

RVBAT Meeting – May 6, 2026

Meeting Purpose

Discuss AI's impact on work, education, and digital equity.

Key Takeaways

- **AI as a Co-pilot:** AI is a powerful tool for automating production tasks (writing, design), freeing humans to act as "directors" and focus on strategic thinking.
- **Education Must Adapt:** Higher education is past its peak. It must shift from preparing students for disappearing employee jobs to fostering entrepreneurial mindsets and teaching practical AI application.
- **Broadband Access Remains Unequal:** The BEAD program will not achieve universal Oregon coverage. Cost and data caps are major barriers, leaving many connected but unable to afford meaningful use.
- **Privacy & Security Risks:** Cloud-based AI poses privacy risks (e.g., sharing proprietary data). Local, "edge computing" LLMs offer a more secure alternative for sensitive information.

Topics

The AI Revolution: Work & Education

- **AI as a Co-pilot:** AI automates production tasks, enabling humans to focus on strategic direction.
 - **Example (Eric):** Using ChatGPT to generate code for the Aspen web builder, creating a library program webpage without needing a web developer.
- **Education's Necessary Shift:** The traditional higher ed model is outdated for the AI era.
 - **Problem:** Entry-level jobs and internships are disappearing due to automation.
 - **Solution:** Education must foster entrepreneurial mindsets and teach practical AI application.
 - **Rationale:** The "human in the loop" remains critical for critical thinking and ensuring AI accuracy.

Broadband Access & Digital Equity

- **BEAD Funding Limitations:** The BEAD program will not deliver universal broadband in Oregon.

- **Reason:** The funding amount was significantly reduced from original projections.
- **Outcome:** Service will only reach 100% of the *approved* areas, not the entire state.
- **Affordability is a Major Barrier:**
 - **Starlink:** High cost (\$120/month) is prohibitive for many households.
 - **Tiered Plans:** Low-cost plans have data caps that are easily exhausted by modern usage (e.g., student coursework), leading to throttling.
- **Fiber vs. Satellite:**
 - **Fiber:** Higher initial cost but cheaper long-term and more scalable.
 - **Satellite:** Lower initial cost but limited by current technology and less upgradeable.

AI & Cybersecurity

- **Privacy Risks of Cloud AI:** Cloud-based AI systems (e.g., ChatGPT) may use user inputs for training, posing a risk for proprietary or sensitive data.
- **Local LLMs as a Solution:** "Edge computing" runs LLMs locally on devices (e.g., Apple Mac mini), keeping data secure and offline.
 - **Benefit:** Allows for secure experimentation with AI.
 - **Example:** Victor is seeking a grant for a mobile lab of Mac minis to teach secure AI use.
- **AI Hallucinations & Human Oversight:**
 - AI can generate false information (e.g., fake case law), requiring mandatory human review to prevent errors.

AI & Language Access

- **AI for Translation:** AI is improving rapidly for translation, offering a potential solution for language access.
 - **Progress:** AI can now localize translations for specific dialects (e.g., Cuban Spanish) and is adding indigenous languages (e.g., Mayan).
 - **Benefit:** Can be trained on specific terminology (e.g., scientific terms) to improve accuracy.
- **Human Interpreters vs. AI:**
 - **Problem:** Human interpreters can be unreliable.
 - **Example (Rvcog):** A LanguageLine interpreter missed critical details and hung up when corrected.
 - **Rationale:** Effective translation requires cultural understanding, not just linguistic fluency.