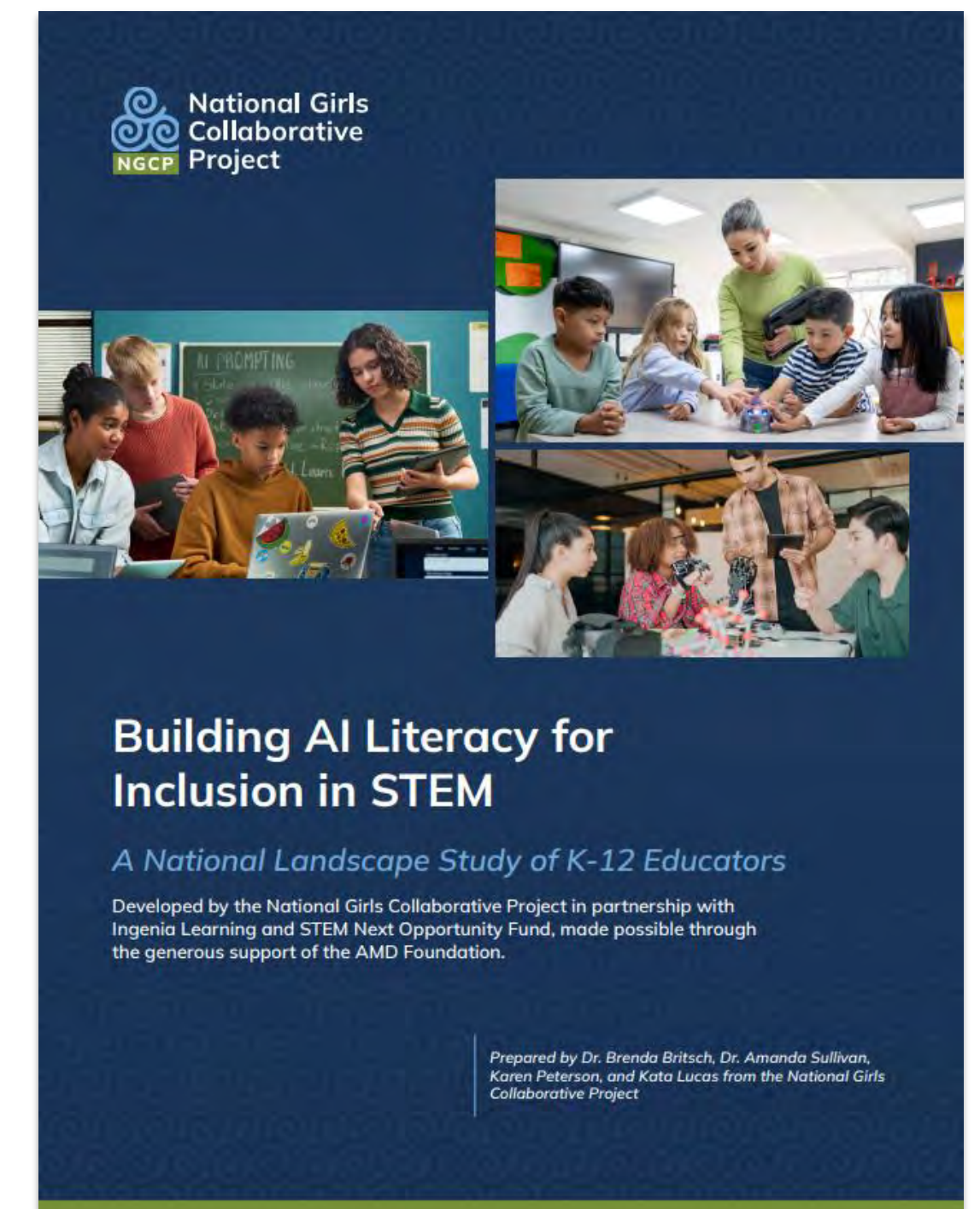
National Perspective & Recommendations



National Perspectives & Recommendations

Three national priorities for today's discussion

- 1. Ongoing educator capacity building and professional development:** Invest in sustained, tiered AI professional development for educators.
- 2. Clear guidance:** Develop clear AI guidance, policies, and decision-making tools for education settings.
- 3. Practical, youth-centered resources:** Create practical, youth-centered AI literacy resources that support formal and informal STEM learning, future readiness, and responsible AI use



Insights from Opportunity AI

Opportunity AI

Opportunity AI pilot trained 35 OST leaders across 4 states (West Virginia, Montana, Pennsylvania, and Ohio) and 20 sites through four key domains that make AI accessible, ethical, and career-connected.

Understand (AI Basics)

Recognize AI in daily life, explain how it learns from data, and identify what AI can and cannot do.

Evaluate (Critical Thinking & Ethics)

Question AI's outputs, detect bias, and apply human judgment to ethical dilemmas around privacy, fairness, and misinformation.

Create & Manage (Using AI Responsibly)

Collaborate with AI tools to create and problem-solve, practice prompting and refining, and decide when AI should support human work.

Putting it into Practice

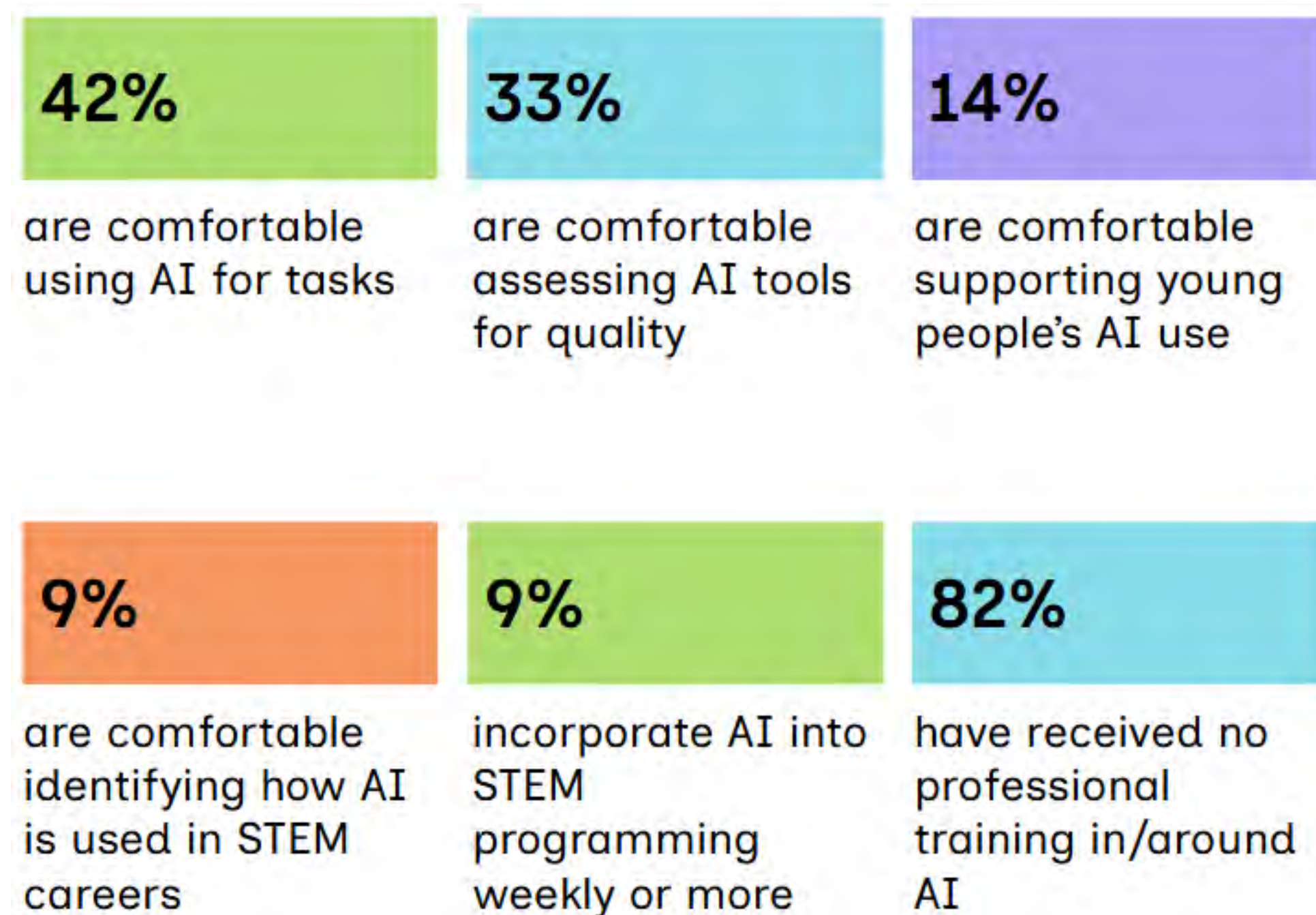
Prototype solutions to community problems and consider how AI helps us with STEM learning. Youth directly engaging with AI-related tools and concepts.

Crosscutting Strand: Career Connected Learning. Every domain links directly to workforce relevance. Youth see how AI shows up in careers, practice durable skills (creativity, teamwork, problem-solving), and connect with role models and opportunities.

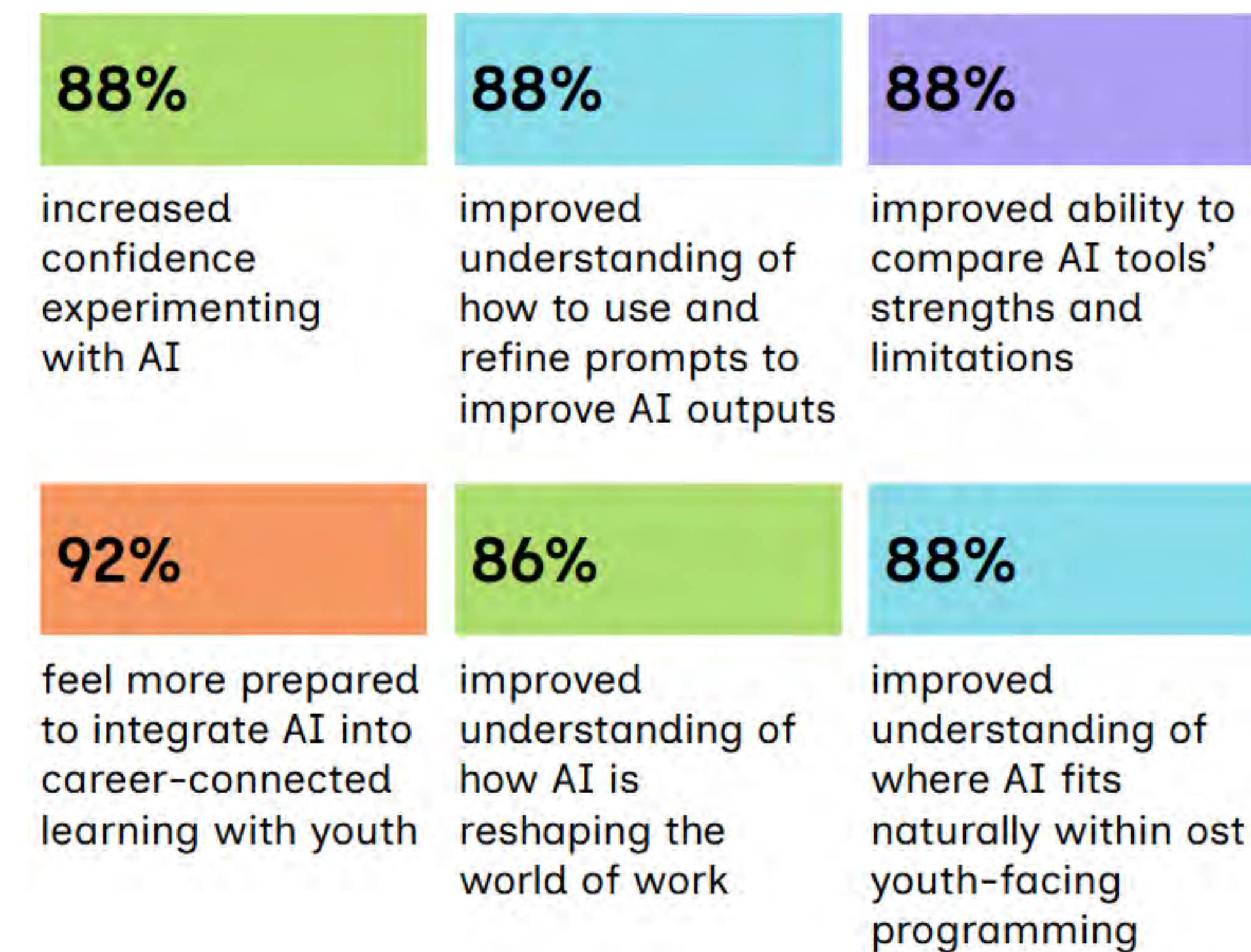
Opportunity AI: Building Confidence

Survey data before and after

Educator responses before Opportunity AI



Opportunity AI participants report gains across target outcomes



AN AHA MOMENT

Making AI Learning Approachable

Opportunity AI participants at West Virginia Statewide Afterschool Network (WVSAN) led an activity at the state's afterschool quality conference.

The hands-on activity from STEM Next's toolkit was for elementary-age youth, using everyday objects to sort items into categories and identify patterns, demonstrating how AI systems organize information and make decisions.

“

“We’re not diving in with second graders learning how to prompt...We’re learning how AI works, and giving that foundation of understanding, and then building on that as kids get older.”

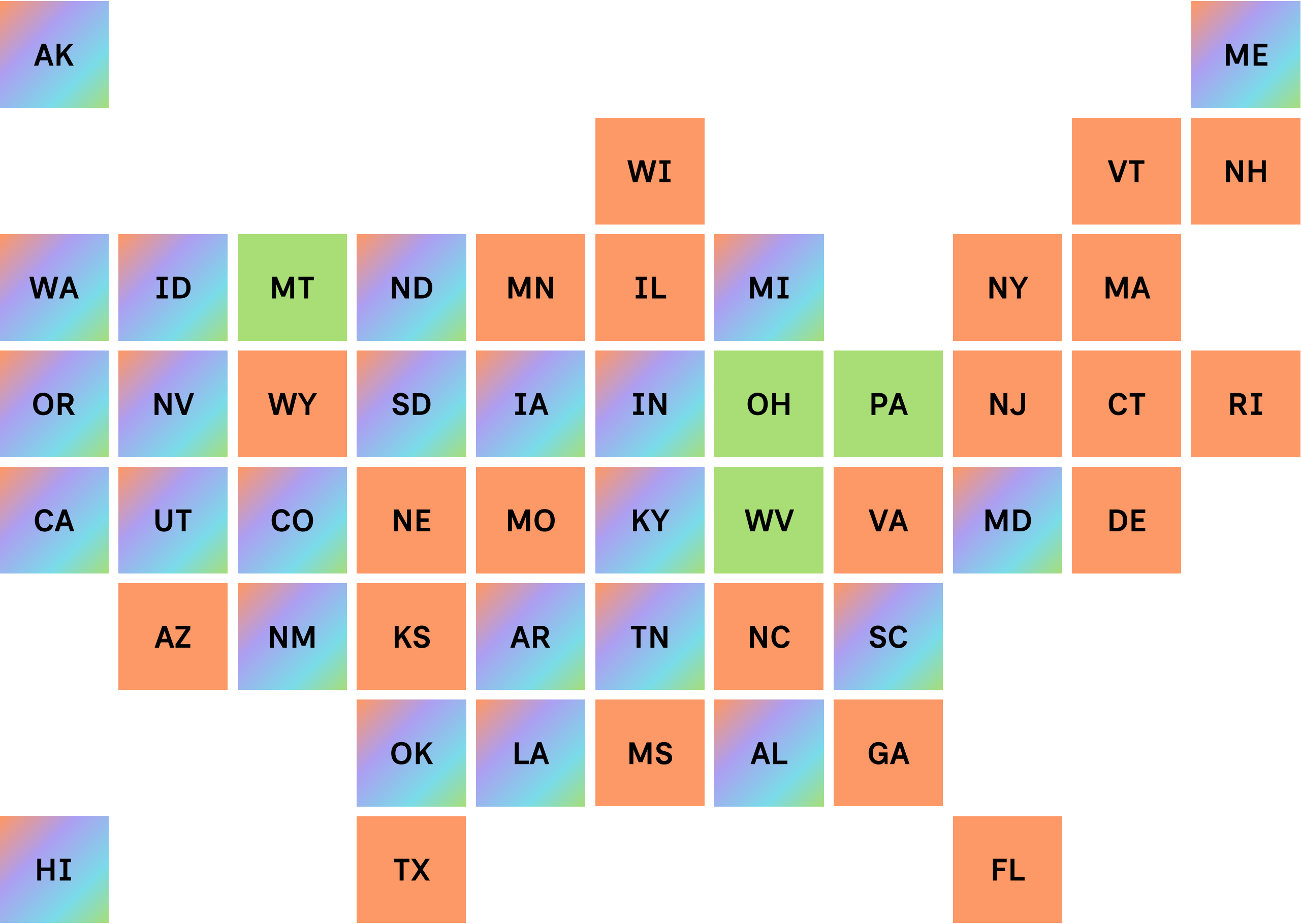
— Tami Jo Wilt

West Virginia Statewide Afterschool Network and Opportunity AI participant



**STEM
NEXT**

2026 AI Summer Boot Camp for System Leaders



BY-THE-NUMBERS

- 52 participants
- 25 states

AI LITERACY PILOT STATES

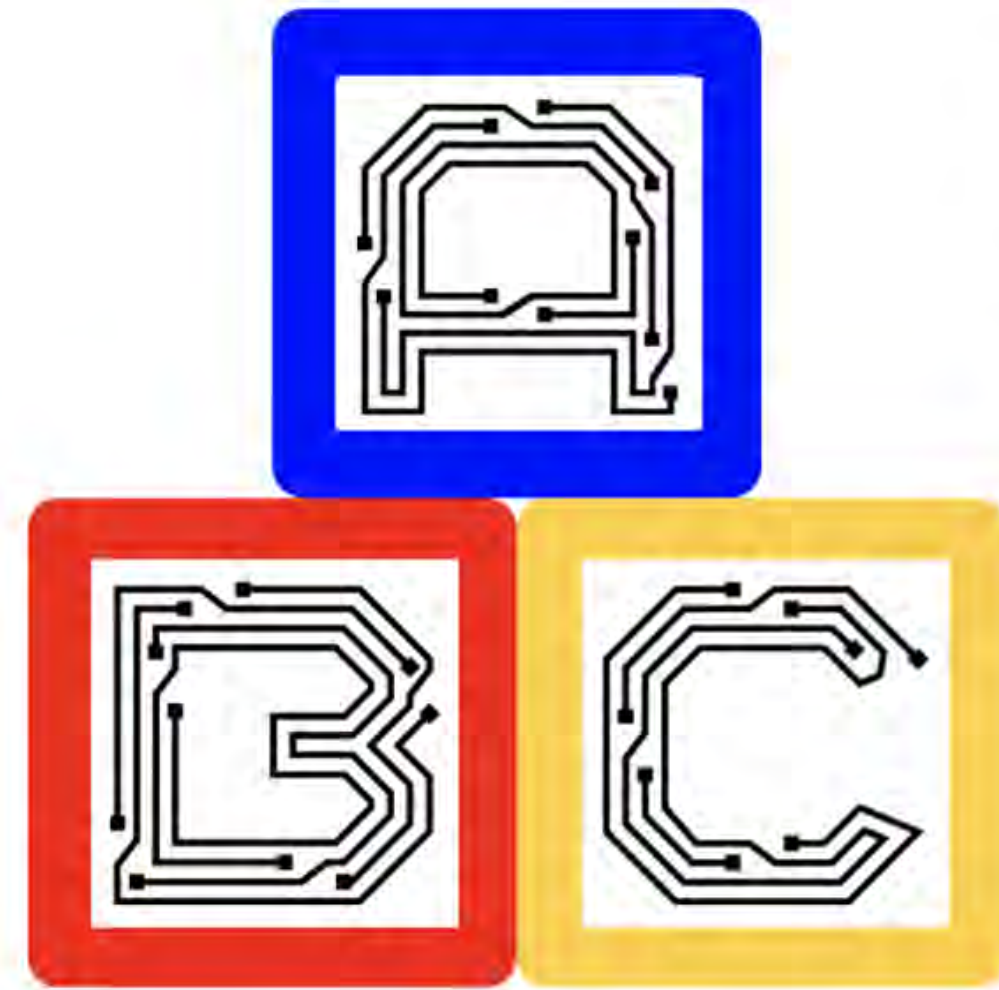
BOOT CAMP ATTENDEES

Field Spotlight: In-the-Field Educator Training on AI Literacy

Kelli Shrewsberry



Educator Training

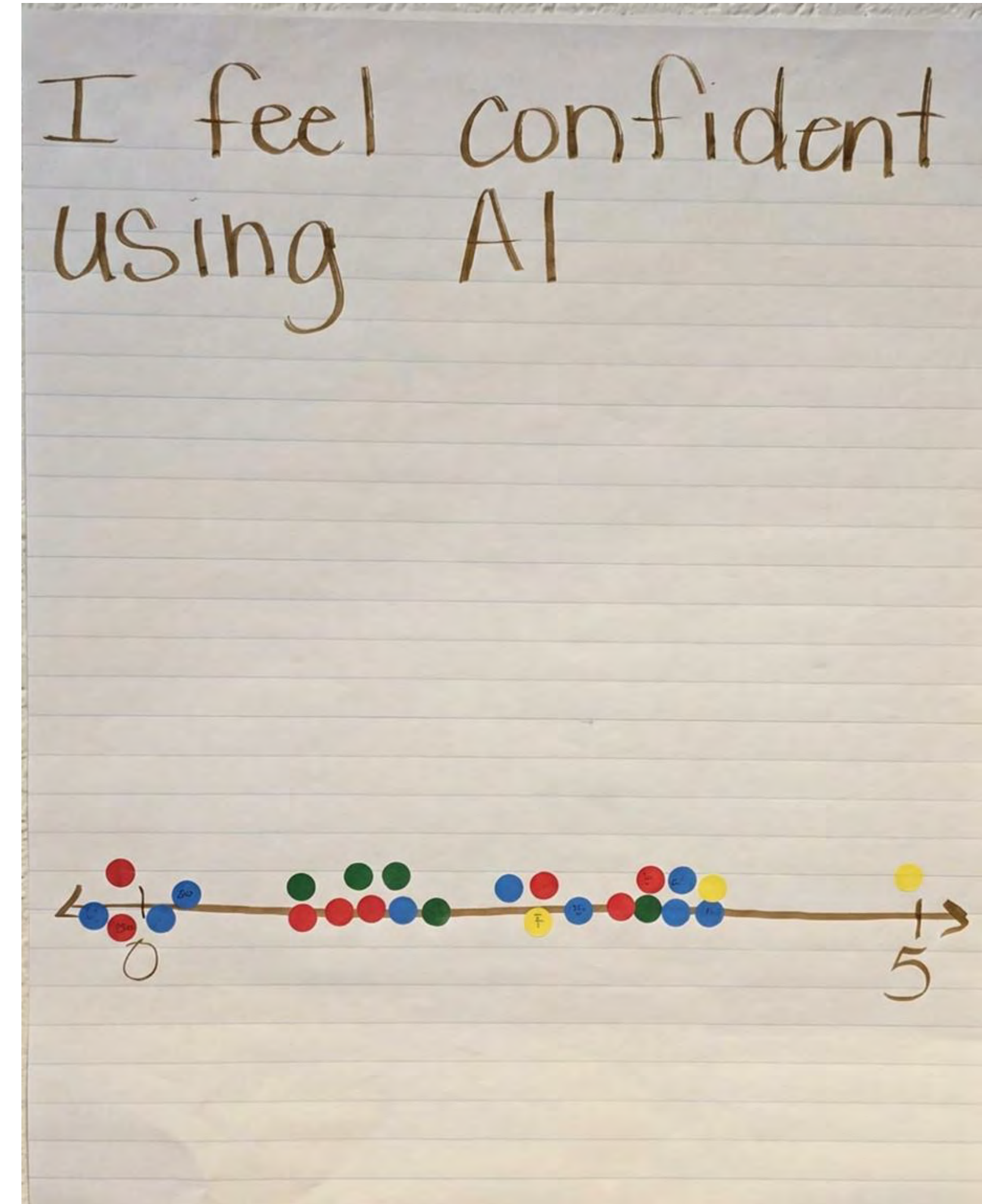


**the
building
blocks**
OF COMPUTER SCIENCE

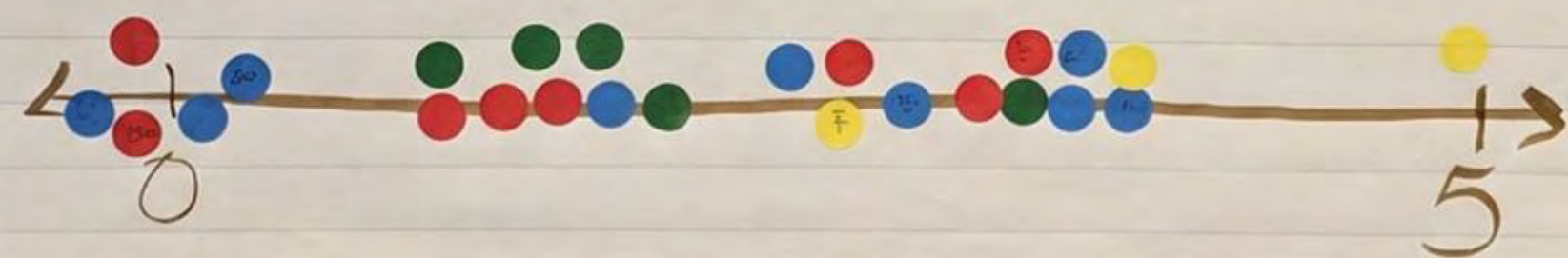




Building confidence to facilitate AI learning

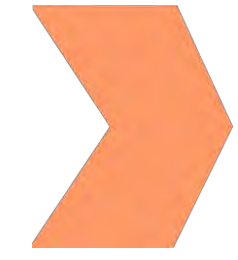


I feel confident
using AI



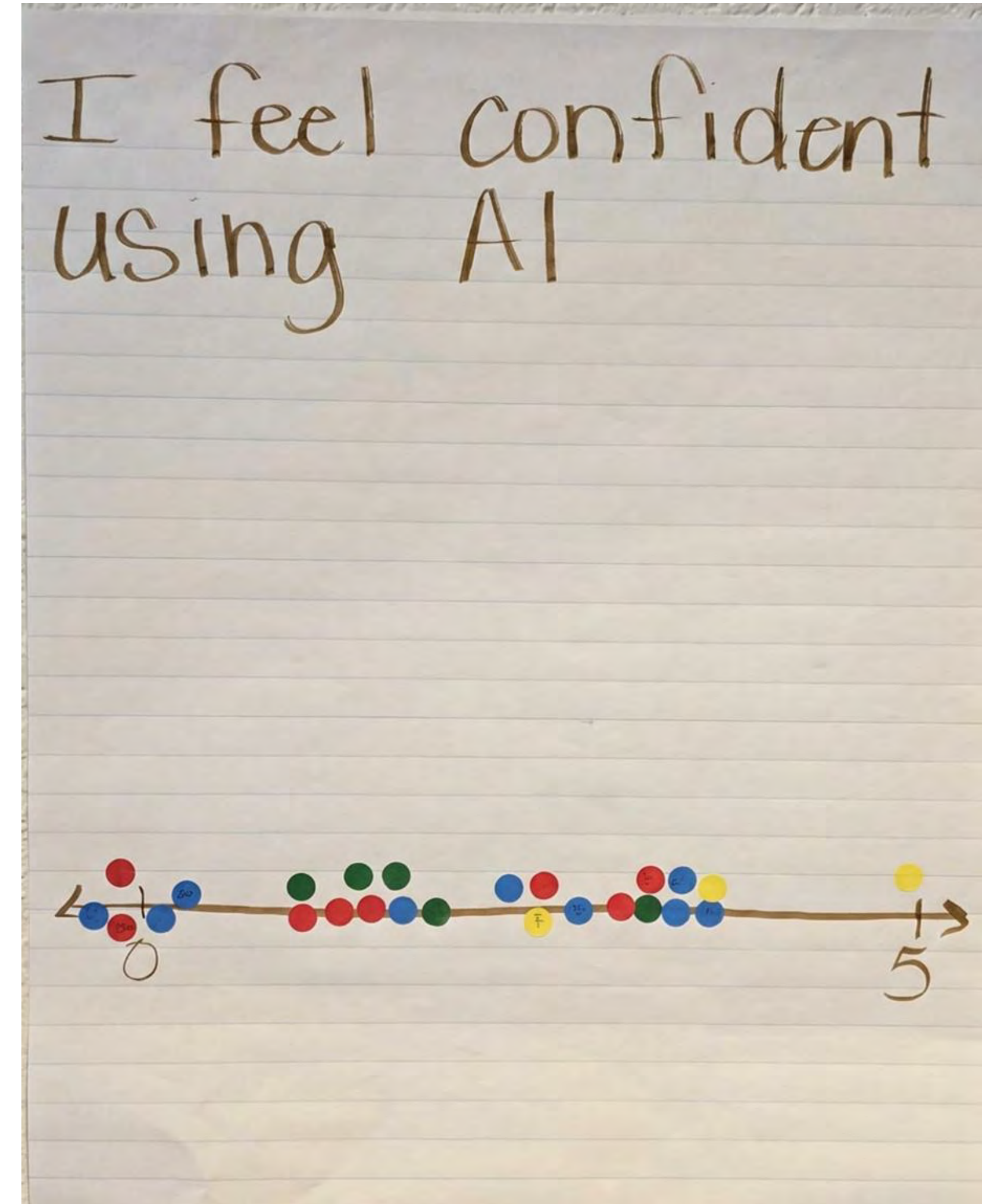
My students
are already using AI
at home and school!





Building confidence to facilitate AI learning

- OST educators already bring the skills that make great learning possible
 - spark curiosity
 - guide discussions
 - trying new things





Building Confidence to Facilitate AI Learning

- How does AI work?
- Where can it go wrong?
- What does responsible use look like?
- Where do people stay involved?

Hands-on Training Strategies: Experience Before Explanation



➤ GAME ON: Making AI learning visible

01 BEHIND THE HINT PREDICT



WHAT EDUCATORS EXPERIENCE

Build a prediction from play-test records. River and Sky share a clue but want different things.

THE AI IDEA MADE VISIBLE

Patterns support a guess; the data may leave out what matters.

02 BUILD PIP'S VOICE GENERATE



WHAT EDUCATORS EXPERIENCE

Build a reply from language examples, then trace Pip's directions on the verified game map.

THE AI IDEA MADE VISIBLE

Generated words can sound right even when a detail is wrong.

03 READY, SET, RELEASE? DECIDE



WHAT EDUCATORS EXPERIENCE

Test an outdated route and an unwanted hint. Choose what Pip should do before release.

THE AI IDEA MADE VISIBLE

People check accuracy and choice, then decide whether AI belongs.

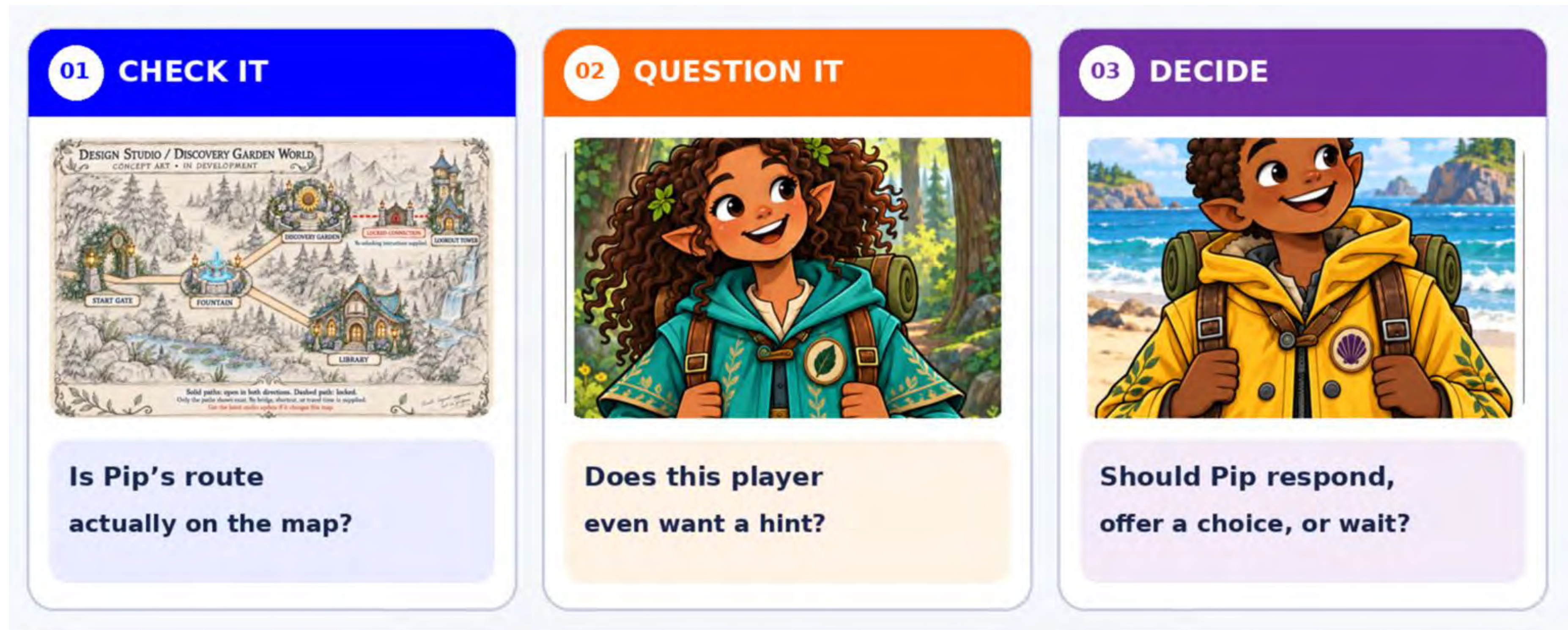


Building Confidence to Facilitate AI Learning

After each experience, we ask:

- *What AI idea did you notice?*
- *What questions helped uncover that idea?*
- *How would you guide young people through that discovery?*

➤ Real-world impact: From AI users to AI decision-makers



Let's Connect!

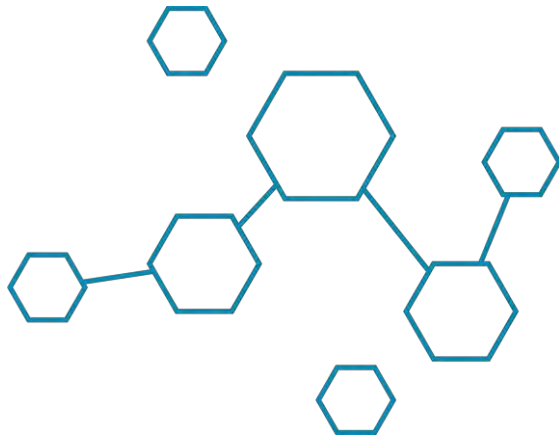
Kelli Shrewsberry

kshrewsberry@techcorps.org



Field Spotlight: Developing Ecosystem-Level AI Literacy Guidance

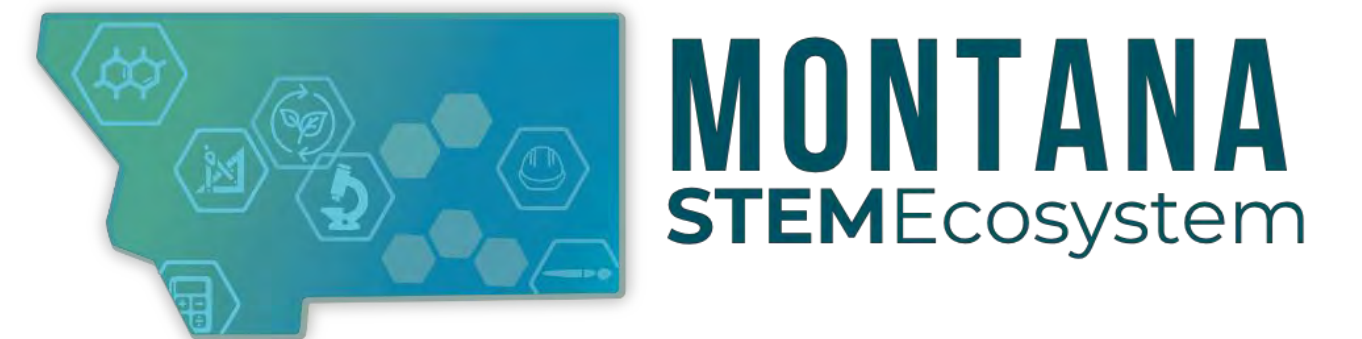
Heather Jameson



Expanding AI Literacy Across the Big Sky

Montana Afterschool Network Perspective

Heather Jameson, Strategic Initiatives Lead
Montana Afterschool Alliance



Montana STEM Ecosystem an initiative of the Montana Afterschool Alliance

Together We



Connect

Bring together diverse stakeholders to identify needs and opportunities.



Partner

Form dynamic partnerships in the STEM field to amplify our collective impact.



Catalyze

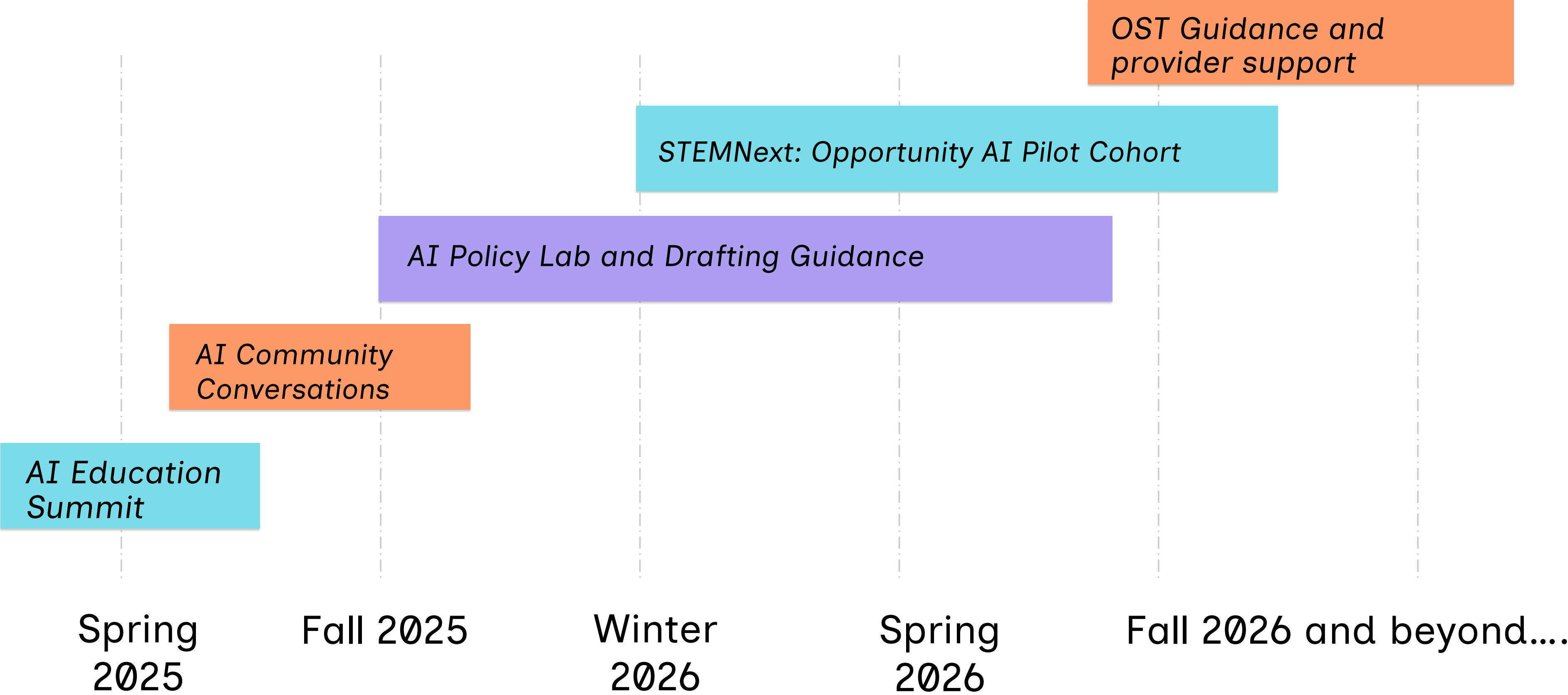
Increase access & opportunities for youth to actively participate, acquire expertise, and develop skills in STEM fields.



Montana Snapshot

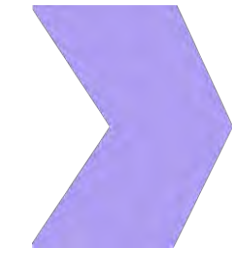
- 96% of Montana school districts are classified as “small rural,” one of the highest percentages in the U.S. (*Montana State University, Center for Research on Rural Education, n.d.*).
- Twice as many cows as people (*Montana Free Press, 2025*).
- Montana ranks 50th nationally in internet coverage, speed and availability. (*BroadbandNow, Internet Access in Montana, 2026*).
- STEM is one of the fastest-growing, highest-paying, and most innovative areas of the economy, and STEM jobs will be vital to Montana’s economic growth (*MT Dept of Labor and Industry, Montana Employment Projections, 2021–2031*).
- From 2014 to 2024, the High Tech industry grew twice as fast as Montana’s overall economy (*Montana High Tech Business Alliance, 2026*).
- Montana’s photonics sector is projected to generate 10,000 new jobs and \$10 billion in economic activity over the next 10 years (*Montana Chamber of Commerce, August 23, 2024*).

Montana's AI OST Journey

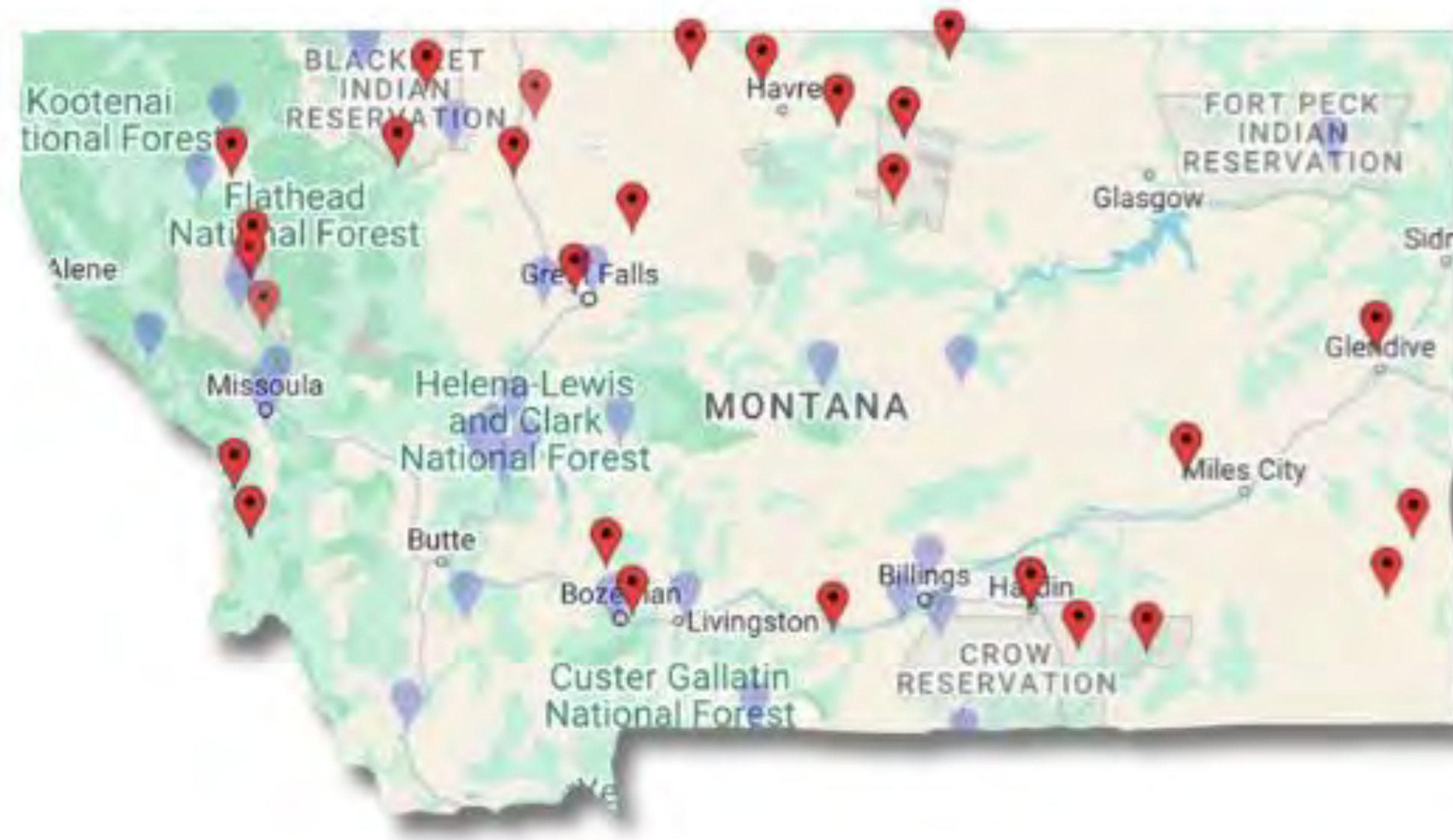


➤ AI Education Summit





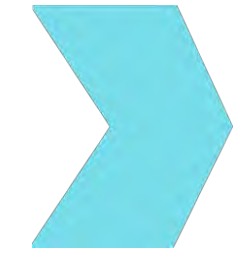
Supporting Access: Travel Scholarship



With available funds **50 awardees** from **30 communities** attended.

Average round-trip Mileage for awardee was 446 miles with **the largest awarded at 916 miles.**

(red indicates awardee, blue indicates summit attendees)



AI Community Conversations- Fall 2025

Project Overview

- Listening sessions to surface AI perceptions, opportunities, risks and needs
- Centered on expanding access and community-informed visions for AI readiness.
- Input to guide future policies, resources, and educator supports.
- Building a statewide AI network

"The communities I work with, rural families, Tribal nations, and educators in small towns, aren't asking to be left behind in the AI conversation. They're asking to be included in situations where decisions are being made. This work matters because AI education can't just be an afterthought for communities outside tech hubs. It needs to be co-created with the people it will impact most."

-Community Conversation Participant



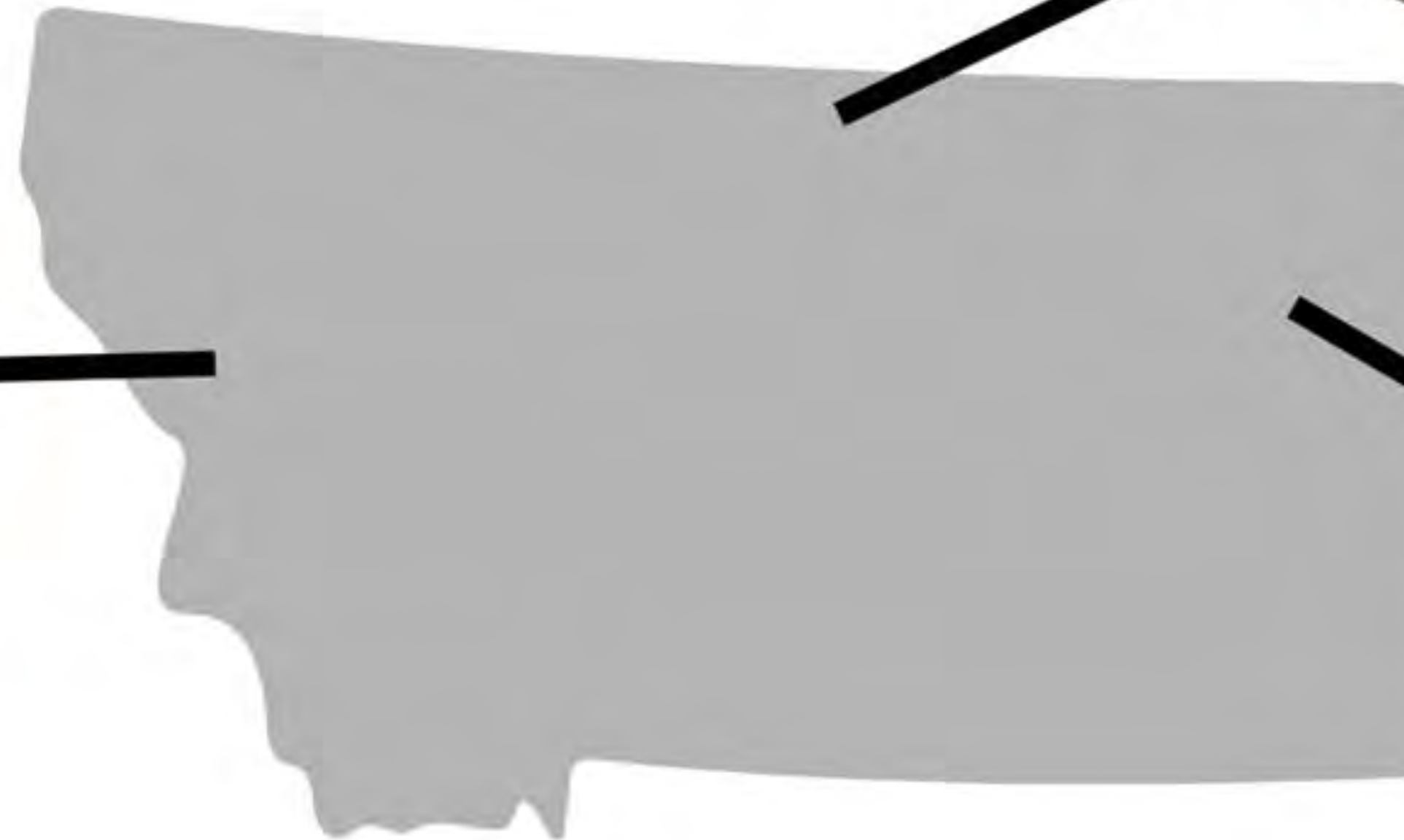
Community Sites



Pablo, MT
Pop: 769
**Flathead Indian
Reservation**
28,000



Harlem, MT
Pop: 769
**Fort Belknap
Reservation**
Pop: 3,461



Poplar, MT
Pop: 769
**Fort Peck Indian
Reservation**
11,000

and teen conversation, a virtual statewide call and statewide conference

session

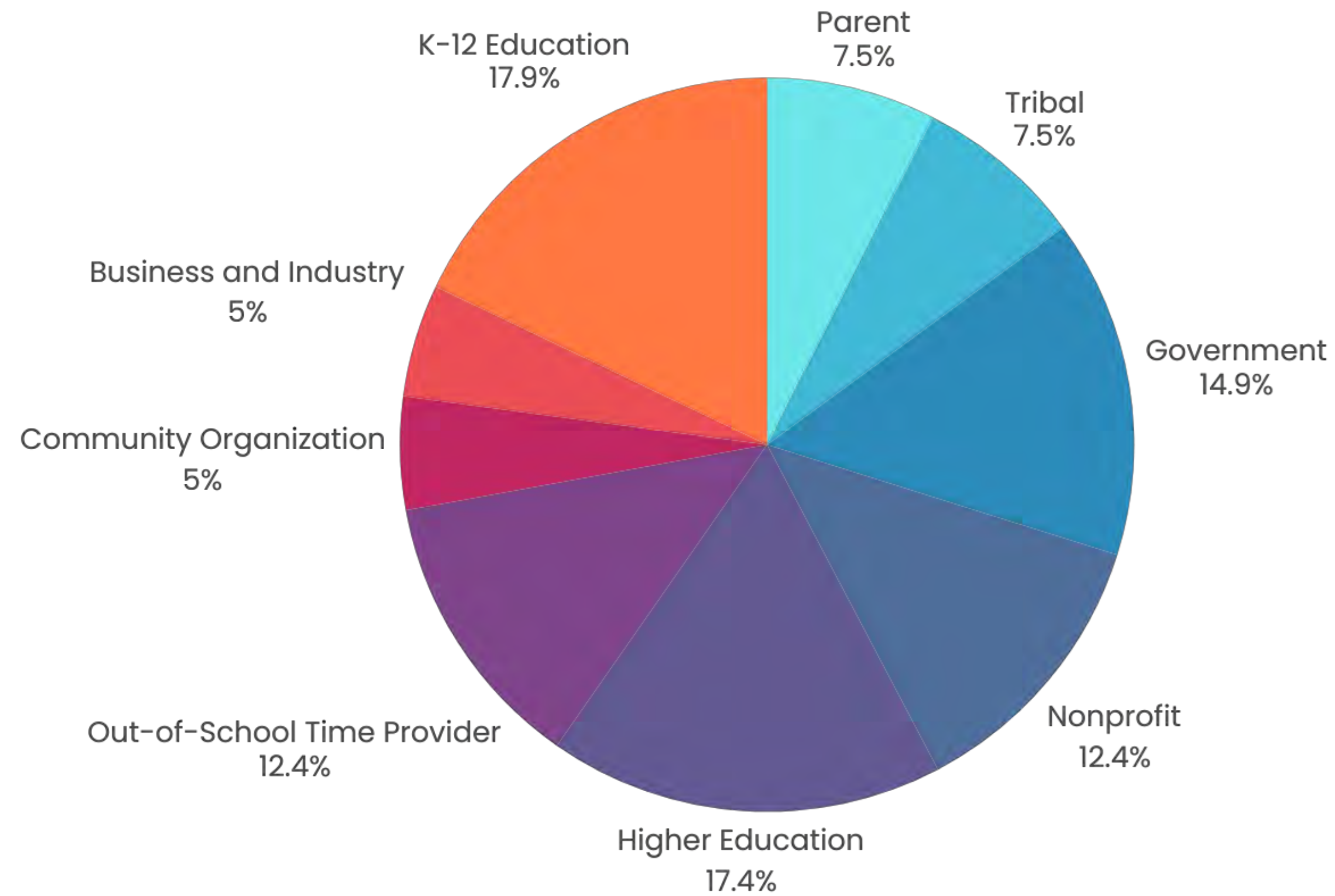
STEM NEXT

Partnerships



- Tribal Colleges and Public Library as event host
- Partnerships for presenters (e.g. *Montana Digital Academy*, *Boys and Girls Clubs*, *Montana State University Education Dept*).
- *Project support from aiEDU*

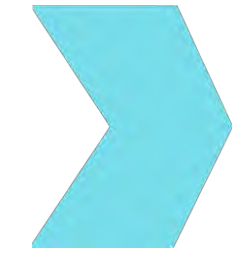
Cross-sector Attendance



Key Takeaways & Priorities

- Value of open-ended, cross-sector dialogue
- Communities feel both excitement and concern
- Shared experiences shift perspectives.
- Feeling of further left behind.
- Ai is here. Unlike previous technology rollouts.
- Youth are out pacing adults.
- Professional development guidance and shared resources (*use cases, policy examples*) are needed.





From Conversation to Guidance- Winter 2026

AI Policy Lab - EDSAFE AI Alliance

AI Policy Lab - EDSAFE AI Alliance:

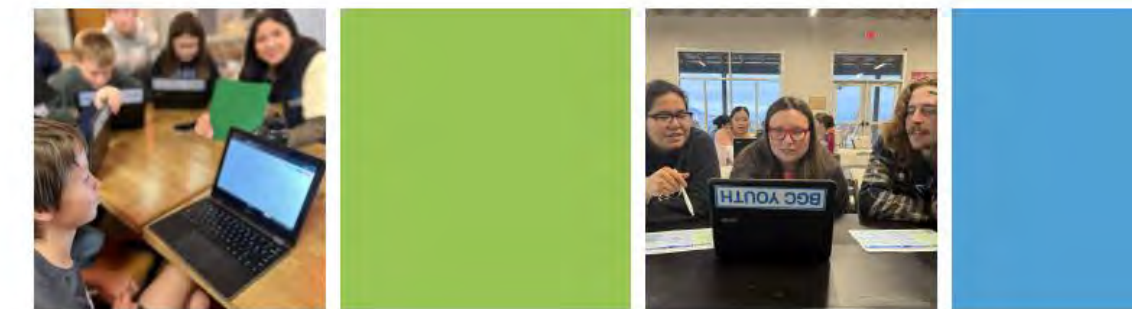
- Nation's first district- and state-level AI policy network
- At the start Montana did not have existing state-level guidance
- Engaged state and national partners for drafting and reviews

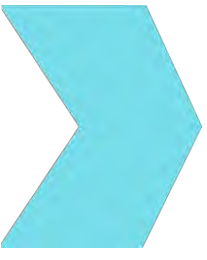


➤ Guidance for Out-of-School Time Programs

- Provides guidance for safe, responsible AI use in OST settings
- Centers human connection
- AI literacy can grow without direct AI tool use.

**Guidance for Out-of-School
Time Programs:**
Artificial Intelligence



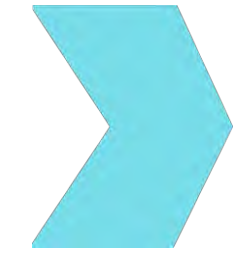


Guiding Principles

Section 1: Safe & Responsible Use of AI

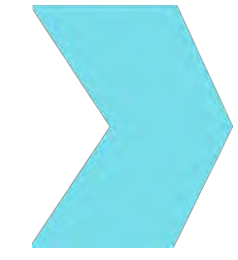
Section 2: Active Learning & Skill Building with AI

Section 3: Launch Points: Real-World Applications



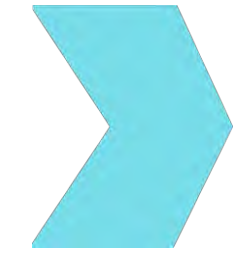
Section 1: Safe & Responsible Use of AI- Safety & Privacy Practices

- **Safety & Privacy Practices**
 - Relevant laws, Student and User Data Privacy
 - Establish clear policies, awareness of AI harmful content
- **Staff Training Focus Areas**
 - Build AI literacy and staff awareness around emerging online safety concerns
 - Use AI to increase efficiency, support data-driven improvements, and create more time for meaningful human interaction
- **Community Engagement & Shared Responsibility**
 - Communicate openly with families, involve youth in decisions, and provide feedback and opt-out options.



Section 2: Active Learning & Skill Building with AI- Human-Centered AI Facilitation

- **Human-Centered Facilitation**
 - Relationships first, active staff guidance.
 - Support youth to develop critical thinking, hands-on projects, and collaborative problem-solving.
- **Active Learning**
 - Creative exploration, real-world connections, digital citizenship information literacy, reflection & access
- **Age-Appropriate Exploration**
 - AI literacy concepts, unplugged to launching points
- **Youth Voice & Leadership**
 - Involve youth in actively shaping, leading discussions, and providing feedback on program practices.



Section 3: Launch Points: Real-World Applications

- **Operations & Administration**
 - Program management tasks (comms, reports, grants, data analyst and program improvement)
- **Program-Level Applications**
 - Lesson & activity planning, homework support (*CAST Homework Protocol*)
 - Youth as Creators, Not just Consumers
- **Resources**
 - Activities, readiness reflection, implementation road map, links to articles and reports

EDSAFE AI Alliance

First Ever State Policy Lab Ascent Award



“Operating in a space not traditionally addressed by mainstream education initiatives....they have successfully carved a path for others to follow where no trail existed before.”

Next Steps

- Continue meeting people where they are----> Cohorts, Working Groups, Youth Voice, Cross-sector Partnerships
- Connecting opportunities and efforts statewide and nationally
- Support AI literacy with OST guidance, co-create, feedback loops and trainings

AI Initiatives Page



Connect at heather@mtafterschoolalliance.org

PANEL DISCUSSION

Q&A and Closing

Takeaways and Action

Today's examples highlight the value of:

- Giving educators time to practice and learn with peers
- Making guidance useful for everyday decisions
- Designing AI learning around access, relevance, and youth voice.

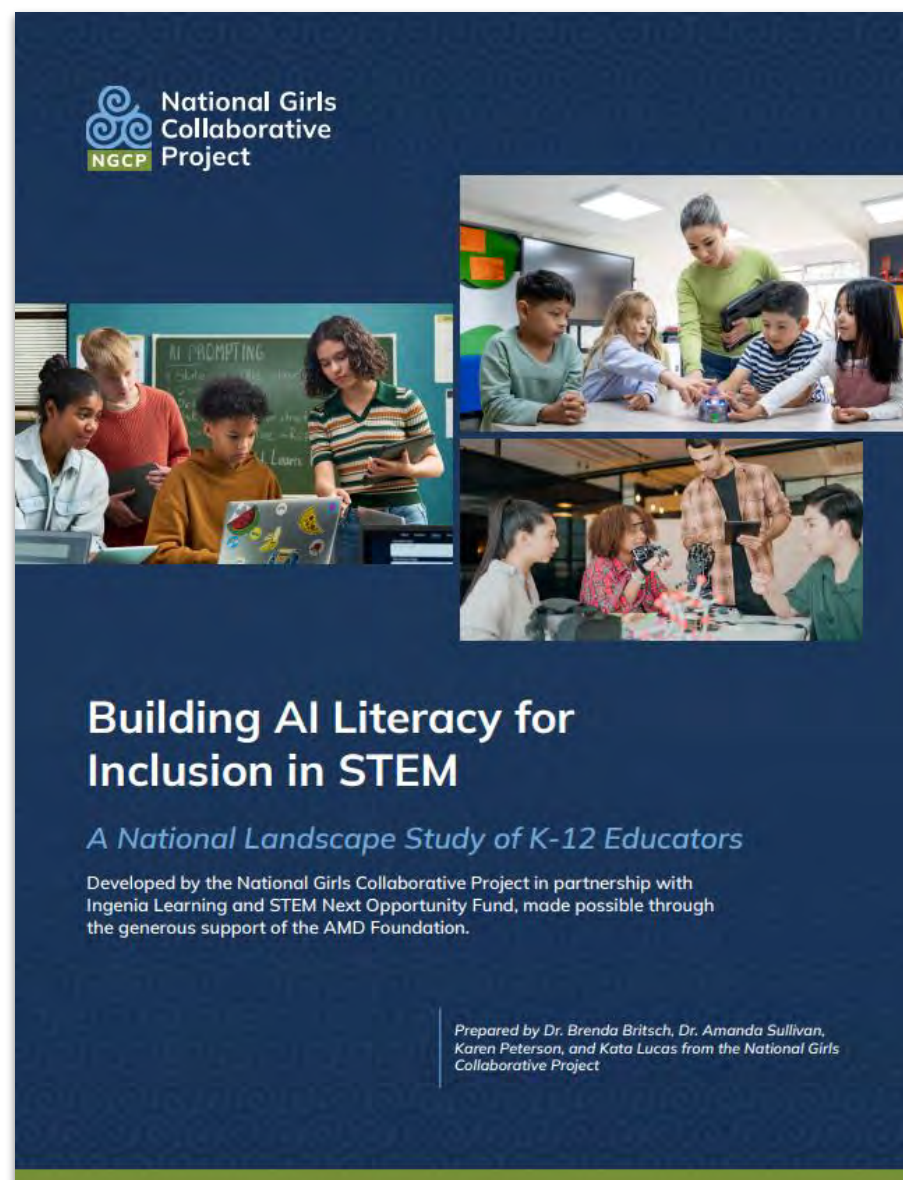
Choose one action to take in the next 30 days.

Try an activity with colleagues, review an organizational guideline, or connect with a partner who can help.

In the chat: What will you do, and what support will you need?



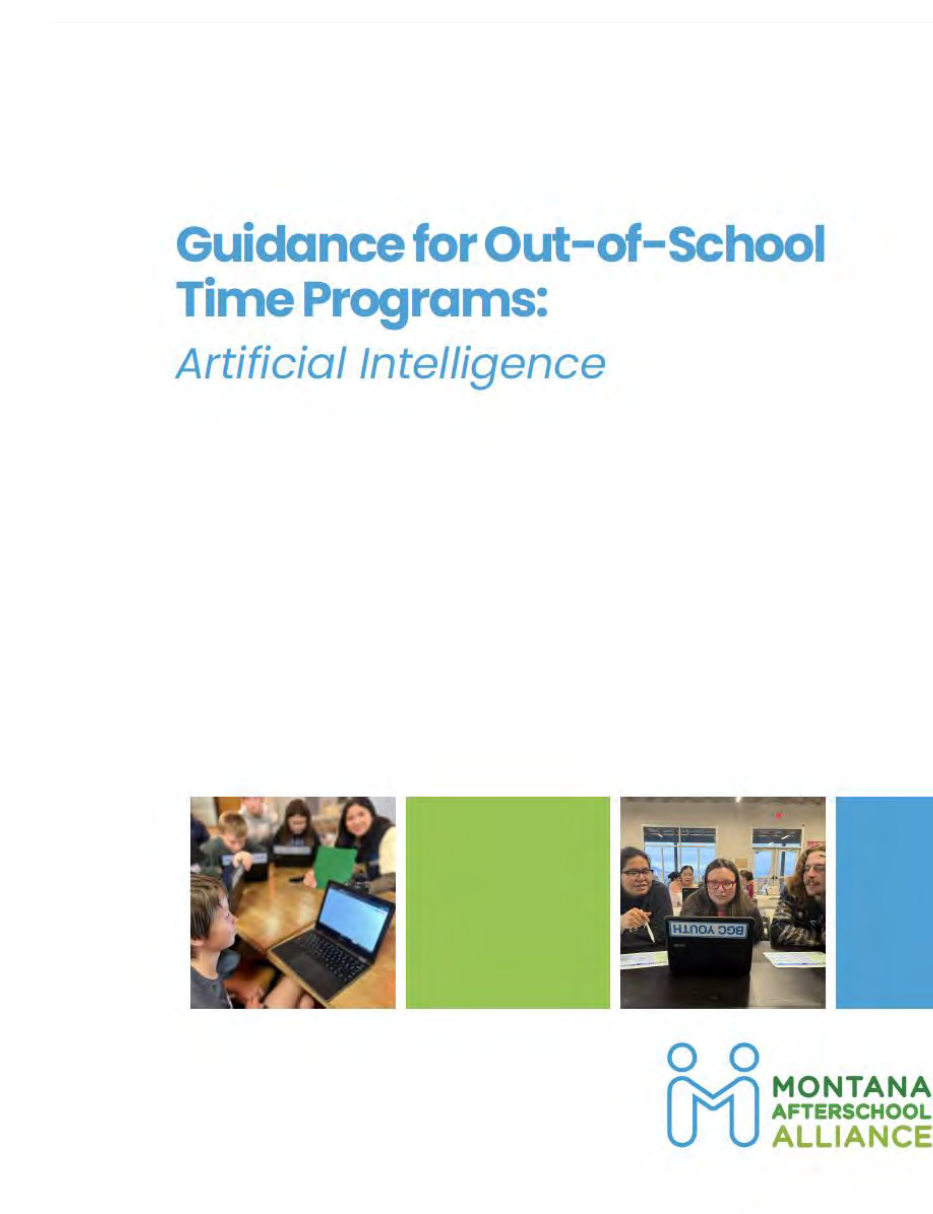
Resources for Continued Learning



Building AI Literacy
for Inclusion in STEM
National Girls
Collaborative Project



Building AI Literacy at
Scale
STEM Next Opportunity
Fund



Guidance for Out-of-
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