

AI in K-12 Education:

What Districts Need to Know

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RESOURCES



DISCLAIMER

Generative AI Tools

The **State of Tennessee does not currently permit the use of Generative AI tools**, such as Otter, in meetings hosted on state resources. Meetings with contractors, vendors, and subrecipients are not public meetings and may involve discussion of protected state data.

Generative AI tools are not adequately regulated and are designed to train on data that is collected and may misrepresent data or release protected data to the general public.

While the State supports your desire to maintain documentation of the meeting and what you learn, **please respect our decision to safeguard information** and do not attempt to use tools such as these. If you choose to use a tool such as this, the State will block that tool from the meeting.



It's Monday morning in your district:

- Teacher uses AI to **draft IEP-related materials**
- Student submits an AI-generated paper: ***“Prove I cheated.”***
- HR director uses AI to **screen applications**
- Principal **uploads a discipline situation** into an AI tool
- Vendor says its **product is “AI-powered”**



What We Heard

AI Is Already Here

District leaders aren't asking whether AI is coming.
They're figuring out how to manage what's already happening.

100% of Directors indicated AI is already being used or emerging in their districts

Efficiency & Instruction

The most common uses leaders described:

- Planning & Materials
- Differentiation & Personalization
- Assessment & Feedback
- Administrative Efficiency

"Help us figure out how to do this well."

District leaders consistently asked for:

- Clear guidance
- Tool vetting
- Practical examples
- Professional learning
- Guardrails

The opportunity leaders see:

Give educators time back & personalize learning

The tension:

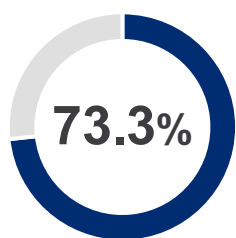
Move forward without losing human judgement, rigor, privacy or safety



What We Heard

The Clarity Gap

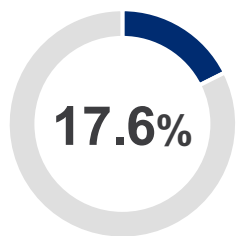
The demand is shifting from *"What is AI?"* ... to *"What does responsible use look like in my job?"*



73.3%

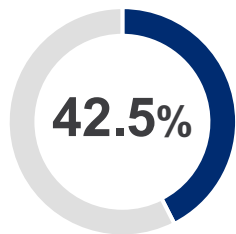
Educators are very or somewhat familiar with their district/school AI policies

But...



17.6%

Educators aren't aware of any district/school AI policy or expectations



42.5%

Educators are unsure or report that student AI expectations vary by teacher/classroom

Percentage of Educators Concerned About:

68.5% Academic Integrity

65.9% Overreliance on AI

What Educators Want from TDOE:

58.2% Academic Integrity & AI

53.1% Responsible & Ethical AI Use

46.9% Appropriate Student Use

43.2% Evaluating AI Information for Accuracy

41% Student Privacy & Data Protection

These are multi-select responses, so amounts won't total to 100%

The Superintendent Shift:

From AI Use to AI Governance

Old Question:

*How should
teachers use AI?*

New Question:

*How should our
district govern AI?*



Your job is not to become the district's AI expert, it's to set the boundaries, ownership, and questions.



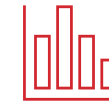
Instruction



Assessment



HR



Data & Privacy



Procurement



Communications

3 Questions Every Superintendent Should Be Able To Answer

1

**What should we
stop doing?**

*Where could AI
give staff time back?*

2

**What should we
never delegate?**

*Which decisions require
human judgement?*

3

**What happens
when AI is wrong?**

*Who catches it?
Who's accountable?*

The Next Wave: *AI Agents*

- AI is moving from:
Answering questions >> Taking action
- AI agents can execute **multi-step work** across tools, documents, and workflows
- Imagine saying:
“Find the issues in my inbox that require my attention, draft responses, schedule the follow-ups, and flag anything involving student privacy or legal risk.”



Tennessee's Approach



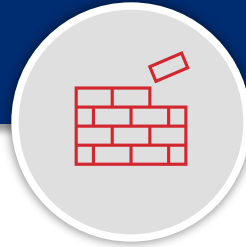
LISTEN

What is
happening
now?



GUIDE

Provide
statewide
guidance and
recommended
guardrails



BUILD

Grow AI
literacy
and
practice



ENABLE

Give
districts
usable
tools



SUSTAIN

Keep
guidance
current

2 Tools to Put In Your Superintendent Toolkit

Diagnose

District AI Readiness Snapshot

A fast look at where your district is today

- Leadership ownership
- Policies & expectations
- Privacy & security
- Professional learning
- Student opportunity
- Continuous improvement

Build the Guardrails

AI Model Policy Checklist

A starting point for local policy conversations

- Who/what is covered
- Oversight + ownership
- Data protections
- Approved/prohibited uses
- Human verification
- Monitoring + review



Artificial Intelligence Readiness District Snapshot



For each area, mark the response that best describes your district today:

Area	Question to consider	Not Started	Exploring	Developing	Implementing
Leadership	Do we have clear ownership of AI decisions?	☐	☐	☐	☐
AI Literacy	Do staff and students understand what AI is, its limitations, and responsible use?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Policies & Expectations	Have we reviewed existing policies for AI implications?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Teaching & Learning	Have we established expectations for appropriate AI use in instruction and assignments?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Privacy & Security	Do we have a process for reviewing AI tools and protecting data?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Professional Learning	Are educators receiving practical AI training?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Student Opportunity	Are students learning how to use AI responsibly and effectively?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Continuous Improvement	Do we have a process for monitoring AI use and updating our approach?	☐	☐	☐	☐

Based on your responses:

One area of strength:

One immediate priority:

One resource you need from TDOE:

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AI Model Policy Checklist September 2026

Artificial intelligence, as defined in [T.C.A. § 49-2-203\(16\)](#), refers to any system created by people that can gather information, interpret what it observes, and independently analyze that information to make predictions, offer suggestions, or take actions that affect real or digital environments. This includes tools that build internal models from human and machine inputs, draw conclusions from those models, and generate responses that align with the goals set for them.

This document provides recommended topics for local boards of education to consider when developing policies and procedures related to such systems. The information offered here is intended to support boards with technical assistance rather than legal guidance, and boards are strongly encouraged to work with their attorneys to ensure that any AI policies or procedures comply with applicable state and federal laws.

Items to Consider When Drafting

- ☐ Define the purpose of the AI policy.
- ☐ Define what and who are covered by the policy.
 - How will the district define “artificial intelligence”?
 - What programs does the policy cover?
 - Will the district require approval of AI programs before they can be utilized by staff and students? If yes, what is the process for approval?
 - How does this policy apply to third parties such as vendors or visitors?
- ☐ Designate personnel.
 - Who is responsible for AI oversight and implementation (a committee, the technology department, a leadership team, or another designated official(s))?
 - Would the creation of an AI review committee be beneficial for evaluating AI programs, reviewing risks and benefits, monitoring implementation, and recommending policy updates?
- ☐ Address student and employee data protections.
 - What student/employee data may be entered into AI programs vs. what student/employee data is prohibited from being entered into AI programs?
 - How will the district ensure compliance with FERPA and other applicable confidentiality and privacy laws?
 - Are parental notices and/or consent procedures necessary?
- ☐ Address training.
 - Will staff training be required (consider responsible use of AI, data privacy and security, verification of outputs, etc.)?

AI in Tennessee Schools

Local AI Policy Mandate: Tennessee law requires local school districts and public charter schools to set clear rules for how students and teachers use AI. These guidelines are meant to keep everyone safe and support positive learning experiences.

Internet Safety & AI Literacy: New rules add digital literacy lessons about recognizing AI-generated content.



Understanding Artificial Intelligence (AI) What Families Need to Know

What is AI?

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a rapidly advancing technology that can perform complex tasks that traditionally may require human intelligence, such as recognizing patterns, generating content, translating languages, answering questions, and making predictions.

You may hear about generative AI, which can create new content such as text, images, audio, video, or computer code based on a user's prompt.

AI does not "know" things the way people do. It can make mistakes, provide incomplete or inaccurate information, and reflect biases in the information used to develop it. Think of AI as a tool, not a teacher, tutor, friend, or decision-maker.

With AI shaping every aspect of modern life, its integration into search engines, recommendations, writing tools, translations, accessibility features, and educational technology can feel overwhelming and exciting. In schools, AI must be harnessed to enhance learning outcomes, and not to replace educators or diminish critical thinking.

AI in Tennessee Schools

Tennessee is considered one of the nation's leaders in creating thoughtful AI legislation, specifically focusing on protection of intellectual property and ensuring safe, responsible use of AI in K-12 schools. A few of the policies include:

figure out yourself?
good or not-so-good use of AI?

the answers. It's to help students become curious, critical
technology wisely.

check information,

stand bias and

egrity and privacy,

and
organization,
determine what

AI Conversation Cards

CARD 2 | "Can I trust what AI tells me?"

Practice being a fact-checker together

AI can sound confident, even when it is wrong. When your child shows you something AI-generated, try asking: "Does that answer make sense? Could we check?"



Artificial Intelligence (AI) with Your Child's School & Family Conversation Cards

You don't have to be an AI expert to start the conversation.

AI is changing quickly, and families and schools are learning together. Use these conversation starters to ask questions, understand how AI is being used, and help your child develop good judgment when using AI.

CARD 1 | "My child used AI for an assignment."

Start the conversation with your child.

Instead of starting with: "Did you use AI to do your homework?" Try: "Tell me how you used AI on this assignment."

Then ask:

- What did you ask it to do?
- What did you do yourself?
- Did you change or add anything?
- How did you know the answer was correct?
- What did you learn from using it?

The goal:

Focus on the process, not just whether AI was used. A student who uses AI to brainstorm, checks its response, and can explain their work is having a very different learning experience from a student who asks AI to complete an assignment for them.

CONVERSATION GOING

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together, try to

personal

mistake made

become a



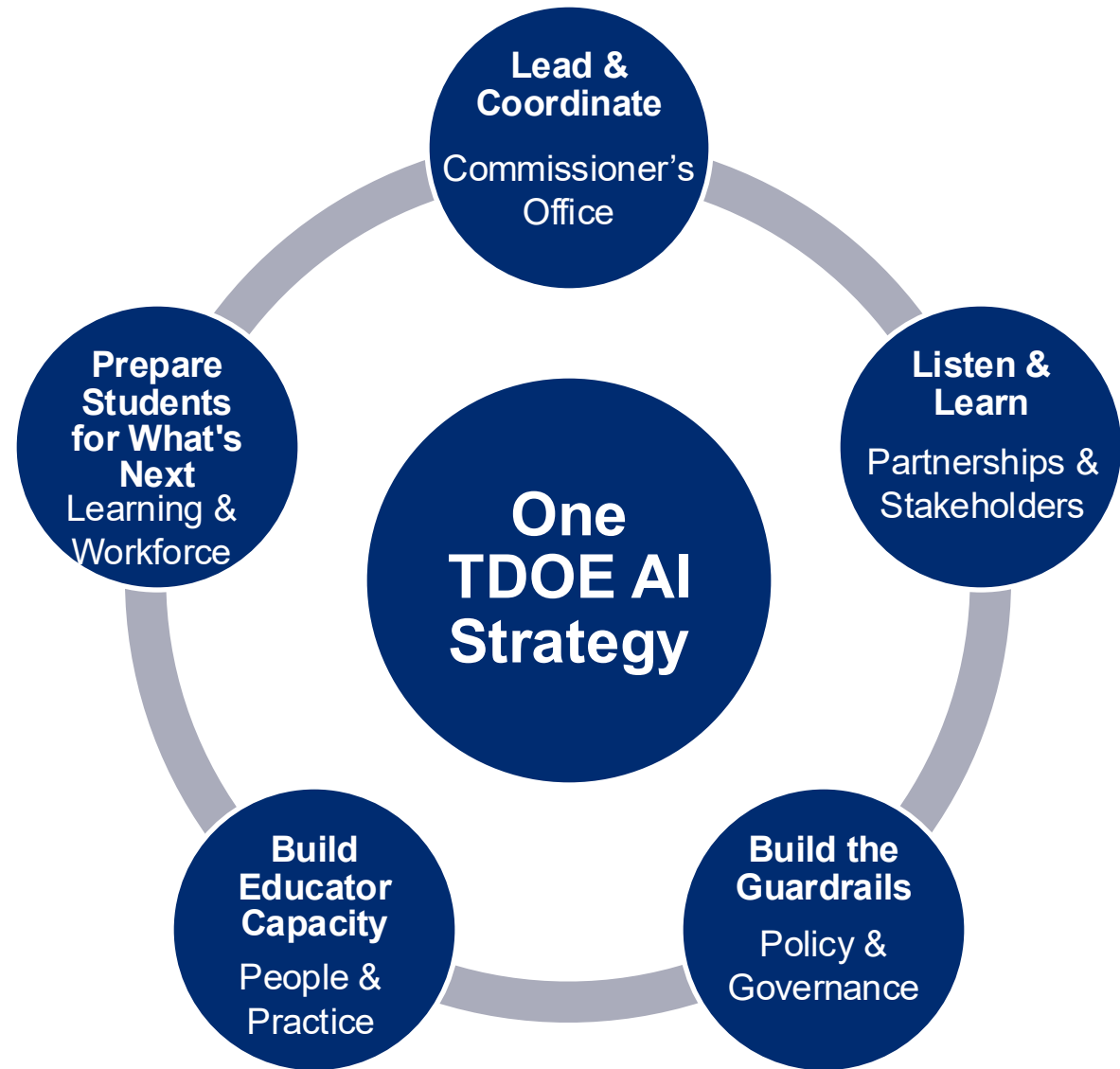
Your Next 30 Days:

Don't Launch an AI Initiative, Start an AI Conversation

- 1. Inventory:** Ask “*where are we using AI already?*”
- 2. Set Boundaries:** Clarify data, human oversight, and high-risk decisions
- 3. Pick 3 Use Cases:** Choose 3 places where AI can save time or improve service
- 4. Assign Ownership:** Decide who owns AI strategy, tool review, and ongoing monitoring

What are we doing in tandem to support you?

Coordinated through the Commissioner's Office





Thank you

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