

Beyond the Bell 10/17/2025

[Link to video on YouTube](#)

Transcript

0:00 Pop style instrumental music plays in the background.

A graphic split into three segments showing shelves of books, children studying, and a row of school buses appears and disappears showing the channel 6 digital studio logo and a logo for the Education Impact Initiative with a subheading reading “transforming Oklahoma’s Education System.”

Narrator: Streaming from Oklahoma's own digital studio, this is Beyond the Bell

0:06 A swipe edit transitions a ringing wall mounted bell with text overlay that says Beyond the Bell.

Narrator: Brought to you by the Oklahoma Education Impact Initiative.

0:12 Another swipe edit transitions to anchor Tatum Guinn

Tatum Guinn: You're watching Beyond the Bell, brought to you by the Oklahoma Education Impact Initiative. In our first episode, we talked about why education matters for all Oklahomans. And today, we're taking the next step, really digging into the challenges and opportunities shaping our schools of the future. Some may argue that the future is already here. How do our educators navigate this world of artificial intelligence? And that's where today's guests come in. They are experts in the field of artificial intelligence.

0:39 The camera cuts to the other side of the news desk where Dr. Kathy Curry and Dr. Jentre Olsen are seated.

Tatum Guinn: We have Dr. Kathy Curry with us. She joins us in our first episode, and we had to include her in today's conversation because this really is her wheelhouse. Dr. Curry is the Williams chair in higher education at Oklahoma State University and former Oklahoma Secretary of Education. She's recognized nationally for her research and leadership, and she is now focused on how artificial intelligence can shape the future of our schools. Dr. Curry, welcome back.

Dr. Curry: Thank you.

Tatum Guinn: Also joining us today is Dr. Jentre Olsen, the Brock Chair of Innovative Educational Leadership at Oklahoma State University and leader of the AI and Education

Echo Hub. His work helps schools explore how artificial intelligence can enhance teaching and learning while keeping the human connection at the center. A former teacher and host of the Innovating Education podcast. How exciting.

1:28 The camera cuts to a wide shot of the anchor and two guest sitting at the news desk with Dr. Olsen seated in the middle.

Tatum Guinn: Dr. Olsen. You focus on leadership, innovation, and the future of education. Welcome. Thank you for joining us this afternoon.

Dr. Olsen: Thanks for having me. It's great to be here.

Tatum Guinn: So, let's start here. It's really hard to go anywhere, have any conversation, turn on the TV without something being touched by artificial intelligence. It's been incorporated into everyday life. I mean, I've got friends that have chat GPT plan out their meals for the week. I mean, it really is everywhere. And of course, it is in education.

1:59 A text overlay reading “AI IN EDUCATION” appears in the lower left hand corner of the screen.

Tatum Guinn: So, let's talk about why it matters for education right now. Um, how what is the framework for what that looks like, the landscape of it? It's already here. How are educators approaching it or how should they?

Dr. Curry: So, that's an excellent question. Um, I think you're correct. I think it is going to change the trajectory of education.

2:19 A text overlay reading “Kathy Curry, PH.D – Professor, Oklahoma State University” appears in the lower left hand corner of the screen.

Dr. Curry: It changes the way students learn. It changes the way instructors teach. Obviously, that's at the heart of education. So, our commitment has been to get in front of it, to understand it more fully, to understand its implications for education both short-term and long-term. And that's why we're here communicating with you today to share some of our insight that we've gleaned. There is quite a bit that we don't know about artificial intelligence and how it will influence education in the future. That's why it needs to be a priority.

Tatum Guinn: Sure. Well, in our conversation last month, you said something that I have thought about often since that conversation was-- we've got students that are not the same as they were even five 10 years ago. We are working with students of the future and our teaching, the way we teach them, the way that people should approach education really needs to evolve with that. The way that things have been is you have these students that

have devices at the reach of a hand, but yet our teaching is behind and we have to change our approach to the way that we are connecting our students. We have to meet them where they are and where they are really is there's artificial intelligence there. So how can we harness that to our advantage? How can we understand the challenges of that? Dr. Olsen, I'd love to pick your brain. What are the challenges of trying to navigate this new landscape?

Dr. Olsen: Right. So, I think artificial intelligence is coming to us at a time of schooling that's just really primed for, um, serious momentum and change. I mean teachers at this point in time are overextended and students are hungry for individualized personal learning outcomes and options and so artificial intelligence has the capacity to meet both of those needs.

4:05 A text overlay reading "Jentre Olsen, PH. D – Associate Professor, Oklahoma State University" appears in the lower left-hand corner of the screen.

Dr. Olsen: I don't see AI, if we can say that, as replacing schooling in any way, but it will just enhance the work that we're doing. We can't go back to a status quo way of learning, but we have to together and collaboratively reimagine a new future um for education and it's very exciting.

Tatum Guinn: Okay. I love what you said. We have to use it to enhance what we are already doing. When I think of AI, I think of oh, it's doing the thinking for me. And that is a very important distinction. That is not the point of AI. that AI that's not how it should be used in schools. So, how do you use that tool in that way? How do you incorporate it?

Dr. Olsen: Yeah, that's a really good question. Um, it's incredibly important for us to fully understand what AI is. Students should not just be using AI or working with AI, but they need to be working on AI. They need to understand what AI is. And if we're just saying, "Hey, use AI," but we're not really teaching them how, when, where, what, and why they should be using AI, then we're missing the boat completely. Much like in a great investigative journalism uses a lot of questions to get to the heart of a matter, we have to be asking a lot of questions right now and having collaborative conversations. Uh, I'd argue that teachers need to be leading that conversation. But when we understand that in collaboration with parents, we can ensure that students um not only are just replacing their learning with AI but again enhancing it. And I can give some good examples of how that's possible, but I'm sure Dr. Curry has something to say as well on that topic.

Dr. Curry: Well, absolutely. One of our greatest concerns, um the large language models, absolutely they'll produce an answer for a student in an instant. That's not the kind of AI use that we're advocating. Um we've actually become quite involved with Khan Academy and their platform of Khanmigo which uses a Socratic method which gives a student a one-

on-one tutor which we all know the benefits of one-on-one tutoring. The fact that AI is scalable and every single student could have a one-on-one tutor and the AI aligns itself with a student's abilities and can adjust and adapt based on a student's ability leads us to believe it's a very strong support for student learning. So those are the ways that we envision AI being used in education, not in the way a student would go in and answer, ask a question, solve this problem for me, or help me write an essay for whatever class. There actually is some research out of MIT, Dr. Olsen and I were talking about it just this morning that suggests that the use of AI to replace that cognitive dissonance that problem solving can actually lead to a decline in cognitive connectivity. And so those are the kinds of questions we have to ask is how are we using AI in a way that supports learning, enhances learning rather than replaces learning because we don't know the long-term consequences of replacing learning with AI. So, we do have some strong ideas and some strong opinions about that, and we feel like educators need to get in front of it.

Tatum Guinn: Sure. Well, I imagine when thinking of the challenges when it comes to AI on the nose, it is that how do you utilize it in a way where it doesn't-- you want it to encourage critical thinking. That's the whole component for education is you want to be able to ask these tough questions and try to get there and you don't want a computer doing it for you. What are some of the other challenges that y'all are seeing in the way we incorporate AI?

Dr. Olsen: So, for anyone who's used AI at home, everybody is using chat GPT in different capacities like exercise planning, meal prepping, all these things you said—

Tatum Guinn: decorate my house for me.

Dr. Curry: Plan a vacation for me.

Dr. Olsen: Yes, for sure. It comes down to prompting. And you know, students sometimes aren't always excellent prompters and they have to be taught even how to use AI in a way that they can prompt perfect like in a more-- ask better questions again. So, when a student is saying, you know, write a five paragraph essay on Harriet Tubman and ChatGPT can spit that out in 5 seconds or less, is that student learning anything about writing? No. And the MIT article would suggest that they're enhancing their cognitive debt and actually losing gray matter. They couldn't actually recall anything about Harriet Tubman because ChatGPT did all the work. So, like an example Dr. Curry used which was Khan Academy within their Khanmigo smart AI tutor they have an essay tutor that helps students write. So, if a student was to ask Khanmigo for example write me a five paragraph essay on Harriet Tubman. It's not going to spit out a five-paragraph essay. It's going to say well what do you know about Harry Tubman? And it's going to be more of a Socratic back and forth model, which is why we want to promote and also teach parents, teachers, students, administrators how to

ethically and responsibly use AI because students aren't learning anything if it's a plug-and-play model.

Tatum Guinn: Well, and that's that would as a parent that would be my hesitation from using it. But on the other hand, it's already here. They're going to get to it whether we like it or not. They being the students. So, how can we guide them to the right tools, the right programs? We know that schools are already utilizing AI. Are there specific programs that, in y'all's positions, you would encourage educators to look at? Are there some that y'all are - that excite you that can be incorporated in the classroom already?

Dr. Olsen: Definitely. Yeah.

Dr. Curry: So, I think yes, there are a variety of programs that are used across the state. Some of those programs are teacher-facing which means that they will support a teacher in writing lesson plans, grading, those kind of things. Some of them are student-facing so they might help with reading or even math tutoring those kind of things. But we have found one and Dr. Olsen told you about it, that actually does both. And we feel like both a student-facing and a teacher-facing site is very important because what happens is you link that data. There's real time data. Student uh excuse me, a teacher can assess student progress in the moment and adjust lessons to meet the needs of that student. The teacher can also track mastery and the kinds of questions that students are asking to see where the gaps truly are. That's the kind of efficiency that we need because what it does is you know the question that everyone is asking is will AI replace the teacher. We're envisioning a world where AI will give the teacher more time to interact with students and build those kinds of relationships that are absolutely needed for learning by making the teacher's tasks more efficient and giving her greater insight into student needs.

Tatum Guinn: Well, I think you just said it right there that the goal is efficiency. Imagine all of the time that a teacher could have to really focus on maybe the student that needs that extra 10 minutes, that extra little bit of help as opposed to spending that time planning, doing lesson plans or whatever tasks that AI could be used to really free up some more time.

Dr. Curry: Yes.

Tatum Guinn: And same with students that do need the help. They're able to identify that key area. Hey, they need a little bit of help with this reading comprehension, what whatever it is, they're able to use it that way. What is likely to happen as AI use expands? We've got a really key opportunity here. AI is far enough along that it's it is being used. It is we need to incorporate it, embrace it, but it's still new enough where we can really get on top of it now to make it as effective as possible for schools.

Dr. Olsen: Yeah. I think that when we allow teachers to lead this innovation, education is going to win. We need to put teachers front and foremost. They're the ones doing the work in the classroom. You know, research says teachers are the change agents of education. And to have a really systemic approach in Oklahoma is wise because we can all learn from each other in that way. When we have multiple schools or different districts doing different approaches to AI, that can be exciting, and they can maybe find new and innovative programs. But also, if there's a roll out that is systemic and thoughtful and teachers are leading that charge, we can learn professionally in professional learning communities. We can collaborate. We can understand what's working, what's not working. But the worst thing that we could do is not be talking about it. We have to be out in front, as Dr. Curry mentioned, having this conversation and including parents in the conversation as well because a lot of times where students are going to be using artificial intelligence is in the home doing their homework. And if parents aren't tight partners in that relationship, you know, students could, you know, students are going to diminish their learning instead of allowing AI to enhance their learning. But one example that Dr. Curry was giving that I thought would be important is we all, you know, remember back when we were in high school and the teacher said what? Show your work. If you had a math test and you just put the answer down, you didn't get credit for the problem. And this is much like the issue that we have with artificial intelligence is we have to find ways for students to still show their work and teachers have to teach in a way that gives opportunities for students to show their work. Much like in the Khanmigo essay generator, um the essay portion of the tutor, students have to start drafting components of their five-paragraph essay. Khanmigo might say, "Well, let's start with the hook. What would be an exciting hook? What is a hook?" And they'll go back and forth until they've gotten through a hook and a thesis statement and started working on building evidence around there. And so, a teacher can look back into a platform and see all the stepwise approach that a student has taken to writing this essay versus like a chat GPT approach where it just-- a perfectly formulated essay at the end of all things.

Tatum Guinn: Here you go. It is done. I did all that. I promise. That's not what this is.

Dr. Olsen: We have to understand how the sausage is being made as well.

Dr. Curry: So the student could actually have a conversation with Harriet Tubman which is quite fascinating and uh the idea of student engagement. We are very hopeful that AI will enhance student engagement as it draws students in to those examples, conversations with historical figures or being able to walk through a problem, a math problem that they don't quite understand. It would be very beneficial for-- let's think of a student that is more shy and reserved that doesn't want to ask questions. That student would have an AI tutor

right there and could ask any question that he or she wanted to ask without those social challenges that are sometimes students. The other idea that comes to mind is the idea of English language learners because the many of the platforms can be translated into a student's native language. While the student is learning English, they can also learn content. So, it really does bridge some of the gaps that we're seeing in education. So tremendous potential. But I do want to go back to something that Jentre just said, and that is the systemic approach to AI implementation in the state. I am fully convinced the time is now to step up and look statewide at the issue of AI and education, including the voices of teachers, administrators, even professors who could do some of the evaluative work. Um, we've got important questions to answer. We have policies that need to be established, guidelines, guard rails. What kind of professional development is needed for teachers? How can we make that professional development more efficient at the state level? What kinds of student AI literacy standards are needed? What kind of teacher prep program standards are needed to prepare teachers for this AI world? So, we have a tremendous responsibility to get out in front of it. And I think Oklahoma could actually be a leader if we do it now. We step back now.

Tatum Guinn: The time is now. And timing is everything. We have a new administration in place. Dr. Lindel Fields, Mr. Lindel Fields, his team is in place. They've got this turnaround team and one of their goals, one of their priorities, is artificial intelligence. So, there is hope that maybe we are working to make that framework. In your opinion, how long would that take? You just laid out a major task ahead. How do we do that? What does that look like?

Dr. Curry: I think it has to happen at the state level. I think it has to happen even beyond the level of the Oklahoma State Department of Education where we pull a task force together maybe of superintendents, teachers, higher ed representatives, policy makers to look at all of the factors that need to be considered for effective AI implication in the state. I think that would be the best way to handle that systemically.

Dr. Olsen: Yeah. And one voice we can't ignore in all of that is students. Students sometimes have all the answers. We don't always ask them. They're the ones using the technology and they're the ones who are going to be entering the workforce where AI is going to be dominating all the workflows. You know, much like when we went to school and a calculator was a standard thing you brought to math class or a search engine. You know, I went to school at a time where I didn't go to a library and use a library card. I went to a computer lab, and I Googled or used a search engine to research a topic. Artificial intelligence is going to be part of the standard workflows of most of our students' lives coming out of school. So, we have to also be strategic in teaching them, which is part of what the systemic approach and an AI task force would do is what is it that we need to be

teaching students about ethical and responsible AI use in the classroom now. And that has to be standardized across all of our state because we don't want to have any of our students left behind. We want to make sure all of our students are prepared for the future workforce that they're going to be, you know, graduating into.

Tatum Guinn: Sure. And we want them to be leaders in that space. And we want to, I've said this before, have a have a seat at the table. And it's hard to have that when you we don't have a system that is ready for them to support that and help them be successful there.

Dr. Curry: So, Tatum, one of the things I did this summer was I attended an AI conference in Shenzhen, China, which was at the University of Hong Kong. And one of the aha moments for me was realizing how fully they have integrated AI into their educational systems. And I was even made aware of the fact that their higher ed instruction instructors are mandated to use AI in their classes. So, while we're wondering if we will use it or how we will use it, they are charging full steam ahead. And so, we need to get on it. We need to ask these important questions now because it's not going away. It will change education.

Tatum Guinn: Well, it's here. And if we don't act now, you could argue we're already behind. So, how do we how do we not just catch up, but how do can we be competitive in that space? That's a big task.

Dr. Olsen: Well, going back to kind of a previous kind of topic of conversation. We talked about AI replacing teachers or learning. And I think part of the solution is in our teachers. AI is not going to replace teachers. In fact, AI calls for a need for even greater and excellent teachers because teachers do the human work of schooling that AI can't do. AI can reason, adapt, think in a human fashion using large language models and pattern finding patterns and data and it's miraculous what it can do. But when we all go back to what maybe we take from our elementary or high school schooling, it's those heroes. teachers are still going to be the human element that champion, encourage, empathize, um, motivate students in a way that an AI can't. But, a human, the human touch of schooling is going to be ever more important. And we need excellent, great teachers who will not be afraid to use the new and innovative technologies of AI, but use them to make their excellent craft even better because they are experts in the field. And we need to raise the professionalization of teaching. I know this is a very passionate topic of Dr. Curry, but we have to raise the level of professionalization in teaching and that is a cultural event. Oklahoma needs to rise to the occasion collectively to understand that our teachers are our heroes and our teachers are excellent professionals in their field and need to be treated as such. And therefore, when we can recruit and retain excellent teachers who aren't afraid to use new technologies, but to be able to differentiate a lesson plan in a few minutes into three different ways of

learning that meet the individualized needs of different students, that's what artificial intelligence can do.

Tatum Guinn: Well, and the support to foster that kind of work as well. Well, to bring to bring this all full circle, Dr. Olsen, you posed a great question and I'm reading it verbatim. If we get this right, what do you think the future of education could look like? We have a fantastic opportunity here to really grab onto something special if we do it right. What could it look like?

Dr. Olsen: If we do this right, we create a dynamic ecosystem of education in Oklahoma that's nothing like we've seen before. We attract high quality, excellent teachers who harness the power of AI to individualize instruction to meet students at their individual needs. We can't teach to the average, which is what we've done in schools for decades. Artificial intelligence explodes the possibilities of every student coming into a classroom and being able to learn at an individualized personal way with topics that are aligned to things that pique their own interest. How exciting is that? That's unfathomable even 3 years ago. The other thing it does is it saves so much time for our educators. We can get teachers away from the mundane tasks that don't harness their true potential. Again, that human element of teaching needs to rise to the fore and we need to be able to inspire and empower teachers to make those connections with students because teachers haven't even had the time to do that, right? But when students can have that human connection with their teacher, while receiving excellent instruction, we're inspiring the next leaders of Oklahoma. We're inspiring people to enter the workforce and do things that were, you know, beyond unimaginable just a few years ago. So again, I see it as a turning point for a dynamic just fascinating horizon for education and it's very exciting.

Tatum Guinn: Do you think there is support there at the state level to really implement this statewide? Are there conversations or it is a point of priority for our turnaround team. Do you think it's really there to make this happen?

Dr. Curry: I think we need to make it more of a priority. I think there's quite a bit of interest. I think that we're asking a lot of the right questions, but I think we need to be very purposeful about our approach and what we do. I read an article by Michael Fulen who's one of the top researchers in systems education as a system and he suggests he said we're asking questions about how to fit AI into our current system. What we need to do is ask the question, how do we alter our current system to fit around AI? Because it's here and we can't go back to the old ways of doing things. I feel strongly that teachers need to be at the center of those conversations, and I also feel strongly that we need to include experts. We have such talented educators in this state. We need to tap into their expertise and pull in people from agencies from career tech from K12 from higher ed. And we need to put our

heads together to develop a plan that could really set Oklahoma apart. We're at that point. We need to do it now.

Tatum Guinn: Absolutely.

Dr. Olsen: Yep. If we get this right, we could be a national leader in how to unroll this into a state in a systemic um innovative approach. And we're excited about being part of that conversation and just invite more people to be talking about this. The most important thing we need to be doing is having conversations around AI. Parents, teachers, schools, community leaders. It really takes us all to rise the level of education in Oklahoma, which we all know needs to happen. It doesn't happen with just our teachers or our administrators in our schools. It really takes everybody. And this should be something that is a rallying cry around Oklahomans to find what that deep seated Oklahoma passion is and say we're proud of our state and we're proud of our education system because we have led in this way.

Tatum Guinn: Absolutely. Okay. Well, I think perfect opportunity for that. Um, any final thoughts as we as we wrap this up? I mean, it's a big topic. It's not going anywhere. Now is the time for us to really I don't want to say jump in, but we really need to jump in and try to get ahead of the curve.

Dr. Curry: We're actually behind

Tatum Guinn: Right?

Dr. Curry: Um, as a nation, we're behind. As a state, we're behind. And so, this is our opportunity. Uh, we need to make informed decisions, principal decisions. We need to ask questions that put guard rails around AI that protect our students. Data privacy is a huge issue. The amount of time that students spend in technology is another huge question we need to ask. What is best for their cognitive development, their social development? We need to be asking all of those questions. And we really feel like the time is now. We think we have a great opportunity to bring leaders in the state together to have these important conversations.

Tatum Guinn: Absolutely.

Dr. Olsen: I think what I would say is I want to highlight we do have some excellent work already happening in our state. We have districts who have jumped all-in into AI and they are leading our state in ways. We have Enid public schools, Keys Public Schools, Hullbert is jumping in, Bixby, Broken Arrow. We have schools around Oklahoma City that are jumping in and reaching out and saying we want more information. And so, kudos to those early adopters for going out there and trying this. We saw in Enid public schools where we

started with just their math department, and they had such success with students that they've expanded it to all subjects and all grades.

Tatum Guinn: Incredible.

Dr. Olsen: These things. So, there is-- I think the last things I would want to say is I want to highlight the work that Oklahomans are doing because there is excellent work that's happening. Let's learn from them. Let's rally together other schools to work together so that we're really making sure that we're rolling this out and not leaving anybody behind. We have to make sure that we have an equitable distributive approach to rolling out AI for our rural districts, for our urban districts, for our suburban districts. And when we can highlight those who are doing excellent work, capture their knowledge and learning, have open conversations around how to be ethically responsible. Yes. and how to ensure that our students aren't over relying on this technology but using it in a way that enhances and not replaces their learning. I think if we do that, we're going we're going to be in good place.

28:45 Pop style instrumental music plays in the background.

Tatum Guinn: We are absolutely. Well, thank you both so much for your insight, your expertise on the topic. Um it is fascinating and uh we thank everybody at home for tuning in and we can't wait to see you next month. Thanks for coming.

29:00 A graphic split into three segments showing shelves of books, children studying, and a row of school buses appears and disappears showing the channel 6 digital studio logo, a logo for the Education Impact Initiative with a subheading reading “transforming Oklahoma’s Education System, and a text overlay at the bottom of the screen reading “copyright 2025 Griffin Media.”