AI Parent & Community Engagement Strategy

Overview

This resource is designed to help districts build community trust and transparency around the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in schools. It includes two parts: a customizable communication strategy and a district-ready FAQ. These tools support proactive outreach, family engagement, and responsive communication. Districts can use this resource to plan and track engagement efforts, share information with families, and respond to community concerns in a clear, supportive way.

For districts new to AI, this resource pairs well with the included Understanding AI in Education Starter Guide, which offers foundational explanations and practical talking points to build shared understanding.

Part 1: Community Engagement Strategy

A five-part strategy to guide how school districts can proactively engage families and communities around AI use.

1. Build Internal Readiness

Why it matters: Before engaging families, district leaders and staff must have clarity and alignment on AI use cases, policies, and values.

How to implement: Train school staff and leaders to ensure consistent messaging and shared understanding.

Example Tactics:

- Develop talking points aligned to your Responsible Use Policy.
- Ensure that school site leaders are equipped to respond to common parent questions.
- Host a briefing for board members or advisory councils.

2. Communicate Early and Proactively

Why it matters: Families should hear about AI initiatives from the district first—not through media or social media posts.

How to implement: Use proactive outreach to communicate the district's approach and values.

Example Tactics:

- Send a letter from the superintendent or site leader explaining the district's approach to AI.
- Include a brief update in family newsletters or school websites.
- Provide a timeline of planned rollouts and opportunities to learn more.

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3. Use Accessible, Parent-Friendly Language

Why it matters: AI can be confusing or intimidating. Clear and simple communication builds trust.

How to implement: Translate complex terms into plain language and provide real examples.

Example Tactics:

- Use the FAQ in this tool as a foundation and adapt it for your community.
- Create a short video, one-pager, or flyer using visuals and district examples.
- Translate materials into the most commonly spoken languages in your district.

4. Create Space for Dialogue and Questions

Why it matters: Parents should feel heard and have a chance to ask questions or raise concerns.

How to implement: Host structured opportunities for dialogue and feedback.

Example Tactics:

- Include AI as a topic at parent advisory council meetings.
- Host a dedicated family info session or town hall.
- Create an email inbox or online form where families can submit questions.

5. Follow Up and Report Back

Why it matters: Transparency doesn't end with one meeting—ongoing updates help families stay informed and invested.

How to implement: Share key updates, decisions, and next steps regularly.

Example Tactics:

- Provide a summary of community feedback and how it's being used.
- Include updates in newsletters or board presentations.
- Publish an annual AI progress update on the district website.

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Part 2: Parent FAQ

Customize the questions and responses below to reflect your district's specific approach, tools, and communication style.

What is artificial intelligence (AI), and how is it used in education?

AI refers to computer programs that can perform tasks that usually require human intelligence, such as generating text, analyzing data, or translating languages. In education, AI might support teachers with administrative work, help families with translated communications, or assist school leaders in reviewing data trends to improve student support.

Will AI replace teachers or school staff?

No. AI tools are designed to assist—not replace—educators and staff. Teachers remain the most important influence in the classroom. The district is committed to ensuring that AI is used in ways that support, not substitute, the work of caring professionals.

What types of AI tools might be used in our district?

AI tools may include language translation software, tools that help summarize long documents, systems that assist with data entry, or platforms that generate ideas for communication drafts. These tools are reviewed for usefulness, safety, and alignment with district goals.

How does the district protect student privacy when using AI?

The district follows strict privacy policies and complies with laws like FERPA and COPPA. Every AI tool must go through a data privacy review. Tools that collect, store, or process student data are approved only if they meet rigorous safety standards and provide clear protections.

How will families be kept informed about AI use in schools?

The district is committed to transparency. Updates will be shared through newsletters, school websites, and family meetings. Parents and caregivers will have opportunities to ask questions, give feedback, and participate in district decision-making when appropriate.

Who can I contact if I have more questions or concerns?

[Insert your district's contact information here. Consider listing a specific contact person, department, or email inbox.]

If your district is just beginning to explore AI, this guide offers a helpful starting point:

Understanding AI in Education – A Starter Guide for Stakeholders. This foundational guide is designed to help school boards, administrators, educators, and community stakeholders build shared understanding of what AI is—and what it is not—in the context of TK–12 education. It offers simple, accessible language, school-specific examples, and practical talking points to support informed conversations and decision-making.

Common Sense Media and Day of AI have teamed up to launch a free toolkit, featuring a video and interactive activities to help families and educators explore AI together. These resources support age-appropriate conversations and build the skills that kids need to thrive in a digital world.

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