

AI News Digest

09/21/2026 - 09/27/2026

WEEKLY DIGEST: EDUCATION & LEADERSHIP

AI's Impact on Education and Workforce Skills

The integration of AI in education is transforming the way we learn and work, with significant implications for workforce skills and student wellbeing. Recent developments highlight the need for educators, policymakers, and employers to adapt to these changes. AI is altering the voice and tone of human writing, eroding critical thinking skills, and changing the way students interact with educational materials. As AI becomes more prevalent, there is a growing need for transparency, guidance, and clear expectations in its use. By understanding these shifts, we can better prepare students and workers for an AI-driven future.

KEY FINDINGS

- ✓ Extensive LLM use leads to a 70% increase in neutral essays and a decrease in creative writing in a user's own voice.
- ✓ AI is changing which human capabilities matter most at work, with critical thinking, judgment, and the ability to evaluate AI output being eroded.
- ✓ Nearly 9 in 10 kids aged 9-17 use or interact with AI, with 1 in 4 using it daily, and 20% of AI users reporting negative impacts on their wellbeing.

IMPLICATIONS

- Educators and employers must prioritize developing skills that complement AI, such as critical thinking, creativity, and human empathy.
- Policymakers and educational institutions need to establish clear guidelines and standards for AI use in education and the workforce.
- The increasing reliance on AI requires a fundamental shift in how we approach education, workforce development, and student wellbeing.

Key Metrics: 70% increase in neutral essays due to LLM use; 1,500 workforce leaders and 8,800 employees surveyed globally; 9 in 10 kids aged 9-17 use or interact with AI; 1 in 4 kids use AI daily; 20% of AI users report negative impacts on their wellbeing

1. Video: How LLMs Distort Our Written Language

Category: Research

Departments: Computer Science, Communication, English, Educational Leadership, Psychology

Topics: Large Language Models, Semantic Meaning Preservation, Human-AI Writing Interaction, Language Model Misalignment

Impact Score: 26.0

Rubric Scores

Research Relevance: 5

Educational Value: 4

Innovation / Novelty: 4

Practical Impact: 4

Interdisciplinary Potential: 4

Ethical / Policy Implications: 5

LLMs alter not only the voice and tone but also the intended meaning of human writing. A human user study found extensive LLM use led to a 70% increase in neutral essays and users reported less creative writing not in their voice. LLMs making grammar edits based on expert feedback significantly alter semantic meaning, and LLM-generated peer reviews prioritize different criteria and assign higher scores. These findings highlight a misalignment between perceived AI benefits and its effect on human writing semantics.

<https://digitalhumanitiesnow.org/2026/09/video-how-llms-distort-our-written-language/>

2. Quantum computing's "dark horse" just proved it can go universal

Category: Research

Departments: Physics, Computer Science, Electrical & Computer Engineering, Mathematical Sciences, Engineering Education & Leadership

Topics: Quantum AI, Non-Abelian Anyons, Universal Quantum Computing, Quantum Error Correction, Entangled Qubits

Impact Score: 25.0

Rubric Scores

Research Relevance: 5

Educational Value: 4

Innovation / Novelty: 5

Practical Impact: 4

Interdisciplinary Potential: 5

Ethical / Policy Implications: 2

Researchers demonstrated a new approach to universal quantum computing using non-Abelian anyons, creating and testing a full set of operations based on these quantum objects. The results provide the first experimental demonstration that this approach can support the broad range of operations required for universal quantum computing. Non-Abelian anyons may offer a more efficient route toward reliable quantum machines by potentially bypassing the need for expensive magic state distillation in quantum error correction. This approach encodes information across many entangled qubits, allowing it to be naturally protected from disturbances and manipulated through braiding operations.

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2026/09/260924020403.htm>

3. Report: AI May Be Eroding the Very Skills Employers Need Most

Category: Business
Departments: Educational Leadership, Computer Science, Engineering Education & Leadership, Industrial, Manufacturing & Systems Engineering, Psychology
Topics: AI Ethics & Safety, Workforce Skill Development, Human-AI Collaboration, AI Literacy

Impact Score: 21.0

Rubric Scores

Research Relevance: 3	Educational Value: 4	Innovation / Novelty: 2
Practical Impact: 4	Interdisciplinary Potential: 4	Ethical / Policy Implications: 4

IBM surveyed 1,500 workforce leaders and 8,800 employees globally, finding that AI is changing which human capabilities matter most at work, yet employees report erosion of those same capabilities. Critical thinking, judgment, and the ability to evaluate AI output are at the center of this tension, with 60% of employees saying skill erosion directly affects them. Only 26% of organizations clearly define human-led and AI-assisted work, and 46% of executives and 60% of employees express concern about skill erosion. Employees and executives prioritize different skills, with a 33-percentage-point gap in prioritizing the ability to supervise, validate, or override AI outputs.

<https://campustechnology.com/articles/2026/09/21/report-ai-may-be-eroding-the-very-skills-employers-need-most.aspx>

4. Learning Commons Launches Open Platform for K-12 Edtech

Category: Applications
Departments: Educational Leadership, Computer Science, Engineering Education & Leadership, Teacher Education, Counseling and Special Education
Topics: Education AI, Dataset Standardization, Evidence-Based Edtech

Impact Score: 19.0

Rubric Scores

Research Relevance: 2	Educational Value: 4	Innovation / Novelty: 3
Practical Impact: 4	Interdisciplinary Potential: 4	Ethical / Policy Implications: 2

Learning Commons launched an open platform providing free datasets, curricula, and evaluation tools to help educators and edtech developers create evidence-based materials and assessments aligned with state standards. The platform offers datasets from all 50 states, including academic standards, learning progressions, and curricula from prominent providers, which can integrate into AI tools. Learning Commons has partnered with over 70 organizations, including OpenAI and Anthropic, and its datasets have been downloaded approximately 20,000 times since its launch. The platform aims to help scale evidence-based research and high-quality instructional materials in edtech.

<https://edsurge.com/news/learning-commons-launches-open-ai-platform-for-k-12-edtech>

5. AI Security Is an Engineering Problem - How to Solve It at Every Layer of the Agent Stack

Category: Research

Departments: Computer Science, Electrical & Computer Engineering, Industrial, Manufacturing & Systems Engineering, Engineering Education & Leadership, Mathematical Sciences

Topics: AI Security & Safety, Agent Stack Security, Security Controls Verification

Impact Score: 17.0

Rubric Scores

Research Relevance: 2

Educational Value: 4

Innovation / Novelty: 1

Practical Impact: 4

Interdisciplinary Potential: 3

Ethical / Policy Implications: 3

AI security is an engineering problem requiring defined security requirements, enforceable controls, named owners, and evidence that protections work. Security fundamentals, such as establishing identity, controlling access, limiting exposure, and verifying protections, endure despite technological changes, and must be applied to AI agents. AI agents introduce new security responsibilities across the full agent stack, including models, harnesses, and runtime environments, which require controls to protect data, instructions, and actions. Engineering teams need evidence that security controls are effective, through testing and verification, before deployment and after material changes to AI systems.

<https://blogs.nvidia.com/blog/ai-security-agent-stack/>

6. What Students Can Teach Us About AI

Category: Education

Departments: Educational Leadership, Teacher Education, Computer Science, Engineering Education & Leadership, Counseling and Special Education

Topics: AI Ethics & Safety, Transparency in AI, Responsible AI Education, AI Bias Mitigation

Impact Score: 17.0

Rubric Scores

Research Relevance: 2

Educational Value: 4

Innovation / Novelty: 1

Practical Impact: 3

Interdisciplinary Potential: 3

Ethical / Policy Implications: 4

Students' perspectives on AI usage in schools reveal a need for transparency, guidance, and clear expectations. They want educators to disclose when and how AI is being used, especially in grading and feedback, and to understand how AI works, including its limitations and potential biases. Students require opportunities to learn safe, ethical, and responsible AI use, including protecting personal information and evaluating AI-generated content. Consistency and equitable opportunities across classes and subjects are also essential to avoid confusion and frustration.

<https://www.techlearning.com/technology/ai/what-students-can-teach-us-about-ai>

7. AI and Student Wellbeing: 5 Takeaways from Common Sense Media's New Course

Category: Education
Departments: Educational Leadership, Counseling and Special Education
Topics: AI Ethics & Safety, Student Wellbeing, Emotional Support AI

Impact Score: 17.0

Rubric Scores

Research Relevance: 2	Educational Value: 4	Innovation / Novelty: 1
Practical Impact: 3	Interdisciplinary Potential: 3	Ethical / Policy Implications: 4

Common Sense Media has developed a free, hour-long online course examining AI use and its connection to student wellbeing. The course reveals that nearly 9 in 10 kids aged 9-17 use or interact with AI, with 1 in 4 using it daily, and 20% of AI users reporting difficulty going without AI for a month. Students who use AI more often, particularly for emotional support, are more likely to experience loneliness, and the course warns that AI's limitations can lead to negative effects on wellbeing, such as reinforcing validation-seeking patterns and hindering human relationships. The course provides actionable advice for educators to help students overcome these challenges.

<https://www.techlearning.com/technology/ai/ai-and-student-wellbeing-5-takeaways-from-common-sense-medias-new-course>

8. Why AI Made Me a Better Principal

Category: Education
Departments: Educational Leadership, Teacher Education
Topics: Enterprise AI, AI Ethics & Safety, Natural Language Processing

Impact Score: 16.0

Rubric Scores

Research Relevance: 0	Educational Value: 3	Innovation / Novelty: 2
Practical Impact: 4	Interdisciplinary Potential: 3	Ethical / Policy Implications: 4

A school principal found that AI's greatest benefit is reducing cognitive load, enabling more presence in classrooms, intentional leadership coaching, and better decision-making. The principal uses ChatGPT's voice conversation feature during their commute to reflect and prepare, structuring their thoughts with key leadership frameworks. AI tools are used to synthesize information, process experiences, and coach thinking, supplementing human coaching relationships and providing a low-stakes sounding board. AI use is strictly managed to protect privacy, ensure accuracy, and maintain human accountability.

<https://edsurge.com/news/why-ai-made-me-a-better-principal>

9. The Cost of Unchecked Assumptions: Fewer Male Teachers, More Baby Slop

Category: Research

Departments: Educational Leadership, Teacher Education, Counseling and Special Education, Communication, Psychology

Topics: AI Ethics & Safety, Generative AI, Content Moderation

Impact Score: 16.0

Rubric Scores

Research Relevance: 2

Educational Value: 2

Innovation / Novelty: 1

Practical Impact: 3

Interdisciplinary Potential: 4

Ethical / Policy Implications: 4

Male teachers often face assumptions about their roles before they can correct them, contributing to a decline in their numbers in the profession. Researchers investigated why men leave teaching and potential solutions for schools to retain them. AI-generated videos for toddlers and preschoolers, known as "baby slop," often contain inaccurate content that can mislead young children. These videos are being mass-produced and posted online, raising concerns about their impact on early learning.

<https://edsurge.com/news/the-cost-of-unchecked-assumptions-fewer-male-teachers-more-baby-slop>

10. Navigating the Future of Work: A Conversation with JFF's Maria Flynn

Category: Education

Departments: Educational Leadership, Computer Science

Topics: AI Ethics & Safety, AI Literacy Education, Workforce AI Adaptation

Impact Score: 16.0

Rubric Scores

Research Relevance: 1

Educational Value: 3

Innovation / Novelty: 2

Practical Impact: 4

Interdisciplinary Potential: 4

Ethical / Policy Implications: 2

The ninth annual Reagan Institute Summit on Education discussed the purpose of education in America, including the impact of artificial intelligence on the workforce. Maria Flynn, president and CEO of Jobs for the Future, emphasized the need to align what students learn in school with future workforce requirements. Flynn suggested that every high school graduate should possess basic AI literacy, similar to typing skills, and that educators should focus on building fluency in applying AI to day-to-day tasks. Promising models of AI education include Ohio State University's horizontal embedding of AI across majors and Miami Dade College's applied AI education initiatives.

<https://edsurge.com/news/navigating-the-future-of-work-a-conversation-with-jffs-maria-flynn>