



CoSN Leaders Offer Practical Steps for K-12 AI Implementation

In a webinar this week, K-12 thought leaders from the Consortium for School Networking summarized the ethical implementation of AI in schools as a matter of preparation, communication, equity, privacy and flexibility.

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Experts from the Consortium for School Networking (CoSN), a professional association for K-12 ed-tech leaders, offered actionable advice for schools on implementing AI during a webinar this week. The event, “Implementing Ethical AI: CoSN’s Insights and Recommendations,” focused on how schools can start using AI while remaining mindful of issues such as ethics, equity and data privacy.

Hosted by K-12 software company PowerSchool, the July 17 webinar featured CoSN CEO Keith Krueger and Pete Just, executive director of CoSN’s Indiana chapter, the Indiana CTO Council. During the event, Just described the current stage of AI adoption as “primal” and said school leaders are grappling with big questions as they work to lay the foundation for appropriate AI use in education.

“Superintendents, school district leaders, school board leaders, as well as CTOs, curriculum folks, they’re all trying to understand more deeply what generative AI means,” Just said. “The questions then become, how do we teach with AI, and how do we teach about AI — two different things by the way — and what practices, policies, things of that nature need to be in place?”

As a starting point, Krueger recommended school districts use the [K-12 Generative AI Readiness Checklist](#), developed by CoSN and the [Council of the Great City Schools](#), a coalition of 78 of the nation’s largest urban public school systems. He said the checklist contains 93 yes-or-no questions across six domains to help schools figure out where to focus first.

In addition, Krueger said schools can begin to define appropriate AI use through the lens of their existing policies on topics such as academic integrity and acceptable use. He

emphasized that administrators should be careful to create policies and guidelines flexible enough to accommodate the rapid changes expected with this new wave of technology.

“Maybe, at this early, early stage, you need to think of it more as guidance rather than board-approved policy that locks you into something that next month, next year, next tomorrow might be different,” Krueger said.

On the topic of ethics, the discussion turned to the importance of clear communication from teachers to students about permitted levels of AI use for various assignments and how to cite such use. Just said this is an area that will require greater professional development and pointed to resources such as the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay’s [GenAI Checklist](#), a guide to adapting classes to account for the availability of generative AI.

As for the equity of AI in education, both Krueger and Just said schools need to ensure all students have access to this technology. Just said students who don’t will be at a disadvantage when it comes to future employment.

“If you don’t have this skill, you will be left behind,” he said. “It’s critical in terms of being able to level the playing field.”

However, as access to AI increases, so too do concerns about data privacy. Just and Krueger said school leaders need to study the terms of use of any AI tool before implementation, to understand what data it collects and how that data is used. In addition, they said school districts must make clear that users should never share personally identifiable information with any AI program.

In terms of the potential impact of AI on education and society in general, Krueger put the transformative powers of this technology on par with those of the steam engine and electricity.

“This is the fourth industrial revolution,” he said. “We have to be very humble about the fact that we’re at the tip of the iceberg. I think it’s really hard to predict how this all will play out.”