Artificial Intelligence in New Mexico's Schools

INSTITUTO DEL PUENTE

FUTURE FOCUSED EDUCATION

Potential + Concerns

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a tool that can help realize the potential of community-based learning through capstone projects. While this technology has the potential to revolutionize the way young people and educators access information and collaborate, it also poses a challenge to concerns over cultural, language, and data sovereignty here in New Mexico.

> **This fall, we convened students, teachers, administrators, school board members, and community members. Here's what they had to say about Artificial Intelligence in schools:**
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> *"A state-wide policy designed from within NM communities, with input and oversight, supports the advancement of equitable systems across the state benefiting NM children and families."*
>
> *"Developing an AI policy with tribes at the table is critical for identifying concerns and solutions for use of this fast-growing area of technology."*

Future Focused Education's findings:

Over the past two years, through Instituto del Puente, Future Focused Education has convened hundreds of community members and educators to hear from young people about their hopes for the future. These conversations have led to policies that reinforce three common needs:

1. **Equity, Inclusion, and Tribal Sovereignty**

   - Ensure AI policies support equitable, inclusive access to AI tools and prioritize tribal sovereignty.
   - Engage tribal communities as sovereign nations with control over their data, with protections negotiated and reviewed as leadership changes.

2. **Ethical and Cultural Protection in Education**

   - Define ethical AI use in classrooms to protect student privacy and cultural backgrounds, especially for marginalized communities.
   - Outline AI's scope of influence at all levels—state, county, and community-wide.

3. **Unified State Approach to AI Implementation**

   - Establish a state policy to consolidate disparate AI projects and enable collaboration across New Mexico.
   - Create a central framework that supports both statewide coordination and local adaptability.

4. **Implementation Roadmap**

   - Develop a practical, actionable AI implementation plan for educators, students, and communities.
   - Avoid merely policy-driven AI adoption by promoting meaningful, real-world applications in capstone projects.

5. **Inclusive AI Workforce Development**

   - Prepare students for roles in AI by defining workforce needs and supporting educational pathways in AI and emerging fields like quantum technology.
   - Enable students to actively participate in the design and ownership of AI tools within the education system.

Recommendation:

Collaborate with Representative Yanira Gurrola, member of the House Education Committee, to introduce legislation based on the following principles:

1. **Equity, Inclusion, and Tribal Sovereignty**

2. **Ethical and Cultural Protection in Education**

3. **Unified State Approach to AI Implementation**

4. **Implementation Roadmap**

5. **Inclusive AI Workforce Development**

Creating AI policy is essential to outline the ethical use of AI in educational settings in New Mexico, ensuring that students' cultural backgrounds and privacy are protected. The policy would help set standards for how AI influences learning and capstone projects while maintaining a focus on safeguarding sensitive information related to communities, especially for historically marginalized groups.