

IOLEBA AI-WISE — EDUCATOR DEEP DIVE

"What Your Students Actually Carry Out the Door"

HOST A: So I want to start somewhere a little unusual for an education conversation. Not with a philosophy, not with a mission statement. With a question. When a student finishes a course — any course — what do they actually walk out the door with?

HOST B: Mm. Usually a grade.

HOST A: Right. A grade. Maybe a transcript line. And if it went really well, something they remember. But you can't hold any of that up to an employer.

HOST B: And that's the thing that makes this particular program worth a closer look. Because the honest answer for most of what we teach is: they walk out with a record that they were present and they passed. The IOLEBA AI-WISE program is built around a completely different exit question. Not "did they pass," but "what did they build."

HOST A: Okay, so let's stay right there, because the listeners ranked this as the thing they most want to understand. What does a student actually build?

HOST B: So picture the arc of it. Fourteen modules. And across those modules, the student isn't accumulating facts about artificial intelligence — they're assembling working pieces of an actual small business. By the end, they have a real thing: a simple online business model, a set of AI workflows they built and understand, and a ninety-day plan to run it.

HOST A: Give me something concrete. Because "an online business model" can mean anything.

HOST B: Fair. So — one student decides they want to do freelance marketing. Along the way they build a workflow that takes a messy list of contacts, cleans it up, organizes it, and drops it into a simple system they can actually use. Another student builds a little assistant that answers the most common customer questions automatically, so they're not doing it by hand at eleven at night. These aren't hypothetical exercises. They're tools the student made, that work, that they can show somebody.

HOST A: And that's the part I find genuinely different. Because I've seen plenty of "entrepreneurship" curricula where the deliverable is a business plan in a binder.

HOST B: Right. A plan for a business that will never exist.

HOST A: Exactly. The binder goes on a shelf.

HOST B: And here the deliverable is the running thing itself. The capstone isn't an exam — it's the student launching their integrated setup and showing it works. So when they sit across from an employer, or a client, or frankly a college admissions officer, they're not saying "I took a class about AI." They're saying "I built this, here it is, let me show you how it runs."

HOST A: Which, for a sixteen-year-old, is a remarkably different posture to enter the world with.

HOST B: It's the difference between describing a car and driving one out of the lot.

HOST A: And it doesn't stop at graduation, does it? That's the piece that surprised me reading about it.

HOST B: No, and this matters for the "what do they carry forward" question specifically. Every graduating senior who completes the track gets a full year of continued membership after they leave — so the tools, the community, the support don't just evaporate the Monday after they walk the stage. That first year out of high school is exactly when a young person is most likely to drift, and the program is designed to keep a hand on their shoulder through it. Whether they go to work, to more training, or start building something of their own.

HOST A: Okay. So that's the student side, and it's strong. But I want to turn to the person who's actually in the room making this happen. Because the listeners put the teacher's role second, and I suspect for a lot of them it's actually first in their private worries.

HOST B: You mean the fear.

HOST A: I mean the fear. Let's just say it plainly. If I'm a teacher, and you tell me I'm about to teach a course on artificial intelligence, my very first thought is — I don't know enough about this. The kids in my room might know more than I do.

HOST B: And that fear is completely rational. AI as we're talking about it didn't exist when most teachers were trained. Nobody got a degree in this. So if the program required the teacher to be the expert at the front of the room — the smartest person in the conversation about a fast-moving technology — it would fail on day one. Every time.

HOST A: So how does it not fail?

HOST B: Because it removes that requirement entirely. And this is the part I'd want every nervous teacher to hear. The program doesn't ask you to lecture about AI. It asks you to do something teachers are already extraordinarily good at — running a room, drawing students out, keeping a group on track, asking the question that makes someone think harder. The role shifts from lecturer to mentor. From the source of all answers, to the person who runs the environment where students find them.

HOST A: Walk me through what that actually looks like on a Tuesday. Because "mentor not lecturer" is a nice phrase, but what is the teacher doing?

HOST B: So the instruction itself — the core teaching of each module — is delivered through the program. The textbook, the walkthrough, the guided pieces. The student moves through that at their own pace. What the teacher does is host. They run the assemblies, which are these collaborative sessions where students bring what they've built and work on it together. The teacher keeps that productive. They notice the kid who's stuck and clear the roadblock. They connect the student who built one thing with the student who built the thing that pairs with it.

HOST A: So the teacher's expertise isn't "I know AI." It's "I know how to teach."

HOST B: That's exactly it. And that's a kind of expertise these folks already have in abundance. The program just points it at a new subject. And — this is important — the training to do this is free, and it's short. Under two hours to get an instructor ready. They're not being asked to go back to school. They're being asked to do what they already do, in a slightly new shape.

HOST A: I'll admit, that reframes the fear pretty effectively. Because the fear assumes the job is to be the expert. And the job is actually to be the guide.

HOST B: And honestly, there's something freeing in it. The teacher gets to be curious alongside the students instead of having to perform certainty. When a sixteen-year-old builds something clever, the teacher gets to say "show me how you did that" — and mean it. That's a healthier classroom than one where the adult is pretending to know everything.

HOST A: Okay. So the students build real things, the teacher's role is achievable and even appealing. The third thing our listeners want addressed is the one administrators lose sleep over. Does bringing this in create risk? Does it create a mess?

HOST B: And this is where I want to be careful and precise, because this is exactly the area where programs oversell and get themselves in trouble. So let me stick to what's actually true.

HOST A: Please.

HOST B: Three things administrators worry about: cost, compliance, and disruption. On cost — it's twenty-five dollars per student. That's not a typo and there's no asterisk hiding a bigger number. For a program where each student produces a documented body of work, that's a rounding error in a district budget.

HOST A: What about the funding mechanics? Because "cheap" and "allowable" aren't the same thing.

HOST B: Right, and here's where the precise language matters. Under the federal Perkins V framework — specifically Section 135 — local boards have broad discretion over how they spend their allocations, including on new and emerging instructional materials that strengthen approved career and technical education programs. Now — how a given district applies that discretion is genuinely their call to make, in consultation with their state office. The program doesn't claim to be automatically approved everywhere. What it does is fit cleanly into a category that local boards already have authority over. And because it enhances an existing approved track — a business or entrepreneurship course the school already runs — rather than creating a brand-new course, adopting it doesn't trigger a new course-code approval.

HOST A: So you're not asking a district to invent a new class and run it up the flagpole to the state.

HOST B: Correct. You're adding a modern resource to a course that already exists and is already approved. That's a much smaller, much safer move administratively. It slides into the schedule you already have.

HOST A: And the data question. Because the second you say "AI in a classroom," somebody pictures student information flying off to a server somewhere.

HOST B: And that's the right thing to worry about. So here's the straight version. The program runs within the school's existing Google Workspace for Education environment — the same managed, FERPA and COPPA compliant environment the district already controls. IOLEBA itself doesn't collect student data. The students aren't handing personal information to an outside company. The district keeps its existing controls, its existing guardrails. Nothing about this asks a school to lower the data perimeter it already maintains.

HOST A: That's a more modest claim than I expected, honestly. In a good way.

HOST B: And that's deliberate. The temptation is to make some sweeping, bulletproof-sounding promise. But administrators have heard sweeping promises before, and they've been burned. The honest version — it lives in the environment you already trust, and we don't collect your students' data — is both true and, frankly, more reassuring than a slogan.

HOST A: So no new course to approve, a cost that won't move the budget needle, and it stays inside the data environment the district already runs.

HOST B: The friction is genuinely low. And the program's whole design philosophy is to keep it that way — to be the thing that's easy to say yes to, because the hard part isn't convincing anyone it's valuable. The hard part is just removing the reasons to hesitate.

HOST A: Which brings us to the last thing, and the biggest. Step back from the mechanics for a second. Why does this matter? Why now?

HOST B: So here's the frame I'd offer. There's a number that gets thrown around — and I want to be careful with numbers, because it's easy to sound like hype — but the verifiable, checkable reality is this: a few years ago, a major new AI system showed up maybe once a month. Today, the leading labs are releasing major new models every couple of weeks. You can look that up. It's not a projection, it's the current pace.

HOST A: And a school's planning cycle is measured in years.

HOST B: That's the collision. A textbook adoption can take two years. The technology it's describing has turned over many times in that window. So the old model — pick a fixed curriculum, lock it in, teach it unchanged for years — structurally cannot keep up. Not because anyone's doing a bad job. Because the math doesn't work.

HOST A: So the answer isn't a better textbook.

HOST B: The answer is to stop teaching the tool and start teaching the capacity to keep learning the next tool. That's the real shift. The specific AI a student uses today will be old news in a year. But the habit of mind — "I can pick up a new capability, figure out what it's good for, and put it to work" — that doesn't expire. That's the thing that survives twenty generations of AI. Not knowledge of any one system. The confidence and the method to keep adapting.

HOST A: And that's a thing a sixteen-year-old can actually learn.

HOST B: It's a thing they're better positioned to learn than almost anyone. They're not unlearning an old way of working. They're just learning to work this way from the start.

HOST A: There's a line I keep coming back to in all of this. The idea that this curriculum is being built with teachers and students — not handed down to them.

HOST B: And that's not a marketing line, it's actually the operating model. The program revises continuously, and the revisions come from the people in the room. Teachers say "this part dragged, this part landed." Students say "this tool clicked, this one didn't." And the next edition reflects that. The alternative — and this is the part that should light a fire under educators — is that the shape of AI education gets decided somewhere else. By a large technology company, or a textbook publisher, who hands schools a finished product and says "here's the method, teach it."

HOST A: And once that's the standard, it's very hard to unwind.

HOST B: Right. So there's a genuine window here. AI education is going to get defined over the next couple of years one way or the other. The only real question is whether teachers and students have a hand in defining it, or whether they receive it from a boardroom after the fact. This program is a bet on the first option. That the best version of this comes from the classroom, not the corporation.

HOST A: So let me try to pull the whole thread together, because it actually forms a pretty clean line. A student comes out the other side not with a grade, but with a working thing they built and a year of support to keep building it. The teacher isn't asked to become an AI expert overnight — they're asked to do what they already do well, with free training and a new focus. The administrator isn't taking on cost or compliance risk or a scheduling fight — it fits the budget, stays in the data environment they already run, and slides into a course they already offer. And underneath all of it is a simple bet: that the way to survive a technology that changes every couple of weeks is to teach adaptability itself, and to build that education with the people in the room rather than for them.

HOST B: That's the whole thing. And the ask, if you're an educator listening, is smaller than you'd think. It's not "overhaul your school." It's "take a closer look, and consider being one of the places that helps shape this while it's still being shaped."

HOST A: Which is a very different invitation than most education pitches.

HOST B: Most pitches sell you a finished answer. This one's asking you to help write it.

HOST A: That feels like the right place to end. To everyone listening — thank you for spending this time with us. If any of this is worth a closer look, that's all the program is really asking for. Stay curious and keep questioning the systems around you.