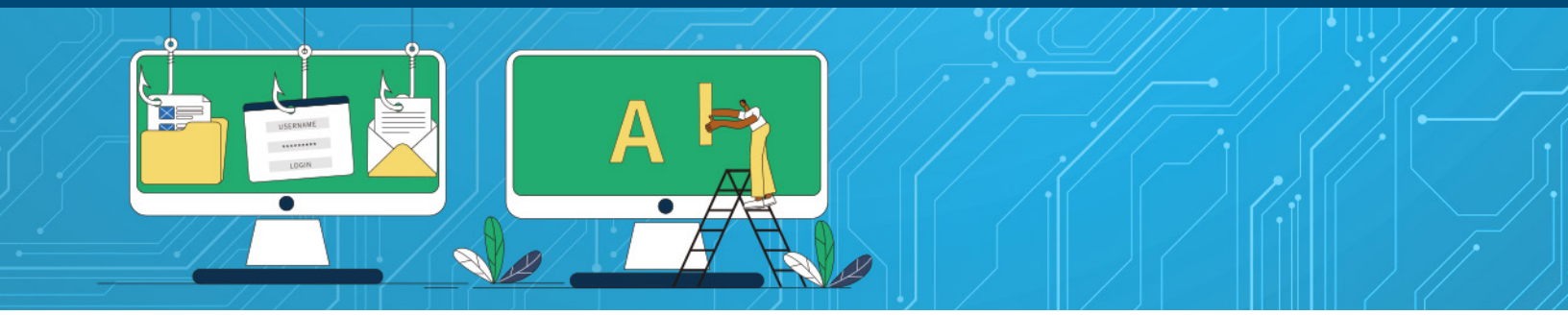
CSBA AI TASKFORCE

Using AI to Reduce Administrative Burdens



Artificial intelligence (AI) has the potential to revolutionize the way schools work, including how it can help with educator evaluations, special education intervention support processes, and the administrative paperwork associated with both. By leveraging AI, school districts and county offices of education can potentially streamline these processes, remove onerous or duplicative tasks, increase accuracy, and improve the supports recommended and provided to educators and students. However, it's essential to consider the ethical and effective implementation of AI resources.

By supporting the use of AI, in conjunction with human judgment, boards of education can ensure that AI enhances processes, rather than replaces them. While board members would not implement AI in these scenarios, this brief provides an overview of two promising uses of AI so governance teams can have informed discussions about the potential benefits and challenges.

This background knowledge can be useful when considering policy adoption and tool selection.

Additionally, this brief suggests potential talking points for board members and includes an appendix with a list of some best practices for using AI for educator evaluations.

Using AI to assist in employee evaluations

Employee evaluation and professional development are critical to providing a high-quality education to all students. Evaluations are also a time-intensive process with the potential to be improved through AI tools.

Education data and technology experts believe that AI could potentially:

- Reduce the time it takes to perform evaluations
- Improve the consistency and comprehensiveness of evaluations across employees in compliance with the California Standards for Teaching Profession categories
- Reduce some aspects of evaluator bias
- Provide data-driven insights by quickly identifying trends
- Enhance communication between educators and administrators

If AI tools are used to inform decisions about employee compensation or working conditions, employers must ensure that these decisions comply with both state and federal labor laws, including obligations to negotiate with labor unions over terms and conditions of employment within the scope of negotiation. Furthermore, a human-centered approach must be taken to ensure that the outputs of AI tools do not perpetuate bias, discrimination or harassment of the employees.

Below is a high-level overview of the employee evaluation process to

help readers understand the general process and identify potential points where AI might improve it. Following this overview is a list of some potential uses for AI to support employee evaluation and professional development. Local practices may vary from the illustration below.

Employee evaluation process

Potential ways AI can support employee evaluation and development

- **Automated observation summaries:** Use AI to analyze classroom videos and generate summaries, identifying key teaching practices, instructional strategies and student engagement patterns. For instance, computer vision algorithms or AI analysis of classroom video recordings could assess student attentiveness or group interaction levels, providing a breakdown of class dynamics.
- **Real-time feedback tools:** Use AI-powered observation tools during or after classroom visits to offer immediate feedback based on predefined criteria, helping administrators provide more specific and actionable insights.
- **Personalized PD pathways:** Based on evaluation data, use AI to recommend specific professional development opportunities for each teacher. For example, if a teacher struggles with differentiated instruction, AI could suggest workshops or resources that target that skill.
- **Content recommendations based on teaching style:** Use AI to analyze a teacher's practices to suggest professional development content, such as articles, webinars or online courses tailored to their needs and subject area.
- **Trend analysis and goal tracking:** Use AI to analyze longitudinal data on teacher performance, showing trends in areas like classroom management, curriculum implementation and student engagement. Administrators can track these trends and compare progress against individualized goals set in previous evaluations.
- **Comparative data across peer groups:** When aggregating anonymized data across departments or schools, use AI to provide context for a teacher's performance. For example, AI could highlight that a science teacher's engagement metrics align with high-performing peers or flag areas for improvement relative to benchmarks.
- **Streamlined documentation:** Use AI to simplify the documentation process by summarizing evaluation notes and observations, ensuring consistency and saving time for administrators. This allows evaluators to focus more on meaningful feedback rather than administrative work.
- **Automated scheduling and notifications:** Use AI-powered tools to manage the logistics of evaluations by scheduling classroom visits, sending reminders to teachers, and prompting follow-up meetings, thus keeping the process organized and consistent.
- **Identifying potential bias in feedback:** Use AI to assist evaluators in identifying implicit bias by objectively analyzing evaluation data

AI could be used to identify correlations between instructional changes and student performance, helping teachers see tangible outcomes of their efforts.

across various dimensions and flagging inconsistencies. For example, AI might identify patterns of more favorable ratings for certain groups and suggest administrators review those cases for potential bias.

- **Standardizing rubrics and criteria:** Use AI to ensure that evaluation rubrics are applied consistently across evaluators, providing checks for standardization and inter-rater reliability. This practice helps reduce variability due to subjective interpretations of evaluation criteria.
- **Measuring impact on student performance:** Use AI to link teacher evaluations with student outcomes (e.g., academic progress, behavioral changes) to evaluate the relationship between instructional and classroom management methods and student achievement. For instance, AI could be used to identify correlations between instructional changes and student performance, helping teachers see tangible outcomes of their efforts.
- **Individualized student data integration:** Use AI to incorporate data from individual students to evaluate how teachers support diverse learners, such as students with disabilities or English learners. This insight can be used to adjust evaluation criteria based on a classroom's particular context.
- **AI-driven reflection prompts:** Use AI tools to prompt teachers to reflect on specific aspects of their teaching, such as adapting to different learning paces or using technology in instruction. Teachers receive customized prompts based on their evaluation results, encouraging self-reflection aligned with growth goals.
- **Goal-setting assistance:** Use AI to guide teachers through goal-setting, suggesting targets based on past evaluations and offering strategies for improvement. For example, if evaluations highlight a need to improve classroom management, the AI might suggest measurable goals and actions to track progress.

Some principals at a California school district have begun using ChatGPT to assist in translating their typed teacher observation notes into the format of their formal observation forms. The prompt they input provides specific instruction on the format and headings of the observation form uses the terminology in district-specific documents and directs the tone of the narrative to be supportive in nature. The outputs from ChatGPT using these prompts are considered a starting point for each written evaluation, which principals then review and edit to appropriately fit their needs. The practice follows a "human-AI–human" (H-A-H) approach to keep people at the center of the work. A list of best practices the district utilizes for its H-A-H approach is included in Appendix A of this document. Principals using this methodology have reported that ChatGPT saves them approximately 30 minutes per evaluation.

Using AI to assist in the IEP process

In the excitement of AI's potential in the education sector, no application seems more attractive from an efficiency perspective — yet fraught with peril from a privacy lens — than the use of AI in supporting special education services. LEAs are experimenting with ways to use AI to assist educators in efficiently populating individualized education program (IEP) documentation, supporting personalized learning and enhancing therapeutic support. A May 2024 *Education Week* article reported that districts using AI to support the generation of student learning goals and other assistance (then checked by a qualified educator) saved approximately 30 minutes per IEP. These LEAs invested time in truly understanding the use and limitations of the AI tools to ensure success, especially how to give specific prompts without giving out protected information.

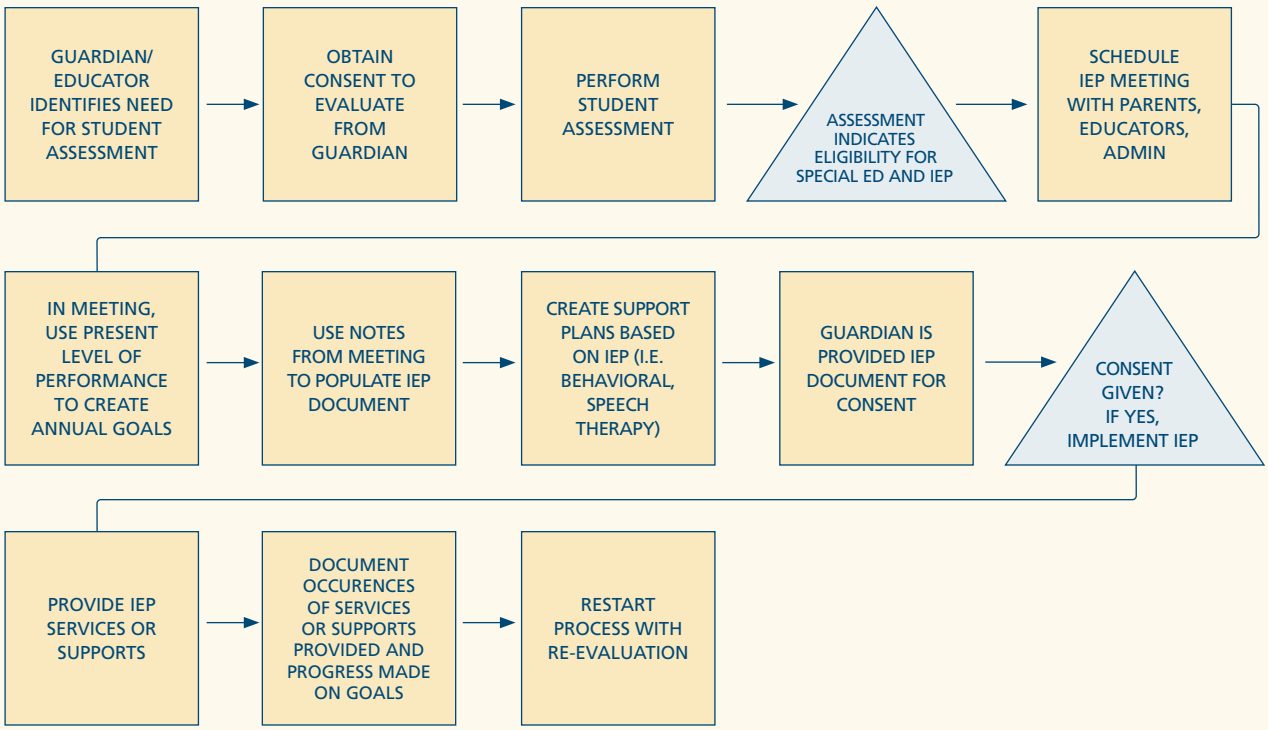
AI tools used in support of the IEP creation, review and dissemination process must comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which mandates that schools provide a free appropriate public education to students with disabilities. To comply with IDEA means ensuring that AI is used to support, not replace, human judgment and expertise in determining student's individual needs, keeping students in a least restrictive environment, continuing to involve parents in the IEP process and protecting student privacy in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). LEA employees should not enter student-identifiable information into any AI tool until the appropriate LEA sources can verify that the AI tool used is FERPA compliant. LEAs should also ensure compliance with state special education and student record laws.

Below is a high-level overview of the IEP creation and approval process to help readers understand the IEP process and identify potential points where AI might offer improvements. Following this graphic is a list of some potential uses for AI, both in the IEP creation process and subsequent support for students receiving special education services.

Potential ways AI can support special education

- **Predictive analytics for early intervention:** AI can use predictive analytics to identify patterns that suggest emerging challenges. This allows special education teams to intervene early, potentially adjusting the IEP or implementing additional supports before issues become significant barriers.
- **Automated data collection and analysis:** AI-powered tools can help collect and analyze data on student performance, behavior and engagement across various platforms. This provides teachers with insights into student progress that can guide IEP goal–setting, adaptations and modifications, making it easier to track whether interventions are working and where adjustments are needed.
- **Natural language processing for IEP documentation:** AI-driven natural language processing tools can simplify the drafting of IEPs by assisting with the generation of goal-oriented language, adapting educational jargon for family-friendly explanations and even automatically pulling in relevant data. This helps save time and ensures the language is accessible and aligned with the student's needs.

IEP creation and implementation process



- **Personalized learning plans:** AI systems can help develop personalized learning plans aligned with IEP goals by analyzing each student's strengths, areas of weakness and progress. These systems can recommend specific resources, instructional strategies and tools that are tailored to meet individual needs, supporting both academic and behavioral goals.
- **Enhanced communication and collaboration tools:** AI can facilitate better communication among teachers, administrators and parents by summarizing key data points, generating reports and offering real-time updates on student progress. Some AI platforms even create virtual spaces for collaboration, allowing IEP team members to contribute, comment and adjust plans asynchronously.
- **Behavioral monitoring and support:** AI-driven behavior analysis tools can monitor student behavior in real time and provide insights that are useful for developing and updating behavior intervention plans within the IEP. These tools can help identify triggers, monitor patterns and suggest proactive strategies for behavioral management.
- **Assistive technologies for accessibility:** AI-driven assistive tools such as speech recognition software, language processing apps and augmented communication devices can directly support students' IEP accommodations. These tools help students access the curriculum, communicate effectively and engage more independently in learning activities.
- **Speech and language therapy support:** For students who require speech and language interventions, AI-driven speech therapy apps can supplement in-person sessions. These apps can provide individualized exercises, assess progress and track data, which can be incorporated into the IEP to support communication goals.

Board member talking points

Board members may be asked by the media and the public to weigh in on the benefits and concerns surrounding the use of AI in employee and special education student success. The following are talking points board members can use to enable productive discussions.

- **AI has the potential to enhance efficiency of evaluations and planning.** It's no secret that educators and administrators have experienced increasing amounts of paperwork over the years AI has the potential to streamline the most basic and routine tasks to allow more time for human ingenuity. This can translate into more educator time spent with students and not on paperwork.
- **AI innovations cannot and will not take the place of human oversight in the evaluation and planning process.** While AI may quickly generate an employee evaluation form or IEP, the humans responsible for these documents will still hold full accountability for ensuring the information provided to employees, parents, guardians and students is accurate and appropriate. AI is a tool to support, not replace, the expertise and professional judgment of our employees.
- **AI tools can help LEA staff identify trends and potential solutions.** The increasing analytic powers of AI tools presents one of the most exciting opportunities for AI in education settings. AI tools have the potential to more effectively identify issues and corresponding supports to help employees and students reach their potential.
- **Despite all of AI's potential, bias exists in these systems.** To this extent, processes should be put in place to evaluate potential bias both ahead of employee evaluation and IEP generation, as well as cyclically over time. Feedback loops to better understand and mitigate problems are essential to the successful adoption of these tools.
- **Privacy and security are top priorities as our LEA evaluates and implements new tools in the employee evaluation and IEP processes.** These tools would require access to sensitive information and LEAs should hold their vendors and system users accountable for the protection of this information. The LEA comply with all legal requirements to protect the privacy of sensitive information, including student records.
- **Our LEA is committed to transparency and accountability in its use of AI**. The LEA will ensure that employees, parents and guardians are informed about how AI is used and what mechanisms are in place to address concerns.

Appendix A: Human-AI-Human best practices for teacher evaluations

The content in this appendix is utilized by one California school district (described earlier) in its AI-supported teacher-evaluation practices.

In today's educational landscape, school administrators are increasingly leveraging AI to enhance the teacher evaluation process. The key is to support principals and other evaluators in managing the vast amount of data collected, while maintaining a personal and human-centered approach in evaluations. The emerging human-AI-human (H-AI-H) model exemplifies how administrators can integrate AI thoughtfully.

1) Streamline data organization

AI can help principals organize and analyze observation notes, teacher goals and feedback. For instance, administrators are using AI tools to compile and categorize feedback, highlighting trends in teacher performance and identifying areas for growth. This allows principals to focus less on data processing and more on using the data to provide meaningful feedback and professional growth.

2) Enhance reflective feedback

The H-AI-H model underscores a process where AI acts as a middle layer, ensuring that evaluators maintain a human presence at the beginning and end of evaluations. AI organizes data to pinpoint specific strengths and areas for improvement, but feedback delivery remains personal. Principals use AI-generated summaries to tailor feedback sessions with specific examples, allowing teachers to feel recognized and valued.

3) Providing real-time support and follow-up

AI can be integrated into ongoing support between evaluations, tracking professional development and reminding teachers of resources that address their individual goals. This adds continuity and depth to the process, as AI tools offer principals real-time insights on teacher progress, enabling them to personalize support and reach out at appropriate intervals, reinforcing a commitment to teacher growth.

4) Balancing data with professional judgment

The H-AI-H model stresses that AI should assist, not replace, professional judgment. By using AI for administrative organization — like scheduling, compiling reports and generating performance analytics — principals can ensure evaluations are efficient and data-informed but retain the personalized, intuitive insights that only human evaluators can provide.

5) Maintaining trust and transparency

Transparency with teachers is essential. Administrators have found success by clearly explaining the role of AI in evaluations, addressing privacy and emphasizing that AI merely aids in organizing data, not in making evaluative judgments. This approach has built trust into the process, reassuring teachers that their evaluations reflect authentic, human-led feedback rather than solely data-driven metrics.

These best practices can guide administrators in creating an evaluation process that combines AI's organizational power with the irreplaceable "human touch," fostering a supportive, growth-oriented environment for educators.

For additional artificial intelligence guidance and resources, visit CSBA's AI Taskforce webpages at www.csba.org/AI.