

21.6% of U.S. Educational Support Providers in Top 3 Metros — ALEX Intelligence
2026

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The concentration of critical higher education infrastructure reveals a systemic
bottleneck

THE DATA

21.6%

Share of America's Educational Support Providers in Its Top Three Metros (2022)

The top three metropolitan areas house more than one-fifth of the nation's educational support providers, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2022 County Business Patterns data.

This level of concentration suggests that the scalability of AI-enhanced academic services—such as adaptive tutoring, student mental health platforms, and automated administrative workflows—is inherently tied to a handful of urban centers. As AI systems in higher education grow more complex, their operational backbone depends on a geographically narrow network of support providers, creating a single point of failure in national academic resilience.

01

AI Education Scales Only Where Infrastructure Is Dense

The implication is clear: national AI education policy must prioritize decentralizing support infrastructure, not just distributing software. Otherwise, the promise of AI in education remains a coastal luxury.

02

The Illusion of AI Democratization

True democratization requires more than access to algorithms —it demands a distributed network of support. Without it, AI education becomes a top-down command structure, not a grassroots revolution.

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