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AI in Education

Understanding Educator Perspectives on Research and Adoption Patterns

A Comprehensive Look at Attitudes Toward Purchasing AI-Powered Educational Tools

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Letter from our Founder

Dear Educator Leaders and EdTech Creators,

Artificial intelligence is reshaping education with both promise and challenge. Our research reveals that while 54% of educators now use AI tools, adoption remains measured as ethical concerns (54%) and data privacy (53%) have become the primary barriers—ahead of cost considerations.

For educator leaders, we found that **student engagement** is your top priority when evaluating AI tools. The apparent tension between formal research and peer recommendations dissolves when research features contexts you recognize—creating the ultimate "social proof" that resonates with your reality.

For EdTech creators, this report highlights the need for **diverse research portfolios** demonstrating success in **authentic classroom settings**. Building tools with solid research foundations doesn't slow innovation—it enhances it, creating solutions with measurable impact.

To bridge this gap, we've included a practical checklist at the end of this report that provides specific questions to guide AI tool evaluation across six essential categories.

In today's budget-constrained environment, every technology investment must deliver meaningful impact. By developing clear criteria for evaluating AI tools, we can build educational technology that truly serves students and teachers.

In partnership,

Dr. Rachel Schechter

Founder of LXD Research

Executive Summary

The integration of artificial intelligence into educational settings represents one of the most significant shifts in classroom technology adoption since the introduction of personal computers. As schools nationwide grapple with decisions about AI tool implementation, understanding educator perspectives becomes crucial for successful adoption and meaningful impact on student learning.

This paper presents findings from a comprehensive survey of 203 K-12 educators across 37 states in the U.S., conducted by LXD Research between April and May 2025. The research reveals a complex landscape where educators express both enthusiasm and caution about AI integration, with preferences for how tools should be evaluated, implemented, and validated.

Key findings

- **Student engagement** emerges as the primary evaluation criterion: 66% of educators identify student engagement as "extremely important" when evaluating AI tools, surpassing all other factors, including cost and ease of use.

- **Pilots eclipse all other validation methods:** Over 80% of educators consider pilots critical for decision-making, with 40% selecting free trials as their single most important proof point, outweighing formal research studies, peer recommendations, and cost considerations.

- **Research evidence matters**, yet social proof prevails in the final steps: While 84% agree research evidence is crucial for tool selection, 69% indicate that peer recommendations carry more influence than formal research studies in their actual decision-making. However, 75% of educators trust educational tools more when they are scientifically validated, indicating a clear value of research evidence.

- **Privacy and ethics have become the primary barriers**: Ethical concerns (54%) and data privacy risks (53%) now surpass cost (35%) as the top barriers to AI adoption, representing a fundamental shift in educator priorities.

- **AI adoption has reached a tipping point**: 54% of educators currently use AI tools, with 77% likely to adopt AI tools in the next two years, indicating mainstream acceptance.

The apparent preference for peer recommendations over formal research studies may reflect other issues: most educators assume research is esoteric, removed from real teaching scenarios, and conducted in settings that don't look like theirs. Yet, 75% of educators trust educational tools more when they are scientifically validated, highlighting the importance of scientific validation. As one elementary teacher mentioned,

> *"Other professional fields use research to guide their work and the tools that they use. So, of course, we should be doing that with educational tools...we shouldn't be implementing anything without research being part of it."*

These findings emerge against a backdrop of broader AI adoption trends showing accelerating use across educational sectors, with particular growth among younger educators and school leaders who report higher adoption rates and more positive perceptions of AI's educational value.

Checklists For You

Evidence Checklist for EdTech Providers:

A structured framework for evaluating educational product research against ESSA standards, examining quality indicators like study design and sample size alongside impact measures and implementation factors.

AI Tools Evaluation Checklist for Educators:

Six practical categories for assessing AI educational tools, focusing on student engagement, research validation, evidence hierarchy, pilot requirements, privacy/ethics verification, and contextual validation in settings similar to your own.

How to Cite This Article

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Introduction

The 2024-2025 school year marked a pivotal moment in educational technology adoption. Following the widespread introduction of generative AI tools to the public, educators found themselves navigating uncharted territory as they considered how these powerful technologies might enhance or transform their teaching practices. Unlike previous educational technology adoptions, AI tools presented unique opportunities for personalization and accessibility, while simultaneously raising complex questions about ethics, authenticity, and the fundamental nature of learning itself.

Research across the educational landscape in the first half of 2025 reveals a system in transition in response to AI. Students increasingly value AI's ability to provide on-demand help and reduce learning anxiety, with over half of high schoolers reporting that AI helps ease math anxiety (Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics, 2025). Higher education has seen dramatic acceleration in AI adoption, with AI usage surging 2.3x over the past year and 93% of leaders expecting even greater use over the next two years (Ellucian, 2024). Perhaps most tellingly, generational differences among educators are becoming pronounced, with nearly 90% of Gen Z educators reporting AI use during the 2024-25 school year—more than double the rate of Gen X teachers and quadruple that of Baby Boomers (D2L, 2025).

This research emerges from a critical need to understand how educators—the ultimate arbiters of classroom technology use—perceive and evaluate AI-powered educational tools during this transformative period. Rather than examining AI adoption from a purely technological or administrative perspective, this study centers on educator voices and experiences on how they decide which tools to try and possibly adopt, recognizing that successful integration depends fundamentally on educational leadership paired with teacher buy-in and effective implementation at the classroom level.

58%

of K-12 teachers have yet to receive any training on artificial intelligence

90%

of Gen Z educators reporting AI use during the 2024-25 school year—more than double the rate of Gen X teachers and quadruple that of Baby Boomers (D2L, 2025)

The Current AI Education Landscape

The broader educational technology landscape in 2025 reflects rapid AI adoption across multiple sectors. In higher education, institutional leaders report dramatic increases in AI use by students, with most expecting continued expansion. This acceleration reflects both the technology's maturation and growing recognition of its potential to enhance productivity and operational efficiency.

K-12 adoption patterns reveal significant variation by educator demographics and district resources. While overall adoption rates continue to climb among educators, access remains uneven, with substantial gaps based on school resources, student demographics, and educator preparation. Teachers and principals in higher-poverty schools are less likely to report using AI tools relative to those in lower-poverty schools (RAND, 2025). These disparities raise important questions about equitable access to AI-enhanced learning opportunities.

The Generational Divide in AI Adoption

One of the most striking trends in current AI adoption involves generational differences among educators. Younger educators demonstrate significantly higher adoption rates and more positive perceptions of AI's educational value. Gen Z educators are three times more likely to report that AI has enhanced rather than harmed classroom engagement, suggesting that as the teaching workforce evolves, student access to AI-powered materials will likely increase substantially (D2L, 2025).

This generational shift has profound implications for educational systems. As younger educators enter the profession with native comfort around AI technologies, their integration practices may differ significantly from those of their more experienced colleagues. Understanding these differences becomes crucial for developing effective professional development programs and institutional policies.

Students themselves are increasingly seeking AI-enhanced learning experiences that provide personalized support, reduce anxiety, and adapt to their individual needs. High school students particularly value AI's ability to offer judgment-free assistance and on-demand help, with 61% of students suggesting that AI provides instant help, clarification, and feedback in a nonjudgmental setting, helping them worry less about feeling lost in crowded classrooms (Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics, 2025). Additionally, AI's ability to build students' confidence by providing round-the-clock help enables them to ask questions and get clarification at their own pace (Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics, 2025).

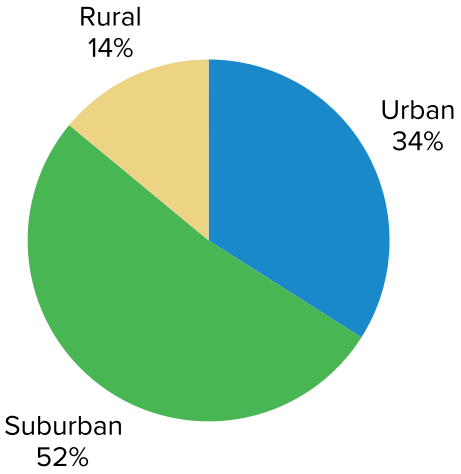
Despite growing adoption, significant barriers continue to limit AI's educational impact. Teacher training lags far behind adoption rates, with nearly 58% of K-12 teachers having yet to receive any training on AI, even two years after the introduction of ChatGPT (EdWeek Research Center, 2025). This training gap undermines equitable access to AI's benefits and creates risks around inappropriate or ineffective implementation.

Methodology

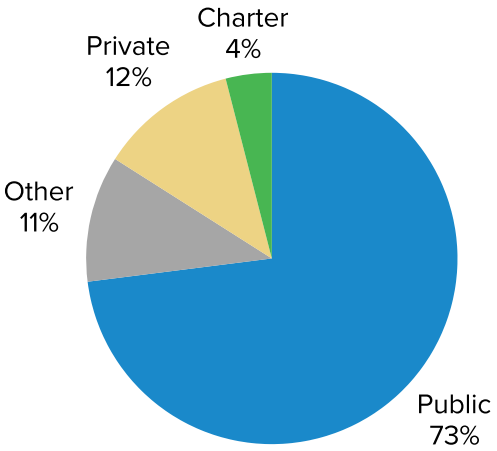
LXD Research conducted an online survey of K-12 educators between April and May 2025, gathering responses from 203 participants across 37 states and 166 cities. The sample included 138 teachers and 65 school administrators (including principals, vice principals, curriculum directors, and technology coordinators) representing a broad range of grade levels and subject areas.

The geographic distribution included 52% suburban, 34% urban, and 14% rural educators, with 73% from public schools, 12% from private schools, and 4% from charter schools. Grade-level representation spanned Pre-K through 12th grade, with strong representation across elementary (35%), middle (30%), and high school (30%) levels. The sample was diverse in terms of subject areas, with English/Language Arts (50%), Mathematics (38%), Social Studies (36%), and Science (33%) being most represented.

School Setting



School Type



Survey questions explored multiple dimensions of AI tool evaluation and adoption, including factors considered most important when selecting educational technology, influences on decision-making processes, levels of trust in AI applications for different educational purposes, and barriers to adoption. By leveraging multiple open-ended video questions (up to 2 minutes long), the research design balanced quantitative metrics with qualitative insights to capture both measurable preferences and nuanced concerns.

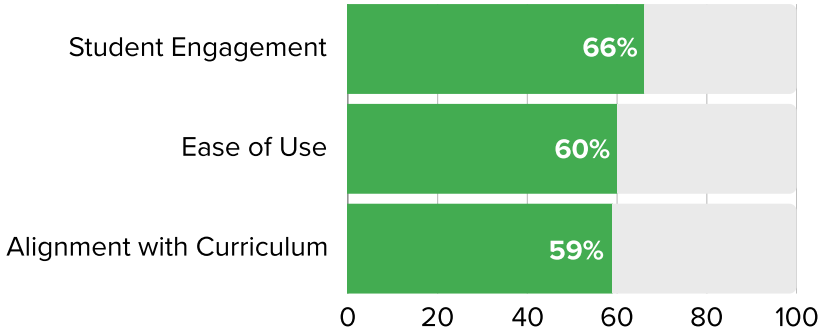
Key Findings

Student Engagement Emerges as the Primary Evaluation Criterion

The most striking finding from this research centers around what educators value most when evaluating AI-powered educational tools. Student engagement topped the list of "extremely important" factors, with 66% of respondents identifying it as crucial in their decision-making process for general educational tools, and 55% maintaining this priority specifically for AI tools. This emphasis on engagement reflects educators' recognition that AI's greatest educational value may lie not in administrative efficiency or curricular coverage, but in its capacity to motivate and involve students in their learning.

Following student engagement, educators prioritized ease of use (60%) and alignment with curriculum (59%) for general educational tools. However, when specifically evaluating AI tools, the priority order shifted notably: data privacy and security compliance (54% extremely important) and pilot trials (52% extremely important) gained prominence, reflecting unique concerns about AI implementation.

Top 3 Most Important Factors to Educators for Decision-Making around Educational Tools



The emphasis on engagement aligns with broader research showing that students value AI's ability to provide personalized, judgment-free learning experiences. This perspective suggests that successful AI tools must demonstrate clear value in enhancing student participation, interest, and investment in educational activities, rather than merely automating existing processes.

The Pilot Imperative: Educators Demand Hands-On Experience

Perhaps no finding more clearly illustrates the practical nature of educator decision-making than the preference for pilot programs and free trials. When forced to choose a single most important factor for AI tool evaluation, 23% selected pilot trials—making it the top choice, followed closely by peer recommendations (22%) and research evidence (19%). Essentially, teachers want to try it themselves and watch their own students to see if engagement leads to learning.

This preference intensifies when examining general educational tool selection, where 40% identified pilot trials as their single most relied-upon proof point, far exceeding peer recommendations (22%) and formal research studies (7%). The emphasis on pilots represents educators' insistence on evidence that extends beyond theoretical effectiveness to practical applicability in their specific contexts.

The demand for hands-on experience is closely tied to educators' high valuation of references from other schools (70% considered very or extremely important) and customer testimonials (70%). These preferences suggest that educators trust experiential validation more than vendor claims, seeking confirmation from colleagues who face similar challenges and constraints. This also reinforces the value of qualitative insights and data collection during research studies, ensuring that educators are asked about their experiences with the program and what worked or didn't work for them, rather than looking purely at isolated metrics or test scores.

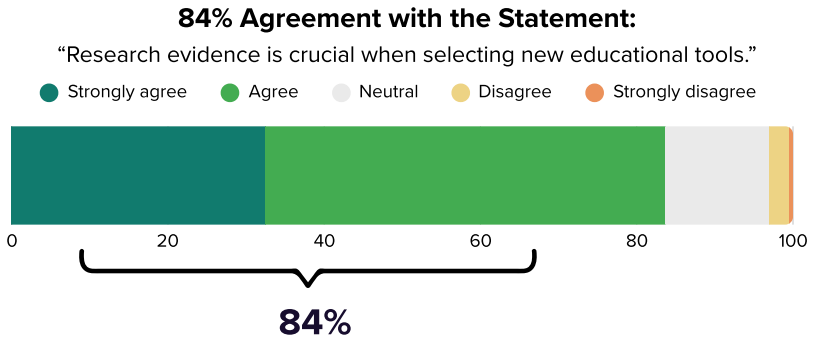
Action Research

Action research conducted with a school's own teachers and students is the most meaningful evidence, outweighing formal research studies, peer recommendations, and cost considerations. This hands-on approach reflects educators' desire to see tools work in their specific contexts before committing to full implementation.

Offering a third-party consultation with an experienced LXD Researcher could be a low-cost way to help measure the impact of these often short trial experiences, transforming standard pilots into evidence-generating implementations that lead to successful launches and long-term adoption.

Research Evidence as the Ultimate Form of Social Proof

The relationship between formal research evidence and educator decision-making reveals a critical insight: research evidence and peer validation are not competing approaches. Research is actually the most powerful form of social proof when it demonstrates success in contexts that educators recognize as similar to their own.



While 84% of educators agreed that research evidence is crucial when selecting educational tools, and 77% indicated that research evidence heavily influences their adoption decisions, the apparent preference for peer recommendations over formal research studies reflects a deeper issue: most educators assume research is esoteric, removed from real teaching scenarios, and conducted in settings that don't look like theirs. Yet, 75% of educators trust educational tools more when they are scientifically validated, highlighting the **importance of scientific validation**. As one elementary teacher mentioned, "Other professional fields use research to guide their work and the tools that they use. So, of course, we should be doing that with educational tools... we shouldn't be implementing anything without [research] being part of it."

Educators are not just taking research evidence at face value—they are critical consumers of research, expressing a desire for high-quality, generalizable evidence with real students and teachers in a variety of different contexts and classrooms. As one teacher mentioned, "Every educational tool should be researched, but I think it needs to be researched with different types of students. Students that live in poverty-stricken areas, students that are middle class, students that are on the higher level. To me, a lot of times when we get educational tools, it's geared more towards the middle class students, and that's not the only type of students that are in schools." Another teacher described a recent experience deciding whether to adopt it at her school by noting, "my kids need one-on-one support, and the evidence did not present that at all...I wasn't just looking for a good program, I was looking for a good program that met my needs."

School leaders demonstrate stronger reliance on formal research than teachers, with 46% of leaders saying research has "a great deal" of influence on their decisions compared to 30% of teachers. However, this gap likely reflects the reality that school leaders often have more direct influence than teachers when it comes to decision-making around adopting educational tools and programs. There may also be an accessibility challenge since most peer-reviewed research is behind paywalls that only individuals with university access can read without charge.

The Importance of Independent and Relatable Research

Critically, educators express particular skepticism about vendor-conducted research. As one administrator noted: "When we look at that research evidence to make a decision whether we're going to adopt or reject the educational tool, what we look at the most is research that's been conducted by somebody other than the vendor. When the vendor is the exclusive company that has conducted that research, it makes it a little bit harder to accept that research as valid."

The key insight is that research becomes compelling social proof when it demonstrates three critical elements listed below. When research meets these criteria, it provides the ultimate form of “social” proof: evidence that colleagues just like them, in settings just like theirs, have achieved success with the tool.

Authentic implementation contexts: Studies conducted in real classrooms with practicing teachers who face genuine constraints and challenges. This approach ensures research reflects the true complexity of educational environments rather than idealized laboratory conditions.

Recognizable settings: Research conducted in districts, schools, and classrooms similar to the decision maker's context in terms of demographics, resources, and challenges. When educators can see themselves and their students in the research scenarios, they can more confidently predict similar outcomes in their own settings.

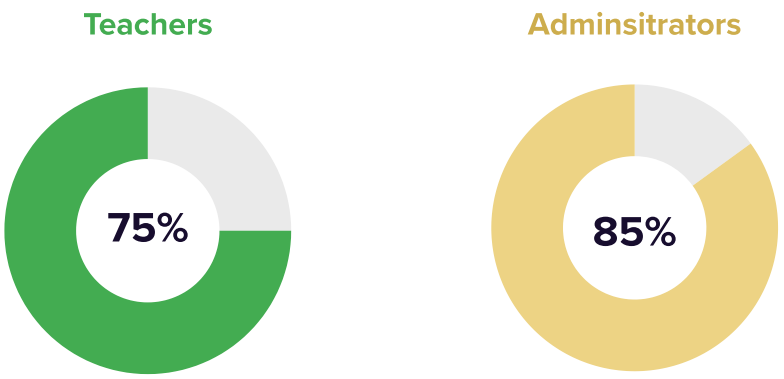
Independent validation: Studies conducted by third-party researchers rather than vendors, remove the inherent conflict of interest in self-assessment. Independent research provides credibility that vendor studies cannot achieve, particularly when researchers have academic credentials or established reputations in educational evaluation.

Research should also be expert reviewed by non-profit organizations, including Digital Promise, Evidence for ESSA, or EduEvidence.

AI Adoption Patterns Reveal Cautious Optimism with Clear Barriers

The survey revealed that AI adoption has reached a tipping point in K-12 education, with 54% of educators currently using AI tools. These numbers match other surveys conducted in the space over the last year. Looking ahead, 77% of respondents expressed a likelihood to adopt AI tools in the coming school year, with school leaders again showing stronger intent (85%) than teachers (75%).

Likelihood of Adopting AI tools in the Next School Year



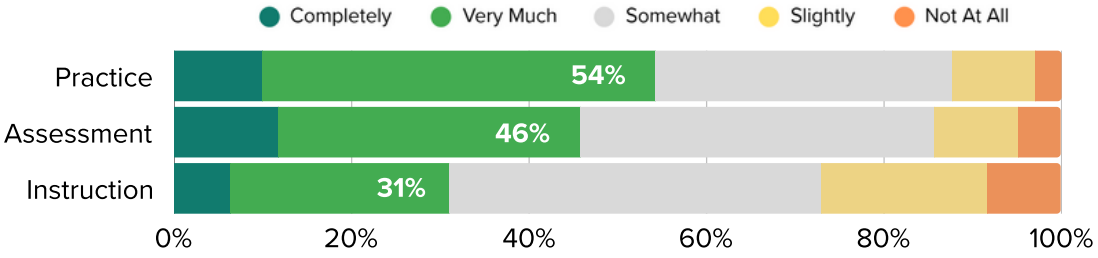
However, this optimism coexists with substantial concerns that may influence the pace and nature of future adoption. The barrier profile for AI tools differs markedly from general educational technology concerns. While cost has traditionally been a primary barrier for educational technology adoption, AI tools face a different set of challenges (see below). This represents a fundamental shift in educator priorities, where ethical and privacy considerations have surpassed financial constraints as the primary adoption barriers.

%	Barriers to AI-Powered EdTech Adoption
54%	Ethical concerns
53%	Data privacy and security risks
40%	Uncertainty about long-term benefits
35%	Cost of implementation
34%	Resistance from other staff

Trust Varies Significantly by Educational Function

Educators expressed differentiated levels of trust in AI applications depending on their educational purpose, revealing sophisticated understanding of AI's appropriate roles. The trust hierarchy shows practice tools with the highest levels of trust and instructional tools with the lowest.

Level of Trust in AI-powered Educational Tools for Different Educational Purposes



This pattern suggests educators view AI as most appropriate for reinforcing existing learning rather than delivering primary instruction. The low trust in AI for direct teaching reflects fundamental questions about whether technology can replicate the human elements of instruction —empathy, cultural responsiveness, and nuanced real-time adaptation to student needs.

When asked about factors that increase trust in AI educational tools, educators emphasized experiential validation over theoretical assurances (see below). This hierarchy reinforces the finding that educators prioritize practical experience over abstract validation, while also revealing important differences by role. School leaders showed higher appreciation for research evidence (72% vs. 50% for teachers) and ongoing support (69% vs. 53%), while teachers placed greater emphasis on success stories from peer schools (62% vs. 56%).

The emphasis on ongoing support and training suggests that educators understand AI tool adoption as a learning process requiring sustained assistance rather than a one-time implementation decision.

%	Factors that Increase Trust
73%	Positive experiences during pilots or free trials
60%	Success stories from other schools
56%	Ongoing support and training
55%	Evidence of effectiveness through research

Implications for Educational Technology Development

Prioritizing Engagement in Design Philosophy

The overwhelming emphasis on student engagement as the primary evaluation criterion should fundamentally influence AI tool development priorities. Rather than focusing primarily on administrative efficiency or curricular coverage, successful AI tools must demonstrably enhance student motivation, participation, and investment in learning.

This finding suggests that AI developers should prioritize features that increase student agency, provide meaningful choice, offer personalized challenges, and create opportunities for creative expression. Tools that merely automate existing processes, regardless of their efficiency, may struggle to gain educator adoption if they fail to enhance student engagement.

"Formal research definitely needs to collect information about student use of AI, so not teacher use. Yes, educators are using AI to come up with creative lessons. However, I want to know how is it impacting student learning? How is it affecting their scores? Are they actually learning if they use an AI and not just repeating everything the AI says."

Designing for Pilot Success

The critical importance of pilot programs in educator decision-making suggests that AI tools must be designed for successful trial implementations. This requirement extends beyond basic functionality to include comprehensive onboarding, clear success metrics, and support systems that enable educators to quickly identify value and overcome implementation challenges.

Successful pilot programs require tools that demonstrate impact quickly, provide clear evidence of student engagement improvements, and offer sufficient flexibility to accommodate diverse classroom contexts.

"What really influenced my decision was when we got a trial, however, [was that] they assigned us a person to go through the program and to talk it through, because it wasn't just a trial I was doing on my own, not really knowing what I was doing; someone actually was there guiding me, and that made a huge difference."

A Hierarchy of Research-Based Proof

Understanding that research serves as the most credible form of social proof when properly contextualized, educational leaders and EdTech companies should recognize that different types of research serve different validation purposes. The ESSA evidence framework provides a useful hierarchy that moves from theoretical foundation to practical demonstration (see below). This approach transforms research from abstract validation into practical demonstration, showing educators that colleagues in similar contexts have successfully implemented the tool and achieved meaningful results.

ESSA LEVEL/TIER IV	**Foundation-Level Proof** demonstrates that the product aligns with academic research regarding effective teaching methodologies, drawing upon learning sciences, educational standards, and pedagogical frameworks. The accompanying literature review addresses the specific teaching domain or instructional focus area of the product, detailing how the product both supports student engagement and facilitates intended learning outcomes. A clear logic model is also required, outlining the product's function, context of use, and the intended implementation model within the classroom or broader school environment.
ESSA LEVEL/TIER III	**Usage-Based Proof** includes correlational studies that demonstrate when teachers implement the tool more frequently or consistently, students perform better. These studies provide powerful social proof because they show real teachers, in real classrooms, achieving better outcomes through higher-quality, more consistent, and more sustained implementation. Educators can envision themselves achieving similar results through committed use.
ESSA LEVEL/TIER II or I	**Comparative Proof** includes quasi-experimental and randomized controlled studies compare users to non-users across multiple settings and contexts. When conducted across diverse schools and districts, these studies provide the strongest form of social proof because educators can identify schools similar to theirs and see evidence of success in comparable contexts. These studies also provide a clear reference point, by including a comparison or control group of students, that a given program is compared to in order to demonstrate improvements in student achievement above and beyond typical or expected growth.
	The Power of Multiple Studies in Recognizable Contexts: The most compelling research portfolios include multiple studies conducted in various settings, allowing educators to find contexts that resonate with their own. When a leader reviews research and thinks, "That school district looks like ours, and they got great results," the research transcends academic validation to become powerful social proof.

Recommendations for Educational Leaders

Prioritizing Research as Strategic Social Proof

Given that research serves as the most credible form of social proof when conducted in recognizable contexts, educational leaders should prioritize AI tools supported by comprehensive research portfolios that demonstrate success across multiple authentic educational settings. Rather than seeking a single "gold standard" study, leaders should look for research programs that include:

- **Foundational Evidence:** Studies documenting co-design with teachers and alignment with educational research, providing assurance that the tool was built with educator input and grounded in learning science.
- **Implementation Evidence:** Correlational studies showing that higher-quality implementation leads to better student outcomes, demonstrating that the tool works when used as intended in real classrooms.
- **Comparative Evidence:** Multiple quasi-experimental or randomized studies conducted across diverse settings, allowing leaders to identify contexts similar to their own and see evidence of success in comparable environments.

The key is ensuring that research portfolios include studies conducted in settings that leaders can recognize as similar to their own context. A single study in a high-performing suburban district may not provide relevant social proof for an urban district leader, but a portfolio including multiple studies across various contexts allows each leader to find relevant evidence.

When evaluating research, leaders should ask: "Can I see schools like mine in this research? Are there teachers like mine implementing this tool? Are the outcomes demonstrated in contexts I recognize?" Research that passes these tests provides the most compelling form of social proof available.

Ensuring Equitable Access and Implementation

The documented **disparities in AI access and training** across different school contexts require deliberate attention to equity in adoption planning. Leaders should prioritize ensuring that all students have access to AI-enhanced learning opportunities, regardless of their school's resource level or demographic composition. This commitment to equity requires both **technological infrastructure and educator preparation,** with particular attention to schools serving high-poverty communities, students with disabilities, and multilingual learners who may need additional support to realize AI's potential benefits.

Creating Ethical Frameworks for AI Use

The prevalence of ethical concerns among educators suggests that successful AI adoption requires clear guidance and frameworks for ethical use. Leaders should develop policies that address **academic integrity, data privacy, and appropriate boundaries** between human and artificial intelligence in educational contexts. These frameworks should be **developed collaboratively with educators, students, and families,** recognizing that ethical AI use requires ongoing dialogue and adaptation rather than static policies.

Looking Forward: The Future of AI in Education

It's hard to know how fast AI will continue to integrate into everything we see and do, but preparing students for this future remains our most critical responsibility.

Preparing Students for an AI-Enhanced World
Students need to develop digital literacy, critical thinking, and ethical reasoning capabilities. As AI becomes increasingly prevalent across society, educational experiences with these technologies help students build skills they'll need as citizens and workers.

Equipping Educators with Essential Skills
Teachers require ongoing professional development to effectively implement AI tools in their classrooms. Nearly 58% of K-12 teachers have yet to receive any training on artificial intelligence, creating a critical gap that must be addressed for equitable implementation.

Balancing Innovation with Proven Practices
Educational systems must balance technological advancement with sound pedagogical principles. Human judgment and connection will remain central to effective teaching, even as AI capabilities continue to evolve.

Conclusion

This research reveals that the apparent tension between formal evidence and peer recommendations is illusory—research itself becomes the most powerful form of social proof when it demonstrates success in contexts educators recognize as similar to their own. Educators don't inherently distrust research; they distrust research disconnected from their reality. When studies feature teachers, schools, and students like theirs, research transforms into the ultimate peer validation.

For both educational leaders and EdTech companies, this insight suggests prioritizing diverse, authentic research portfolios over single large-scale studies in controlled environments. As educational systems navigate AI integration, success will be measured not by technological sophistication but by impact on student engagement, learning outcomes, and equity—achieved through practical implementation that addresses educator concerns while maintaining rigorous independent validation.

AI TOOLS EVALUATION CHECKLIST

For Educational Leaders: Before selecting an AI tool, use these guiding questions to review and evaluate tools with Research-Based Social Proof.

Student Engagement Focus

- [ ] Does the tool demonstrate clear evidence of enhancing student motivation and participation?
- [ ] Are there specific metrics or examples showing improved student engagement?

Research Portfolio Assessment

- [ ] Are there multiple studies conducted in different settings (not just one large study)?
- [ ] Can you identify schools, districts, or student populations similar to yours in the research?
- [ ] Was the research conducted by independent third parties (not just the vendor)?

What do you notice about these critical indicators?

- [ ] **Foundational Evidence:** Is there documentation of teacher co-design and research-based development?
- [ ] **Implementation Evidence:** Are there correlational studies showing that higher-quality or more consistent implementation leads to better outcomes?
- [ ] **Comparative Evidence:** Are there studies comparing users to non-users in settings you recognize?

Pilot Program Requirements

- [ ] Are there clear success metrics focused on student engagement and learning outcomes?
- [ ] Will you have access to guided implementation rather than a self-directed trial?
- [ ] Can you connect with other schools that have completed successful pilots?

Privacy and Ethics Verification

- [ ] Are data privacy practices clearly documented and independently verified?
- [ ] Is there a clear ethical framework for AI use in educational contexts?
- [ ] Are there transparent policies about data collection, use, and retention?
- [ ] Do privacy protections meet or exceed your district's requirements?

Contextual Validation Questions

- [ ] Are there teachers like yours implementing this successfully?
- [ ] Are the outcomes demonstrated in contexts you recognize as similar to your own?
- [ ] Would this evidence convince your school board and stakeholders?

EVIDENCE CHECKLIST

For Ed-Tech Solution Providers: Use these guiding questions for building Research-Based Social Proof.

Co-Design Documentation

- [ ] Have we documented teacher involvement throughout development?
- [ ] Did we pursue research-based design certifications?
- [ ] Can we show how educator input directly shaped features?
- [ ] Have we developed clear logic models connecting design to outcomes?

Implementation Research Strategy

- [ ] Have we conducted studies across diverse settings?
- [ ] Can we demonstrate how quality implementation leads to better outcomes?
- [ ] Do we show clear connections between usage and student learning?

Comparative Evidence Portfolio

- [ ] Have we conducted multiple studies across different contexts?
- [ ] Do our studies feature authentic classroom implementation?
- [ ] Can any educator find research relevant to their context?

Research Partnership Best Practices

- [ ] Are we partnering with credible, independent research organizations?
- [ ] Have we maintained transparency about funding and methodology?
- [ ] Do we document both successes and challenges?
- [ ] Have we included diverse school types and demographics?

Communication and Accessibility

- [ ] Have we created accessible summaries and context-specific case studies?
- [ ] Do we provide implementation guides based on research insights?
- [ ] Are we continuously expanding research and conducting follow-up studies?
- [ ] Have we refined our product based on research findings?

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