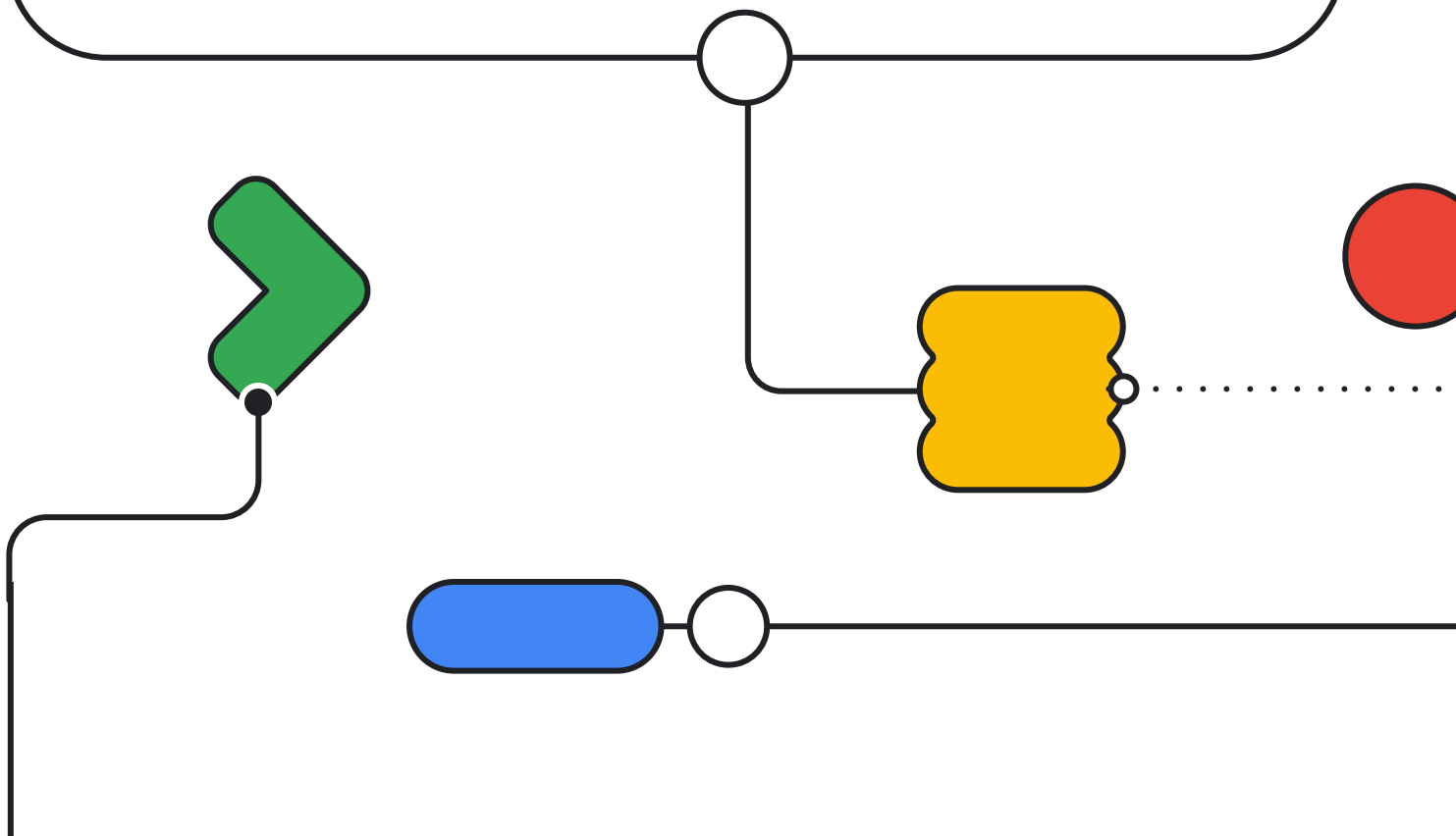
Google for Education

AI in Education Readiness Assessment



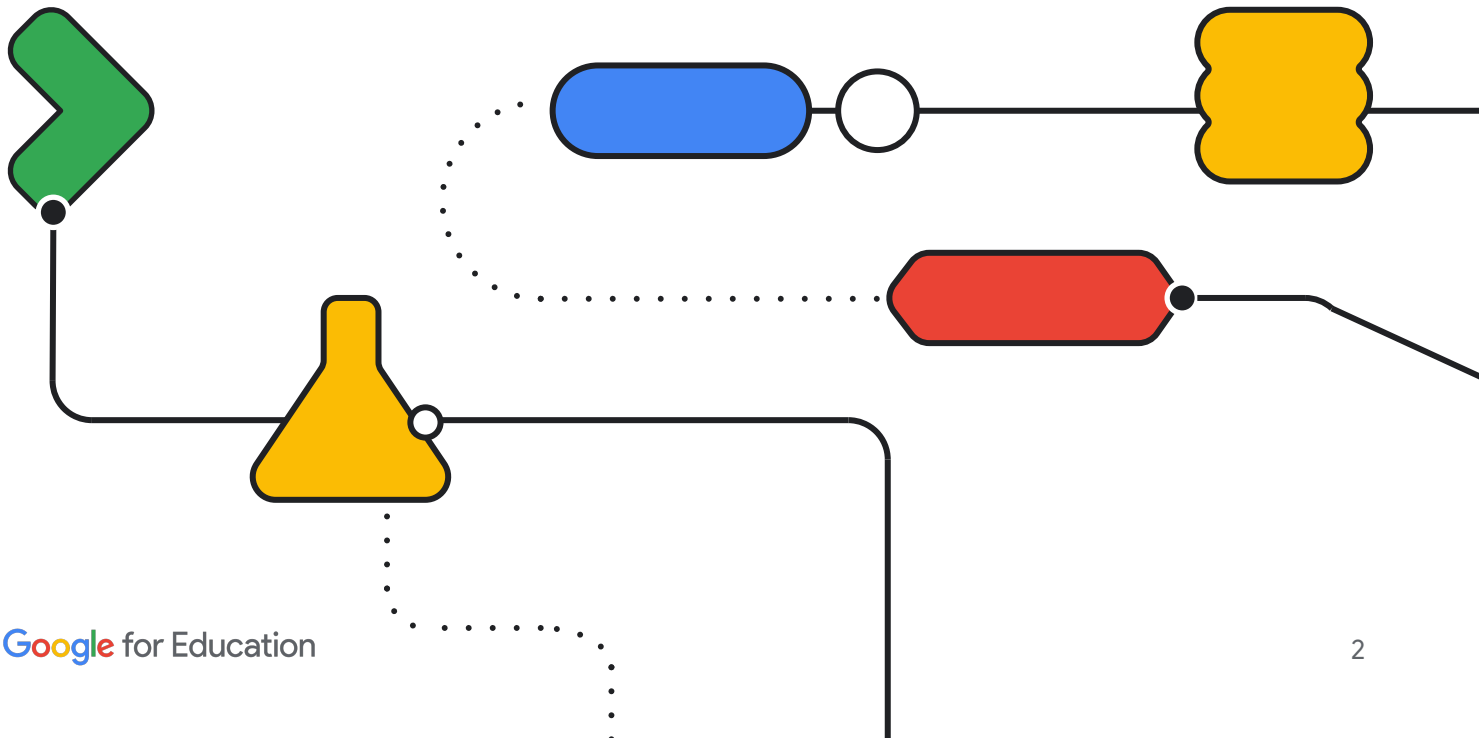
01

Overview and Origins

The Vision for Resilient Education

The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into global education systems presents a profound opportunity to rethink how we learn and teach, offering the potential to create inclusive learning experiences and empower educators to reach every student. Across the globe, forward-thinking institutions are already demonstrating how AI can be a powerful catalyst for bridging educational divides and fostering instructional equity. These success stories reveal a consistent theme: the most effective implementations are built upon a foundation of shared leadership, purposeful partnerships, and a deep commitment to building local capacity (Gustilo et al., 2024).

The AI in Education Readiness Assessment provides a flexible, research-backed approach for global application, supporting leaders in scaling these successes regardless of the AI tools in use. This assessment helps organizations move thoughtfully from early exploration toward creating resilient, pedagogy-first ecosystems. By adopting a model of collaborative stewardship, we aim to empower educational institutions to focus on their core mission—inspiring students and delivering high-quality instruction—while leveraging the security, technical expertise, and auditing rigor of global industry partners.



Who Should Use This Assessment?

This assessment is designed for a broad spectrum of educational stakeholders across primary, secondary, and higher education, as well as government entities. To ensure it leads to actionable change, it is recommended to convene a cross-functional leadership team that includes:

A lead decision-maker

(e.g., Minister, Superintendent, or Provost) to provide the mandate for change.

Strategic & implementation leads

(e.g., tech directors, curriculum heads, and legal counsel) to bridge policy with infrastructure.

Practitioner voices

(e.g., teachers and faculty) to ensure pedagogical feasibility.

How to Use This Document

This assessment is intended as a collaborative workshop tool for honest dialogue and strategic planning. The following process is recommended:

01

Convene your team

Gather the cross-functional group identified above.

02

Evaluate by focus area

Review each focus area independently. It is expected and normal that institutions will show non-linear readiness (e.g., being level 2 in pedagogy and level 1 in governance).

03

Identify localized evidence

Determine what specific data, policies, or cultural norms support your self-assessment in your unique regional context.

The 4-Level Readiness Scale

The assessment uses a 4-level scale to provide a realistic, context-sensitive roadmap for growth. This structure mirrors the four stages of the ISAR learning model (Bauer et al., 2025) and the international risk categories of the EU AI Act:

Level 1

Nascent (Exploring) – Represents a higher risk of Inversion, where unstructured AI bypasses cognitive engagement and rigor (Fan et al., 2024).

Level 2

Emerging (Integrating) – Represents Substitution, where AI is used for basic efficiency without changing the core learning process.

Level 3

Advanced (Optimizing) – Represents Augmentation, where AI provides Socratic cognitive scaffolding, while offline skills are deliberately preserved.

Level 4

Transformative (Sustaining) – Represents Redefinition, where AI transforms learning into double-loop inquiry—transfer of tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge that is then questioned—supported by strict procurement, culturally responsive design, and continuous safety monitoring (Argyris et al., 1978).

Principles of Progression

Cumulative growth

Progressing to a higher level assumes the institution maintains the criteria of all preceding levels for that specific focus area.

A portfolio approach

Comprehensive transformation is viewed as a portfolio of individual scores, allowing leaders to prioritize high-impact areas based on local needs.

Synthesis of International Frameworks

This assessment is an operational synthesis of global standards and empirical research:

Global equity & infrastructure

Informed by the World Bank's EdTech principles, the assessment emphasizes scalable, cost-effective interventions (e.g., $48/pupil deployments) capable of fostering global digital inclusion and resource equity (Molina et al., 2024; Burns, 2026).

Human rights & data governance

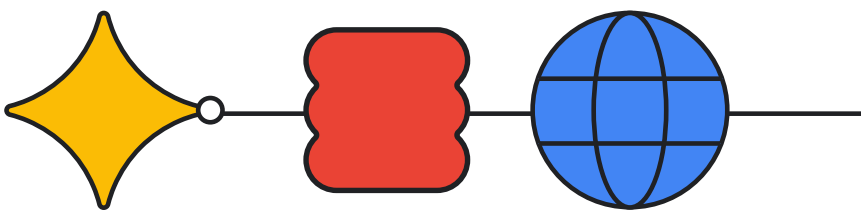
Focus area 3 aligns with the UNESCO Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence and the EU AI Act, mandating data sovereignty and explicitly banning high-risk biometric emotion-inference systems in schools (European Union, 2024).

Advanced safety auditing

Instead of requiring local institutions to perform internal red-teaming, the framework recommends educational organizations request vendors submit to crowdsourced audits and standardized benchmarks like EduGuardBench and OpenLearnLM to test for culturally specific bias and alignment faking, where AI operates safely even when considered unmonitored (Lee et al., 2026).

Learning sciences & cognitive health

Focus area 6 addresses global concerns over declining reading comprehension and attention spans by mandating analog preservation (e.g., handwriting) and cognitive forcing functions that require human reflection before AI generates an output (OECD, 2026; Gerlich, 2025).



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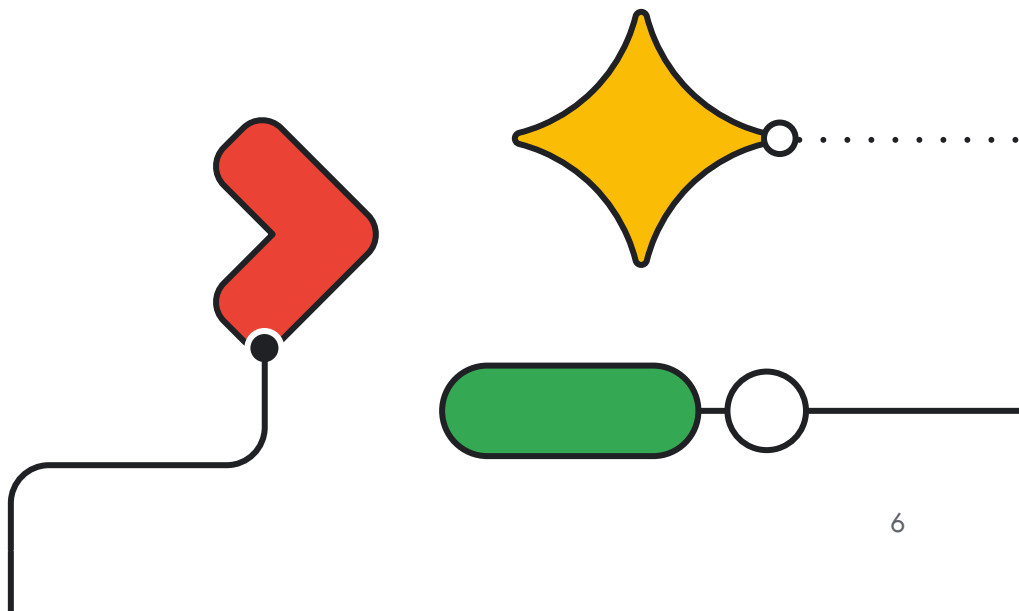
Baseline AI Readiness Rubric

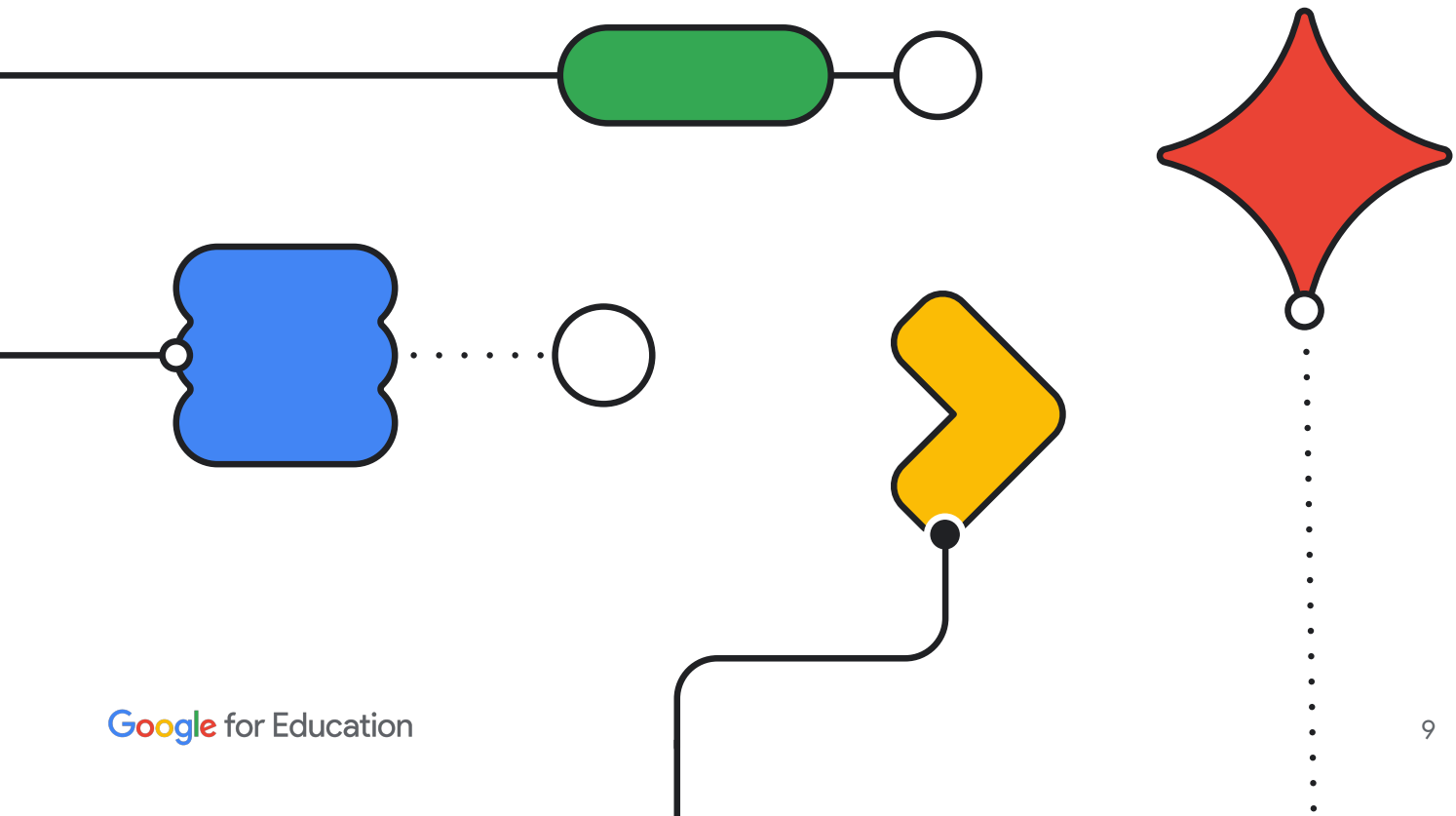
Focus Area	Level 1: Nascent	Level 2: Emerging	Level 3: Advanced	Level 4: Transformative
01. Governance & Procurement Requirement ↓ Action ↓ Synthesis	R: Identifies critical gaps in existing digital transformation and data policies. A: Explores initial vendor partnerships through the lens of institutional values and regulatory requirements. S: Establishes a baseline awareness of the policy shifts required for AI integration.	R: Drafts flexible AI usage guidelines that prioritize safety and academic integrity. A: Initiates small-scale, departmental pilots to test vendor tool efficacy and identify user friction points. S: Begins the transition from passive observation to active, controlled experimentation.	R: Solidifies procurement cycles with independent, third-party safety audits. A: Scales successful pilot workflows into institutional policies backed by independent, third-party safety audits. S: Transitions from experimental tool adoption to policy-backed operational scaling.	R: Adapts institutional workflows iteratively based on real-world pilot data. A: Validates vendor efficacy claims through localized research to ensure automation is driving measurable cost-savings. S: Achieves long-term financial viability through a resilient, data-informed leadership culture.



Focus Area	Level 1: Nascent	Level 2: Emerging	Level 3: Advanced	Level 4: Transformative
02. Infrastructure & Scalability Requirement ↓ Action ↓ Synthesis	R: Maps local connectivity, hardware density, and persistent digital divide gaps. A: Audits existing cloud capacity and server readiness for AI workloads to identify immediate technical bottlenecks. S: Defines the physical and digital boundaries of the current institutional ecosystem.	R: Provides initial, targeted funding for hardware and high-speed infrastructure. A: Establishes baseline cloud standards and interoperability requirements to ensure seamless integration between diverse AI tools. S: Allocates resources to build a stable foundation for localized AI deployment.	R: Implements scalable regional or cloud-based platforms with sustainable funding. A: Standardizes enterprise-grade AI architecture to ensure high-concurrency uptime and availability across the entire organization. S: Strengthens digital infrastructure to support high-concurrency usage across the organization.	R: Achieves nationwide or institution-wide scalability for cost-effective AI ecosystems with sustainable funding. A: Optimizes a distributed architecture to ensure technical performance parity and low-latency access for all users, regardless of geography. S: Sustains a future-proof environment where infrastructure adapts dynamically to emerging technical needs.
03. Data & Privacy Requirement ↓ Action ↓ Synthesis	R: Aligns internal data governance with local, regional, and national privacy laws. A: Identifies data residency requirements and high-risk data touchpoints to map where data is stored and who governs it. S: Ensures foundational legal compliance and establishes a privacy-first mindset.	R: Implements encryption-at-rest and in-transit for all pilot AI interactions. A: Establishes strict identity and access management (IAM) for educators and students to prevent unauthorized data exposure. S: Strengthens the pilot environment through secure data handling and credentialing.	R: Implements automated data purging and anonymization protocols. A: Conducts independent privacy audits to verify vendor compliance with data-purging and anonymization protocols. S: Safeguards the data layer through verified technical protection and proactive risk mitigation.	R: Conducts continuous, real-time privacy evaluations of AI model interactions. A: Negotiates IP-protective zero-retention clauses and audits outputs to ensure institutional data is not used for external model training. S: Protects institutional intellectual property and ensures total data provenance for all users.

Focus Area	Level 1: Nascent	Level 2: Emerging	Level 3: Advanced	Level 4: Transformative
04. Safety & Ethics Requirement ↓ Action ↓ Synthesis	R: Defines core AI red lines regarding bias, harmful content, and data usage. A: Reviews vendor-provided safety reports and model cards against the institution's defined AI red lines. S: Cultivates a shared ethical vocabulary for evaluating emerging technologies.	R: Implements basic safety filters and content moderations at the user interface level. A: Monitors pilot interactions to identify real-world algorithmic bias, frequent hallucinations, or bypasses of basic safety filters. S: Moves toward supervised safety through active monitoring of human-AI interactions.	R: Reinforces systems against adversarial attacks, prompt injections, and jailbreaking. A: Subjects systems to independent, crowdsourced safety benchmarks to measure resilience against adversarial attacks and prompt injections. S: Establishes a proactive technical defense against emerging AI safety vulnerabilities.	R: Mandates rigorous testing for alignment faking and unmonitored safety. A: Reports findings from alignment faking tests to global consortia, ensuring models remain safe during unmonitored student use. S: Maintains a permanent safety monitoring loop that contributes to and evolves with global industry safety standards.
05. Educators & Agency Requirement ↓ Action ↓ Synthesis	R: Provides foundational sandbox environments and self-paced literacy tools for all staff. A: Monitors early administrative shifts and staff sentiment to identify where AI can solve immediate pain points. S: Prioritizes educator psychological safety and baseline literacy before formal deployment.	R: Establishes formal channels for faculty to evaluate the usability and pedagogical value of pilot tools. A: Offers optional, professional development that focuses on immediate operational efficiency. S: Empowers educators as the primary evaluators and first-responders of AI integration.	R: Integrates AI-enabled pedagogy into internal professional standards and promotion/tenure criteria. A: Forms peer-led councils that hold decision-making power over departmental tool selection and PD design. S: Formalizes educator agency to ensure technology supports, rather than replaces, human expertise.	R: Ensures educators are involved in the creation of national or institutional AI governance. A: Deploys AI as a force-multiplier to automate admin tasks, explicitly redirecting that saved time into 1-on-1 mentorship. S: Reaches a state of pedagogical co-evolution where AI extends the reach and impact of the educator.

Focus Area	Level 1: Nascent	Level 2: Emerging	Level 3: Advanced	Level 4: Transformative
06. Learning & Cognition Requirement ↓ Action ↓ Synthesis	R: Maintains traditional testing environments to ensure core knowledge and durable skills are verified without AI. A: Maps high-risk academic areas where AI bypasses critical thinking or essential learning milestones. S: Conducts a risk-first assessment to isolate core skills that must remain AI-free.	R: Introduces AI-assisted tools designed to supplement instruction and provide tiered student support. A: Evaluates the impact of digital tool use on student focus, spatial memory, and deep-reading habits. S: Explores augmented learning pathways while protecting fundamental cognitive habits.	R: Formalizes analog times to safeguard cultural skills like language acquisition and manual dexterity. A: Configures institutional AI tools to guide students through questioning rather than providing direct answers. S: Prioritizes cognitive preservation by ensuring AI remains a secondary tool to human inquiry.	R: Transitions to educator-reviewed portfolios where students must demonstrate and defend their learning journey. A: Requires students to identify AI logical flaws and justify their own reasoning through the double-loop reflection process. S: Achieves durable learning where AI serves as a catalyst for deep, metacognitive development.



03

Determining Your Readiness Tier

The AI in Education Readiness Assessment is a diagnostic tool designed for internal strategic alignment. Rather than providing a pass/fail grade, this section helps your leadership team visualize your progress as a portfolio of maturity. This approach acknowledges that transformation is often non-linear, with different focus areas evolving at different speeds based on local priorities and resources.

The 6-Point Scale

To eliminate neutrality bias and provide a clear direction for growth, this diagnostic uses a 6-point forced-choice scale. This requires the leadership team to determine whether they lean toward developing or integrated practices. Use the following definitions to score each item in the rubric:

Score	Descriptive Anchor	Institutional Context
01	Strongly disagree	No progress has been made; area is not currently a priority.
02	Disagree	Early internal discussions are occurring, but no action taken.
03	Slightly Disagree	Specific needs/gaps have been identified but remain unaddressed.
04	Slightly Agree	Developing practice; pilots or initial guidelines are in place.
05	Agree	Consistent implementation across most departments or schools.
06	Strongly Agree	Fully integrated into institutional culture and policy.

Scoring and Tiers

To determine your overall readiness tier, calculate the average of your scores across all focus areas. This average provides a baseline for your institution's current posture.

Average Score: 1.0 – 2.4	Tier 1: Nascent	Focus: Building initial awareness, identifying local needs, and establishing core safety values.
Average Score: 2.5 – 3.9	Tier 2: Emerging	Focus: Moving toward active pilot programs, drafting flexible guidelines, and building initial staff capacity.
Average Score: 4.0 – 5.4	Tier 3: Advanced	Focus: Scaling successful practices, implementing robust data stewardship, and refining pedagogy-first ecosystems.
Average Score: 5.5 – 6.0	Tier 4: Transformative	Focus: Leading global innovation, fostering a culture of continuous ethical review, and serving as a model for collaborative stewardship.

Understanding Your Results: The Portfolio Approach

Your results should be viewed as a snapshot for dialogue among your cross-functional team. When analyzing your tiered results, keep these principles in mind:

Non-linear progress

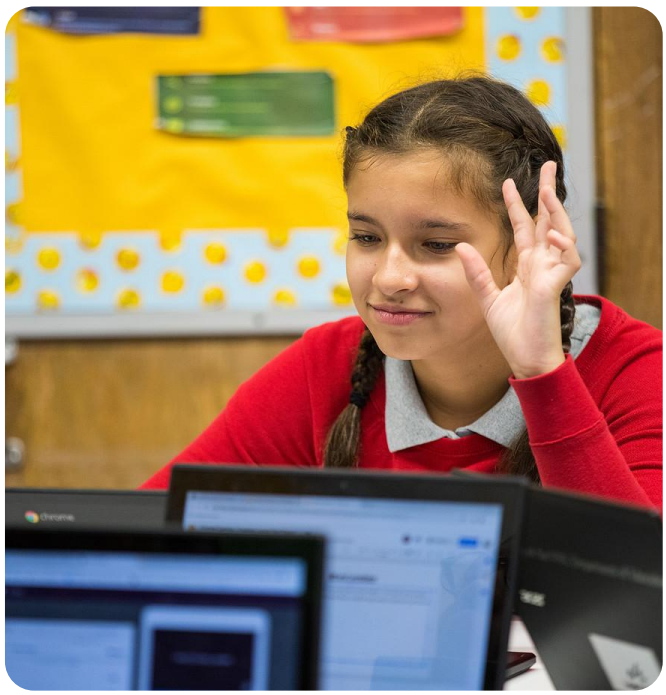
It is common for an institution to lead in one area (e.g., educators & agency) while remaining at an earlier stage in another (e.g., governance & procurement). This profile helps you identify where to reallocate resources.

Cumulative requirements

Achieving a high score in a Transformative level assumes the foundational infrastructure (Levels 1 and 2) and optimization (Level 3) requirements for that specific focus area are fully operational and maintained.

The safety floor recommendation

While the scoring is additive, it is strongly encouraged that teams prioritize high scores in secure data ecosystems and safety testing. Establishing these foundational safeguards is critical before scaling transformative pedagogical practices.



Conclusion: Toward Collaborative Stewardship

The journey toward AI readiness is not a one-time technical implementation but a continuous cycle of collaborative stewardship. Completing this baseline assessment, can be a first step in moving from early exploration toward a pedagogy-first ecosystem that prioritizes student agency and cognitive health.