

PIE IN THE CHI

2026 PIE NETWORK SUMMIT



Over 500 high-profile state, local, and national education policy, advocacy, and philanthropic leaders gathered in Chicago, IL, on September 30–October 2 for the invitation-only 2026 PIE Network Summit.

Advocates, policy leaders, and philanthropists from red, blue, and purple states gathered to dig into the top challenges and opportunities of the moment. Just weeks before the 2026 election that will usher in new leaders at every level of government, participants heard from cross-partisan pollsters about what's on voters' minds. We spoke with two former U.S. Secretaries of Education about cross-partisan collaboration, and with leaders about how to protect and prepare students for an AI-powered future. In hands-on workshops, participants sharpened their messaging, coalition-building, and leadership skills. Leaders dug into the Network's top policy issues, including literacy, math and data science, career and technical education, postsecondary outcomes, great educators, expanding quality choices for families, and assessment and accountability, and left with new connections, sharper strategies, and energy for the work back home, so that every student, in every community, gets the education needed to achieve a future without limits.

PARTICIPANTS SAID

***"PIE Network Summit is the most 'like home' conference.
So much good energy and people and programming."***

"The sessions are very relevant to my current work and provide both practical strategies and conversations with peers who share similar goals and strategies. Engagement during the Summit is essential to the success of my work and that of my organization."

"I really appreciated the opportunity to connect with role-alike participants from other places and organizations, and I found all the sessions I attended helpful and relevant for my work. As a first timer I also found the new member session helpful and it pushed me to optimize my experience. I'm excited to go again next year!"

***"I appreciate how the topics evolved over the years.
AI and teachers are a topic that we didn't discuss a few years ago."***

"The people! It always fills my cup to have the opportunity to connect and network with like-minded advocates from across the country. This Summit is the perfect balance of professional development and fun!"

"The space was really conducive to catching people in the hallway you may have missed in a session. Great to see so many first-time attendees. Programming felt relevant to the political climate."

"Good balance of reflecting on past wins and challenges and looking forward."

CELEBRATING ADVOCACY & POLICY CAMPAIGNS: 2026 EDDIES WINNERS

The annual Eddies Awards are an opportunity to amplify, celebrate, and learn from strategic advocacy that is driving impactful policy change. Network leaders from across the country nominated 80 policy and advocacy campaigns that have the potential to impact more than 35 million students.



Game Changer Campaign of the Year: Mass Reads Coalition: Winning Evidence-Based Literacy for Every Massachusetts Student
EdTrust in Massachusetts, Educators for Excellence-Massachusetts, ExcelinEd, Latinos for Education, Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education, MassPotential, National Council on Teacher Quality, Teach Plus Massachusetts, Massachusetts Charter Public School Association



Best Collaboration: The READ Act: The Biggest Federal Literacy Reform in Over a Decade
All4Ed, Bipartisan Policy Center, Center for American Progress, Collaborative for Student Success, EdTrust, Educators for Excellence, MassPotential, National Center for Learning Disabilities, National Council on Teacher Quality, National Parents Union, Teach Plus, The Center for Learner Equity



Best Defense: Education Protection War Room Coalition: Holding the Line for 50 Million Students Against Federal Attacks on Public Education
EdTrust, Educators for Excellence, National Parents Union



Best Implementation: The Tennessee Transformation: From Landmark Law to Literacy Gains
State Collaborative on Reforming Education, TNTP



Best Kept Secret: Black Student Success Data Tool
EdTrust-West



Most Actionable Tools and Research: Supporting Families, Strengthening Schools: Driving State Action on Paid Parental Leave for Teachers
National Council on Teacher Quality



Suzanne Kubach PIE Network Weaver of the Year: David Mansouri
State Collaborative on Reforming Education

[Read more about the 2026 Eddies winners and finalists on our website.](#)

RECORD-HIGH PARTICIPATION, SIXTH YEAR RUNNING



19TH ANNUAL SUMMIT BY THE NUMBERS

4.4

Participants gave Summit a 4.4 out of 5 bottom line score

503

Participants from 35 states and Washington, D.C.

78%

Of Network organizations participated

104

Network Executive Directors participated

33%

Of participants attended Summit for the first time

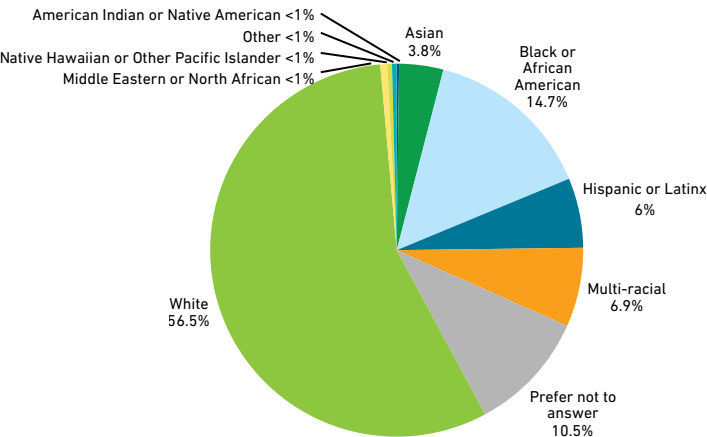
91%

Of participants learned something new

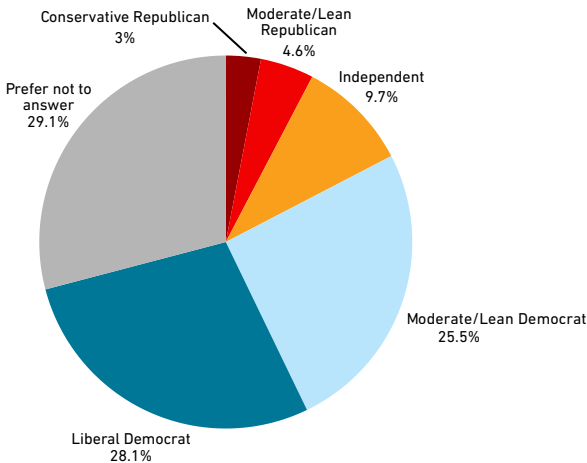


PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

Racial/Ethnic Identity of Participants



Political Ideology of Participants





THANK YOU PIE NETWORK FUNDERS & SPONSORS

PIE Network gratefully acknowledges our Network funders and Summit sponsors, whose support makes our work possible.

PIE NETWORK FUNDERS



**Arnold
Ventures**

**Bloomberg
Philanthropies**



CHARLES AND LYNN
Schusterman
FAMILY PHILANTHROPIES

city fund

Gates Foundation



**Houston
Endowment**



**Raikes
Foundation**

**ROBERTSON
FOUNDATION**

strada

**TheJoyce
Foundation**



**VALHALLA
FOUNDATION**

**WALTON FAMILY
FOUNDATION**

2026 SUMMIT SPONSORS

CATALYST



**Bezos Family
Foundation**

CHAMPION

cognia



**Lumina
FOUNDATION**

ZEARN

FRIEND

Amplify.

HMH



HopSkipDrive



**CROWN FAMILY
PHILANTHROPIES**