世界数字教育联盟
WORLD DIGITAL EDUCATION ALLIANCE

Digital Education Bulletin

Global Insights

Issue 4

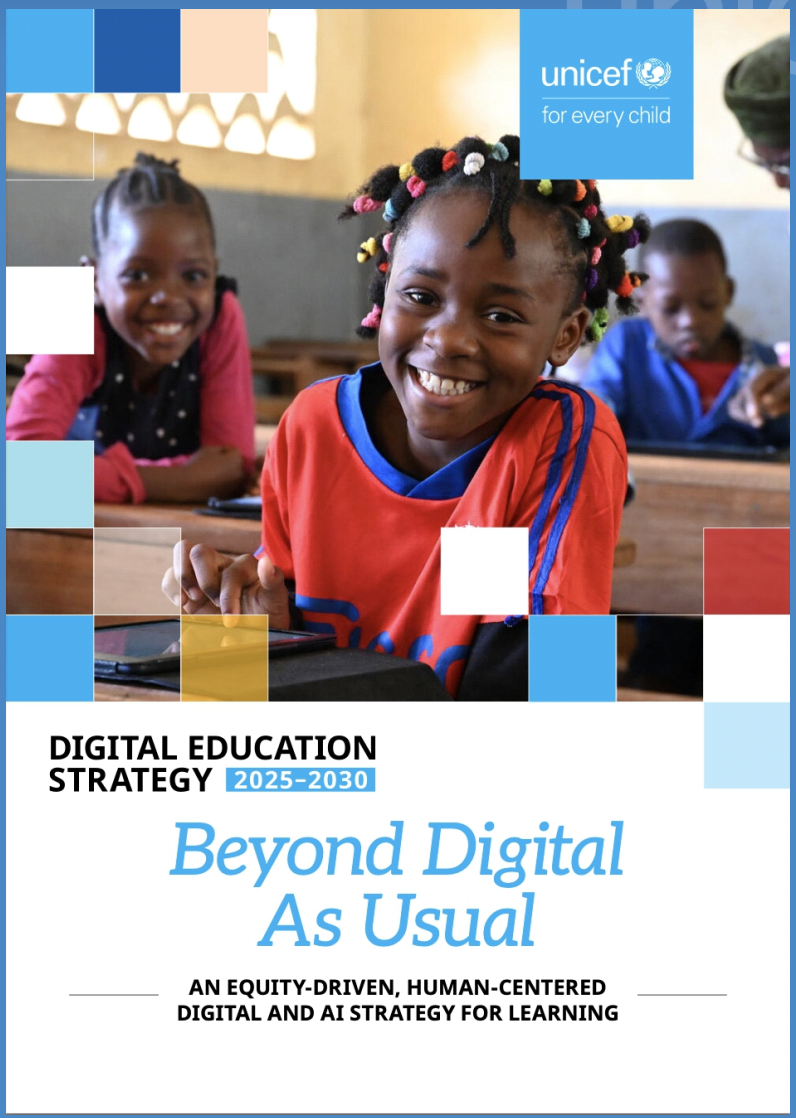
2026.4

CONTENTS

UNICEF

Digital Education and AI Strategy: Beyond Digital As Usual

01



On January 24, 2026, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) released the report *Digital Education and AI Strategy: Beyond Digital As Usual* in Helsinki, Finland.

The purpose of the new Digital Education Strategy is to dramatically accelerate results for learning and the global impact of UNICEF's work on learning gains and skills acquisition.

Five focus areas addressing critical education challenges and bottlenecks:

1. Empowering teachers

- **Teacher shortages and low teacher motivation and retention** – Insufficient numbers of qualified teachers, especially in rural and marginalized areas, coupled with high turnover rates, challenges in recruitment and uneven teacher deployment, disrupt the continuity and quality of education. In addition, teachers have overly heavy workloads with too much time spent on administration and management, significantly reducing teaching time.
- **Low teacher capacity** – Many teachers lack adequate training and professional development opportunities (pre-service and in-service), leading to gaps in subject knowledge and pedagogical skills and challenges in delivery of effective lessons.

2. Foundational learning

- **Instruction not at the right level or language for the child** – Mismatches between teaching instruction and content, and students' learning levels or language proficiencies, which impedes effective learning. This is especially critical at early stages of literacy. Lack of effective learning approaches for children outside the formal
- **School system** –Children who are out of school, in non-formal education settings, experiencing disrupted education, and more broadly children who lack opportunities for appropriate and effective learning.

3. Competencies and skills development

- **Disconnect between the skills acquired in schools and those required in the job market** – Many children leave school without the skills and competencies, for example digital and AI skills, needed to thrive in an ever evolving and increasingly digitized future.
- **Lack of accessible accreditation opportunities** – Out-of-school children lack options to acquire recognized competencies for employment and as a complementary pathway to reintegration into formal schooling.

4. Strengthening systems

- **Inadequate government capacity and lack of robust ICT in education master plans** –Challenges include limited government capacity on ICT in education, lack of long-term planning and financing, and infrastructure gaps.

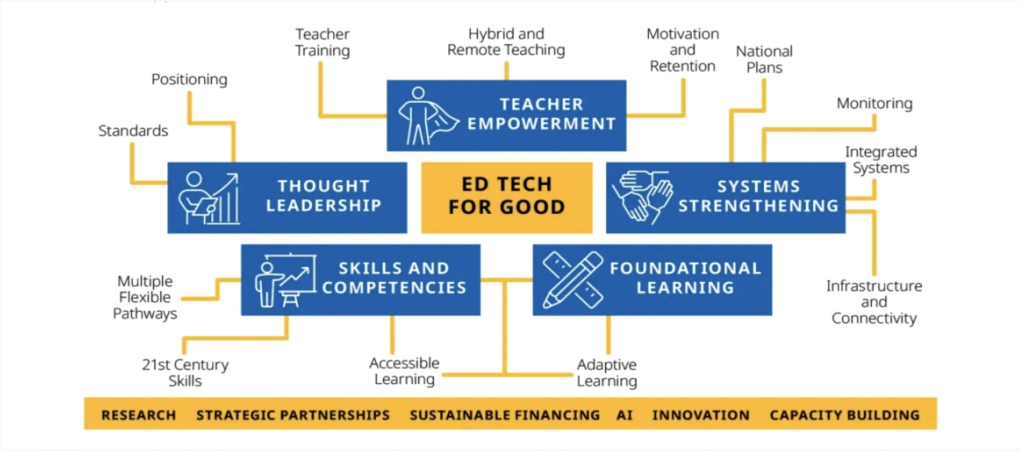
- **Weak monitoring systems and strategic planning** – Ineffective data collection and analysis hinders the ability to track out-of-school children, monitor learning outcomes, and make evidence-based decisions. Additionally, a lack of long-term, holistic and strategic planning by governments results in fragmented efforts and inefficient use of resources.

- **Barriers for children with disabilities and adolescent girls** – Physical, societal and cultural obstacles limit access to education for children with disabilities and adolescent girls.

- **Fragmented and ill-suited digital platforms** – Multiple platforms and solutions for monitoring, management, and learning often operate in isolation, lacking interoperability and duplicating functions. At the same time, decisionmakers, including those at the school level, lack clear guidance to identify the most appropriate, context-relevant, impactful (based on evidence), inclusive and safe solutions. This leads to inefficiencies, siloed approaches and limited or even negative impacts on learning outcomes.

5. Thought leadership

- **Lack of evidence-based decision-making in digital education** – Insufficient use of data and research-based insights leads to misallocated investments, ineffective strategies, and potentially detrimental impacts on both learning outcomes and child wellbeing.
- **Lack of standards regarding safe and effective use of digital in education** – Absence of clear standards leads to inconsistent practices, mixed messaging, insufficient attention to online safety and privacy risks, and missed opportunities to fully realize the benefits of technology.



Eight strategic shifts to operationalize the Strategy

1. From standalone digital learning to integrated digital transformation: There will be a shift from digital learning as a standalone domain to a more integrated and cross sectoral approach to digital transformation. This reflects the interconnected realities of today' s digital age, where technology impacts not just how children learn but how education systems are designed, managed and improved.

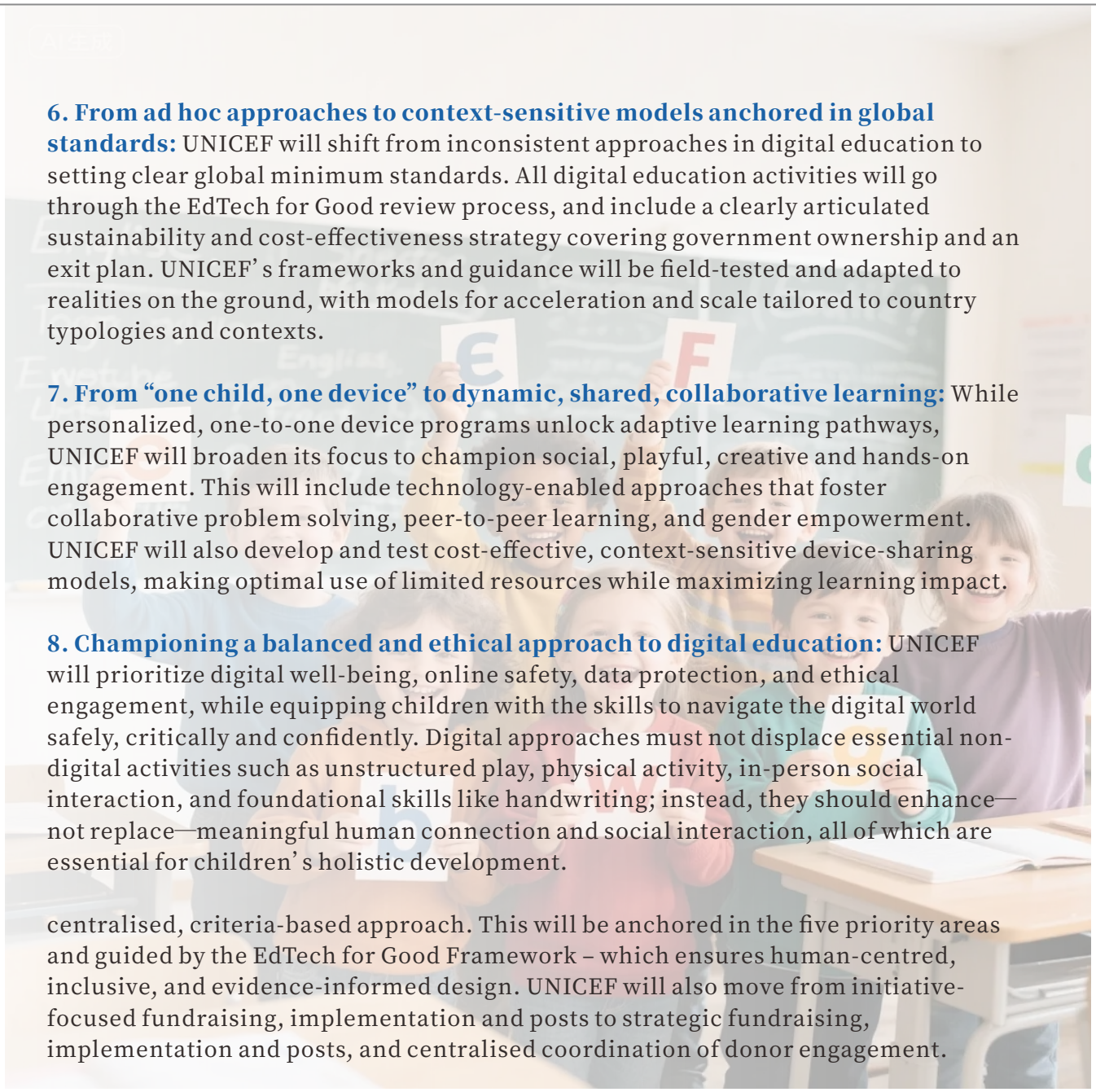
2. From tech-driven to human-centred approaches, with teachers and learners at the centre: UNICEF will shift from technology-driven approaches towards human-centred and culturally appropriate digital education, empowering and supporting teachers, strengthening their capacity to effectively use and shape technology, and prioritising inclusive, personalised, and adaptive solutions that address the diverse needs and contexts of both educators and learners.

3. From initiatives to strategy-driven scaling: To maximize impact and coherence, the Strategy represents a major shift from an initiative- and opportunity driven approach to a centralised, criteria-based approach. This will be anchored in the five priority areas and guided by the EdTech for Good Framework – which ensures human-centred, inclusive, and evidence-informed design. UNICEF will also move from initiative-focused fundraising, implementation and posts to strategic fundraising, implementation and posts, and centralised coordination of donor engagement.

4. From scattered approaches to big bets: While recognizing the importance of local partnerships, at the global level, a small number of high profile (centrally managed) global partnerships will be launched that are 'big bets' in digital education intended to have significant global impact on learning (+100 million beneficiaries). At country level, they will directly respond to key identified challenges, ensuring relevance and alignment with national priorities.

5. From outputs to outcomes: UNICEF digital education will shift from an outputs-based logic to an outcomes-based logic (this means 'did children learn?' is more important than 'did children take part?'). As part of this strategic shift, all digital education initiatives will be underpinned by robust research and based on the best of the existing evidence of what works, while also contributing to new evidence to help shape the global education sector. Impact measurement will include a clear equity dimension, using disaggregated indicators and research designs that assess whether digital approaches are reducing or widening learning gaps.

https://www.unicef.org/digitaleducation/media/2101/file/Digital%20Education%20Strategy.pdf
Reference:
UNICEF. (2026, January). Digital education and AI strategy 2025–2030: Beyond digital as usual.
https://www.unicef.org/digitaleducation/reports/unicef-digital-education-strategy-2025-2030



6. From ad hoc approaches to context-sensitive models anchored in global standards: UNICEF will shift from inconsistent approaches in digital education to setting clear global minimum standards. All digital education activities will go through the EdTech for Good review process, and include a clearly articulated sustainability and cost-effectiveness strategy covering government ownership and an exit plan. UNICEF' s frameworks and guidance will be field-tested and adapted to realities on the ground, with models for acceleration and scale tailored to country typologies and contexts.

7. From "one child, one device" to dynamic, shared, collaborative learning: While personalized, one-to-one device programs unlock adaptive learning pathways, UNICEF will broaden its focus to champion social, playful, creative and hands-on engagement. This will include technology-enabled approaches that foster collaborative problem solving, peer-to-peer learning, and gender empowerment. UNICEF will also develop and test cost-effective, context-sensitive device-sharing models, making optimal use of limited resources while maximizing learning impact.

8. Championing a balanced and ethical approach to digital education: UNICEF will prioritize digital well-being, online safety, data protection, and ethical engagement, while equipping children with the skills to navigate the digital world safely, critically and confidently. Digital approaches must not displace essential non-digital activities such as unstructured play, physical activity, in-person social interaction, and foundational skills like handwriting; instead, they should enhance—not replace—meaningful human connection and social interaction, all of which are essential for children' s holistic development.

centralised, criteria-based approach. This will be anchored in the five priority areas and guided by the EdTech for Good Framework – which ensures human-centred, inclusive, and evidence-informed design. UNICEF will also move from initiative-focused fundraising, implementation and posts to strategic fundraising, implementation and posts, and centralised coordination of donor engagement.

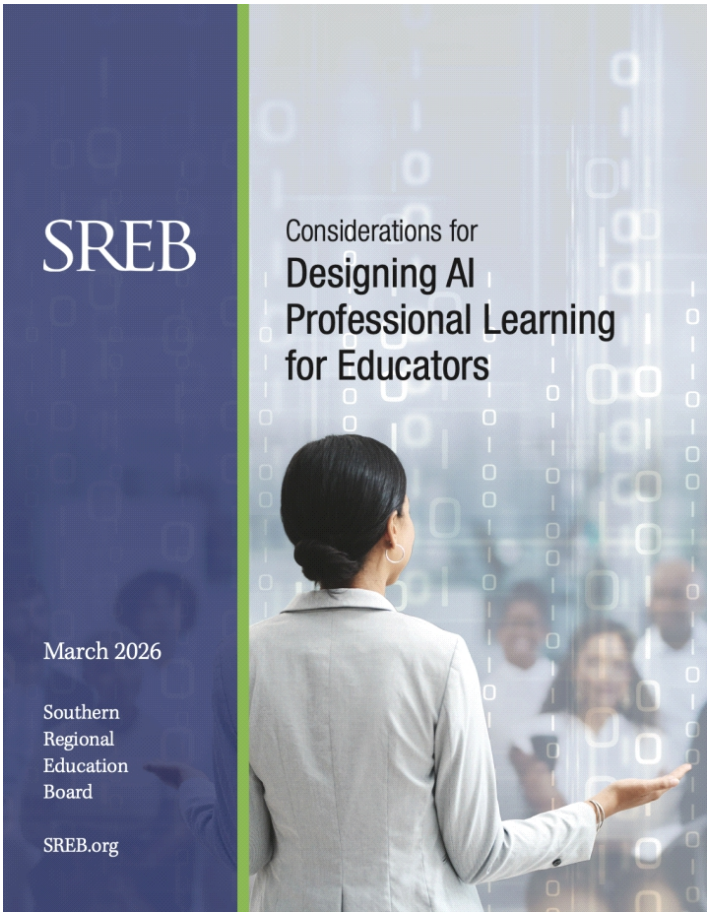
For more details, please visit the link below:
https://www.unicef.org/digitaleducation/media/2101/file/Digital%20Education%20Strategy.pdf

Reference:
UNICEF. (2026, January). *Digital education and AI strategy 2025–2030: Beyond digital as usual.*
https://www.unicef.org/digitaleducation/reports/unicef-digital-education-strategy-2025-2030

SREB

Considerations for Designing AI Professional Learning for Educators

02



On March 17, 2026, the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) released a report *titled Considerations for Designing AI Professional Learning for Educators.* This report outlines considerations for educational entities in designing high-quality professional learning plans that enable current K-12 educators to ethically and effectively integrate the use of artificial intelligence. In developing these guidelines, the Southern Regional Education Board purposefully considered the broad use of AI, rather than any specific tool. AI is both a tool with broad uses, such as creation, data analysis and productivity, as well as a source of information. It is up to each school, district or state agency to determine AI guidelines for students and staff, and how AI can be used to meet the unique needs of their student population.

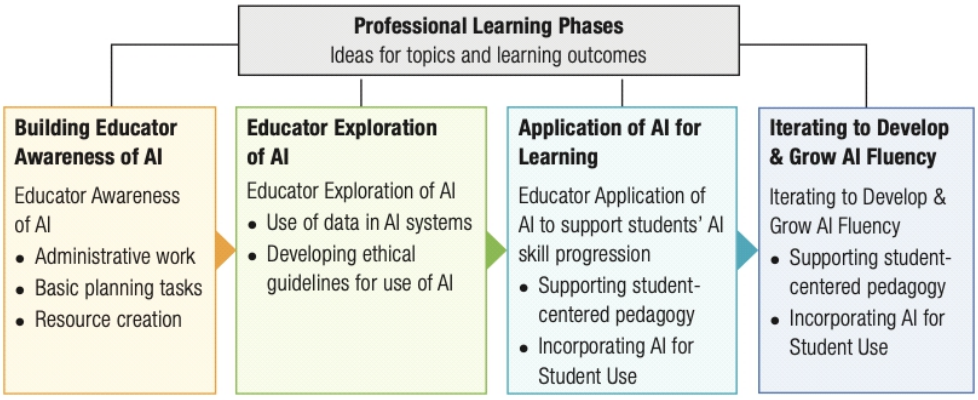
Based on this guidance, the commission developed **four** considerations for designing a professional learning plan to upskill educators.

Consideration 1

Develop a professional learning plan that builds on the complexity of AI use over time

With numerous initiatives and directives imposed on K-12 educational entities, the instinct is often to adopt a "one-size-fits-all" or "one-and-done" approach to professional development. However, the complexities involved with effectively integrating AI into the learning process, along with developing educators' skills with AI, require a phased approach over time and need to be designed around research-based adult learning theory.

Recommended professional learning phases for incorporating artificial intelligence into the K-12 classroom



We recommend the following four phases as a framework for developing professional learning phases:

1. Building educator awareness of AI
2. Educator exploration of AI
3. Application of AI for learning
4. Iterating to develop and grow AI fluency.

While we are capturing these in phases, some of these phases can be done concurrently, depending on the readiness of the audience and access to technology. Each phase should be supported by instructional coaching or collaborative learning communities to support teachers as they work to incorporate these new skills into their teaching practice. It is also crucial for leadership to attend professional learning sessions alongside teachers so they understand how to support them within their school or district communities.

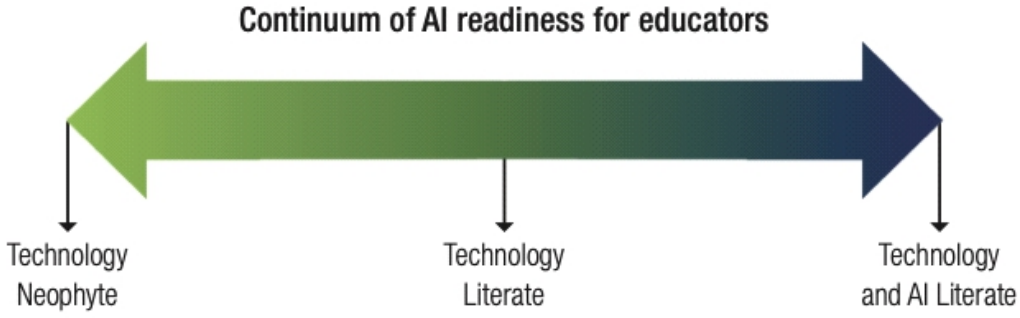
Consideration 2

Design professional learning plans around best practices for adult learning

Malcome Knowles' foundational research on adult learning provides these key principles of adult learning:

- Involvement: Educators need to be involved in the process of developing and applying the new knowledge in their classroom, and they need feedback on their progress.
- Experience: Adult learners bring their experience and expertise into professional learning sessions and, to grow, they need to learn and make mistakes.
- Relevance: Educators need to know how the learning will impact their work and why this tool or idea is important to the students they serve or their teaching practice.
- Focus: Learning should be oriented around solving problems or dilemmas within their context.

Applying these principles to the upskilling of teachers in the use of AI, several considerations need to be made in professional learning plans:



- Use active learning strategies
- Incorporate Practice-Based or Problem-Based Learning
- Provide opportunities for differentiation
- Provide follow-up support through job-embedded coaching or collaborative learning communities
- Build in feedback and reflection loops

Consideration 3

Develop expectations for how adults and students ethically and responsibly use AI for teaching and learning

Prior to implementing any AI tool, it is imperative that schools, districts and states develop guidelines for how adults and students will use AI in their local context. As stated in Consideration 1, this can be built into the professional learning plan; however, it is also important to have draft guidelines prior to implementing any AI tool. It is also essential to review and revise these guidelines as new AI technology is developed and to address any issues or concerns that arise from its use. Questions to consider include:

1. What will be considered appropriate use of AI?
2. How will we support students to engage in the learning process rather than using AI to circumvent the learning process?
3. How will we monitor AI use and its effects on learning?
4. What will we do if someone is suspected of misusing AI?
5. How will we protect student data and information and adhere to local, state and national policies?
6. What precautions must we take when using AI to assess student work or make decisions that may affect a student' s grade or future?

In developing a professional learning plan, it will also be crucial for educational entities to revise their vision for what high-quality teaching and learning look like in their context, alongside the use of AI. Furthermore, classroom practices and teaching strategies to support the vision will need to be identified. Educators may need professional development on these practices and strategies prior to or along with the AI-focused professional learning.

Consideration 4

Integrate AI career readiness with professional learning outcomes

AI literacy is increasingly becoming a durable skill that will be essential to success in careers, learning beyond K-12, and integrated in various aspects of daily life.

As a part of the process for developing an AI professional learning plan, SREB suggests connecting with local businesses and industries that offer growing, high-wage, high-demand career opportunities and determining how they are using AI. And SREB recommends integrating these AI-ready skills into educators' professional learning as they seek to develop those skills with students

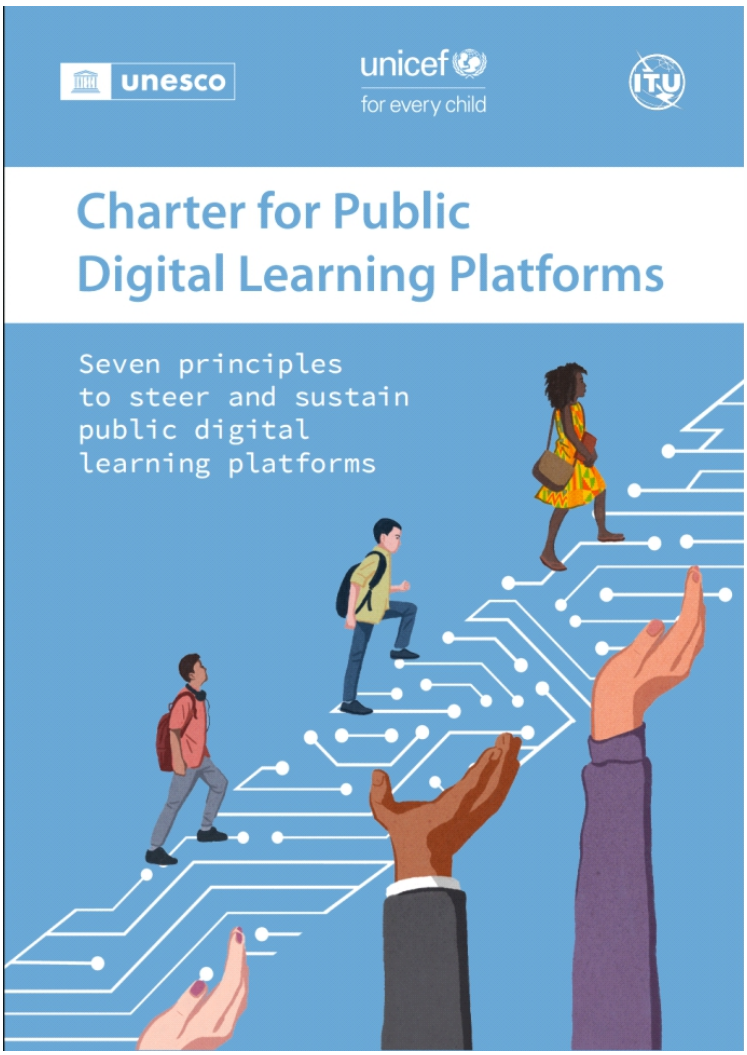
For more details, please visit the link below:
https://www.sreb.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/2026-designing-ai-pl-for-educators.pdf?1773773719

Reference:
Southern Regional Education Board. (2026, March 17). *Considerations for designing AI professional learning for educators.* https://www.sreb.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/2026-designing-ai-pl-for-educators.pdf?1773773719

UNESCO, UNICEF and ITU

Charter for Public Digital Learning Platforms

03



On March 19, 2026, on the occasion of the International Day for Digital Learning, the UNESCO, UNICEF, and the International Telecommunication Union jointly released the *Charter for Public Digital Learning Platforms*, encouraging governments worldwide to establish and sustain digital learning platforms that support public education.

The UNESCO-UNICEF-ITU Charter encourages governments and their partners to establish, improve, and sustain digital learning platforms that support education as a human right and a public good. It clarifies purposes for digital learning platforms and recommends seven principles to guide the development and governance of platforms that complement and enrich wider systems of education.

What are public digital learning platforms?

Public digital learning platforms are integral components of wider systems of education.

Similarly to physical schools – with their quality-controlled learning resources, prioritization of safety and well-being, and designs and operations to facilitate equitable education – public digital learning platforms are spaces that bring together content, technology, people, and learning activities. They help learners learn and teachers teach. While digital learning platforms are not replacements for schools and education conducted face-to-face with teachers, they are necessary complements to schooling – and vital branches of public education. They are digital commons dedicated to strengthening education as a human right and a public good.

Aims of the Charter

This Charter seeks to help guide the development and improvement of public digital learning platforms that support, extend, and enrich education. It proposes seven broad principles that education authorities can use to clarify the objectives of digital learning platforms. It also puts forward suggestions regarding the design, operation, and governance of these platforms.

The Charter places a primary focus on the role of digital learning platforms as complements to primary and secondary level education, and a lesser focus on platforms that open non-formal lifelong learning opportunities or complement tertiary, vocational, or professional education.

The principles serve as signposts, rather than prescriptive 'how to' guides. Given the diversity of educational contexts in the world, it will be up to educational authorities at national, provincial, and municipal levels to determine how these principles are interpreted and applied in practice, and in ways that reflect local needs, capacities, priorities, and objectives.

Seven principles

This Charter recommends and explains seven principles to help public sector authorities make informed choices about the design, development, provision, and enhancement of public digital learning platforms.

The principles are grounded in a vision that digital learning platforms should:

- help uphold and fulfil the human right to education
- be governed as digital public goods
- strengthen inclusion, equity, safety, and quality across education systems

Each principle is elaborated with sub-points that provide additional guidance to leaders and teams responsible for the development and oversight of public digital learning platforms. The principles help define and establish a common language to support discussions and policies about digital learning platforms that support public education.

Principle 1: Public

1. Public good
2. Public governance
3. Public financing
4. Data sovereignty and stewardship
5. Skilled teams of civil servants

Principle 2: Inclusive

1. Supporting opportunities for all
2. Multilingual design
3. Accessible for learners with disabilities
4. Culturally relevant
5. Compatible with the technologies people have
6. Works with the digital skills people have

Principle 3: Pedagogical

1. Teacher led
2. Balances guidance and independent exploration
3. Pedagogically diverse
4. Learning together and learning alone
5. Humility about what education and learning digital environments can support

Principle 4: Complementary

1. Reinforcing
2. Part of a larger whole
3. Integrated with digital public infrastructure
4. Embedded in policy
5. Synchronized
6. Cohesive and coherent
7. Recognized

Principle 5: Open

1. Connected and interoperable systems
2. Modular architecture
3. Open licensing
4. Open by design

Principle 6: Focused

1. Start small
2. Support teachers
3. Empower parents
4. Guided by needs, not technological novelty
5. Steered by data

Principle 7: Trustworthy

1. Accurate
2. Reliable
3. Age appropriate
4. Responsible stewards of data
5. Data governance and accountability
6. No small print
7. Responsible in an age of AI

For more details, please visit the link below:
https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000397729/PDF/397729eng.pdf.multi

Reference:
UNESCO, UNICEF, & International Telecommunication Union. (2026).*Charter for public digital learning platforms.*
https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000397729

The International Summit on the Teaching Profession

THE OPENING SESSION · PLAY

8-11 March 2026 I Tallinn, Estonia

Switching gears:

Teachers and Learners in the Future Learning Environment

04

The International Summit on the Teaching Profession (ISTP) aims to support the teaching profession in meeting the formidable challenges of 21st century education. In March 2026, the Estonian Ministry of Education and Research, the OECD, and Education International are bringing education ministers, union leaders and other teacher leaders together for the 16th gathering of the Summit, under the theme ‘Switching gears: Teachers and Learners in the Future Learning Environment’.

One of the secrets of the ISTP’s long-standing success is that the summit explores difficult and often contested issues in a setting where ministers and union leaders talk with each other, rather than about each other, drawing on sound evidence provided by the OECD, the global leader in internationally comparative data and analysis.

Theme one: reimagining the teaching profession

The first theme of this year' s ISTP invites us to step back and look closely at how the teaching profession is evolving. We are living in a world shaped by overlapping global challenges and breathtaking technological shifts. When changes accelerate this quickly, education cannot simply tweak at the margins. We need to rethink learning itself, redesign how we teach, and ultimately reimagine what it means to be an educator today.

The question is no longer whether the teaching profession is changing - it already is. The question is whether we are shaping that change or merely reacting to it.

As teaching evolves, so too must our understanding of how one becomes a teacher. The traditional, linear pathway into the profession is no longer the default choice for many talented young people. Careers today are longer, more varied and less predictable. As a result, education systems must adapt. Supporting people who choose teaching is not just a matter of training and recruitment. It is also about purpose and professional identity.

Theme two: autonomy, trust, and the power to innovate

The second theme focuses on a simple idea with transformative potential: professional autonomy. Education systems everywhere face the same dilemma of how to attract new talent while also nurturing the professional growth of the current teacher workforce. When properly supported, professional autonomy can be a powerful lever.

But autonomy is not a free-floating concept. It only becomes meaningful when grounded in collaboration and built on trust. Trust in school leaders to guide change with vision and care. Trust in teachers to shape their classes and implement curricula with competence, integrity and accountability. And trust in students to take ownership of their own educational journeys.

Getting the balance right between autonomy and collaboration is not a technical detail, it is the backbone of resilient, future-ready education systems. At the heart of that system stands the teacher: reflective, responsible, accountable, and deeply aware of their own practice.

Theme three: turning AI into an educational ally

Education systems are trying to keep pace with technologies that are advancing faster than ever. That race presents both a remarkable opportunity and a profound responsibility: to integrate educational technology, especially artificial intelligence, in ways that genuinely empower educators and help every learner succeed.

AI is no longer something on the distant horizon. It is already reshaping classrooms, workflows and learning experiences. The real question is not whether AI belongs in education, but how we use it wisely.

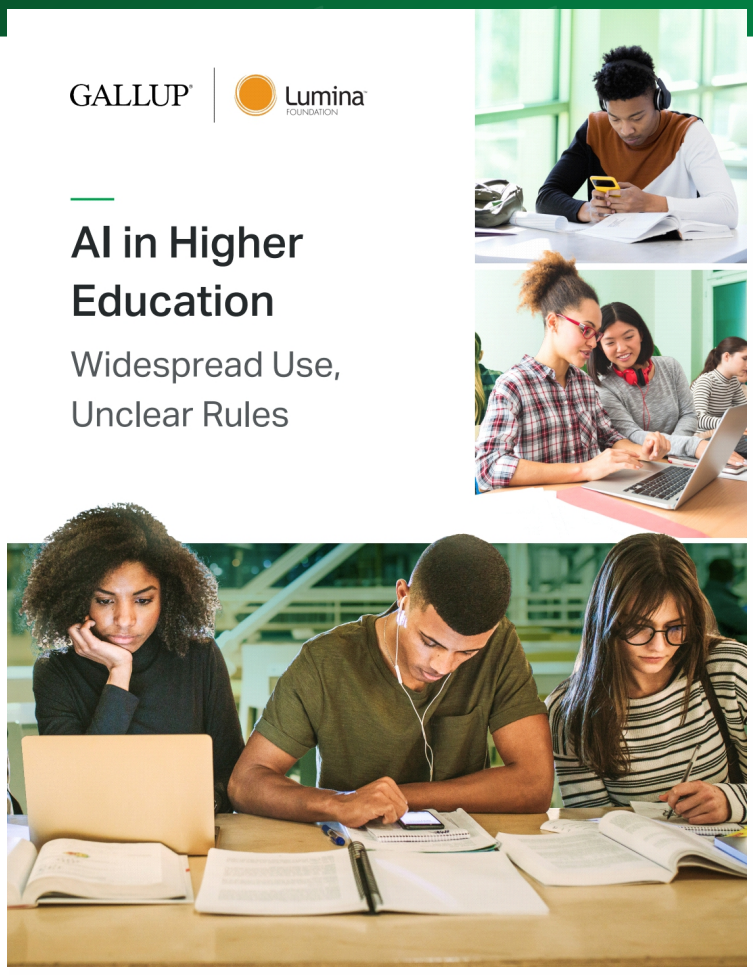
Used thoughtfully and grounded in evidence, AI offers the chance to modernise education by enabling teachers to focus on what is most important. It can also sharpen insight into student needs, and support teachers and learners where they need it most. But these opportunities will only lead to tangible results if education leaders have a clear sense of how they want education to develop.

For more details, please visit the link below:
https://istp2026.ee

Reference:
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2026). *Reimagining teaching in an accelerating world: International Summit on the Teaching Profession.*
https://doi.org/10.1787/d0edfe8c-en

Lumina Foundation and Gallup

AI in Higher Education: Widespread Use, Unclear Rules



05

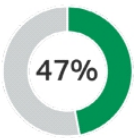
On April 2, 2026, Lumina Foundation and Gallup jointly released the survey report *AI in Higher Education: Widespread Use, Unclear Rules* , which finds that artificial intelligence has become a routine part of college life, even as many institutions struggle to set clear rules for its use. The study shows that a majority of college students now use AI tools such as ChatGPT, Microsoft Copilot, and Google Gemini for their coursework at least weekly, including many students at institutions that discourage or prohibit their use. Against that backdrop, a new survey from Lumina Foundation and Gallup finds that AI use is now commonplace in college coursework. Most of the nearly 4,000 associate and bachelor' s degree students surveyed report using AI tools for schoolwork on at least a weekly basis, while just 13% say they never do. Those who use AI primarily do so to better understand complex course material, while those who avoid it are most likely to cite ethical concerns or a belief that using AI is cheating.

Despite the widespread adoption of AI in students' academic work, 53% say their college discourages or prohibits AI use for schoolwork, while only a small minority say their school encourages maximal use.

Yet even where restrictions exist, many students continue to use AI with regularity: 48% of students whose institutions discourage AI use still use this technology at least weekly, as do about one in four students attending schools that prohibit AI use altogether. Additionally, more than half of students (52%) indicate that at least some of their courses do not have clear policies about how they can use AI.

The impact of these policies may expand beyond the classroom. While 58% of students say their school is providing the right amount of training on how to use AI, nearly three in 10 say they are not receiving enough instruction. Importantly, students' perceived preparation is correlated with their institution's stance on AI: Students at schools that discourage or prohibit AI use are more likely to feel undertrained, and students unsure of their school's policy are especially likely to feel they are not getting enough education about AI. Colleges and universities that want to ensure students not only learn effectively alongside AI but are also well-equipped to employ it in their postgraduation lives and work must continue to find ways to strike a balance in how this technology is integrated into the classroom.

Nearly three in 10 college students say their school is not adequately training them to use artificial intelligence. Students at schools that discourage or prohibit AI use are more likely than their peers at schools that encourage AI use to say they are not receiving sufficient training on how to use the technology.



Forty-seven percent of college students have given at least a fair amount of consideration to changing their major due to the impact of AI on the job market, while one in six students (16%) say they have actually done so.

For more details, please visit the link below:
https://www.gallup.com/analytics/644939/state-of-higher-education.aspx

Reference:
Lumina Foundation, & Gallup. (2026). *AI in higher education: Widespread use, unclear rules.*
https://www.gallup.com/file/analytics/704279/Lumina-Foundation-Gallup-SOHE_AI_Report.pdf

06 WDEC
World Digital Education Conference

BACKGROUND

Artificial intelligence is integrating into people's learning, work, and daily life with unprecedented breadth and depth, injecting new momentum into economic and social development while opening up vast possibilities and practical pathways for educational transformation. The rapid advancement of new technologies represented by large models and generative AI is reshaping the way knowledge is produced and disseminated, fundamentally transforming the underlying logic of education, and driving continuous evolution in teaching scenarios, learning methods, and assessment mechanisms. While this process brings infinite possibilities for educational innovation, it also raises higher requirements for ethical norms, data security, and digital literacy.

The international community is paying close attention to the integrated development of AI and education. The UN Transforming Education Summit emphasized that digital learning must benefit all learners. UNESCO has successively released the Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence, the AI Competency Framework for Teachers, and the AI Competency Framework for Students to guide countries in the responsible application of AI. A growing number of countries are incorporating AI literacy into their educational development schemes, actively exploring diverse pathways for AI-empowered teaching, assessment, and management, while simultaneously strengthening ethical safeguards and privacy protection.

Since 2023, the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China has successfully hosted the World Digital Education Conference for three consecutive years. Over this period, the conference has continued to expand in scale, international participation, as well as brand influence. A series of tangible outcomes have been achieved, including the establishment of the World Digital Education Alliance, the launch of the international version of the platform of the Smart Education of China, and the release of the China Smart Education White Paper in the name of the government.

OBJECTIVES AND THEME

This conference aims to establish an open and inclusive global dialogue platform to jointly explore schemes for leveraging intelligent technologies to enhance educational equity and quality, and to build consensus and guidelines for global AI education governance.

The theme of the conference is "**AI+Education: Transformation Development Governance**". It seeks to explore how AI can drive systemic educational transformation, promote high-quality educational development, and foster an inclusive, secure, and sustainable new paradigm of global governance.

ORGANIZERS

- Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China
- People's Government of Zhejiang Province

PARTICIPANTS

Invited guests for the conference are expected to include:

- National leaders and ministers of education
- Ambassadors and diplomatic envoys to China
- Heads and representatives of international organizations
- Representatives from relevant Chinese ministries and provincial education authorities
- Presidents of renowned universities, vocational schools, and primary/secondary schools from China and abroad
- Leading experts and scholars in the field of artificial intelligence
- Representatives from leading enterprises

For more details, please visit the link below:
https://wdec.smartedu.cn/en/

THE

Designing a Sustainable Future: The 2026 Global Sustainable Development Congress Heads to Jakarta

07

22–25 June 2026 | Indonesia Convention Exhibition (ICE), Jakarta, Indonesia

From **22–25 June 2026**, the global higher education community will gather at the **Indonesia Convention Exhibition (ICE) in Jakarta** for the fifth annual Global Sustainable Development Congress (GSDC). Hosted by Times Higher Education (THE) in partnership with the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organisation (SEAMEO), the congress serves as a vital platform for university leaders, researchers, and sustainability professionals to exchange ideas and forge the partnerships necessary to achieve the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This year congress bringing together a powerful alliance of over 5,000 global changemakers. This landmark event serves as a collaborative laboratory to transform commitments into measurable action for the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Who is GSDC For?

The congress is a cross-sector platform designed for those leading the transition to a sustainable future:

Higher Education Community: University leaders, researchers, and sustainability professionals exchanging ideas and collaborating with global peers.

Business Leaders: Executives driving sustainable transformation, innovation, and long-term business value.

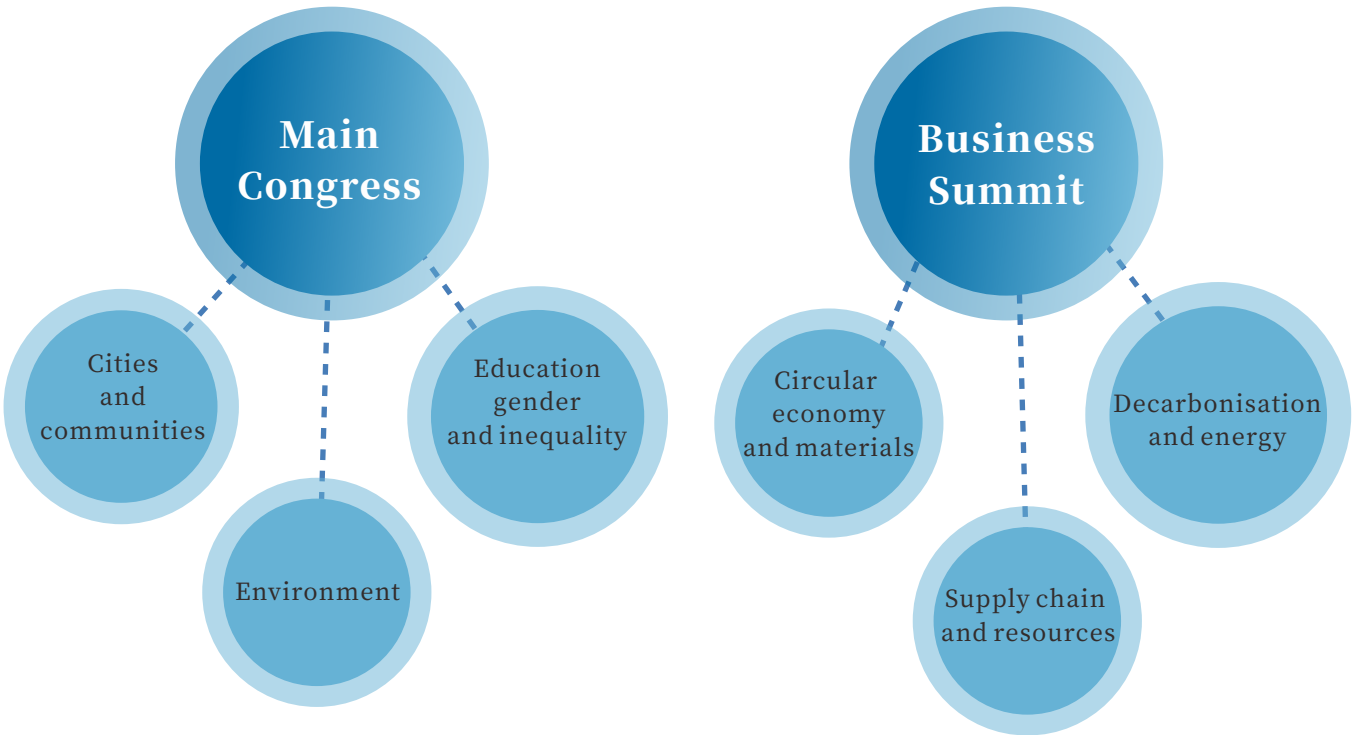
Policymakers: Ministers and advisers shaping green innovation and inclusive economies.

Civil Society: NGOs and social enterprises advancing equality, inclusion, and environmental justice.

Specialized Leadership: CFOs spearheading responsible investment and HR leaders exploring workforce transformation.

A Focused Agenda

The four-day program addresses the most urgent pillars of the 2030 Agenda through two core streams.



Featured Summits

The event also features high-level summits, including the **APAC Sustainable Business Summit, Sustainable Trade and Economic Development Summit** and the **Sustainability Skills Summit**, ensuring a deep dive into the economic and professional shifts required for a sustainable future.

The Sustainability Impact Ratings 2026

A definitive highlight of the event is the live reveal of the **THE Sustainability Impact Ratings 2026**. As the world' s only performance table assessing universities against the SDGs, this session offers essential benchmarking data, accompanied by a dedicated data masterclass and a live Q&A for institutional leaders.

Join the Movement

We invite you to join this global alliance in Jakarta to accelerate our collective progress toward a fairer and more sustainable world.

Member units of **WDEA** are eligible for an exclusive **25% discount** on registration.

- Dates: 22–25 June 2026
- Location: Indonesia Convention Exhibition (ICE), Jakarta
- Promo Code: PARTNER-25

Official Website:
www.gsdcongress.com/2026

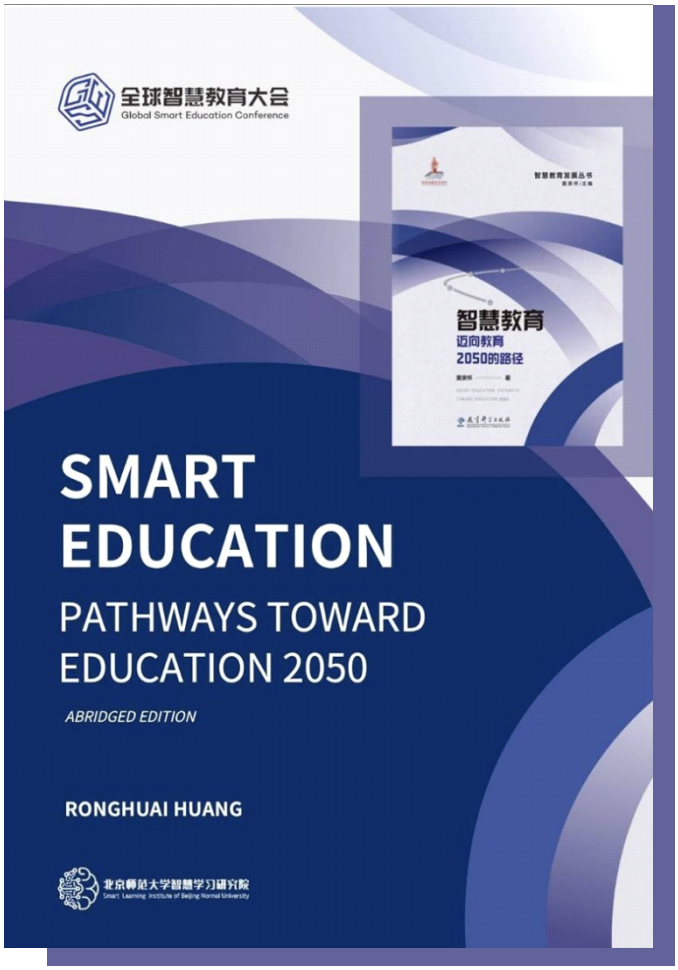
08 GSE

Smart Education: Pathways Toward Education 2050

At this critical juncture following the inaugural year of smart education, education is undergoing a major digital transformation, signalling a new phase in the intelligent age. The deep integration of artificial intelligence (AI) and education offers significant potential to accelerate progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, while also raising global challenges related to technological adaptation, ethical boundaries and educational equity. How can we uphold the human-centred essence of education and ensure that AI serves educational purposes rather than contributing to new imbalances or distortions? How can innovation in AI be aligned with educational principles so as to support the holistic development of learners? And how can the international community foster consensus and strengthen cross-sectoral and cross-regional collaboration to promote mutual learning and shared progress in harnessing AI for the sustainable development of education? These questions have become central to the global education agenda. As a new educational paradigm in the intelligent age, smart education is both a critical pathway for addressing these challenges and an essential strategy for promoting inclusive, equitable and high-quality education, as well as lifelong learning opportunities for all. It is increasingly recognised as a shared strategic vision for countries seeking to respond to the challenges of the digital era and advance progress towards SDG 4.

Since 2020, the Global Smart Education Conference has served as an important platform for international dialogue, exchange and cooperation on smart education. As the annual conference of the Global Smart Education Network (GSENet), the Global Smart Education Conference 2026 will be held under the theme "Reimagining Education in the Age of AI: Equity, Quality and Sustainability." Through plenary sessions, parallel sessions, high-level dialogues, roundtables, workshops, seminars and design competitions, the Conference will provide a platform for exploring policy, technology, theory and practice in smart education, sharing innovative cases and solutions, and fostering international collaboration towards more equitable, quality and sustainable education in the age of AI.

At the Global Smart Education Conference 2025, HUANG Ronghuai, Co-Dean of the Smart Learning Institute at Beijing Normal University and UNESCO Chair on Artificial Intelligence and Education, launched the book *Smart Education: Pathways Toward Education 2050*.Funded by the Chinese government and supported by the National Publication Foundation, it serves as a flagship publication representing the commitment to advancing global educational transformation with both academic insight and strategic vision. It brings together years of theoretical inquiry, empirical investigation, and practical experience to address a central question: How can smart education become a shared global vision for Education 2050?



This book positions smart education as a transformative response to the evolving demands of the intelligent era. While rooted in the principles of the Education 2030 Agenda—particularly the recognition of education as a global common good—this vision extends further, anchoring itself in the long-term horizon of 2050. It seeks to promote inclusive development, social equity, and sustainability in an increasingly digital and interconnected world. Build on this value, smart education emphasizes high-quality learning, flexible and adaptive content, and enhanced instructional efficiency. These priorities are anchored in principles of shared responsibility, mutual trust, and empathetic collaboration. Ultimately, smart education seeks to foster inclusive learning communities that support human flourishing in an increasingly complex world.

To conceptualize smart education, the book introduces two interrelated analytical dimensions. The performative features of smart education, which represent a shared vision of future learning and its goals. The constructive features, which identify the practical pathways and enabling conditions necessary to realize this vision. Structured around these core ideas, the book unfolds in four interconnected parts.

It begins by reviewing the global trends of digital transformation in education. It then refines key features of smart education, followed by a discussion of practical strategies to advance educational reform. Finally, the book offers a forward-looking landscape of smart education by 2050—drawing on the social experiments and the deep integration of technology and education to explore how smart education can align with broader national development goals and support the creation of future-ready education systems.

This book does not seek to prescribe a predetermined future, but rather invites global stakeholders to co-create it. It is intended not only as a guide, but also as a call to action—inviting researchers, educators, policymakers, and communities to explore, experiment, and collaboratively shape education systems needed for the world ahead. We hope this book will serve as a starting point for meaningful dialogue, a reference for informed decision-making, and a shared source of confidence and direction—as we collectively chart bold, inclusive, and visionary pathways to reimagine education for generations to come.

Co-organised by Beijing Normal University(BNU) and the UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education(UNESCO IITE),the Global Smart Education Conference 2026(GSE2026) will be held in Beijing from 18 to 20 August 2026.
Across three days, GSE2026 will explore how Al can support sustainable, inclusive, and high-quality education through dialogue,practice-sharing,and solution showcases spanning policy, technology,theory,and implementation-from classroom practice to system-level transformation.

For more details, please visit the link below:
https://gse.bnu.edu.cn/en/

https://sli.bnu.edu.cn/docs/2025-11/436d672ff99e4104b2fae3e888bd05e7.pdf

Editing & Compilation: WANG Menghan, WANG Junyi
Reviewed by: ZENG Haijun

Contact us

Joint Secretariat for WDEA:
China Education Association for International Exchange(CEAIE)
Beijing Normal University(BNU)

Tel:
010-66090069
010-58807205

Email:
wdea@bnu.edu.cn

Website:
https://wdea.bnu.edu.cn