Artificial Intelligence in Education: Implications for School Districts

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Purpose

- This presentation explores the growing role of artificial intelligence in K-12 education and its legal implications for school districts. Topics include the integration of AI tools in teaching and learning, potential impacts on student assessment, data privacy concerns, workforce considerations, and equity challenges.

- The session aims to inform attendees about both the opportunities and risks associated with the adoption of AI in schools and to encourage thoughtful and ethical implementation strategies.

Agenda

- What AI looks like in K–12 today.

- The legal framework that applies.

- Impacts on teaching, learning, and assessment.

- Data privacy and security risks.

- Equity and access challenges.

- Workforce considerations.

- Ethical implementation strategies.

- Key takeaways and your questions.

Artificial Intelligence...

...refers to **programs or machines that simulate tasks that typically require human intelligence**, such as:
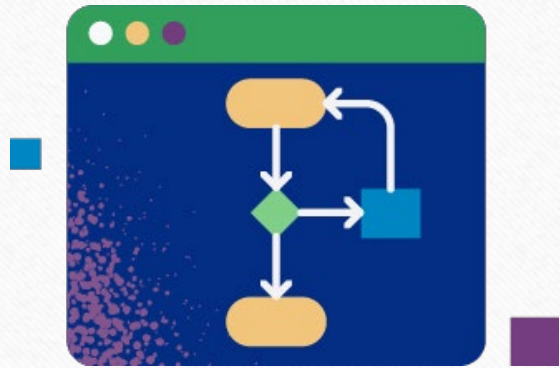
- recognizing patterns
- making predictions
- generating content

The varied definitions and applications of AI and its recent pace of development make it a challenge to regulate.

(OECD, 2024)

Understanding **artificial intelligence** helps decision makers craft and evaluate policies to promote its responsible use, access, and design.

Artificial Intelligence emerges as a field of computer science, integrating concepts from mathematics, engineering, and psychology.

1950s

Machine Learning (ML) is a range of techniques whereby computers are trained to improve their performance by processing vast amounts of data.
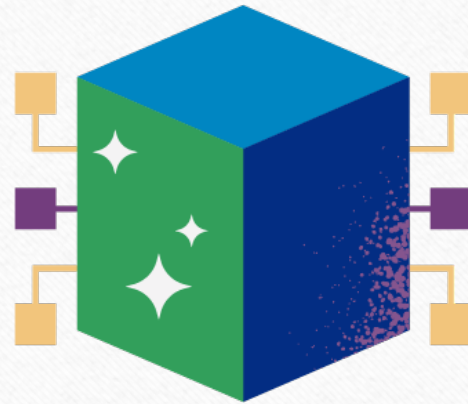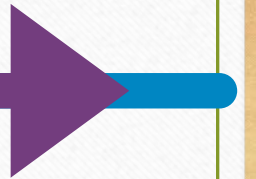
Deep Learning (DL) is an ML technique that utilizes neural networks and algorithms inspired by how human brains learn and process information.

1980s

Large Language Models (LLMs), a product of DL techniques, are models specialized for tasks like natural language processing, text generation, and translation.

2020s

Generative AI (Gen AI) is a powerful category of AI that includes LLMs and other models that generate text, images, videos, or music.

The internal workings of Gen AI models can lack transparency and explainability, making it challenging to build trust and ensure accountability.

Additional issues specific to Gen AI in education include bias, misinformation, and overreliance on AI tools.
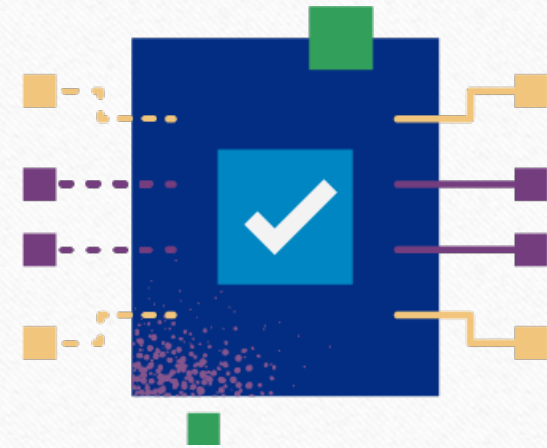
**Today**

AI Literacy

AI Literacy encompasses:

- Understanding how AI works
- Using AI responsibly
- Recognizing its social and ethical impacts
- Understanding AI's potential benefits and risks and how to mitigate the risks

AI in the Classroom Today

- Teachers – Automating lesson planning, differentiating materials for diverse learners, providing instant feedback.

- Students – Using AI chatbots for brainstorming, practicing math problems, or drafting essays.

- Administrators – Predictive analytics for early intervention, optimizing schedules, tracking attendance.

National Trends in AI Adoption

- A recent national survey found that over half of school districts are either piloting or planning to adopt AI tools within the next two years.

- States are beginning to issue guidance, but it's patchwork — there's no single national standard yet.

- That's why school boards play such a crucial role in setting thoughtful local policy.
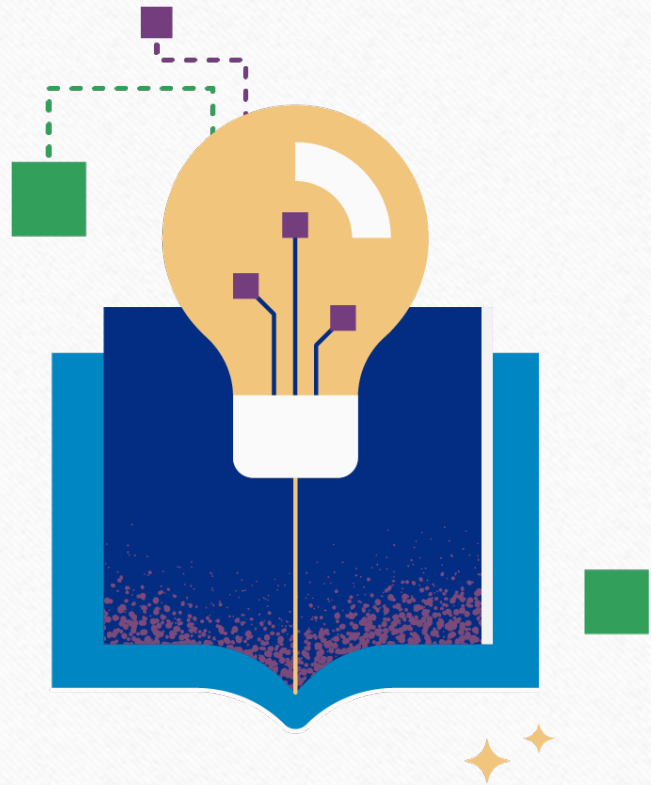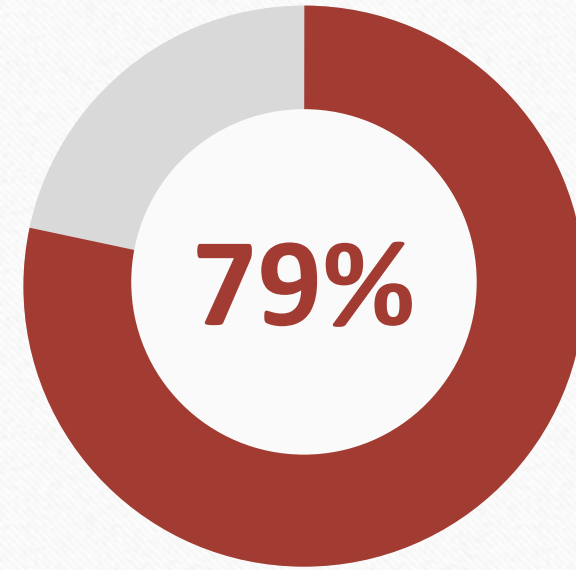
Data on AI in Education

Students and Teachers Want Guidance

72%
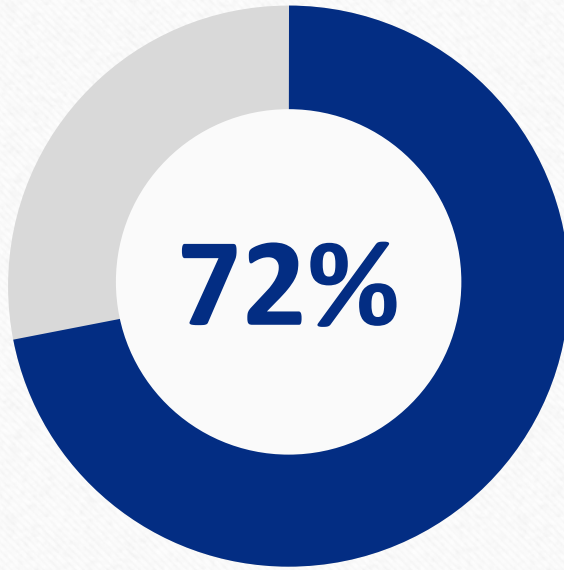
Students say that guidance on how to use Gen AI responsibly would be helpful.
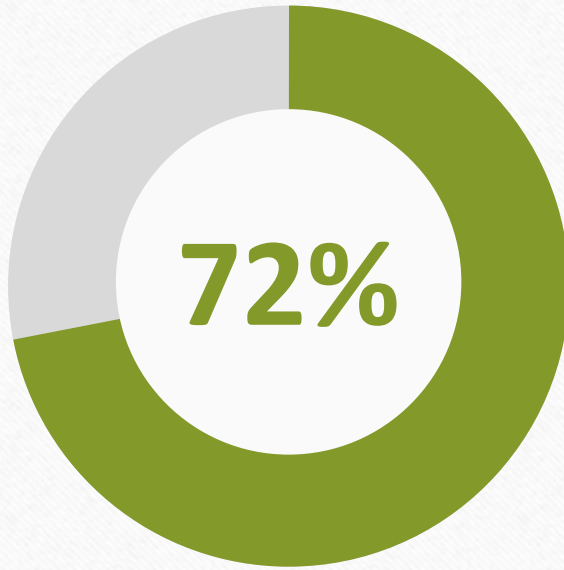
(CDT, Sep 2023)

79%

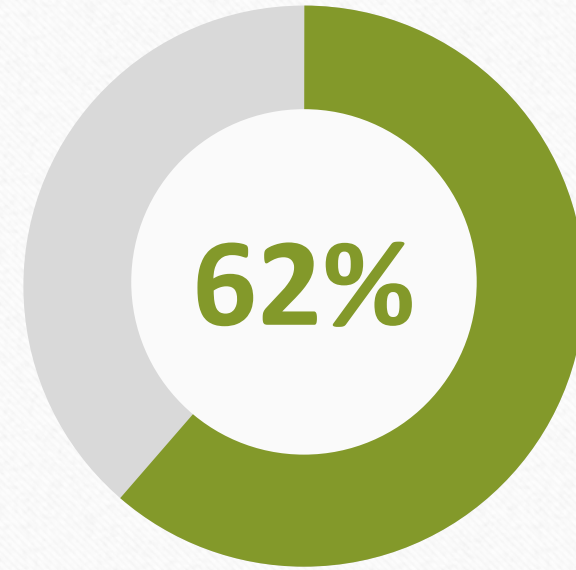**Teachers** say that their district does not have clear policies on AI in education.

(EdWeek, Feb 2024)

Youth Perspectives

72%

Youth who use AI would like some help from adults in learning how to use different tools.
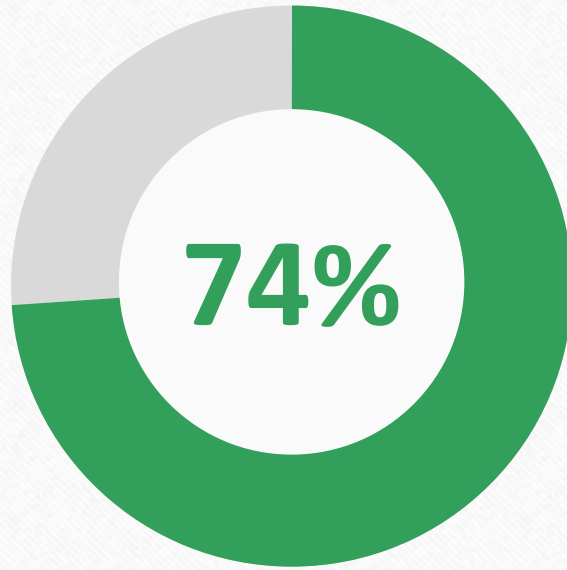(4-H / Hart Research, Feb 2024)

62%

Youth agree that learning how to use generative AI could give students an advantage in their future jobs.
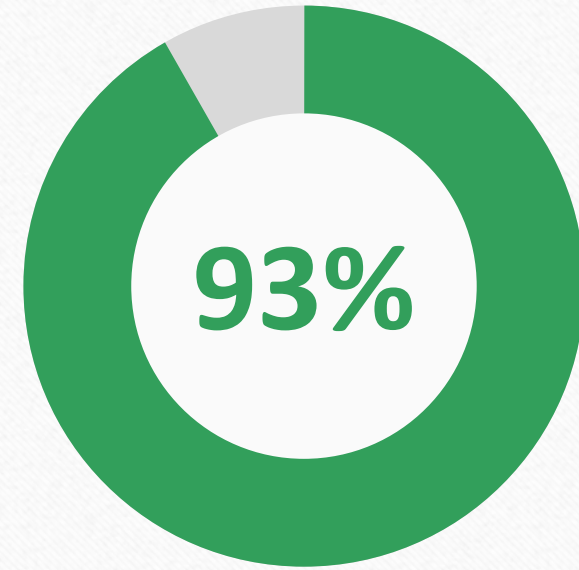(Common Sense Media, Sep 2024)

Teacher Perspectives

74%

Teachers agree that school lesson plans should include materials that help students learn about the implications of AI.

(aiEDU, March 2024)

93%

Teachers believe that integrating AI literacy into their coursework will enhance student engagement.

(Adobe, Jan 2025)

Parent Perspectives

54%
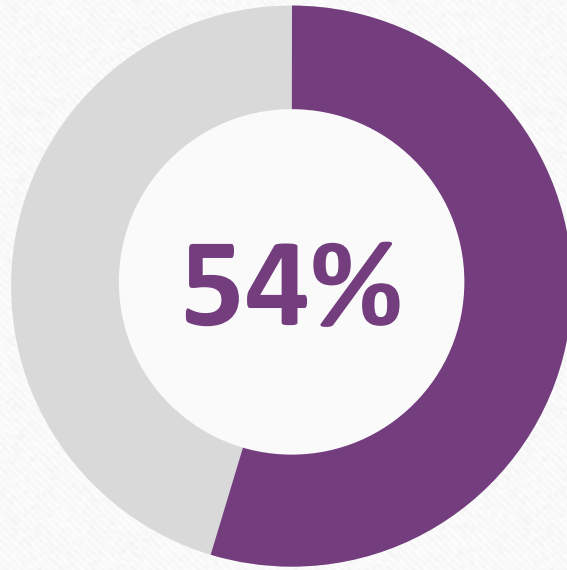
Parents report their child's school has not provided information about school policies on AI tools.

(National Parents Union, Dec 2024)

62%
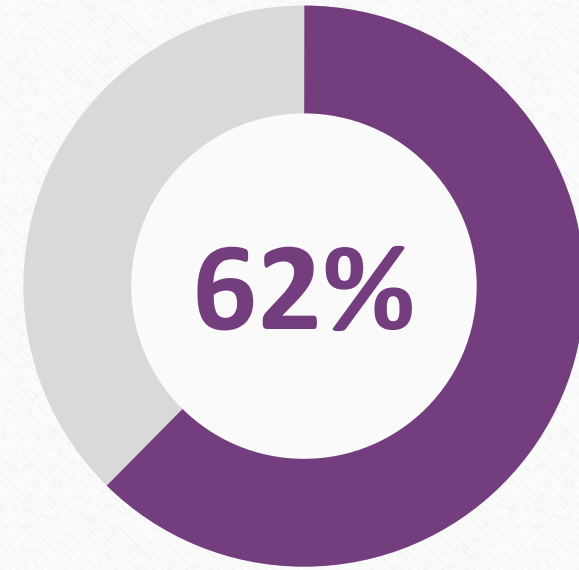
Parents believe teachers using AI tools to customize curriculum for students' needs would positively affect their child.

(National Parents Union, Dec 2024)

Students Use AI But Aren't AI Literate

86%

58%
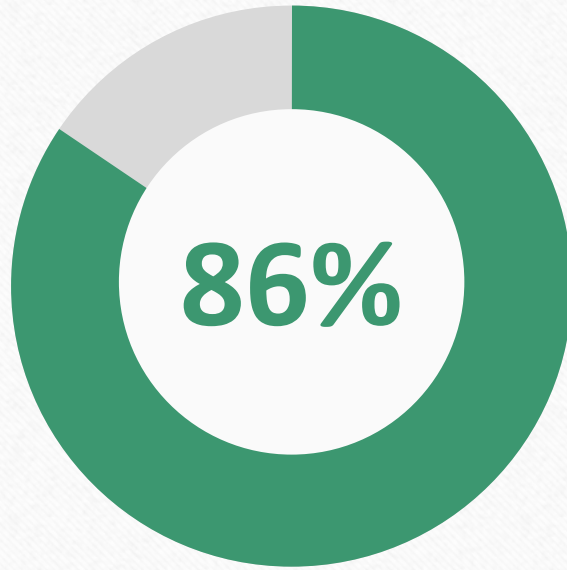
Higher education students are using AI in their studies.
(Digital Education Council, July 2024)
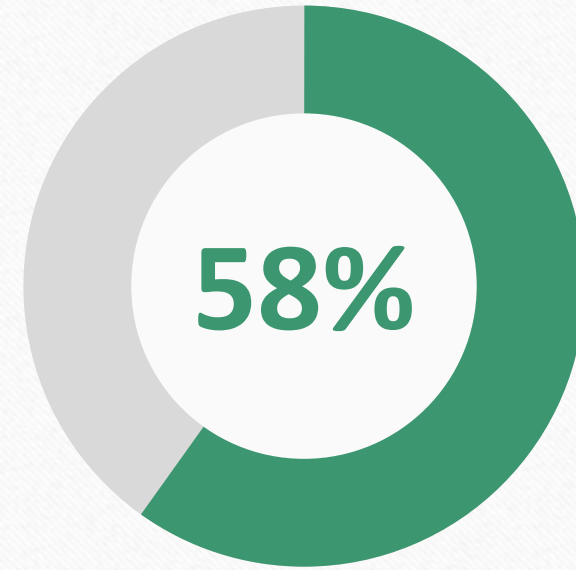
Higher education students do not feel they have sufficient AI literacy.
(Digital Education Council, July 2024)

Potential Benefits & Risks of Using AI in Education

Potential Benefits

Content development and differentiation

Assessment design and timely, effective feedback

Tutoring and **personalized** learning assistance

Aiding **creativity** and **collaboration**

Operational and administrative **efficiency**

Misinformation, errors, and academic dishonesty

Diminished student and teacher agency and **accountability**

Compromised student **privacy** and unauthorized data collection

Overreliance and loss of critical thinking

Societal bias and lack of cultural sensitivity

Potential Risks

Legal Framework: Existing Laws

- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA")
- Children's Online Privacy Protection Act ("COPPA")
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 ("Title VI")
- Title IX of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 ("Title IX")
- State-specific student data privacy laws also apply.

Legal Gray Areas

FERPA interpretation with **cloud-based AI tools** still unsettled.

AI grading tools could introduce **bias or lack transparency**.

AI misidentification.

Few legal precedents—policy and contracts must fill the gap.

Impact on Teaching Roles

- AI reduces repetitive administrative work, allowing focus on student interaction.

- Risk of over-reliance on AI-generated lesson plans or grading.

- Staff need training to critically assess AI outputs.

Academic Integrity Risks

- AI can generate essays, solve homework, or pass quizzes.

- Detection tools are imperfect and evolving.

- Clear policies must define acceptable AI use, with consistent enforcement and due process.

AI in Grading

- Potential to speed grading but risks inaccuracy and bias.

- Legal exposure if automated scores disadvantage protected groups.

- Require human review before final grades are entered.

Data Privacy Risks

- AI tools often store or transmit student data to third parties.

- Risk of breaches, misuse, or re-identification.

- District remains legally responsible even if vendor is at fault.

What about Human Resources?

- HR departments in school districts have also begun implementing AI in a many ways:
  - Recruiting Teachers
  - Reviewing Resumes
  - Vetting Applicants
  - Reducing Bias in the Selection Process
  - Chatbots for Employee Support
  - Performance Management

Workforce Impacts
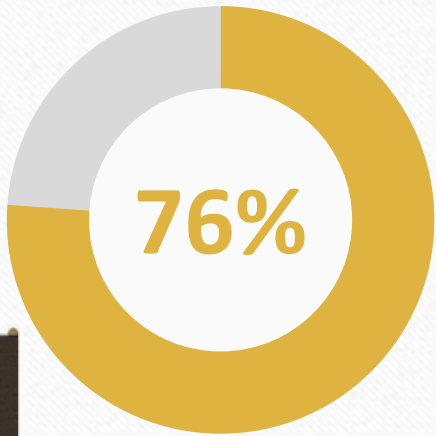
76% Employees say generative AI will **create opportunities** for them to learn new skills.
(PWC, June 2024)
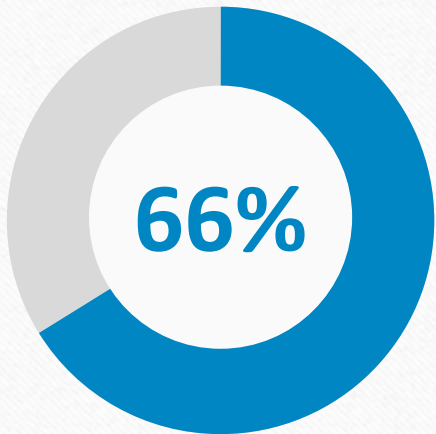
66% Leaders say they **would not hire** someone without AI skills.
(Microsoft, May 2024)

Despite GenAI being well-suited for programming tasks, the Bureau of Labor Statistics projects **the employment of software developers to increase 17.9 percent between 2023 and 2033**, much faster than the 4.0 percent average for all occupations. (BLS, Feb 2025)

Upskilling in an Age of AI

Of the 15 fastest-growing professional skills in the US, **AI Literacy is number 1.** (LinkedIn News, March 2025)

The AI shift requires **rapid upskilling**, with AI and big data skills leading the way. (World Economic Forum, Jan 2025)

Top 5 Fastest Growing Skills by 2030

1. AI and big data
2. Networks and cybersecurity
3. Technological literacy
4. Creative thinking
5. Resilience, flexibility, and agility

(World Economic Forum, Jan 2025)

Specify	Specify data use, storage, deletion timelines, and breach response.
Require	Require compliance with FERPA, COPPA, and state privacy laws.
Include	Include audit rights to verify vendor practices.

Vendor Contracts

Equity & Algorithmic Bias

AI can perpetuate racial, gender, or disability-based bias.

Biased recommendations may violate civil rights laws.

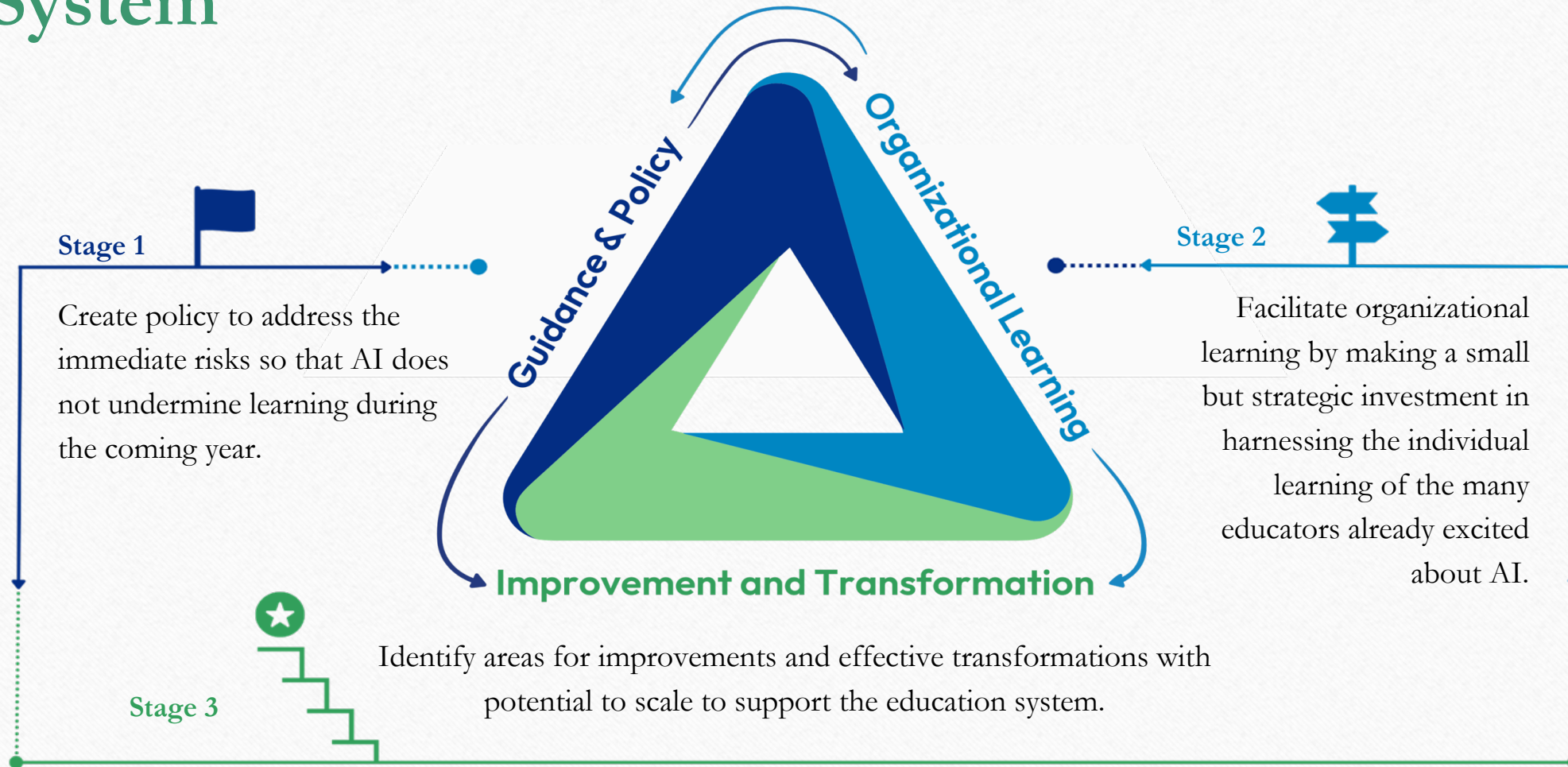Conduct regular bias audits and demand transparency in algorithms.

Special Education Considerations

- AI can support identification and IEP accommodations.

- Must comply with IDEA and Section 504 obligations.

- AI cannot replace professional judgment in eligibility or service decisions.

Workforce Impacts

- Automation may change or eliminate certain roles.

- Collective bargaining agreements may require negotiation before implementation.

- Invest in retraining and skill-shifting for displaced tasks

A Framework for Incorporating AI in an Education System

Guidance & Policy

Organizational Learning

Improvement and Transformation

Stage 1

Create policy to address the immediate risks so that AI does not undermine learning during the coming year.

Stage 2

Facilitate organizational learning by making a small but strategic investment in harnessing the individual learning of the many educators already excited about AI.

Stage 3

Identify areas for improvements and effective transformations with potential to scale to support the education system.

Guidance and Policy

What guidance and policies are needed now to address immediate risks so that AI does not undermine learning in the coming year?
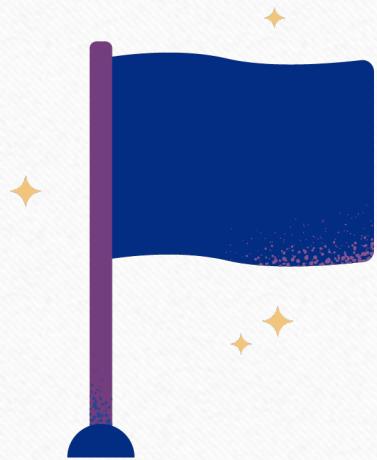
- Ensure that AI use complies with existing security and privacy policies,
- Provide guidance to students and staff on topics such as the opportunities and risks of AI
- Clarify responsible and prohibited uses of AI tools, especially uses that require human review
- Define academic integrity standards related to AI.

Organizational Learning

How can we make a small but strategic investment in harnessing the experiences of educators that are already excited about AI to facilitate organizational learning?

- Prioritize professional development for all staff
- Bring together individual educators' experiences with AI to document successes, identify gaps, and build collective organizational knowledge and capacity.
- Include operational considerations such as evaluating AI tools already in use and creating selection criteria for future evaluations.

Stage 3 **Improvement and Transformation**

How can we identify areas for improvements and effective transformations with potential to scale?
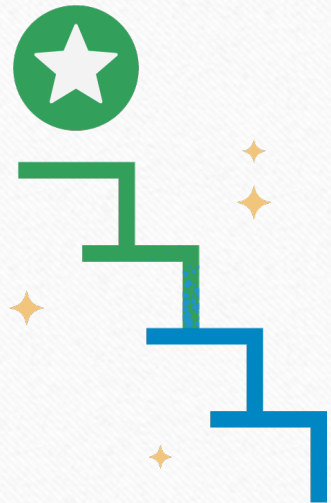
Transformations may include:
- Personalized learning
- Project-based learning aided by real-time and augmented feedback
- A shift to competency-based education
- Reduced paperwork allows teachers more time for student connection and support
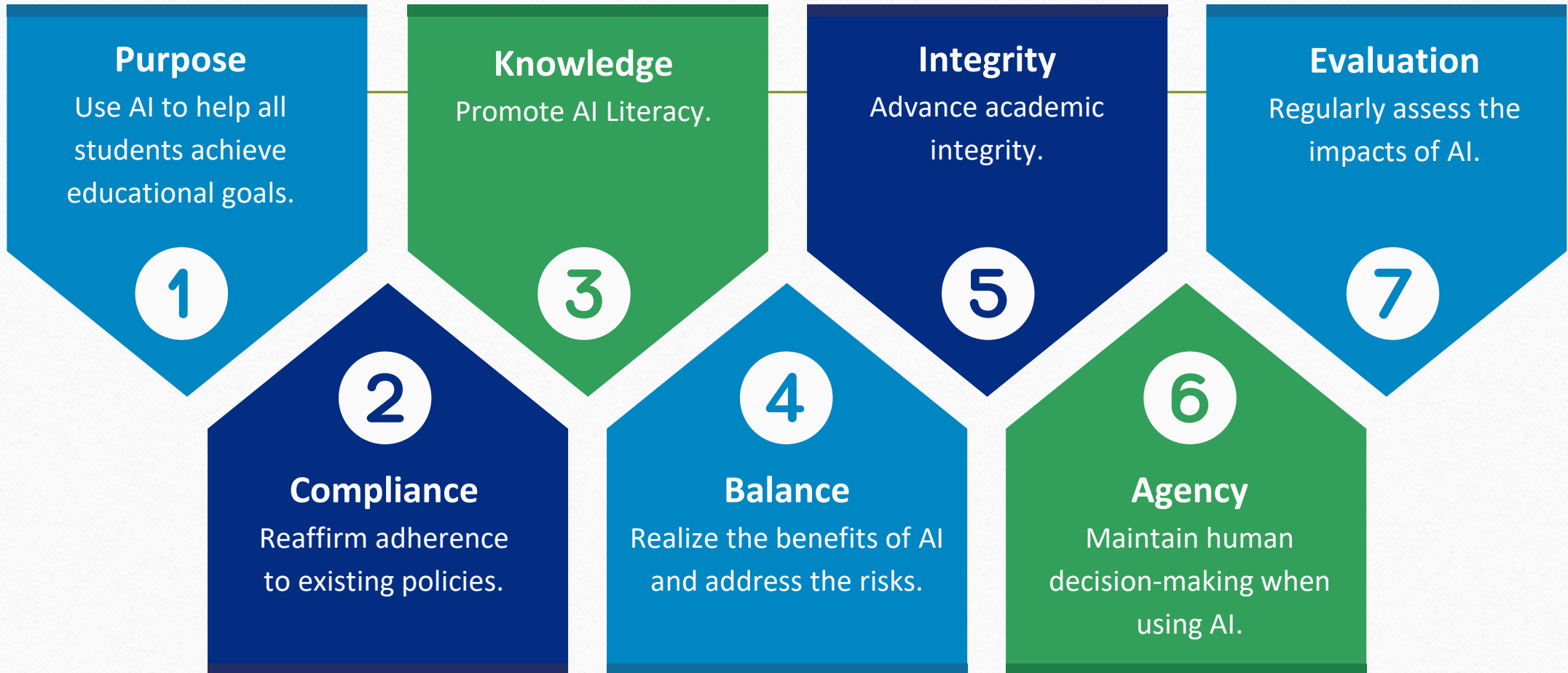
Key Takeaways

- AI is already in your classrooms—policy must catch up.

- Legal responsibility stays with the district, not the vendor.

- Equity, bias, and transparency are central to compliance.

- Boards set the tone for safe and ethical AI use.

Questions?

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