

# Case Study 2: Wichita Public Schools

---

Wichita Public Schools (WPS), the largest district in Kansas, is setting a powerful example for how K–12 systems can integrate artificial intelligence (AI) to drive learning, innovation, and operational improvement. Serving nearly 47,000 students across 88 schools, WPS prioritizes digital equity, personalized learning, and preparing students and staff for an AI-driven future.

This case study explores their thoughtful journey: why they embraced AI, what they've done, the lessons they've learned, and their plans for what's next.

# Case Study 2: Wichita Public Schools

## Why AI?

For WPS, AI offered an opportunity to personalize learning, foster inclusivity, and equip students for a rapidly evolving workforce. From differentiating instruction to addressing language and accessibility barriers, AI aligned with the district's commitment to preparing students with critical thinking and ethical decision-making skills. At its core, AI became a tool to expand access, voice, and choice in learning. With these goals in mind, WPS knew it needed a thoughtful, collaborative approach to explore how AI could be responsibly integrated into its educational ecosystem.

## Getting Started

The district's AI exploration began in late 2022, led by a dedicated edtech team. Early steps included establishing an AI specialist role, piloting AI tools, and launching the Propellus Tech Summit in partnership with Wichita State University, a hands-on event designed to expose educators to emerging AI technologies. This summit provided an early spark for professional development, complemented by structured learning opportunities and one-on-one coaching for school leaders. These early efforts laid the groundwork for broader implementation, setting the stage for hands-on learning, experimentation, and districtwide professional development.

## What They Tried

Professional development at WPS has been both strategic and creative. The district first introduced AI tools like Canva Magic Write to clerical staff to enhance newsletters and social media communications. A unique AI game night gave faculty and their families an approachable, fun way to explore AI in a relaxed setting.

At the heart of WPS's efforts is the annual Propellus AI Summit, a dynamic event offering workshops, live demonstrations, and interaction with national thought leaders. Educators gain hands-on experience with tools like Microsoft Copilot and Canva Magic Media while building networks to support responsible AI implementation.

WPS has also provided one-on-one coaching for principals, exploring how AI can support diverse learners, improve communication, and streamline administrative work. At the classroom level, targeted training has helped teachers leverage AI to support Universal Design for Learning (UDL), enabling multimodal approaches that boost accessibility, voice, and choice for students. Through these varied initiatives, WPS cultivated a culture of curiosity and innovation, while uncovering valuable lessons to guide its next steps.

## Lessons Learned

Early wins include increased educator confidence and enhanced instructional practices. Teachers report that AI tools have freed up valuable planning time, supported differentiation, and helped adapt materials for multilingual and diverse learners. The Propellus AI Summit has emerged as a catalyst, transforming hesitant participants into enthusiastic adopters who bring fresh ideas back to their schools.

A key insight: There's no one-size-fits-all path to AI integration. Teachers need time, flexibility, and relevance. WPS has found that AI is most impactful when used to scaffold thinking, clarify expectations, and guide creative learning tasks. The district continues to prioritize transparency, ongoing communication, and stakeholder buy-in to build trust and momentum. These insights continue to shape the district's approach, ensuring that AI integration aligns with its larger mission and vision for student success.

# Case Study 2: Wichita Public Schools

---

## Connection to Broader Goals

AI integration is a key lever in advancing WPS's "Every Student Future Ready" strategic plan, which focuses on preparing students for life, college, and career. AI supports this vision by enabling personalized learning, equitable access, and workforce-aligned skills. It strengthens pathways to graduation, builds digital literacy, and ensures that innovation always serves inclusion and empowerment. This alignment reinforces the district's commitment to ensuring that AI serves as a tool for equity, empowerment, and lifelong learning.

## Stakeholder Engagement

The district has fostered trust and collaboration through family workshops, transparent communication, and events like the Propellus Tech Summit. These efforts create shared understanding of AI's potential and risks while giving teachers, families, and students hands-on opportunities to explore AI together. With stakeholders engaged and informed, WPS is well-positioned to deepen its efforts and explore new opportunities for AI integration.

## Next Steps

WPS is finalizing a districtwide AI policy focused on safe, ethical student use. The district plans to expand professional development, strengthen partnerships with higher education and industry, and continue leveraging the Propellus Tech Summit as a hub for innovation. Notably, WPS will be honored at an upcoming ISTE + ASCD conference with the Distinguished District Award, recognizing its national leadership in responsible, forward-thinking AI integration.

Wichita Public Schools' journey demonstrates the power of aligning AI integration with strategic goals, centering professional development, and fostering collective ownership. Their work offers a practical roadmap, and inspiration, for other districts seeking to thoughtfully embrace AI for learning, innovation, and inclusion.