



NATIONAL ACADEMY FOR AI INSTRUCTION

National Academy for AI Instruction FAQs

Why is the AFT partnering with tech companies like Microsoft, OpenAI and Anthropic?

The AFT is partnering with these companies out of strategic necessity, not blind trust. Artificial intelligence is rapidly shaping the future of education, labor and policy. If we're not at the table influencing how it's used—and the federal government has made it clear it doesn't want our voice—we risk being left out of decisions that directly affect our members. These partnerships are about educating children wisely, safely and ethically. They are about teaching and learning, including protecting jobs, ensuring the ethical use of AI, and making sure the technology supports, not replaces, our people. We're engaging with eyes wide open to help shape AI in ways that align with our values of equity, privacy (for both students and staff) and educator empowerment.

How are you addressing privacy and data concerns in these partnerships?

We've made data privacy and ethical use non-negotiable in our collaborations. Our partners know we're watching closely. We are advocating for strong protections, transparency and member-first design. The AFT does not endorse a specific company; we are ensuring our educators are trained on how to use the tools to help them with their jobs. We are challenging these companies to do better for our members and for all educators and students. And we're bringing our legal, tech and policy experts to every table to hold these companies accountable.

Why is the AFT engaging with technology companies on artificial intelligence?

At the AFT, we always start by asking: What's best for our members, students, families and the communities we serve? That guiding question led us to partner with a few select technology companies. AI is not a future concept—it's already reshaping how classrooms operate, how educators work and how decisions are made in education and beyond. We believe educators and unions must be at the table to shape these changes, not just react to them.

What if members are concerned about partnering with tech companies?

We understand and share those concerns. Many technology companies have not earned the public's trust, and there are real questions about data privacy, job security and the role of profit in public education. Not only are these concerns valid, they're essential to raise. That's why we're engaging critically and intentionally: to protect educator voice, safeguard public values and ensure AI serves the common good.

What does the AI Academy actually do?

The AFT AI Academy is a hands-on, member-centered space designed to explore, test

and shape the use of AI in our schools and workplaces. It will offer training, host policy labs, develop resources, and convene educators and union leaders to build AI fluency and to demand tools that work for us, not against us. It's about training with purpose and advocating with power so our members aren't left behind.

Why now? Why the AFT?

The moment demands it, and our members deserve it. AI isn't theoretical anymore. It's already shaping hiring processes, student assessments, curriculum tools and healthcare delivery. The old saying *"you're either at the table or on the menu"* has never been more relevant. As one of the largest unions in the country, the AFT has a unique opportunity to lead, not follow. We're doing this not just for ourselves, but to protect the future of public education, labor and democracy.

Are members involved in the development and direction of the AI Academy?

Absolutely. The AI Academy is being built by and for members. We are involving educators, school staff, healthcare professionals and higher ed faculty from across the country. They're shaping the curriculum, testing the tools and raising the hard questions. This isn't top-down; it's a collaborative, union-led model for responsible innovation. Our [Commonsense Guardrails for Using Advanced Technology in Schools](#) was created by our members to incorporate protection, safety and member input into how we work with AI.