



Board Meeting Date: 04/13/2026

Title: Artificial Intelligence (AI) Update

Type: Discussion

Presenter(s): Nate Swenson, Assistant Superintendent; Bethany Van Osdel, Assistant Director of Teaching and Learning; Nathaniel Lindley, Director of Media & Technology Services; Bri Buck, Digital Learning Coordinator; Susan Lander, South View Teacher; and Grace Bireley, South View Student

Description: This update provides an overview of the district's multi-year AI implementation efforts, including the work of the AI Implementation Team, staff professional learning through the AI Academy and newsletters, and operational leadership integration. Together, these efforts are building capacity, establishing clear guidance, and supporting responsible, innovative use of AI across the district.

Recommendation: No recommendation is being made at this time. This item has been prepared for board discussion.

Desired Outcome(s) from the Board: Please bring forth questions for the presenters.

Attachment(s):

- [Presentation Slide Deck](#)
- [Team Role Description](#)
- [AI Newsletter](#)
- [Edina AI Guidance](#)

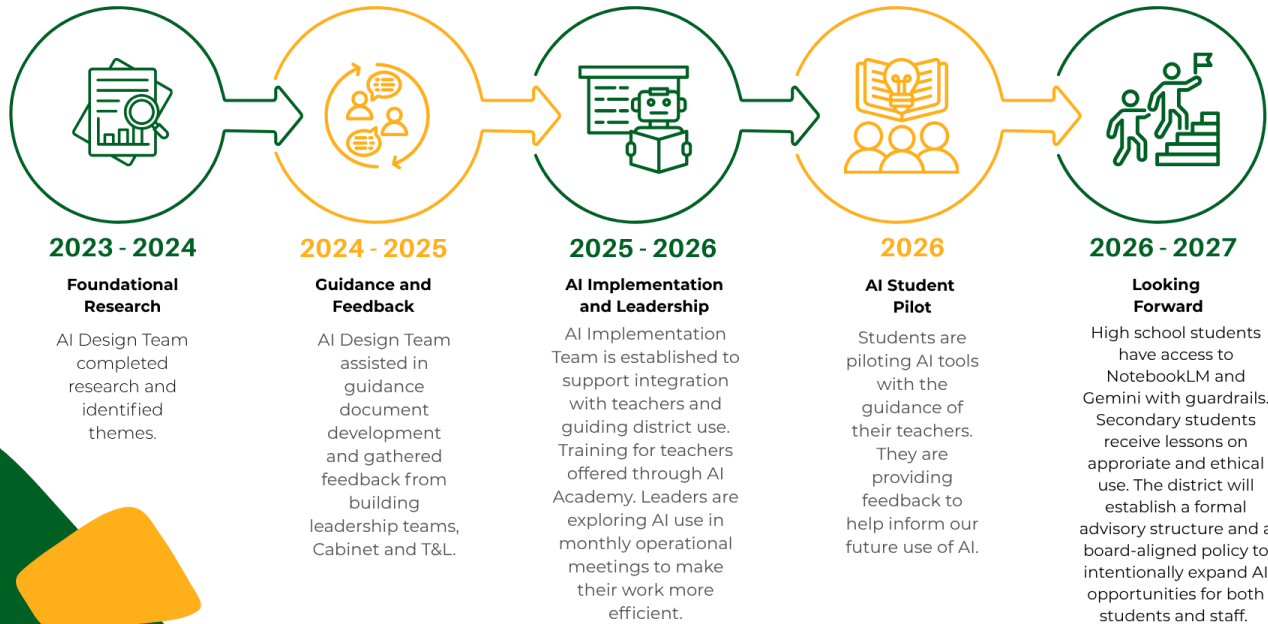
Executive Summary: AI Implementation Plan

April 2026 Update



Edina Generative AI Timeline

Our goal is to raise awareness, build capacity, and support implementation across all staff to foster a foundational understanding of AI.



Overview

Edina Public Schools continues its multi-year initiative to thoughtfully and responsibly integrate Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) into teaching, learning, and leadership practices. Since the launch in 2023, we have moved from defining our vision to active exploration and early implementation. Our work remains grounded in our strategic priorities of academic excellence and the development of future-ready learners, establishing a foundation for innovation that emphasizes ethical use, inclusive access, and the empowerment of our staff and students.

As we navigate this transformative landscape, we remain committed to our **Portrait of a Well-Rounded Edina Graduate**, ensuring students are academically prepared, globally competent, and innovative thinkers who use AI critically and creatively as a tool for problem-solving.

The Edina Public Schools AI plan has 3 strands of support:



This summary will provide an update on all 3 strands of support.

Strand 1: AI Implementation Team

Led by: **Bethany Van Osdel, Assistant Director of Teaching and Learning**

The AI Implementation Team is a group of Edina educators who represent all sites and many roles. The team has met on full days in October, December, and January, with one more meeting scheduled in May. The team has had two main focus areas: establishing the values and behaviors that will guide our district's long-term relationship with AI and thoughtfully applying the guidance with students through classroom pilots.

Core Values and Behaviors

AI is evolving so quickly that it can feel like a runaway train. Though the technology changes daily, the implementation team has defined the tracks that carry us forward: our core values and behavioral standards. By anchoring our work in these values, EPS ensures that no matter how fast the pace of innovation, our direction remains clear.

To ensure AI supports Edina's mission, the team has defined **five guiding values**, each accompanied by a framework of what AI use **is** and **is not** within our schools:

- **Problem Solving:** We use AI to identify challenges and explore solutions.
 - **IS:** Using AI as a thought partner to improve work and design adaptive learning tools.
 - **IS NOT:** Blindly accepting AI output or using it to avoid critical thinking.
- **Ethical:** We leverage AI to enhance thinking, not replace it.
 - **IS:** A collaborative partner that enhances educator expertise, safeguards data, and sparks curiosity while remaining transparent and grounded in best practices.
 - **IS NOT:** A substitute for human judgment, accountability, or the critical review necessary to prevent bias, protect privacy, and ensure student safety.
- **Critical Thinking:** We use AI to enhance, not replace, human agency.
 - **IS:** Checking for accuracy and bias, and using tools to solve complex problems.
 - **IS NOT:** Dehumanizing feedback or using AI without a clear intention.
- **Intentional:** AI use must align with our mission and support diverse learners.
 - **IS:** Reducing workload to prioritize relationship building and differentiating content.
 - **IS NOT:** Using AI to break trust or assess work without human review.

- **Inclusive:** We prioritize belonging and student empowerment.
 - **IS:** Removing barriers to creativity and modeling AI use with students.
 - **IS NOT:** Creating assignments that require inaccessible tools or vilifying AI use.

Stakeholder Voice: Survey Summary

In early 2026, the team collected comprehensive feedback from students and staff to inform our next steps. The data revealed a district "united in what they need—clarity and time—but divided by how they feel".

Staff Perspectives: While many staff members are "cautiously curious," a notable divide exists:

- **Concerns:** Some view AI primarily through the lens of risk, citing worries regarding academic integrity, the potential loss of critical thinking, and environmental impacts.
- **Benefits:** Others highlight the advantages of AI for increasing efficiency in lesson planning, brainstorming, and drafting communications.

Student Perspectives: While many students in grades 6–12 utilize AI for brainstorming and "homework help," a notable disconnect between student perception also exists:

- **Disconnect:** Students often feel misunderstood by adults who equate AI use with cheating; in reality, many use it to deconstruct complex concepts or spark creativity.
- **Wants:** Above all, students value transparency and advocate for human-centered, creative teaching that integrates these tools without replacing personal connection.

Spring 2026: Student Pilot Period

Recognizing that students are already engaging with these tools, the Implementation Team is launching a **student trial period this spring**. This small pilot will move beyond teacher exploration to direct student involvement, allowing us to gather real-time data on how students interact with approved tools like Google Gemini and NotebookLM in a controlled classroom environment. The goal is to develop "student introduction lessons" and refine our guidance based on actual classroom practice before wider implementation in 2026-27.

Strand 3: AI Newsletter and Academy for Educators

Led by: Bri Buck, Digital Learning Coordinator

The AI Academy and monthly newsletters remain the primary engines for staff professional development, ensuring all educators have the support they need to lead in an AI-enhanced environment.

AI Academy

Launched in Fall 2025, the AI Academy provides both live and self-paced learning opportunities.

- **Focus Audience:** For the 2025-26 school year, **teachers** are the primary focus, giving them the "space to talk through values and concerns" before full student integration.
- **Topics:** In November, we focused on Gemini, learning about how to write an effective prompt and the built-in tools such as generating an image and Deep Research. In February, we learned about NotebookLM. Participants explored a Notebook about Edina and generated audio overviews,

infographics, and flashcards. In March, we shared ideas about how to use Gemini and NotebookLM for teacher use and classroom application.

- We have had 150 educators attend these sessions, either virtually or self-paced.

AI Newsletter

To keep momentum high, the **AI Newsletter** is delivered monthly via email.

- **Highlights:** Editions have included topics such as Gemini, Gems, Adobe Express, and NotebookLM.
- **Impact:** Staff feedback indicates these newsletters provide "just-in-time" resources that help demystify AI and provide immediate classroom applications.

Strand 2: Operational Leadership

Led by: Nate Swenson, Assistant Superintendent; Bri Buck, Digital Learning Coordinator

Throughout the fall and winter, Operations meetings have prioritized hands-on exploration of productivity tools for our district leaders:

- **NotebookLM:** Explored as a tool for synthesizing large district documents and streamlining information retrieval.
- **Gemini Gems:** Used to create custom, repeatable workflows for administrative tasks.
- **Empathy Surveys:** Operational leaders participated in an "Empathy Survey" session to compare their values with instructional staff, ensuring that as we seek efficiency, we remain grounded in Edina's human-centered mission.

This spring, we will focus on learning more about Gemini, NotebookLM, and Gems. The Operational Team will also provide feedback on our values and behaviors that will help guide us into the next school year.

Moving Forward: 2026 and Beyond

As we continue on this path, Edina Public Schools will build on our strong foundation by establishing a formal AI advisory structure and developing a clear, district-wide AI use plan. This next phase will include the development of Board-aligned policy guidance, continued opportunities for students to utilize AI, and intentional expansion of staff use through approved tools.

Our commitment remains: to implement AI in a way that deepens our human connections, elevates our innovation, and enhances our execution of our Mission and Vision. Together, these efforts will ensure our approach to AI remains thoughtful, aligned to our strategic priorities, and grounded in human-centered teaching and learning.