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Governor Little and Superintendent Critchfield Announce First-of-its-Kind Public-Private Partnership for Artificial Intelligence Education

The partnership positions Idaho as a national leader in AI literacy

(BOISE) – The Idaho Department of Education announced today a groundbreaking public-private partnership that positions Idaho at the national forefront of AI-driven education.

The first-of-its-kind in Idaho initiative is designed to accelerate responsible AI adoption across K-12 schools. It also advances the vision outlined in Senate Bill 1227, one of the most forward-looking frameworks in the country. The bill, sponsored by Senator Kevin Cook, calls for expanding AI literacy, strengthening digital skills, and ensuring Idaho students are prepared for a rapidly evolving technological landscape.

“As this technology continues to evolve and grow, it’s clear that we have an imperative to make sure that our students are prepared to thrive in environments that demand proficiency with this new tool,” said Idaho Superintendent of Public Instruction Debbie Critchfield. “I’m grateful to our partners for their support and am proud to say that this historic collaboration puts Idaho at the national forefront of AI education.”

Through partnership with Idaho National Laboratory (INL), Idaho STEM Action Center, Microsoft, Micron, and Stukent, Idaho sets the benchmark for responsible AI adoption in education by uniting world-class industry partners to elevate Idaho educators, enhancing statewide curriculum, and ensuring equitable access to high-quality AI learning opportunities for every student.

- **Idaho National Laboratory (INL) to expand STEM engagement and AI learning opportunities:** INL is deepening its commitment to educator support and STEM engagement through its newly launched “Teaching in the Age of AI” professional development series. These workshops offer Idaho teachers practical, classroom-ready strategies for integrating AI concepts into instruction. Beyond workshop delivery, INL has provided funding to support AI trainings for Idaho educators. To date, approximately

70 teachers have participated, reaching an estimated 4,200 Idaho students with enhanced AI learning opportunities.

- **Idaho STEM Action Center:**

Idaho STEM Action Center has awarded a \$250,000 grant to the Idaho Department of Education to offer statewide AI training to educators. Funding will support development of a statewide course for educators to receive training on AI literacy and generative AI tools. Funding will also support regional AI innovators to support effective implementation, regional in-person teacher trainings, and a “train the trainer” cohort to improve AI leadership in schools statewide.

- **Micron to support AI ecosystem development with AI-focused teacher training:**

Micron’s investment in AI education reflects its deep commitment to helping Idaho learners and educators thrive in an evolving AI-driven economy. As part of the White House’s AI Commitment to America’s Youth, Micron pledged to empower 40,000 learners and educators by 2029. As a part of its commitment, Micron supported Idaho’s Hour of AI program, reaching 5,000 students and educators across the state. Partnering with the state on an expansion of teacher training will reinforce Idaho’s position not just as an adopter of AI in education, but as a contributor shaping the nation’s future-ready workforce. By embedding AI curriculum, educator training, and mentorship opportunities across Idaho schools, Micron is helping to build the state’s AI ecosystem from the ground up.

- **Microsoft collaboration to strengthen AI literacy and educator credentialing:**

As part of this statewide effort, Microsoft will provide AI literacy programs and educator credentialing through the Microsoft Elevate for Educators platform to ensure that teachers across Idaho will have access to robust, classroom-ready professional learning resources. Microsoft Copilot Chat will also be available for hands-on AI use by Idaho educators and students ages 13+, supported by enterprise grade security, strong privacy protections, and administrative controls specifically designed for education settings. The partnership also establishes a pathway for school districts to explore customized digital assistants co-designed with local educators to support instructional tasks, district operations, and student services.

- **Stukent donation expands access to high-quality AI curriculum:**

To ensure AI learning is accessible to students regardless of geography or district resources, Idaho-based educational technology company Stukent will donate its full AI curriculum, including teacher training materials, to every Idaho public high school. This contribution will provide engaging, industry-aligned coursework that equips students with foundational knowledge and real-world AI skills.

“Idaho Senate Bill 1227 reflects a thoughtful, human-centered approach to AI in education. It rightly emphasizes transparency, safety, accessibility, and the protection of student data. Those principles align closely with Microsoft’s commitment to responsible AI, keeping teachers at the center of learning and maintaining public trust,” said Kia Floyd, General Manager for State Government Affairs at Microsoft. “By establishing a forward-looking statewide framework, Idaho will become a national leader, and we are proud to partner with the State to help prepare students and teachers for an AI-influenced future.”

Debbie Critchfield, Superintendent of Public Instruction

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“Preparing Idaho’s educators to confidently use and teach artificial intelligence is an investment in our students, our workforce, and our state’s future.” said April Arnzen, EVP and Chief People Officer of Micron Technology. “When educators have access to high-quality AI training, they are better equipped to spark curiosity, strengthen critical thinking, and help students understand how technology can be used responsibly and collaboratively—to enhance learning, solve real-world problems, and support human creativity. At Micron, we believe empowering educators with AI skills today will ensure Idaho’s learners are ready to thrive in tomorrow’s innovation economy.”

Though responsible adaptation of AI will require new, forward-thinking strategy, Idaho is well-positioned as an innovator and trailblazer when it comes to integrating this new technology into public school classrooms.

“This public-private partnership represents a unified commitment to ensuring Idaho students and educators have the tools, knowledge, and opportunities needed to thrive in an AI-driven world,” said Critchfield. “By aligning state leadership with major innovators, Idaho is not just participating in the AI conversation – it’s leading it.”

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