



Introduction

The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) has emerged as a powerful practice with the potential to transform teaching, streamline business operations, and personalize learning. However, the successful implementation of AI-driven tools and practices will require careful planning and strategic alignment with a school district's educational goals, values, and priorities. This planning guide provides educators with practical insights and strategies to navigate the complexities of integrating AI in their districts. This process may be especially challenging for schools over the next few years as AI technology matures and education applications rapidly evolve.

This guidebook serves as a companion to the AI Integration Framework for School Districts, originally created by Michigan Virtual. Each domain of the rubric is explored in further detail, and key concepts are identified for school leaders to consider and plan activities around. School leaders can utilize this guidebook to develop a roadmap for working toward the level of AI integration that aligns with the district's aspirations. As stakeholders and teams come together, leaders can use this guidance to help identify areas where more information and research is needed, make informed decisions, address concerns, and ensure a successful and inclusive implementation of AI technologies.

Before addressing these items, school leaders should keep the following in mind:

What is AI?

Artificial intelligence refers to computer systems and programs that possess the ability to perform tasks that typically require human intelligence. These systems are designed to simulate intelligent behavior, such as understanding natural language, recognizing patterns, making decisions, and learning from experience. AI works by utilizing algorithms and large amounts of data to train computer systems, enabling them to recognize patterns, make predictions, and automate decision-making processes, ultimately enhancing efficiency and enabling new capabilities in various domains. AI technologies are becoming more and more common in the tools and systems that people and businesses use daily, such as navigation systems, healthcare, logistics planning, and recommendation algorithms used by entertainment and social media companies. More recently, the public application of generative AI powered by large language models (LLMs), which can produce text or images based on human input, has brought the topic of AI to the forefront of educational discussions.

Engage in Planning

Planning is a critical step in successfully integrating AI in school districts. It allows educational leaders to envision the potential benefits and risks associated with AI implementation. By engaging in thoughtful planning, districts can proactively address policy, ethical, and legal considerations and anticipate and mitigate potential challenges during implementation. Active involvement by boards of education is also essential, as they play a crucial governance role in informing the policies, risk assessments, and ethical considerations that govern AI implementation for the benefit of students, teachers, and the entire community. Collaborative planning between district leaders and board members provides a roadmap for systematic and sustainable integration of AI, maximizing its potential to positively impact teaching, learning, and operational functions.

Make it Local

Each school district is unique, with its own set of needs, aspirations, and challenges. Therefore, local dialogue and decision-making are crucial when planning for the integration of AI. Engaging in conversations with stakeholders, including educators, parents, students, school board members, and community members, allows for a complete understanding of the local context to foster buy-in and acceptance for AI initiatives.

Dedicate a Team

To effectively integrate AI in a district, it is crucial to establish an internal implementation team of various stakeholders from throughout the district. AI integration will conceivably affect every department within a school district, so ensuring those departmental perspectives are represented is important. The implementation team can play a key role in driving the planning and implementation process, coordinating efforts, and ensuring collaboration and communication among different stakeholders. By involving diverse perspectives and expertise, an implementation team can foster a holistic approach to AI integration.

Address Potential Concerns

Integrating AI may generate concerns within the school community, including fears related to student plagiarism or cheating. Other concerns may include fears of job displacement, ethical considerations, data privacy, and biases in AI algorithms. It is important for educational leaders to address these concerns proactively, emphasizing the value of AI as a tool that augments human capabilities and supports educators' work rather than replacing it. Districts can address potential concerns and build trust in AI integration by involving stakeholders in dialogue, providing transparent communication, and establishing comprehensive policies and ethical guidelines.