AI + K-12 Morning Brief - September 18, 2026

1. Most Americans say AI is doing more harm than good in schools

An NBC News Decision Desk poll of 7,105 adults found that 53% believe AI does more harm than good in K-12 education, while 27% believe it does more good. Separately, 56% said schools that prohibit AI will better prepare students for the future, up nine points from June 2025.

Why it matters: District leaders face a public-trust gap. Clear use cases, evidence, privacy rules and family communication will matter as much as access to the technology.

Tone: ?? Cautious | Source - https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/politics-news/poll-americans-think-ai-harm-good-schools-rcna597777

2. Springfield hackers publish stolen student and staff data

Springfield Public Schools says attackers have now published stolen student and staff information. Officials were still determining exactly what was exposed and where it was posted; the district was also working to provide free credit monitoring to personnel.

Why it matters: This moves the incident beyond disrupted systems into long-term privacy and identity-protection work. District response plans need to cover notification, monitoring and family support-not only restoration.

Tone: ? Alert | Source - https://masslive.com/westernmass/2026/09/springfield-schools-reveal-hackers-have-stolen-published-student-and-staff-data.html

3. Google pilots AI-generated interactive STEM simulations

Google Research announced an early experiment that lets educators generate custom, guided learning simulations. It also released a public sample library of more than 30 teacher-reviewed English-language interactives for middle- and high-school STEM; Google Workspace for Education schools can apply to test the pilot.

Why it matters: Generative AI may shift from producing worksheets and text toward creating active practice. But this is a vendor research pilot, not evidence yet that the generated activities improve learning.

Tone: ? Experimental | Source - https://research.google/blog/the-future-of-practice-enabling-teachers-to-create-learning-interactives-with-generative-ui/

4. K-8 reading data shows a promising turn after years of stagnation

NWEA's latest MAP Growth analysis found sizable reading gains from 2025 to 2026, including stronger gains among historically underserved groups. Most grades still remain below pre-

pandemic levels, and gaps by race, ethnicity and school poverty persist.

Why it matters: Leaders have a hopeful recovery signal, but not an all-clear. The data supports continuing targeted literacy intervention and monitoring whether gains hold across grades and student groups.

Tone: ? Encouraging | Source - https://www.k12dive.com/news/k-8-reading-scores-see-sizable-post-covid-gains-in-latest-nwea-data/830580/

5. Nye County launches a controlled MagicSchool AI pilot

The Nevada district opened MagicSchool to participating teachers through the 2026-27 school year, with professional development planned this month. Teacher-controlled student access is scheduled for November 1, and the district plans a February 2027 review before deciding whether to continue it.

Why it matters: This is a practical rollout model: start with adults, gate student access, train staff, keep administrative control and set an evaluation checkpoint before scaling.

Tone: ? Practical | Source - https://pvc.news/nye-county-school-district-launches-educational-ai-pilot-program/