

Reshaping Education in The Age of AI

Insights from The Better Future Forum in Singapore: May 2026

AI is reshaping education faster than any one of us can make sense of alone. Together, we explored the possibilities and risks of AI related to our core learning question:

How do we support students to grow holistically so they can shape a better future?

Key Insights

The conversation facilitated by Fernando Reimers, Professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, and co-author of [Artificial Intelligence and Education in the Global South](#), explored the impact of AI at three levels: students-facing, teacher-supporting, and system-level, starting with an opening provocation for each area.

Core Insight

This is a pivotal moment and a real opportunity to reshape education. As AI rapidly changes how we learn, teach, and access knowledge, it invites us to question inherited models of education designed for a different era. We need to be clear about the problems we want to solve, imagine new possibilities rather than replicate broken systems, and design with all learners in mind, especially young people, who will be most affected. AI can be a force for good rather than harm, but that will depend not on the technology itself, but on the choices we make together about how we use it.

STUDENTS: What is the impact of AI on growing students holistically?



Emma Venetis of Brookings Institute

Emma shared findings from [A New Direction for Students in an AI World](#), a research effort that engaged more than 500 stakeholders worldwide. One key finding was that **the risks of AI are currently outpacing its benefits**, especially related to cognitive offloading & social-emotional development. At the same time, Emma reminded us that we have the power to change this: When AI is grounded in strong instruction, it has the potential to enhance learning.

Ben Caufield of the AI-powered learning platform Eedi highlighted evidence that real-time feedback can drive significant learning gains, while emphasizing the importance of **keeping humans in the loop to build trust** and ensure consistency. We also saw AI's potential to **expand access and inclusion**. Jhair, a student from Peru, shared that he would not have been in the room without AI helping him learn English. A school leader echoed this possibility, describing how **personalized learning can better support students who have traditionally been excluded**, particularly those who are neurodivergent or learn differently.

At the same time, many shared concerns about the **erosion of fundamental capacities that make us human**. One participant, embracing her identity as an artist, mourned the loss of innate creative expression. Another shared how AI may be weakening critical thinking by reducing our willingness to engage in the productive struggle that learning often requires.

“How do we enable and empower our students to remain with the friction and struggle that are essential to deep learning when these types of tools are at their fingertips?”

— Nikita Khetan, Red Bridge

Participants also raised concerns about **dependency** and **the impact on relationships**. There was a sentiment that AI feels “nearly human,” and fears that some young people are already replacing real, human connection with bots. Concerns were also raised about AI hallucinations, child safety, and the reality that even if schools are intentional, learning increasingly happens beyond the classroom, exposing students to tools trained on non-curated content.

One school leader reminded us not to forget **the essential role teachers play** in helping students build the capacities to think critically. This has always mattered, and may be even more important in the age of AI.

TEACHERS: What is the impact of AI on teachers and teacher-leader development?



Yusuf Ahmad of Playlab

Yusuf spoke about the **possibility and power of AI when agency is placed in the hands of teachers**. He shared the story of Emmanuel, a teacher in Uganda, who built an AI coach to help teachers in his community ask stronger questions in ways that reflected local realities, including large class sizes and context-specific needs. Yusuf also raised questions around power: Who designs, controls, and benefits from these technologies?

Some highlighted AI's potential to create **more space for the deeply human work of teaching** by providing instructional support and reducing administrative burdens. However, there were mixed views on whether these promised gains will translate into practice.

“There is an immense opportunity to free up limited teacher capacity to be more humane, to spend attention developing relationships of care.”

— Rebecca Ume, Educator in Kenya

Others expressed concern that overreliance on AI-generated lessons could weaken teacher agency, a concern also highlighted in UNESCO's recent Teacher Task Force report. Participants also raised questions about equity, particularly given the concentration of power among a small number of actors shaping large AI systems.

The concern was not just unequal access to AI, but the emergence of a two-tiered education system. As one participant put it: "My biggest fear with AI is that an education system with a human becomes the premium product, and the AI-only education is for the disadvantaged!"

SYSTEMS: How will AI reshape our systems?



Oluwaseun Kayode of Schoolinka

Oluwaseun spoke about his experience scaling educator training in Nigeria. He shared that uptake of AI was initially low because teachers worried it would become a tool for performance management, but this shifted when it was reframed as a tool for self-reflection. As Oluwaseun reminded us, **the future of AI in education will not be determined by the quality of technology, but the quality of trust in a system.**

Larisa Hovanissian, Founder and CEO of Teach For Armenia, challenged us to use this pivotal moment not to marginally improve industrial-era models of education, but to reimagine them altogether. She noted that many classrooms remain rooted in teacher-directed learning and argued that **AI creates an opportunity to rethink teachers' roles** as facilitators of learning rather than primary transmitters of knowledge.

“We are at a historical juncture, where we will soon have the collective intelligence that is far greater than the collective intelligence of humanity.”

– Larisa Hovanissian, Teach for Armenia

Sanjay Purohit of the Centre for Exponential Change described AI as a diffusion technology with the potential to help solve some of society's most pressing challenges. He shared examples from India, including a pilot reaching 60,000 schools to accelerate foundational literacy and numeracy, and an initiative testing how AI can **listen to teachers at scale**. Richa Gupta, a social entrepreneur leading Labhya's work to improve student wellbeing across India, highlighted the opportunity to **make classroom data more rapidly accessible** to governments. Oliver Brechard of the Learning Planet Institute invited us to move beyond outdated, top-down paradigms and reimagine how AI can foster collaboration, strengthen learning ecosystems, and **unlock new forms of collective learning**.

Across the discussion, it was clear that AI has significant implications. Whether it becomes a force for good or harm will depend on whose voices shape its development, how we prepare young people and adults to engage with it responsibly, and how intentionally we use it in service of our shared purpose of shaping a better future.

Many thanks to all the participants at **The Better Future Forum** who contributed to these reflections and learning. Visit the [Better Future Hub](#) to explore additional insights and collective learning from Teach For All's [Global Institute for Shaping a Better Future](#). To continue the dialogue or learn more, reach out to Radha Ruparell (radha.ruparell@teachforall.org) or Stephen Jull (stephen.jull@teachforall.org).

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