

President Trump Signs Executive Order to Advance AI Education in K-12 Schools

APRIL 28, 2025

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On April 23, President Trump signed an executive order (EO) establishing an Artificial Intelligence (AI) Education Task Force to advance AI training for K-12 students, faculty, and staff in the nation's public-school districts in an effort to provide early exposure to AI concepts and technology and develop "an AI ready workforce and the next generation of AI innovators."

The EO lays out four initiatives: (1) the Presidential Artificial Intelligence Challenge to encourage and highlight student and educator achievement in AI; (2) improving educational outcomes through AI at the K-12 level, including through creating public to private partnerships and identifying available resources; (3) enhancing the use of AI in teacher training to assist educators in effectively integrating AI-based tools and AI teaching in the classroom; and (4) promoting AI-related apprenticeships across industries, as well as workplace training and learning opportunities for jobs utilizing AI.

The overall purpose of the EO is to ensure "that every American has the opportunity to learn about AI from the earliest stages of their educational journey" and "solidify our Nation's leadership in the AI-driven future." The Task Force will comprise various federal agency heads, including in part, the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy, who will chair the Task Force, the respective Secretaries of the US Departments of Education, Labor, Energy, and Agriculture, and the Director of the National Science Fund. The EO directs the represented agencies to prioritize AI in funding and in grant programs and encourages partnerships with industry and philanthropic organizations.

Below is a further summary of each initiative described in the EO.

The "Challenge"

The EO first announces what the Administration is calling the "Presidential Artificial Intelligence Challenge," which will be a competition for students and educators to showcase their AI knowledge and encourage achievements in AI. The Challenge will highlight student and teacher achievements in AI and will call for multiple age categories, distinct geographic regions for competitions, and a variety of

competition topics. The EO requests that the Task Force agencies submit a plan for the Challenge within 90 days of this EO, with the goal of holding the Challenge within one year of submitting such plan.

Using AI to Improve Education

The second initiative directs the agencies represented on the Task Force to establish public-private partnerships with AI developers, including academic institutions, nonprofit entities, and other organizations with expertise in AI “to collaboratively develop online resources focused on teaching K-12 students foundational AI literacy and critical thinking skills.” The EO further instructs agencies to identify funding methods and work to ensure that such methods are ready to use within 180 days of any private-public partnership rollout. Moreover, the US Department of Education has 90 days from the issuance of this EO to publish guidance relating to the use of discretionary grants for K-12 AI education, such as AI-based high-quality instructional resources, high-impact tutoring, college and career pathway exploration, and advising.

AI Training for Teachers

The next initiative requires the relevant agencies to prioritize the use of discretionary grants for implementing AI education into teacher training with the goal of (1) reducing the time teachers spend on administrative tasks, (2) improving teacher training and evaluation, (3) providing professional development to educators to enable them to integrate AI fundamentals into all subject areas, and (4) providing professional development in foundational computer science. This section of the order also requires both the Director of the National Science Fund and Secretary of Agriculture to “take steps to prioritize research on the use of AI in education” and to create teacher and educator training opportunities that help effectively integrate AI based tools in the classroom.

Workforce Apprenticeship

This final section requires the Secretary of Labor to prioritize the promotion of “AI-related Registered Apprenticeships” by using apprenticeship intermediary contracts and allocating existing discretionary funds to encourage states and grantees under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to use such funding to develop AI skills and support work-based learning opportunities with jobs that utilize AI. Further, the EO directs both the Assistant Secretary of Labor for Employment and Training and the Director of the National Science Fund to promote “quality AI skills education coursework” in collaboration with state and local workforce development boards, industry organizations, education and training providers, and employers. Specifically, the order calls for this effort to identify funding opportunities, set performance targets by way of grant award incentives, and utilize industry and philanthropic partnerships. The Secretary of Labor is also tasked with promoting the creation of opportunities for high school students to enroll in AI courses and certification programs by giving priority to grantees that commit to use funds in this area. The Secretary of Labor will also encourage partnership with states and local school districts to create these dual enrollment opportunities within the student’s high school education.

ArentFox Schiff is here to help you navigate the effects of this EO and will provide updates as they come.

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