



2025 Strategic Plan

updated for 2026-2027 school year



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Glossary

This strategic plan was developed collaboratively by Westport Public Schools administrators and teachers, with support from AI tools such as Canva, Gemini, ChatGPT, and Claude. Educators guided the process, reviewed and refined AI contributions, and determined the plan's priorities and commitments. District leadership retains responsibility for the final content and implementation.



Purpose and Vision

Purpose

We believe that artificial intelligence, when implemented ethically and intentionally, is not a replacement for teachers but a tool to rehumanize education.

Our purpose is to use AI not to automate instruction, but to liberate educators from burdensome administrative tasks, personalize student learning at scale, and design a more thoughtful, inclusive, and forward-thinking classroom experience. We seek to leverage AI as a force multiplier, not a substitute, for the creativity, empathy, and professional judgment of Westport Public Schools Educators.

AI pushes us to continue to move beyond a compliance-driven model toward a fluid, responsive system focused on adaptability, problem-solving, and lifelong learning. It pushes us to redefine success, not as standardized outcomes, but as human potential: creativity, collaboration, and civic readiness in an AI-influenced world. The promise of public education becomes not just “preparing students for the future,” but partnering with them to co-create it.

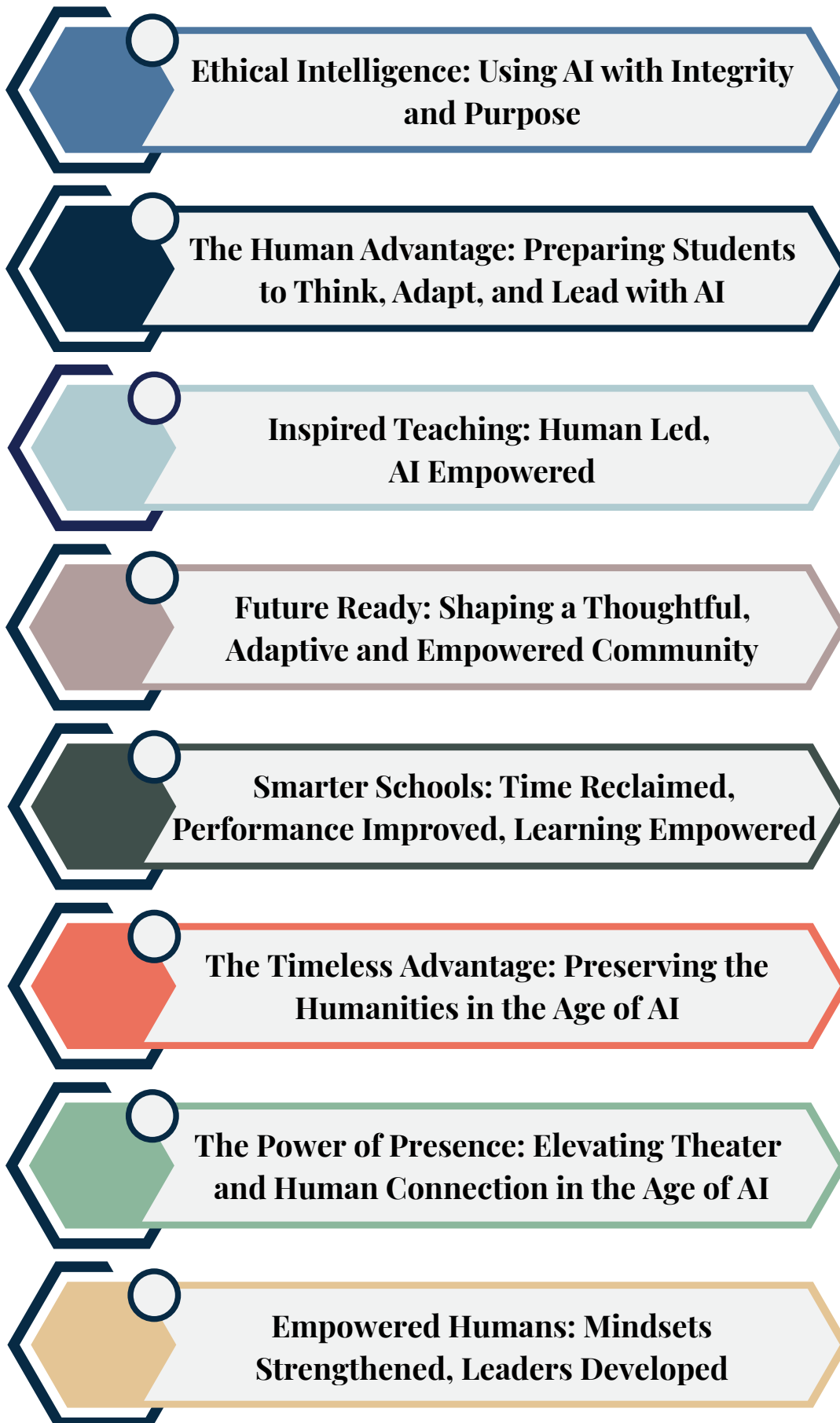
This is not about keeping up with trends. This is about shaping the future, on our terms.

Vision

We envision a school district where:

- Teachers are empowered to be architects of powerful, personalized learning.
- Students engage with meaningful learning experiences tailored to their strengths, gaps, interests, and input.
- Teachers use AI tools to bolster their insights into curriculum, materials, and student learning, as well as to recover and enhance instructional time.
- Opportunity is widened, not narrowed, by ensuring that all learners, regardless of background, have equal access to tools to foster their own growth.
- Data is used responsibly and transparently to adapt curriculum and instruction, with student privacy at the forefront.
- AI literacy will be taught with intention so students become not just consumers, but creators and critics of emerging technologies.
- All stakeholders, students, teachers, families, administrators, understand the core principles and uses of AI in our schools.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES







Ethical Intelligence: Using AI with Integrity and Purpose

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Artificial Intelligence presents extraordinary opportunities for innovation and personalized learning, but also profound ethical challenges. In education, AI shapes how we assess students, make decisions, and use data that affect people's lives, rights, and opportunities. Without clear ethical guidelines, schools risk perpetuating bias, violating privacy, or allowing automation to erode human judgment.

Ethical leadership in AI is not optional; it is essential to preserving trust, fairness, and the humanity at the heart of public education. A clearly defined AI Code of Ethics provides the foundation for responsible decision-making, guiding how we design, deploy, and interact with AI systems across our schools. It ensures transparency and accountability while fostering innovation that serves, rather than replaces, human connection.

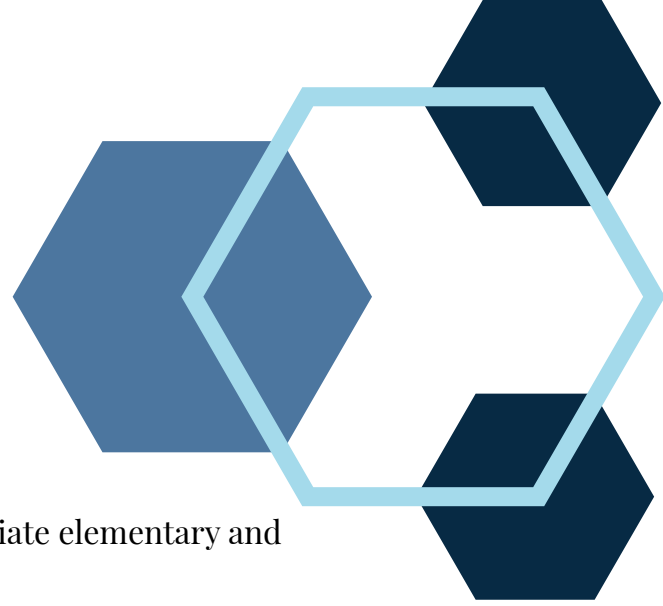
For Westport Public Schools, ethical use of AI is central to our vision of being AI Powered, Human Centered. Establishing a districtwide ethical framework builds public confidence, empowers educators and students to use AI responsibly, and ensures that technology amplifies learning, integrity, and opportunity, not risk or division.

WHAT ARE WE GOING TO ACCOMPLISH?

We will create and adopt a District AI Code of Ethics that serves as a living framework to guide all AI-related practices, from classroom instruction to operational decision-making. This work will:

- Establish shared ethical principles that protect privacy, promote fairness, and ensure human oversight.
- Align district policies, including Academic Integrity, with the values embedded in the Code of Ethics.
- Train teachers, staff, and students in ethical AI use, media literacy, and bias awareness.
- Build trust and transparency through community education and open communication.

By the end of this plan, Westport Public Schools will be recognized as a national model for responsible, human-centered AI integration, where innovation is grounded in ethics, and every decision reflects our district's core values.



HOW WILL WE ACCOMPLISH THIS?

We will advance five coordinated initiatives, with age-appropriate elementary and secondary pathways for student learning.

1. Creating and Adopting an AI Code of Ethics

Build on the subcommittee, community input, and framework research completed in August 2025. Refine the Code and communicate its principles through explanatory videos and public materials. Use implementation feedback to keep the framework current.

2. Amending the Academic Integrity Policy

Adopt and communicate revised expectations for AI use, assessments, and collaboration. September 2026 remains the completion target. Ensure alignment with the Code of Ethics.

3. Ethics, Bias, and Media Training for Teachers

Make this a professional learning focus in 2026–2027. Connect foundational learning with algorithmic and bias awareness, inclusive technology, student data, and classroom applications. Provide usable resources and collect faculty and student input to refine guidance and practice.

4. Ethics, Bias, and Media Training for Students

Begin a phased implementation in 2026–2027 and continue in 2027–2028. Integrate elementary lessons into established AI Literacy instruction. At the secondary level, use case studies, bias audits, media analysis, and ethical design projects. Share student learning through the planned showcases, assemblies, discussions, or symposiums.

5. Community Outreach and Engagement

Continue the communication campaign, public events, speaker series, and family learning sessions. Gather and respond to questions and concerns. Publish an annual AI Ethics Report describing implementation, learning, feedback, and resulting improvements.

Coordination and continuous improvement

Ethical Intelligence provides the ethical principles and expectations that support the other objectives. Coordinate student lessons with The Human Advantage, professional learning with Inspired Teaching, and emerging issues with Future Ready. Use shared materials and implementation records where activities overlap. Review the Code, policies, learning experiences, and community feedback annually, and share useful practices within and beyond Westport.



Ethical Intelligence: Using AI with Integrity and Purpose

INITIATIVES

- Creating and Adopting an AI Code of Ethics
- Amending the Academic Integrity Policy
- Ethics, Bias, and Media Training for Teachers
- Ethics, Bias, and Media Training for Students
- Community Outreach and Engagement

Implementation sequence		
Timing	Reach	Key Milestone
Aug 2025–Sep 2026	District foundations and policy	Subcommittee, community input, and ethics framework research completed in August 2025. Academic Integrity work targeted for September 2026 completion; verify adoption, communication, and instruction.
2026–2027	Rollout Code and academic integrity, teacher learning, initial student lessons, and community engagement	Rollout Code and academic integrity, and public materials; complete teacher learning; begin student ethics experiences. Continue engagement and publish the annual report.
2027–2028	Continued elementary and secondary implementation	Extend and refine student lessons using first-year findings. Continue the school-level unit and showcase commitments and review ethical reasoning across participating grades.
Annually	District, schools, and community	Review evidence, policy alignment, and emerging issues; refine guidance and instruction, report progress, and share practices beyond the district.

Evidence of Success

Evidence will connect completion of the commitments with understanding and application. Record publication of the Code, Academic Integrity, and explanatory video. Use staff surveys, training records, faculty input, and class-level lesson records to verify the existing targets: 90% of staff reporting understanding of the Code, 75% faculty input with student representation, and 100% teacher training and student instruction on acceptable AI use. Distinguish policy orientation from the deeper ethics, bias, and media learning that continues across 2026–2027 and 2027–2028.

Evaluate student ethical reasoning through comparable initial and concluding responses, reflections, and projects, retaining the target that 80% of elementary and secondary students demonstrate growth. Confirm one ethics learning unit within AI Literacy program in every elementary school. For community engagement, retain at least one event per year. Report participation, response rates, missing evidence, and results clearly in the annual AI Ethics Report, and use findings to improve practice

Action Steps

1. Creating and Adopting an AI Code of Ethics

- ☒ Establish an AI Ethics Subcommittee. *(Completed August 2025)*
- ☒ Identify school community values, hopes, and concerns. *(Completed August 2025)*
- ☒ Research national and international ethical frameworks (UNESCO, ISTE, MIT). *(Completed August 2025)*
- ☒ Draft, refine, and adopt the Code through Board approval. *(Ongoing as of August 2026)*
- ☒ Communicate the Code districtwide through explainer videos and public materials. *(Ongoing as of August 2026)*

2. Amending the Academic Integrity Policy *(Will be completed as of September 2026)*

- ☒ Convene the Academic Integrity Committee, including teachers, administrators, students, and parents.
- ☒ Review classroom practices and gather feedback on AI use.
- ☒ Draft and vet policy updates reflecting ethical AI use.
- ☒ Provide training and communication for all staff, students, and families.

3. Ethics, Bias, and Media Training for Teachers *[focus for 26-27]*

- ☐ Launch districtwide AI ethics keynote and foundational workshop.
- ☐ Facilitate sessions on algorithmic bias and inclusive technology.
- ☐ Provide classroom-ready resources for ethical discussions and assignments.
- ☐ Gather feedback and integrate lessons learned into ongoing policy work.

4. Ethics, Bias, and Media Training for Students *[softer rollout for 26-27; continuing into 27-28]*

- ☐ Elementary: Incorporate identified AI literacy lessons into established tech lessons.
- ☐ Secondary: Launch lessons exploring bias, media manipulation, and responsible design.
- ☐ Student projects culminate in showcases or symposiums on ethical AI.

5. Community Outreach and Engagement *[Ongoing]*

- ☐ Launch an AI Ethics communication plan.
- ☐ Host community events, speaker series, and family learning sessions.
- ☐ Collect feedback and address concerns.
- ☐ Publish annual AI Ethics Report celebrating progress.



The Human Advantage: Preparing Students to Think, Adapt, and Lead with AI

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Integration of Artificial Intelligence into education represents one of the most transformative shifts in modern learning. Yet, in Westport Public Schools, the goal is not simply to teach students how to use AI, but to help them understand how it shapes the world, and how they can shape it in return.

Our Vision of the Graduate, Contributing Citizens, defines four essential domains that anchor our work: Collaborators, Communicators, Critical Thinkers, and Creators. These qualities are more vital than ever in an AI Powered, Human Centered world. Students must learn to analyze not only what information says, but how it is generated, who it serves, and what assumptions underlie it.

AI also creates extraordinary opportunities for deeper personalization. Properly harnessed, it can adapt instruction to each student's strengths, needs, and interests; accelerate feedback; and expand access to authentic, real-world projects. But these benefits are only realized when balanced with the irreplaceable elements of human learning, teacher relationships, social connection, and wellbeing.

By embedding AI into the student experience in ways that are intentional and ethically grounded, we ensure Westport students are not merely prepared for the future, they are equipped to lead it as contributing citizens of an AI-powered world.

WHAT ARE WE GOING TO ACCOMPLISH?

We will prepare all students to thrive as informed, creative, and responsible contributors in an AI-driven society. Through a coherent K–12 progression, students will:

- Understand how AI and data systems work and influence information and decisions; approach them with curiosity, skepticism, and ethical awareness.
- Use AI to investigate questions, solve problems, and express original ideas while developing as Collaborators, Communicators, Critical Thinkers, and Creators.
- Balance AI use with wellbeing, human relationships, and collaboration, with access to approved tools, instruction, and opportunities across all schools.

Three initiatives will provide AI literacy, AI wellbeing instruction, and supported competition and innovation opportunities. Literacy will reach every grade band in 2027–2028, with wellbeing targets embedded across K–12 by September 2027. Learning redesign and personalization, including the commitment to close persistent learning gaps, will be advanced through Objective 3, Inspired Teaching.

HOW WILL WE ACCOMPLISH THIS?

We will advance three coordinated initiatives that connect students' understanding of AI with healthy technology habits and opportunities to apply their learning.

1. Build AI Literacy Across Grades

Use the completed district AI literacy framework to guide a coherent K–12 curriculum. During 2026–2027, pilot explicit lessons across grade levels and embed AI concepts in interdisciplinary learning where possible. Develop age-appropriate assessments, use student work to refine instruction, and expand standalone and just-in-time lessons across all grade levels to address the full framework. Integrate instruction in every grade band during 2027–2028.

2. Embed AI Wellbeing into SEL and Digital Citizenship Instruction

Build on the completed screen-time audit and AI and Wellness objectives. Identify age-appropriate principles, embed learning targets into social and emotional learning (SEL) and digital citizenship, and train educators to guide conversations about focus, emotional wellbeing, healthy technology habits, and human connection. Use the audit findings to recommend responsible, intentional AI use in the curriculum.

3. Cultivate AI Excellence Through Student Competitions and Challenges

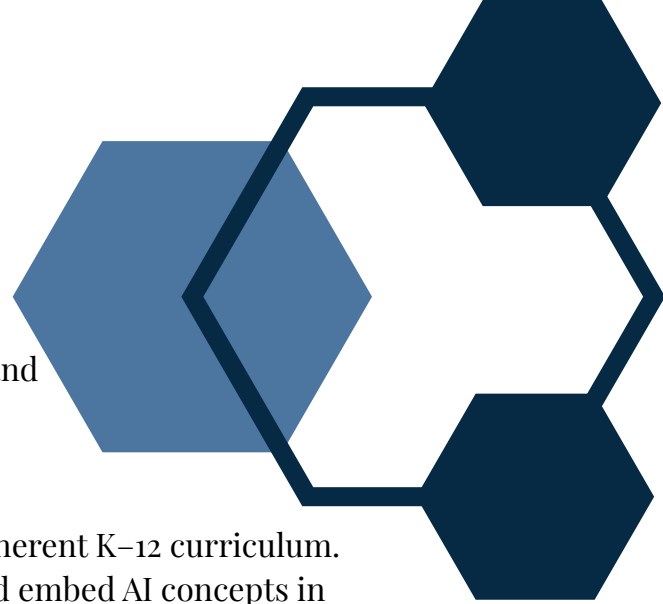
Curate recognized AI and innovation competitions and develop Pathways to AI Excellence. An advisory group will connect students with faculty, community, university, and industry mentors. Provide support for project design, data ethics, and presentation, along with after-school or summer enrichment for competition preparation and independent projects. Share participation and achievements through exhibitions, district showcases, and local media, explicitly connecting the work to Contributing Citizens.

Coordination and continuous improvement

Anna Mahon and Natalie Carrignan will lead AI literacy. Anna Mahon will lead AI wellbeing with Kim Kassay, Natalie Carrignan, and Chris Wanner. The AI Competition Advisory Group and Superintendent will lead competitions, with a Staples faculty advisor for coordination.

Ethical Intelligence will provide the shared principles for responsible use, bias awareness, and academic integrity. Inspired Teaching will lead learning redesign, personalization, educator preparation, and follow-through on the screen-time audit. Coordinate overlapping lessons and records so that one activity can support both objectives without duplicating work.

Across all three initiatives, review participation by school and grade, identify barriers to approved tools and opportunities, and address access needs. Use curriculum records, student work, training participation, and project evidence to refine implementation and sustain the district's human-centered approach.





The Human Advantage: Preparing Students to Think, Adapt, and Lead with AI

INITIATIVES

- Build AI Literacy Across Grades
- Embed AI Wellbeing into SEL and Digital Citizenship Instruction
- Cultivate AI Excellence Through Student Competitions and Challenges

Implementation sequence		
Timing	Reach	Key Milestone
Foundation through 2026	District framework and screen-time audit	AI Literacy Framework and audit recorded as complete. Verify framework publication and rollout and competition preparation against prior targets.
2026–2027	Literacy pilots, wellbeing instruction, and student competition pathways	Pilot standalone and interdisciplinary lessons; continue wellbeing integration and teacher training; support competition teams. Retain the 2026 competition participation target, subject to calendar verification.
2027–2028	Every grade band; K–12 wellbeing	Integrate AI literacy in every grade band; expand instruction across grades and framework skills. Embed wellbeing targets across K–12 by September 2027. Continue mentorship, enrichment, and competitions.
Ongoing	Schools and district	Review student growth, participation, access, healthy technology practices, and competition outcomes. Refine lessons, supports, and responsible-use recommendations with Objective 3.

Evidence of Success

Evidence will show both delivery and student learning. Verify approval and publication of the completed literacy framework, curriculum adoption, and instruction in every grade band by 2027–2028. Retain the target that at least 80% of students demonstrate growth in AI understanding. Use comparable initial and concluding tasks, scored against agreed criteria for the skills taught, and report the number of students reached. For wellbeing, verify K–12 learning targets embedded by September 2027, training completed by 90% of teachers, and the analytical report from the completed screen-time audit. Lesson records, student reflections, and responses to realistic scenarios will help show whether students can explain and apply healthy technology choices.

For competitions, retain participation in at least three recognized AI-focused competitions by 2027, an established mentorship team with community, university, and/or industry partners, and the goal of regional, national, or international recognition or awards. Verify distinct competitions through official participation records, document mentorship and enrichment, and review projects and presentations for collaboration, creativity, communication, and critical thinking. Record awards separately from participation and learning. Across the initiatives, review access by school and grade and use findings to improve instruction and support.

Action Steps

1. Develop a Comprehensive AI Literacy Framework and Curriculum for Students

- ☒ Create a districtwide framework for AI literacy, mapping a coherent K–12 progression. *(Complete)*
- ☐ Pilot AI literacy lessons across grade levels before full integration. *[2026–2027]*
- ☐ Embed AI literacy concepts in interdisciplinary learning experiences. *[2026–2027]*
- ☐ Expand standalone lessons and embedded "just-in-time" AI literacy instruction across all grade levels to include all skills within the framework. *[Future]*
- ☐ Develop assessments of AI literacy *[Future]*

2. Integrate AI Wellbeing into SEL and Digital Citizenship

- ☐ Add "AI and Wellness" objectives to SEL and digital citizenship programs. *[Partially completed, continue 2026–2027]*
- ☒ Conduct an audit of screen time and digital load across classrooms. *(Complete)*

3. Cultivate AI Excellence Through Student Competitions and Challenges

- ☐ Identify and curate a list of prestigious AI and innovation competitions, such as the Presidential AI Challenge, Regeneron Science Talent Search, or MIT's AI Ethics Challenge.
- ☐ Establish district-supported mentorship teams where teachers, AI professionals, and community experts guide students through project design, data ethics, and presentation.
- ☐ Create a "Pathways to AI Excellence" framework outlining competition opportunities by grade level, interest area (STEM, humanities, design, ethics), and skill progression.
- ☐ Offer after-school or summer AI enrichment programs for students preparing for competitions or developing independent projects.
- ☐ Celebrate and publicize student participation and achievements through school exhibitions, local media, and district showcases, positioning Westport as a hub for student innovation.
- ☐ Integrate AI competitions into the Contributing Citizens framework, emphasizing collaboration, creativity, communication, and critical thinking.



Inspired Teaching: Human Led, AI Empowered

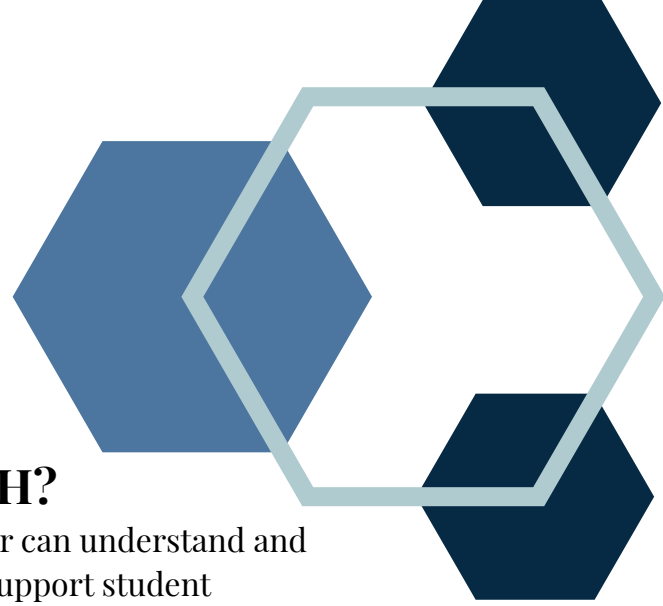
WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

At the heart of every classroom is the educator. No algorithm can replace the empathy, creativity, and professional judgment that define great teaching. As AI evolves, the role of the educator becomes even more essential to model curiosity, discernment, and human connection for students.

AI offers educators a powerful opportunity: it can reduce routine workload, accelerate feedback, enhance lesson design, and open doors for personalized learning. But it must always serve as a collaborative partner, not a substitute for the relationships and mentorship that make learning meaningful.

By empowering teachers, paraeducators, and administrators with the knowledge, confidence, and ethical grounding to use AI intentionally, we reinforce what matters most, human connection, critical thinking, and creativity. In a district as high-achieving as Westport, this balance ensures that innovation enhances teaching rather than overwhelming it.

In short, AI will never replace educators, but educators who skillfully use AI will redefine what is possible for students.



WHAT ARE WE GOING TO ACCOMPLISH?

We will cultivate a professional culture in which every educator can understand and apply AI to strengthen instruction, personalize learning, and support student wellbeing while preserving human connection and professional judgment. Building on the completed educator literacy framework and initial instructional work, we will:

- Prepare teachers, paraeducators, and administrators through practical learning, coaching, and reflection, with ethical judgment and media literacy embedded throughout.
- Improve lesson design, assessment, and feedback so students think critically, create original work, and exercise agency; maintain shared resources and opportunities to learn from colleagues.
- Reduce administrative burden through the coordinated Smarter Schools process, returning capacity to instruction, relationships, collaboration, and creativity.
- Use student evidence to personalize instruction, identify learning gaps earlier, and provide targeted reading and mathematics support, with educators validating recommendations and protecting student information.
- Review teacher practice, student engagement and growth, professional satisfaction, and human connection; use findings to improve implementation and share effective work.

The seven initiatives will develop educators as learners and leaders who help students become Contributing Citizens: Collaborators, Communicators, Critical Thinkers, and Creators. The core learning and pilot cycle will continue through 2026–2027, with evidence informing expansion and refinement from September 2027.

HOW WILL WE ACCOMPLISH THIS?

Seven coordinated initiatives will connect professional learning with classroom practice, student support, and sustained improvement. Related subcharts retain distinct responsibilities within educator literacy and instructional design.

1. Develop a Comprehensive AI Literacy Framework for Educators

Apply the completed framework through introductory and advanced learning, ethics and bias awareness, coaching, and classroom integration. Protect human connection and use the completed screen-time audit as the baseline for continued monitoring.

2. Reimagine Lesson Design and Feedback with AI

Use the completed guiding principles and lesson-planning pilot to refine curriculum, assessment, and feedback. Integrate the AI Discernment tool in instructional planning; maintain the resource hub, share practice in professional learning communities, and host Westport Learns.

3. Reclaim Teaching Time through Thoughtful Automation

Coordinate teacher administrative work with Objective 5, Smarter Schools. Use one discovery process and pilot portfolio, establish time baselines, simplify tasks, and test improvements. Review results in May 2027, make June decisions, and extend effective approaches during 2027–2028.

4. Empower Educators as AI Designers and Leaders

Continue microcredentials and professional learning pathways, support teachers as designers and facilitators, and provide coaching and mentorship. Establish a mentorship and coaching model for AI implementation in the classroom.

5. Embed Continuous Improvement and Reflection

Gather teacher feedback through surveys and focus groups, review student engagement and educator experience, and conduct an annual evaluation. Combine evidence from the other initiatives into a responsive improvement plan and share teacher-led innovations and lessons learned.

6. Leverage AI to Personalize Instruction and Enhance Learning

Identify, test, and refine tools that help teachers respond to student readiness, interests, learning preferences, and needs. Provide professional learning on formative feedback and growth, and use student evidence to adjust instruction while maintaining teacher-student interaction.

7. Leverage AI for Early Identification and Targeted Interventions

Pilot diagnostic, reporting, and intervention AI tools for general education, special education, and response to intervention (RtI). Use educator-reviewed evidence to identify needs, design support and enrichment, monitor reading and mathematics growth, and check privacy, transparency, bias, accuracy, and usability before wider implementation.

INITIATIVES

- Human First
- Reimagine Lesson Design and Feedback with AI
- Reclaim Teaching Time through Thoughtful Automation
- Empower Educators as AI Designers and Leaders
- Embed Continuous Improvement and Reflection
- Leverage AI to Personalize Instruction and Enhance Learning
- Leverage AI for Early Identification and Targeted Interventions

Implementation sequence		
Timing	Reach	Key Milestone
Foundations through 2026	Framework, principles, initial pilots, and shared resources	Educator framework, guiding principles, lesson-planning pilot, and initial screen-time audit complete. Resource hub established and maintained. Early microcredential cohort complete; continuing pathways underway.
2026–2027	Educators, curriculum teams, and pilot classrooms	Continue training, coaching, unit reviews, personalization, and intervention pilots. Complete shared automation results in May and decisions in June. Evaluate learning and feedback; prepare the responsive plan by August 2027.
2027–2028	Expanded classroom and staff implementation	Scale effective automation and intervention approaches from September 2027 using pilot findings. Continue literacy, instructional redesign, personalization, and coaching. Evaluate external learning partnerships from June 2028.
Annually	Schools and district	Review student learning, teacher practice, human connection, workload, and professional satisfaction. Refine tools and professional learning; share innovations through school meetings and Westport Learns.

Evidence of Success

Evidence will connect professional learning with classroom practice. Retain the targets that 100% of schools provide human-centered AI support sessions, 100% of departments have access to the design resource hub, 100% of educators complete AI literacy training, 90% of teachers report confidence in identifying bias and misinformation, and 85% of educators demonstrate growth in AI-integrated instructional design. Use completion records, brief surveys, comparable design tasks, curriculum reviews, and classroom examples. Report roster coverage, response rates, and missing evidence. Verify the AI planning tools and Discernment Tool, annual Westport Learns participation at each school, and the responsive professional learning plan. Review teacher feedback for positive perceptions of meaningful human connection, alongside the screen-time findings.

For personalization and interventions, verify tools, training, teacher-reviewed plans, and demonstrated reading and mathematics growth using comparable baseline and follow-up measures. Document the students served, duration, and supports provided so results can inform subsequent decisions. For automation, use Smarter Schools measures of net time reclaimed, quality, staff experience, and cost, including checking, correction, and support time. Complete the annual review of teacher effectiveness, student engagement, and professional satisfaction; document the resulting changes and share teacher-led innovations. Participation, tool availability, and learning outcomes will be reported separately.



Inspired Teaching: Human Led, AI Empowered

Action Steps

1. Develop a Comprehensive AI Literacy Framework for Educators: Practical Applications, Preserving Human Connection

- ☒ Create a clear, districtwide framework outlining the skills and knowledge educators need to use AI effectively and responsibly, and to maintain human-centered priority. *(Complete)*
- ☐ Provide introductory and advanced training modules for staff at all levels. *[Fall 2026-Ongoing]*
- ☐ Integrate AI ethics and bias awareness into all professional development programming. *[Fall 2026-Ongoing]*
- ☒ Audit curriculum screen time (Strategic Objective #2 “The Human Advantage”) *[Fall 2026-June 2027, will be monitored regularly]*

2. Reimagine Lesson Design and Feedback with AI

- ☒ Pilot AI-supported lesson planning, differentiation, and feedback strategies. *(Complete)*
- ☒ Build a districtwide resource hub with vetted prompts, exemplar lessons, and design templates. *(June 2026-Ongoing)*
- ☐ Host local professional learning communities (i.e. PLCs, department, grade level meetings, etc) focused on AI-supported instructional innovation. *[Fall 2026-Ongoing, will be updated regularly]*
- ☐ Train staff to lead discussions on balance, focus, and responsible technology use.
- ☒ Establish guiding principles for AI-enhanced teaching and learning. *(Complete)*
- ☒ Support curriculum teams in redesigning lessons and assessments that emphasize critical thinking, originality, and collaboration. *(Complete and ongoing)*
- ☐ Coordinators and instructional leaders will audit existing subject-area units via discussion and the AI Discernment tool to identify opportunities for valuable AI-augmented learning *[2026-2027]*

3. Reclaim Teaching Time through Thoughtful Automation

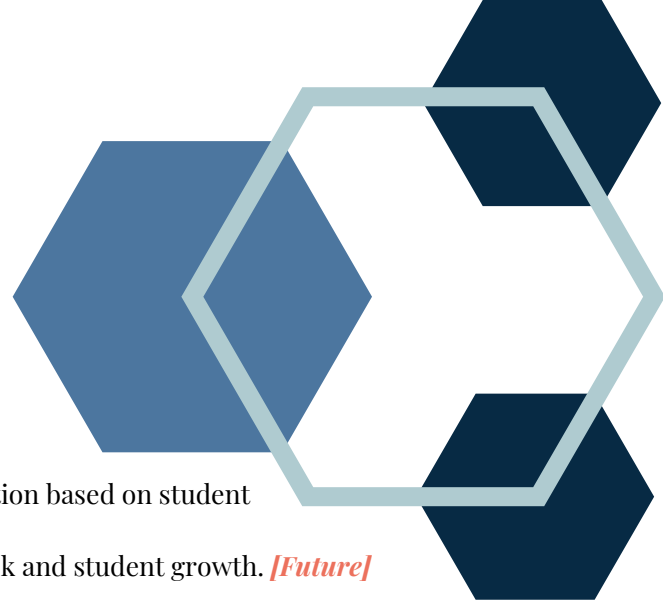
- ☐ Identify and automate time-intensive administrative tasks (e.g., data entry, communication templates, meeting notes).
- ☐ Provide educators with tools and training to streamline workflow and reduce non-instructional burdens.
- ☐ Monitor workload impact and use reclaimed time to enhance collaboration and creativity.

4. Empower Educators as AI Designers and Leaders

- ☐ Offer micro-credentials and PD pathways recognizing teacher innovation with AI. *(Fall 2025-Ongoing)*
- ☐ Support educators in experimenting with co-designed lessons and sharing model practices. *[Fall 2026-Ongoing]*
- ☐ Establish a mentorship and coaching model for educators implementing AI in their classrooms. *[Fall 2026-Ongoing]*

5. Embed Continuous Improvement and Reflection

- ☐ Gather teacher feedback through surveys and focus groups to refine AI integration practices.
- ☐ Conduct annual reviews to assess impact on teacher effectiveness, student engagement, and professional satisfaction.
- ☐ Share outcomes and exemplars to celebrate growth, innovation, and leadership across the district.

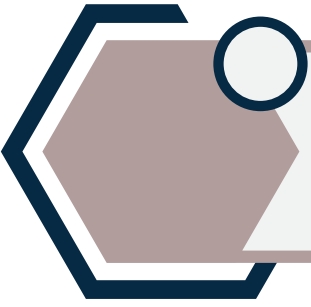


6. Leverage AI to Personalize Instruction and Enhance Learning

- ☐ Identify areas where AI tools can best support differentiated instruction based on student
- ☐ readiness and interest. *(Ongoing)*
- ☐ Provide professional learning on how to use AI for formative feedback and student growth. *[Future]*

7. Leverage AI for Early Identification and Targeted Interventions

- ☐ Deploy AI-driven diagnostic tools that analyze student performance data across assessments, coursework, and digital platforms to identify academic strengths and weaknesses.
- ☐ Generate automated synthesis reports that summarize patterns and pinpoint skill gaps, reducing the time teachers spend sorting through data.
- ☐ Design AI-assisted intervention plans that recommend targeted learning activities, enrichment options, and progress milestones tailored to each learner.
- ☐ Integrate teacher-driven review protocols ensuring educators remain the decision-makers, validating all recommendations through professional judgment, and ensuring student privacy.
- ☐ Establish AI-powered progress monitoring to track rate of growth, provide real-time feedback loops, and refine interventions dynamically.
- ☐ Embed privacy, transparency, and bias checks to ensure interventions remain ethically sound.



Future Ready: Shaping a Thoughtful, Adaptive and Empowered Community

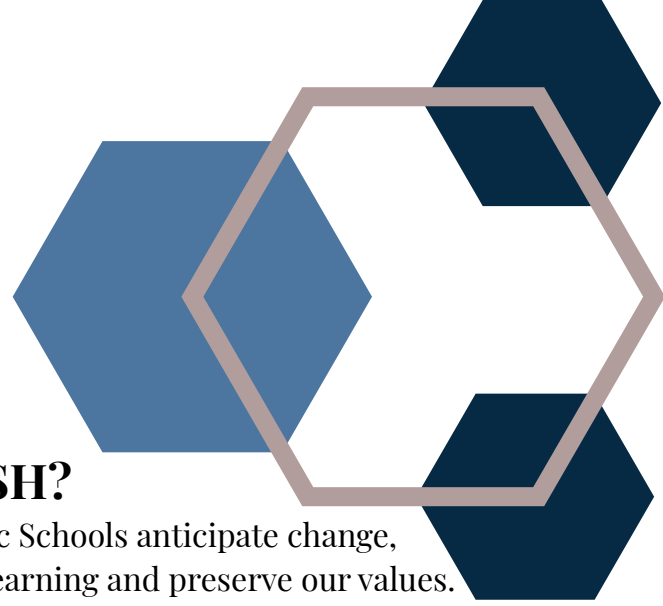
WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

The rapid emergence of Artificial Intelligence has accelerated change in ways that demand both vision and adaptability. The release of large language models (LLMs) like ChatGPT was not a sudden revolution, but rather the visible outcome of decades of steady technological evolution. This moment marks not a passing trend, but a permanent transformation in how knowledge, work, and creativity are expressed.

For Westport Public Schools, this is an opportunity to lead. “Future Proofing” is not about predicting the unknown, it’s about designing a system that can continuously learn, adapt, and evolve. By cultivating organizational foresight, developing systems that scan for change, and ensuring our community has the skills to navigate it, we build a district that is resilient, nimble, and purpose-driven.

In an AI Powered, Human Centered world, adaptability is no longer optional, it is possibly the defining human skill. But adaptability alone is not enough. To thrive amid continuous change, Westport must become a culture of strategic inquiry, one that asks the right questions before rushing to answers, studies patterns before reacting to them, and uses evidence, ethics, and imagination to chart the path ahead.

Our responsibility is to prepare staff and students not only to respond to change, but to anticipate, interpret, and shape it, holding fast to the timeless values that define education and community even as we evolve toward what’s next.



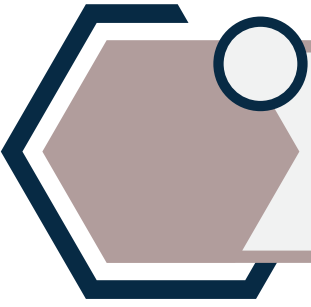
WHAT ARE WE GOING TO ACCOMPLISH?

We will build the systems and habits that help Westport Public Schools anticipate change, evaluate its implications, and respond in ways that advance learning and preserve our values.

We will:

- Sustain an AI Trends Group and regular reporting so leaders, staff, and families can understand emerging technologies and their educational implications.
- Apply lessons from the completed history of AI study to decisions about tools, investments, and strategic direction.
- Review district AI tools against shared criteria, maintain an approved-tools registry, and replace or phase out redundant or short-lived tools through a staged, multiyear process.
- Develop a culture of strategic inquiry that empowers educators and leaders to evaluate new technologies through a human-centered, ethical lens.
- Develop staff and student adaptability through learning and practice; assess district readiness with a Future Ready Index and use the findings to address gaps.

We will lead the national conversation on responsible school adaptation by sharing documented practices and lessons learned. The five initiatives will connect trend awareness with decisions, implementation, and review, keeping the district responsive, resilient, and aligned with its human-centered mission.



Future Ready: Shaping a Thoughtful, Adaptive and Empowered Community

HOW WILL WE ACCOMPLISH THIS?

Five coordinated initiatives will link foresight, historical perspective, tool evaluation, strategic inquiry, and lifelong adaptability.

1. Establish an AI Trends Group

Build on the group's charge completed in spring 2026. Maintain representation from district staff and community experts in AI, technology, policy, and education. Produce reports with implications and recommendations, and continue communication channels for staff and families. Use leadership and community feedback to improve the usefulness of this work.

2. Analyze and Learn from Past AI Trends

Use the "AI Past, Present and Economic Future" white paper completed in summer 2026 to put current developments in context. Share the study and community presentation materials, reinforce lessons from prior innovations, and apply those lessons to new investments and strategic decisions.

3. Future-Proof District AI Tools

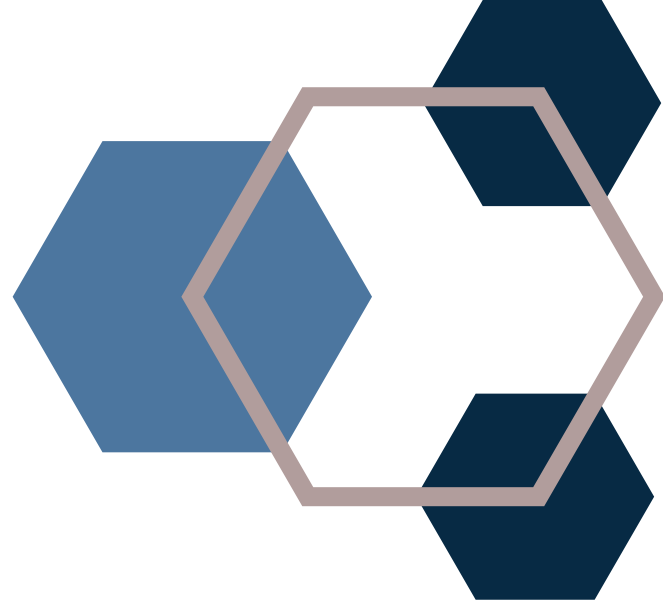
Begin the staged review during 2026–2027 and extend it over subsequent years. Inventory AI tools across schools and departments, ensure approval per CT Data Privacy laws, establish criteria for durability, transparency, safety, ethical design, and scalable value, and maintain a registry with clear review cycles. Use findings to retain, replace, or phase out tools.

4. Build a Culture of Strategic Inquiry

Make strategic inquiry a focus for 2026–2027. Train leaders, principals, and staff in systems thinking, ethical decision-making, and foresight. Include AI implications in all major policy, budget, and curriculum discussions; support classroom research and reflection. Deliver annual Westport Learns at each school through WPS faculty, professional development delivered by WPS faculty only at each school sharing teacher and student learning about emerging technologies and innovative pedagogy.

5. Cultivate Lifelong Adaptability

Embed adaptability, digital literacy, ethical reasoning, and creative problem-solving in professional learning and curriculum. Develop or select a Future Ready Index, establish a district baseline, compare results with appropriate benchmarks, and implement a long-term plan to address gaps. Use staff and student confidence measures alongside evidence of practice.



INITIATIVES

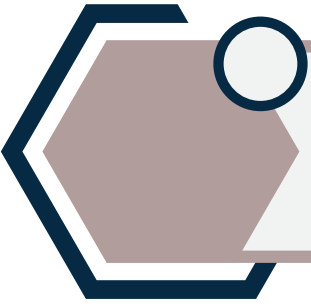
- Establish an AI Trends Group
- Analyze and Learn from Past AI Trends
- Future-Proof District AI Tools
- Build A Culture of Strategic Inquiry
- Cultivate Lifelong Adaptability

Implementation sequence		
Timing	Reach	Key Milestone
Spring–summer 2026	AI Trends Group and historical study	Group charge completed in spring; “AI Past, Present and Economic Future” white paper completed in summer. Quarterly reporting and communication plan for 2026-2027 developed.
2026–2027	District leadership, schools, staff, and students	Focus on strategic inquiry; conduct faculty-led Westport Learns in every school. Begin staged tool review, establish the registry, select or develop the Index, and complete the readiness baseline by June 2027.
2027–2028	All schools and departments	Extend tool vetting across the full inventory; proposed completion by June 2028. Implement the readiness improvement plan, refine supports, and continue learning and inquiry.
Quarterly and annually	District and community	Report trends quarterly; update the tools registry annually. Review inquiry, readiness, feedback, and resulting decisions; share practices locally and nationally.

Evidence of Success

Evidence will show that foresight informs district decisions. Verify the AI Trends group’s charge, membership, meeting records, and regular reports, retaining a meeting cadence of three times a year beginning in 2026–2027. Document leadership and community feedback and examples of recommendations considered in policy, budget, curriculum, or tool decisions. Track tools vetted against the full inventory, including reviews still pending, and verify annual registry updates and decisions to retain, replace, or phase out tools.

For strategic inquiry, verify leadership training, AI implications considered in major discussions, classroom inquiry examples, and annual Westport Learns participation at every school with WPS faculty as the presenters. For adaptability, document the Future Ready Index, baseline, benchmarks, identified gaps, and the long-term improvement plan. Retain the target that 90% of staff and 90% of students report confidence in adapting to new technologies, reporting the two groups separately. Use age-appropriate student questions, state who was surveyed, and report response rates and missing evidence. Pair confidence results with learning and practice examples, then use annual findings to adjust support and district priorities.



Future Ready: Shaping a Thoughtful, Adaptive and Empowered Community

Action Steps

1. Establish the AI Trends Group

- ☒ Identify and appoint district and community representatives with expertise in AI, technology, policy, and education.
- ☐ Define the group's charge, meeting cadence, and annual deliverables. *(Completed Spring 2026)*
- ☒ Produce quarterly reports summarizing key trends, implications, and recommendations for district leadership. *(Ongoing)*
- ☒ Create communication channels to share findings with staff and families. *(Ongoing)*

2. Analyze and Learn from Past AI Trends *(Completed Summer 2026)*

- ☒ Prepare a "History of AI in Education" white paper summarizing major milestones and lessons learned. *(Completed Summer 2026)*
- ☒ Highlight how previous innovations shaped current practice and inform future adoption. *(Completed Summer 2026)*
- ☒ Use findings to guide decision-making for new investments and strategic directions. *(Ongoing)*

3. Future-Proof District AI Tools *[multi-year; soft roll this year into future]*

- ☐ Audit all AI tools currently in use across schools and departments.
- ☐ Develop evaluation criteria to assess durability, transparency, safety, and ethical design.
- ☐ Replace or phase out short-lived or redundant tools with those offering sustainable, scalable value.
- ☐ Maintain a district AI tools registry with clear vetting and review cycles.

4. Build a Culture of Strategic Inquiry *[focus for 2026-2027]*

- ☐ Train district leaders, principals, and staff in systems thinking, ethical decision-making, and strategic foresight.
- ☐ Embed "AI implications" questions into all major policy, budget, and curriculum discussions.
- ☐ Implement an annual "Westport Learns" professional development delivered by WPS faculty only at each school share teacher and student learning about emerging technologies and innovative pedagogy.
- ☐ Encourage classroom-based research and reflection on how AI affects teaching, learning, and wellbeing.

5. Cultivate Lifelong Adaptability

- ☐ Embed adaptability, digital literacy, and ethical reasoning into professional learning and curriculum design.
- ☐ Assess the District against a Future Ready Index





Smarter Schools: Time Reclaimed, Performance Improved, Learning Empowered

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Educational excellence depends on the expertise, judgment, and attention of the people who serve our students. Westport makes a substantial investment in those people. We have a responsibility to ensure that their time supports excellent teaching, responsive service, and effective school operations.

Unnecessary administrative demands consume time and attention that staff need for their core responsibilities and can extend work into evenings and weekends. By simplifying essential processes and using AI and automation thoughtfully, we can strengthen the value of our community's investment while making demanding professional work more sustainable.

Reclaiming time will therefore serve two connected purposes: increasing staff capacity to support students, families, and schools, and reducing administrative work. We will evaluate improvements through demonstrated time savings, maintained or improved quality, and benefits that staff and the district actually experience.

WHAT ARE WE GOING TO ACCOMPLISH?

We will reduce the time teachers, operations staff, and central office staff spend on recurring administrative work, while maintaining or improving accuracy, responsiveness, and service. The initial teacher focus will be documentation, reporting, forms, scheduling, and routine communication. Staff input and a brief review of current processes will identify the specific priorities.

By May 2027, we will complete an initial round of two to three pilots and document their results. By June 2027, district leaders will decide which approaches to expand, revise, or stop. During 2027–2028, we will extend effective approaches in manageable stages and verify that benefits continue.

Success will be demonstrated by sustained net time savings in the processes improved, accompanied by staff reports of greater capacity for core work and reduced after-hours administrative work. Each pilot will have a measurable target established from its baseline before testing begins. Instructional uses of AI will remain coordinated through the Inspired Teaching objective.



HOW WILL WE ACCOMPLISH THIS?

John Bayers, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources and General Administration, and Elio Longo, CFO, will jointly lead three initiatives. A small working team will include teachers, operations and central office staff, and technology expertise. Each pilot will have one accountable process owner. Outside specialists will support defined needs in process improvement, configuration, and practical training.

1. Identify and prioritize time drains

Conduct a focused four- to six-week review using brief staff input, representative task walkthroughs, and sample timing. Compare a short list of opportunities by frequency, staff reach, potential weekly time savings, feasibility, quality, and cost. Select two to three pilots and establish their baseline, success target, owner, and scope.

2. Simplify work and test solutions

Remove unnecessary requirements and duplicate steps, standardize what remains, and apply appropriate automation or AI where it improves the process. Build on Gemini Pro licenses already provided to professional staff and available professional services funds. Provide short, task-specific training and coaching. Test in real working conditions, count review and correction time, and refine the approach with participating staff.

3. Expand proven improvements and sustain time savings

Use evidence to make June 2027 decisions. Expand qualifying approaches during 2027–2028 with clear instructions, support, and an accountable owner. Check results after adoption and discontinue changes that fail to deliver a worthwhile benefit. Maintain a small improvement pipeline, with no more than three active pilots at a time.

INITIATIVES

- Identify and Prioritize Time Drains
- Simplify Work and Test Solutions
- Expand Proven Improvements and Sustain Time Savings



Smarter Schools: Time Reclaimed, Performance Improved, Learning Empowered

Implementation sequence		
Timing	Reach	Key Milestone
Oct–Dec 2026	Discover and select	Two to three pilot briefs with baselines, targets, owners, and resource needs.
Jan–May 2027	Prepare, test, and measure	Results covering time, quality, staff experience, and implementation cost.
Jun 2027	Decide	Expand, revise, or stop each pilot; identify resources for approved expansion.
2027–2028	Expand and sustain	Staged adoption, follow-up checks, and an annual review of benefits.

Evidence of Success

Measure comparable work before and after each change. Count staff time across the full process, including checking, corrections, and recurring support; identify any work shifted to colleagues. Report both minutes per task and hours reclaimed at actual use volumes. Record setup, training, and implementation costs separately and account for them when judging the overall return.

Use light sampling and brief staff feedback. Report daytime capacity and after-hours workload separately, without counting the same saved time twice. Track quality and adoption alongside time. Before expansion, seek six to eight weeks of sustained results that meet the pilot's agreed target. Dates in the charts are planning targets; local baselines will determine numerical commitments.



Smarter Schools: Time Reclaimed, Performance Improved, Learning Empowered

Action Steps

1. Identify and Prioritize Time Drains

- ☐ Establish the working team, roles, and limits on staff time.
- ☐ Gather brief input and sample recurring tasks across teachers, operations, and central office.
- ☐ Rank opportunities by weekly time, reach, quality, feasibility, and cost. Review relevant examples.
- ☐ Choose two to three pilots; assign one process owner to each.

2. Simplify Work and Test Solutions

- ☐ Remove unnecessary steps and define the improved process.
- ☐ Prepare templates or configurations and coach participating staff on actual tasks.
- ☐ Run pilots and adjust using brief feedback and task samples.
- ☐ Compare results with baselines and targets; prepare recommendations.

3. Expand Proven Improvements and Sustain Time Savings

- ☐ Review each pilot against agreed criteria and identify the next users.
- ☐ Prepare reusable materials and confirm capacity, access, and funding.
- ☐ Expand in manageable stages; review results 60–90 days after adoption.
- ☐ Review annual results and the next priorities.



The Timeless Advantage: Preserving the Humanities in the Age of AI

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

There is a profound irony in this moment.

The more advanced our technology becomes, the more essential a classic liberal arts education becomes.

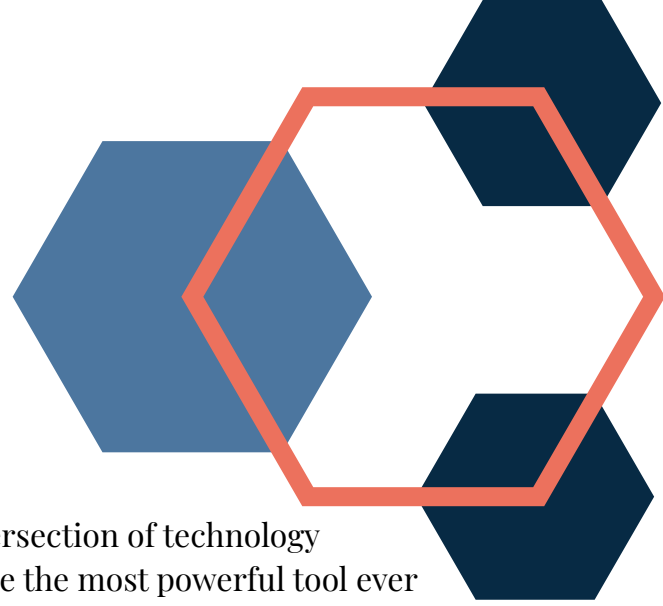
In an age of artificial intelligence, when machines can compute, compose, and even create, what will distinguish our students is not how much information they can recall, but how deeply they can think, feel, and discern. As AI accelerates knowledge, it is the humanities that preserve understanding. As automation expands capability, it is history, literature, and philosophy that preserve judgment.

The liberal arts have had many definitions over the centuries, but in Westport schools, they are understood as the disciplines and practices that expand our intellectual capacities, general knowledge, and personal abilities to engage as free and contributing citizens. And a crucial pillar of our forward-thinking liberal arts education is the humanities: English, social studies, and the fine arts.

In a society increasingly fragmented by technology, the humanities offer students opportunities to analyze, contextualize, and grapple with what it means to be human and how to make wise, ethical decisions in a complicated world. In studying the humanities, students interact with the texts, sources, traditions, events, and philosophies that have helped shape our culture, and embrace the value of those things in other cultures, both past and present.

Westport schools have a proud tradition of excellence in the humanities; our learners dive deeply into literature both classic and new, study societies through varied analytical lenses, and take advantage of the finest music, performing, and visual art programs available. This initiative aims to protect and enhance that tradition in order to prepare students for a world changing at a rapid pace.

Our commitment to the humanities will help students become more empathetic, creative, curious, and self-reliant. It will empower them to tolerate ambiguity, think critically across disciplines, discern meaning from the flood of information and resist the enticing technological shortcuts that define modern life. It will celebrate their uniqueness and elevate their voices.



Steve Jobs once said that Apple’s secret was found “at the intersection of technology and the liberal arts.” The same is true for education. AI may be the most powerful tool ever created, but it will only be as wise, ethical, and creative as the people who guide it. The liberal arts are where those people are formed.

This is not about nostalgia. It is about foresight.

It is about protecting what is timeless while preparing for what is next. It is about ensuring that our students, in a world overflowing with data, still know how to find meaning.

A renewed commitment to a classic liberal arts education will empower students to question, to connect, and to create, not in imitation of machines, but in the full expression of what it means to be human.

This is our moral imperative: to ensure that in a world of brilliant machines, our students remain brilliantly human.



The Timeless Advantage: Preserving the Humanities in the Age of AI

WHAT ARE WE GOING TO ACCOMPLISH?

The humanities are a defining strength of a Westport education, an anchor of discernment, creativity, and ethical reasoning in an AI-powered world. Our goal will not be to reinvent what already works, but rather to protect our excellence while seeking opportunities for perpetual improvement and adaptation to a changing environment. We will elevate the humanities as a defining strength of a Westport education.

To strengthen this foundation, we will take an inventory of our best practices and traditions as a leader in public school education, while also learning from exemplary peers and the higher education institutions where our graduates thrive. Through this reflection, research, and comparison, we will see more clearly what already distinguishes us and what our next level of excellence might look like.

Celebrating the intellectual and creative accomplishments of our students—writing, researching, thinking, composing, creating, and performing—will remain at the heart of our mission. At the same time, faculty will be empowered as national leaders in their fields, supported by structures and resources that sustain and expand their impact.

At the core of this work is a reaffirmation of the classic liberal arts as the moral and intellectual center of an AI Powered, Human Centered education, where knowledge is joined with empathy, creativity with conscience, and innovation with integrity.

We will reaffirm the role of the humanities as the moral and intellectual core of a human-centered education as we embrace the opportunities provided by advanced technological tools like machine learning and artificial intelligence. Our success will not be measured in test scores, but rather in our students' capacity to think critically, compose persuasively, and act courageously. It will be defined by how our graduates lead in their institutions, professions, and communities.

By the end of this work, Westport will be recognized not only for preparing students to compete in a technological world, but for preparing them to elevate it, shaping leaders who understand that progress without wisdom is not advancement at all.

HOW WILL WE ACCOMPLISH THIS?

Six coordinated initiatives will carry the completed research and shared priorities into classroom practice, faculty leadership, authentic experiences, and future schedule planning.

1. Inventory and Research Best Practices

Use the completed internal self-study and external research to identify practices that develop student voice, critical thinking, ethical reasoning, and creativity.

2. Define Our Next Level

Apply the completed guiding practices, growth priorities, short- and long-term focus areas, and district humanities statement. Connect these priorities with the Contributing Citizens framework.

3. Partnering with Technology

Roll out the criteria already created for 2026–2027, supported by practical discernment tools and professional learning on authorship, originality, and ethics. Gather and pilot model lessons that preserve students' own reasoning and expression. Develop and implement discernment tools and model lessons that help teachers use technology to strengthen authentic learning while preserving students' creativity and critical thinking. Pilot classroom activities that enhance instruction and create learning opportunities that would not be possible without AI.

4. Support Faculty as Instructional Leaders

Continue the work identified from May 2026 onward. Assemble a Humanities Faculty Cohort, provide time to design and reflect on instruction, and recognize exemplary practice. Support teacher presentations and publications and sustained partnerships with universities, museums, and humanities organizations.

5. Advance Authentic Opportunities

Expand exhibitions, performances, publications, presentations, debates, and civic dialogue with community partners and alumni. Embed the Assured Authentic Experiences Inventory in instruction and assessment, and connect humanities action items with the Growth Mindset Framework. Develop longer-term interdisciplinary projects and flexible collaboration opportunities.

6. Designing Time for Humanity and Rethinking Master Schedules

Audit instructional and transition time across schools, gather student, teacher, and parent perspectives, and benchmark exemplary middle school schedules. Use the findings to develop master schedule recommendations that support the humanities, nurturing intellectual curiosity and emotional well-being. Evaluate how time allocation impacts writing, reading, collaboration, and creative inquiry, the essential ingredients of liberal arts learning.



The Timeless Advantage: Preserving the Humanities in the Age of AI

INITIATIVES

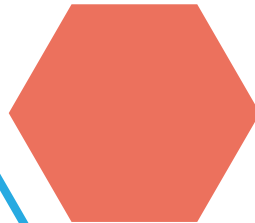
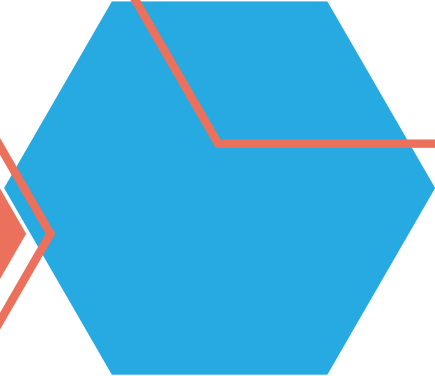
- Inventory and Research Best Practices
- Define Our “Next Level”
- Partnering With Technology
- Support Faculty as Instructional Leaders
- Advance Authentic Opportunities
- Designing Time for Humanity: Rethinking Master Schedules

Implementation sequence		
Timing	Reach	Key Milestone
Completed foundations	Humanities leaders and faculty	Internal inventory, external research, benchmark study, guiding practices, priorities, and district statement.
2026–2027	Humanities faculty and students	Roll out technology criteria, discernment tools, provide authorship and ethics learning, and implement model lessons. Advance the faculty cohort and partnerships.
2027–2028	Faculty and interdisciplinary teams	Continue the cohort and partnerships; develop interdisciplinary opportunities. Proposed schedule study during 2027–2028, with findings and recommendations to the Board by June 2028.
2028–2029 and ongoing	Participating schools and district	Launch interdisciplinary pilots in at least two schools by June 2029. Reach all humanities faculty through the cohort within two years of its launch. Review participation, student work, and instructional improvements.

Evidence of Success

Retain the completed benchmark study and documented participation from other institutions. Confirm faculty and leadership approval of the “Next Level” framework, and its connection to Contributing Citizens. For technology use, retain at least 10 model lessons developed and implemented across grade levels, training records for 100% of humanities faculty in AI ethics and authorship, and teacher and student feedback. Examine the thinking, revision, and creative choices visible in student work alongside feedback about the experience.

Record faculty presentations and publications. Use the Assured Authentic Experiences Inventory to examine students’ opportunities, participation, and learning; connect these findings with the Growth Mindset Framework. Retain the commitment to interdisciplinary pilots in at least two schools and increased teacher participation in interdisciplinary teams. The schedule study should produce a complete analysis and recommendations explicitly connected to instructional goals and wellbeing, presented to the Board.





The Timeless Advantage: Preserving the Humanities in the Age of AI

Action Steps

1. Inventory and Research Best Practices *(Completed)*

- ☒ Conduct a comprehensive self-study of WPS best practices in humanities.
- ☒ Research leading humanities programs in schools that share WPS's values and standards of excellence. Visit or engage with peer and post-secondary institutions to observe models of student-centered inquiry and faculty collaboration.
- ☒ Identify indicators of excellence in pedagogy and curriculum design that cultivate voice, habits of critical thinking, ethical reasoning and creativity.
- ☒ Synthesize findings into a report and presentation: "Humanities Benchmark Study: Lessons from the Field."

2. Defining the Next Level *(Completed)*

- ☒ Convene humanities department leaders and teachers to review inventory and research results in order to identify priorities for growth.
- ☒ Develop a shared set of guiding practices for a world-class humanities education in Westport, one that merges classic education with the skills and knowledge that will empower students.
- ☒ Establish short- and long-term focus areas (e.g., increasing opportunities for inquiry, encouraging creativity and curiosity, supporting interdisciplinary work, elevating student authorship and expression, etc.)
- ☒ Draft a district statement articulating the enduring value of humanities to connect us in an increasingly fragmented and digital world.

3. Partnering with Technology *[Focus for 2026-2027]*

- ☐ Identify clear criteria to determine when advanced technology enhances rather than inhibits students' thinking.
[created and being rolled out for use in 26-27]
- ☐ Create and implement discernment tools that guide teachers in selecting the right technology, while offering innovative pedagogical strategies that protect and enhance authentic student learning.
- ☐ Gather exemplar lessons where AI enhances, not replaces, human creativity and critical analysis.
- ☐ Pilot classroom activities that use AI to augment instruction and identify learning opportunities that would not be possible without AI.

4. Support Faculty as Instructional Leaders *[May 2026-Ongoing]*

- ☐ Recognize and celebrate faculty leadership in the humanities throughout the district and community.
- ☐ Assemble a Humanities Faculty Cohort to implement and reflect on innovative practices in instruction, assessment, and curriculum design.
- ☐ Provide opportunities for teachers to lead presentations, write articles, and share practices within and beyond the district.
- ☐ Support ongoing partnerships with local universities, museums, and humanities councils to offer short and long-term advanced professional learning and collaborative projects.



5. Advancing Authentic Opportunities *[May 2026–Ongoing]*

- ☐ Expand current and new opportunities to showcase student work—such as writing, performances, presentations, debates, and civic dialogue—by collaborating with alumni, local cultural institutions, and community partners to apply humanities thinking to technological, ethical, or design challenges.
- ☐ Department coordinators will lead collaborative dialogues to embed the Assured Authentic Experiences Inventory into core instructional and assessment practices, while crosswalking all humanities action items with the district's Growth
- ☐ Mindset Framework to ensure shared language, aligned targets, and embedded growth experiences across the curriculum.
- ☐ Plan for long-term interdisciplinary opportunities (projects, courses, etc.) that connect the humanities and other subjects, enabling students to initiate collaborative projects with each other and teachers, unrestricted by the school schedule.

6. Designing Time for Humanity: Rethinking Master Schedules *[Future]*

- ☐ Conduct a comprehensive time audit to analyze how instructional and transition time are distributed across all subjects.
- ☐ Facilitate student, teacher, and parent focus groups to understand how schedule structure affects learning, engagement, and balance.
- ☐ Benchmark model schedules from top-performing middle schools known for nurturing intellectual curiosity and emotional well-being.
- ☐ Evaluate how time allocation impacts writing, reading, collaboration, and creative inquiry, the essential ingredients of liberal arts learning.
- ☐ Present recommendations to the Board, identifying opportunities to build new scheduling models.



The Power of Presence: Elevating Theater and Human Connection in the Age of AI

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

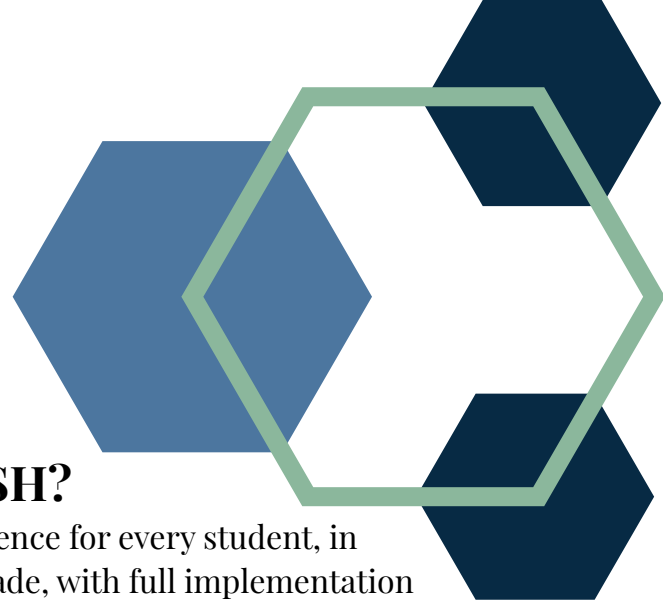
Protecting interpersonal development is a central responsibility of schools in the age of artificial intelligence. As AI becomes more embedded in how students learn, create, and communicate, we must deliberately preserve the experiences through which children learn to understand and relate to other people. Empathy, attentive listening, and the ability to navigate disagreement require sustained practice. Schools must protect time for face-to-face interaction so that technological convenience does not crowd out the relationships and shared experiences essential to growing up.

AI does not give us an emotional center. Students develop their emotional foundations through relationships, reflection, and opportunities to practice. Our AI Powered, Human Centered vision calls us to make this work central to education, helping students consider another person's feelings, recognize the effects of their choices, and contribute to the well-being of others.

Theater brings this work into a shared artistic experience. It can reinforce social and emotional learning, helping students develop a positive emotional center that supports prosocial and productive conduct. Students explore lives and perspectives beyond their own, interpret stories, make creative choices, and depend on peers. They must attend to one another and respond as a scene unfolds. Deliberate practice, or "rehearsal", gives them opportunities to receive feedback, revise their choices, and try again.

Beginning in kindergarten, playful improvisation invites children to build imaginary worlds and discover characters through movement and voice. Joy and shared invention make room for students to grow comfortable participating.

Every student deserves access to theater as an art form and a way of understanding the human experience. Protected, technology-free experiences create space for human connection, shared attention, and belonging. Making theater part of each child's education strengthens our commitment to developing Contributing Citizens who can collaborate, communicate, think critically, and create with others.



WHAT ARE WE GOING TO ACCOMPLISH?

We will establish a meaningful, active theater learning experience for every student, in every grade, every year from kindergarten through eighth grade, with full implementation targeted for September 2028. A coherent K–8 progression will combine classroom integration with dedicated theater instruction. A district design team of faculty, administrators, and outside experts will identify time within the existing school day through elementary specials blocks, integration into core instruction, or a combination of both.

Development will focus on K–5, build on the universal programs already provided in grades six and seven, and extend the middle school program to grade eight. Playful improvisation will be foundational in elementary school.

Students will practice and work towards five outcomes:

- empathy and perspective taking
- communication and presence
- collaboration and listening
- creativity and interpretation
- courage and adaptability

Each annual experience will include connected opportunities to create or interpret, work with others, rehearse and revise, share work, and reflect. Classroom peers or a small group can provide an appropriate audience.

Experiences will take place during the school day, with supports that enable every student to participate meaningfully. The core learning will be technology-free, with necessary assistive and communication supports available.



The Power of Presence: Theater and Human Connection in the Age of AI

INITIATIVES

- Design the K–8 Theater Continuum
- Pilot and Prepare Elementary Instruction
- Implement and Sustain Annual K–8 Participation

HOW WILL WE ACCOMPLISH THIS?

This work will be guided by three coordinated initiatives. A district design team will include current theater teachers, elementary educators, curriculum leaders, and principals, with additional expertise engaged as needed.

1. **Design the K–8 Theater Continuum** – Complete a brief inventory of current experiences and study exemplary programs, especially universal elementary theater and improvisation. Define the progression across grades and recommend the balance of classroom integration, dedicated instruction, theater expertise, and scheduling. Use pilot findings (see below) to refine the framework.
2. **Pilot and Prepare Elementary Instruction** – Conduct the grade-two “Every Child Plays” pilot during 2026–2027 through the proposed Westport Country Playhouse partnership. Use a six-session proposal to test the approach and identify improvements. Prepare teachers and launch experiences to expand the pilot in selected elementary grades in September 2027.
3. **Implement and Sustain Annual K–8 Participation** – Use the first year of implementation (2028–2029) to refine instruction from pilot program, and establish the staffing, partnerships, and instructional time needed for full participation. Expand across K–5 and to grade eight by September 2028. Review participation and student learning annually and use the findings to improve the program.

Implementation sequence		
Timing	Reach	Key Milestone
2026–2027	Grade-two pilot; district design work	Pilot reviewed and selected grades prepared for September 2027.
2027–2028	Selected elementary grades; existing grades six and seven	Initial delivery evaluated; resources and schedules established for full implementation.
September 2028 onward	Every grade, K–8	Annual experiences available to every student, including the grade-eight expansion.

Evidence of Success

Success will include both universal participation and the quality of student learning. Teachers will use brief observations and student reflections to document listening, perspective taking, artistic choices, collaboration, and response to feedback. The design team will establish age-appropriate indicators during the pilot and initial implementation. Teachers will explicitly connect these practices to discussion, group work, and presentation in other learning settings.

Milestone windows in the following charts are proposed planning targets. The design team will recommend lesson duration, participating pilot classrooms, the grades included in the 2027 launch, and staffing and partnership costs. September 2028 remains the target for the full annual commitment.

Action Steps

1. Design the K–8 Theater Continuum

- ☐ Convene the district team with theater teachers, elementary educators, curriculum leaders, and principals.
- ☐ Inventory secondary offerings in one brief session and map elementary experiences.
- ☐ Study exemplary universal programs and elementary improvisation.
- ☐ Define annual experiences, developmental outcomes, accessibility, and the blended delivery model.
- ☐ Incorporate grade-two pilot findings and confirm selected grades for launch.

2. Pilot and Prepare Elementary Instruction

- ☐ Confirm grade-two classrooms, six-session schedule, staff roles, and proposed Playhouse partnership/arrangements.
- ☐ Adapt and conduct Every Child Plays, emphasizing improvisation, ensemble, and perspective taking.
- ☐ Review observations, student reflections, teacher experience, time, and costs.
- ☐ Prepare selected-grade lessons and provide modeling, rehearsal, and coaching for teachers.
- ☐ Launch selected elementary grades with limited additional staffing; monitor and refine.

3. Implement and Sustain Annual K–8 Participation

- ☐ Recommend staffing, schedules, partnerships, and costs using design and early launch evidence.
- ☐ Refine the model and establish assignments, resources, and schedules.
- ☐ Expand across K–5 and to grade eight, building on grades six and seven.
- ☐ Monitor implementation and student learning.



Empowered Humans: Mindsets Strengthened, Leaders Developed

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

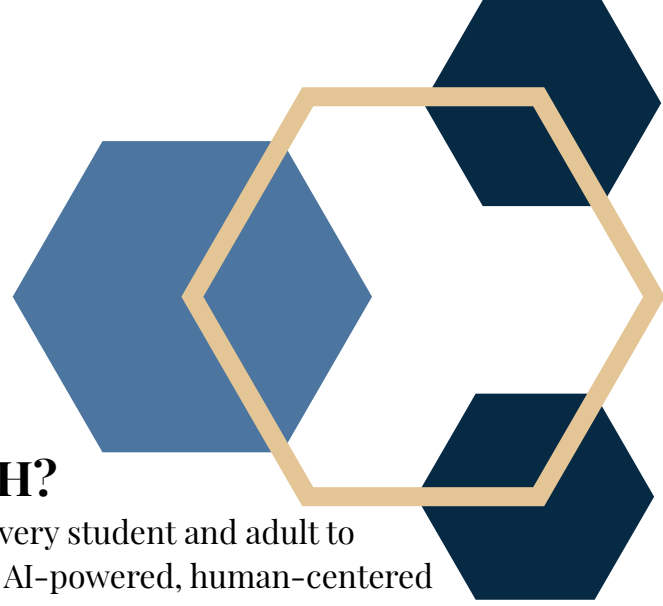
In an AI-accelerated world, the defining advantages our students will carry into adulthood are not technical skills alone, but the deeply human capacities that enable them to adapt, persevere, collaborate, and lead with purpose. As intelligent tools handle more tasks, students' mindsets, beliefs, and leadership abilities become even more consequential — the anchors of agency in a rapidly shifting landscape.

A growth mindset is the foundation of this agency. When students believe their abilities can expand through effort, practice, and feedback, they develop resilience, intrinsic motivation, and a willingness to take on challenges rather than avoid them. These beliefs shape how they respond when confronted with complex problems, new technologies, or unexpected setbacks — the everyday reality of the AI era. A fixed mindset, by contrast, restricts potential and leaves students less prepared for a world that demands continual learning.

Leadership development is the natural extension of a growth mindset in an AI-powered society. Leadership today is not about authority; it is the ability to influence, collaborate, communicate, and contribute to something larger than oneself. Every student — regardless of title, age, or aspiration — must lead their own life with clarity, empathy, ethical reasoning, and confidence. These are the human capacities that AI cannot replicate and that will differentiate our graduates in college, career, and civic life.

Schools play an irreplaceable role in shaping these capacities. Through the language adults use, the structures we design, the opportunities we create for agency, voice, and collaboration, and the explicit teaching of mindset and leadership principles, we profoundly influence how students view themselves and what they believe they are capable of becoming. In a time when AI can accelerate learning but cannot cultivate character, this human work becomes even more urgent.

If we want our students to thrive — not just in an AI-powered world but because of it — we must be intentional and systematic in developing growth mindsets and leadership capacities across every grade, every school, and every classroom. These are not enrichment skills. They are the core competencies that will allow our students to navigate complexity with confidence, leverage AI responsibly, and contribute meaningfully to their communities. To remain true to our vision of being AI Powered and Human Centered, we must commit to cultivating the beliefs and leadership skills that will empower every learner to shape the future, rather than be shaped by it.



WHAT ARE WE GOING TO ACCOMPLISH?

We will build a coherent, districtwide system that empowers every student and adult to develop the mindset and leadership capacities essential for an AI-powered, human-centered future. Our work will move beyond isolated practices to create a unified/systemic approach, one that shapes beliefs, strengthens agency, and elevates leadership at every level of the organization.

1. Align Our System With Growth Mindset Principles

By conducting an audit of district policies, procedures, and practices, and using a blend of AI-enabled analysis and thoughtful human review, we will identify misalignment and opportunities to strengthen language, expectations, and structures.

2. Elevate Educator Practice Through Professional Learning

We will equip educators with the tools, training, and inspiration to embed growth mindset strategies into daily instruction and professional practice.. AI tools will help teachers personalize feedback, analyze learning patterns, and support student resilience while preserving the irreplaceable human relationships at the heart of teaching.

3. Build a Leadership Development System for Students and Adults

We will create a comprehensive leadership development framework grounded in the competencies students and educators need to thrive in an AI-infused world. This includes piloting leadership curriculum units at the high school level, expanding student leadership opportunities, and returning to the exploration of the long term vision of launching a Center for Leadership Development for students.

4. Establish a Culture of Continuous Learning and Feedback

We will continuously evaluate the impact of this initiative through ongoing data collection from students, staff, and families. AI-assisted analytics, paired with human insight, will help us monitor progress, identify patterns, and refine our approach. This ongoing feedback loop will ensure the work remains dynamic, aligned to district goals, and responsive to the needs of our community.

INITIATIVES

- Growth Mindset Policy & Procedure Audit
- Supporting Growth Mindset Educators Within Westport Educator Evaluation and Support Plan (WEESP)
- Growth Mindset Professional Development
- Student Leadership Competency Development & Opportunities



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HOW WILL WE ACCOMPLISH THIS?

We will advance this work through four integrated phases:

1. **Policy & Procedure Audit:** Use AI tools to analyze district documents for alignment with growth mindset and leadership principles, conducting human-led reviews, focus groups, and equity audits, publishing recommendations to strengthen systemwide alignment.
2. **Educator Support & Professional Development:** Offering workshops, training, instructional tools, and coaching, integrating growth mindset and leadership practices into faculty professional goals, and providing AI supports for feedback generation, planning, and instructional reflection.
3. **Leadership Development System:** Creating a K–12 leadership competency framework, piloting leadership curriculum modules at the high school level, expanding student opportunities, returning to the exploration of the development of a Center for Leadership for students.
4. **Continuous Evaluation & Feedback:** Using AI-enabled analytics and human insight to monitor progress, collecting feedback from staff, students, and families, adjusting practices to ensure alignment with district goals and student needs.

Action Steps

1. Policy & Procedure Audit

- ☐ Use AI tools to analyze policies, procedures, and district documents for alignment with growth mindset and leadership principles.
- ☐ Conduct human-led reviews, focus groups, and equity audits to capture lived experiences and identify barriers.
- ☐ Publish clear, actionable recommendations to strengthen systemwide alignment and coherence.

2. Educator Support & Professional Development

- ☐ Offer workshops, keynote speakers, model lessons, and coaching grounded in growth mindset research and leadership development.
- ☐ Embed growth mindset and leadership practices in professional goals, evaluations, and instructional routines.
- ☐ Provide AI supports for feedback generation, lesson planning, and analysis of student learning patterns to free educators for deeper human connection.

3. Leadership Development System

- ☐ Create a districtwide leadership competency framework defining the skills needed to thrive in an AI-powered world.
- ☐ Pilot leadership curriculum modules and expand student leadership opportunities across schools, classrooms, clubs, and community spaces.
- ☐ Launch the Center for Leadership Development, offering adult learning pathways for teachers, staff, and emerging leaders.

4. Continuous Evaluation & Feedback

- ☐ Use AI-enabled analytics to monitor patterns in engagement, feedback, and school climate, paired with qualitative insights from students, staff, and families.
- ☐ Collect regular feedback through surveys, focus groups, and reflective tools.
- ☐ Adjust practices and refine programming to ensure alignment with district goals and evolving student needs.



Glossary

Academic Integrity Policy – District policy on student work; will be updated to address responsible use of AI.

Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) – Policies that govern appropriate use of AI and digital tools; they address issues such as bias, job displacement, and privacy.

AI fluency – Proficiency in using AI tools creatively and ethically; professional development aims to build AI fluency along with ethical judgment and creative design skills.

AI literacy – Skills enabling educators and students to understand what AI is, how it works, and how to use it ethically; involves critical evaluation of AI-generated information.

AI Trends Group / internal think tank – A proposed team that will scan emerging AI technologies, evaluate tools, and prepare white papers so the district stays ahead of trends.

Algorithm bias – The risk that AI systems may reinforce biases; the plan emphasizes principles for minimizing bias and ensuring fairness.

Algorithmic bias and adaptive learning apps – Training topics for teachers and students that explore how algorithms can be biased and how adaptive learning software works.

Bloom’s and TPACK frameworks – Established instructional frameworks (Bloom’s Taxonomy and Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge) used by the Professional Development Committee to guide AI literacy goals.

Computer vision – A field of AI that uses machine-learning and neural-network techniques to extract meaningful information from digital images, videos and other visual inputs. It enables computers to “see” and interpret visual data so they can recognize objects, detect defects or take actions based on what they observe.

Data representation / representation learning – The process of organizing and transforming raw data into numerical forms (feature vectors or embeddings) that machine-learning algorithms can use. Representation learning simplifies raw data into understandable patterns for ML models, uncovering hidden features and enabling classification or prediction. More generally, data representation involves organizing and storing information (bits, bytes, text, images) in ways that make it easy to process and share.

Decision systems (or “Decision AI”) – AI systems that apply algorithms to assist humans in making decisions or that make decisions autonomously. Such systems combine machine learning, data analytics and natural-language processing to gather and analyze information and then provide recommendations for action.

Deepfakes and misinformation – Media-literacy topics highlighted in the ethics plan; students will learn to identify manipulated media.

Differentiated instruction – Adapting lessons to meet individual learners’ needs; AI tools are proposed to help teachers differentiate instruction based on student readiness, interests and learning style.

Digital citizenship – The practice of making ethical and informed choices in how we access, evaluate, create, and share digital information.

Digital citizenship curricula – Resources that teach the knowledge, skills, and dispositions students need to use technology in ways that are safe, respectful, and effective.

Digital tool checklist – A checklist to evaluate new AI environments and ensure they meet the district’s standards for equal access, accessibility, privacy and readiness.

Efficiency opportunity mapping – Matching each time drain to potential AI solutions and categorizing them as quick wins, medium-term projects or long-term innovations.

Equal access – Ensuring all students have access to AI tools and experiences regardless of background or ability.

Ethical AI / AI Code of Ethics – A proposed code to guide the adoption and use of AI models; it stresses fairness, privacy, transparency, and accountability.

Fiscal forecasting / predictive analytics / procurement analysis – Using AI to model enrollment and expenditures, evaluate procurement and provide real-time financial dashboards.

Heat map – A visual chart ranking the top time drains identified in the time study.

Human connection – Maintaining the human touch in teaching and learning despite automated tools; emphasizes authentic interaction between educators and students.

Humanity, Design, Pragmatism & Efficiency, AI Literacy, Professional Development – Five themes guiding educator development: preserve human qualities, creatively design with AI, improve efficiency, build AI knowledge, and provide ongoing training.

Large language models (LLMs) – Deep-learning models trained on massive datasets that can understand and generate human language. LLMs rely on transformer neural-network architectures, making them capable of capturing context and nuance in sequences of words.

Lifelong adaptability – Preparing students and staff to thrive amid rapid technological change by cultivating adaptability and a mindset of continual learning.

Machine learning (ML) – A branch of artificial intelligence that trains algorithms to learn patterns from data and then make predictions or decisions without explicit programming. ML underpins many modern AI systems, from forecasting models to autonomous vehicles.

Media literacy / misinformation – Media literacy is the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, create, and act using all forms of communication. It helps students understand how media messages are constructed, why they’re created, and how they influence beliefs, behaviors, and society.

Micro-credential – A short, focused professional-development credential; the plan proposes offering micro-credentials to early adopters of AI.

Natural-language processing (NLP) – A subfield of computer science and AI that uses machine-learning techniques to enable computers to understand, interpret, and generate human language. NLP combines computational linguistics with statistical modeling to recognize and process speech or text.

Neural networks – Sub-symbolic machine-learning models inspired by the human brain. They consist of layers of interconnected nodes (neurons) that use weights and activation functions to learn patterns in data. Neural networks power tasks such as image and speech recognition and natural-language processing.

Personalized learning / personalization – Using AI to tailor content, pacing and feedback to each learner while maintaining human connection. Emphasis on student readiness, interests and learning style.

Pilot design – Co-designed pilot projects with staff to test AI solutions, establish success metrics and scale responsibly.

Progression – outlines how skills and concepts develop across grade levels. It ensures that what students learn in each grade prepares them for the next.

Prompt library / resource hub – Collections of vetted AI prompts, lesson templates and instructional resources to support teachers’ use of AI.

Smart District – An interconnected, data-driven school system that leverages technology and strategic partnerships to improve teaching, learning, and operations. A Smart District integrates HR, finance, facilities, transportation, communications, and instruction into unified, AI-enabled systems that support real-time decision-making, transparency, and continuous improvement. Every hour and dollar reclaimed through smarter operations is reinvested into students, staff, and human connection

Social-emotional learning (SEL) – Curriculum that helps students develop self-awareness and empathy; the plan embeds AI literacy into SEL and digital citizenship lessons.

Strategic inquiry / culture of critical inquiry – A human-centered framework for evaluating AI tools through guiding questions about equity, privacy, evaluation, and alignment with district values.

Student agency – Encouraging learners to make choices and direct their own learning; highlighted as a principle in AI-powered personalized instruction.

Time study / time drains – A district-wide study to quantify how staff spend their time and identify repetitive tasks that AI could automate.

Vision of a Graduate – The district’s aspirational description of students as Contributing Citizens, defined four essential domains that anchor our work: Collaborators, Communicators, Critical Thinkers, and Creators.

