Lessons from the Field: The Strategic Use of AI in Shaping Future-Ready School Communities

Presented by

St. Cloud Area School District 742!

Our Mission. . .

To provide a safe and caring climate and culture in which we engage, inspire, educate, prepare and empower all learners in partnership with their surrounding community to be successful in today's and tomorrow's society.

How our AI Story began. . .
. . .and continues to unfold. . . . . .
. . .. . . in St. Cloud Area Schools

Superintendent Dr. Laurie Putnam

AI as a Catalyst for Change

- **Student-Centered** Learning
- **Competency-Based** Assessments
- **Collaborative** Socio-Cultural **Learning**
- ****Future-Ready Skills, Knowledge, Agency** and **Meta learning** **
- Essential **Tiered Supports**

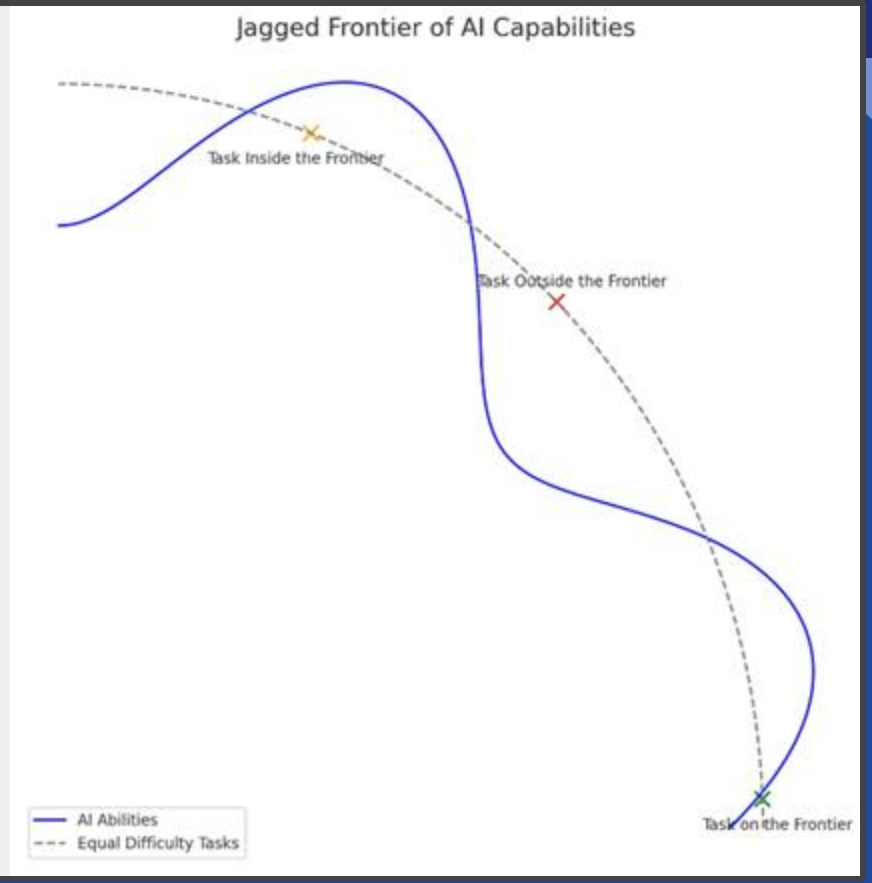
Donna Roper, Executive Director

Not Gartner Hype rather “Jagged Frontier”

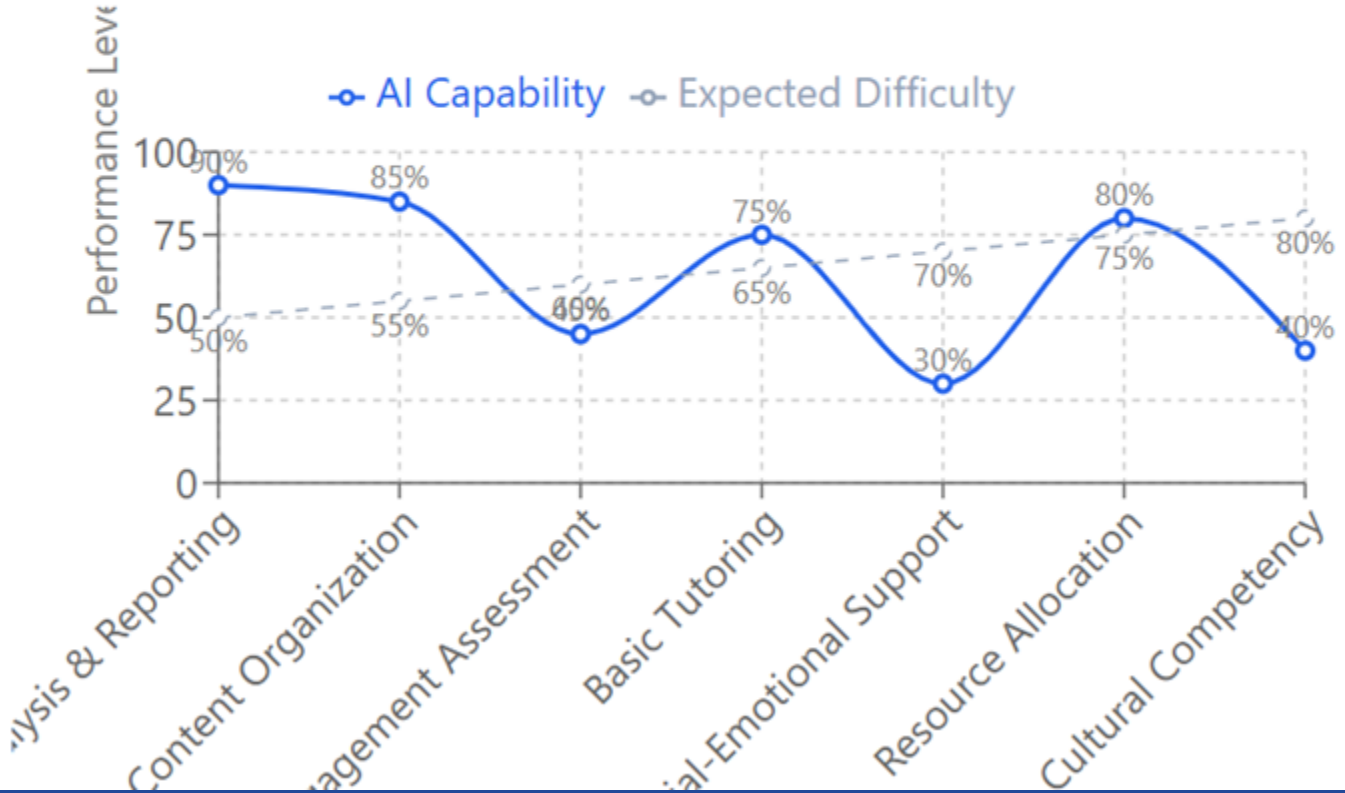
Jagged Frontier

"[T]asks that appear to be of similar difficulty may either be performed better or worse by humans using AI."

Dell'Acqua, Fabrizio and McFowland III, Edward and Mollick, Ethan R. and Lifshitz-Assaf, Hila and Kellogg, Katherine and Rajendran, Saran and Krayer, Lisa and Candelon, François and Lakhani, Karim R., (2023).



AI Capabilities in Education: The Jagged Frontier



Why does this matter?

Which leads us to . . .

H-AI-H approach

. . . first, human inquiry, see what AI produces, and always close with human reflection, human edits, human understanding of what was produced. . .

Principal Justin Skaalerud

Apollo High School St. Cloud

Secondary Instructional Vision

“We are committed to empowering every student with the knowledge, skills, and agency needed to navigate a complex, ever-changing world. Our secondary instructional vision focuses on delivering a rigorous education that cultivates critical thinking, curiosity, wisdom, and perspective-taking. This equips our students with the communication and collaboration skills necessary to engage meaningfully both in the classroom and beyond.”

Our Apollo WHY

- AI is already shaping daily life and will **continue to expand.**
- Students **must develop skills** to understand, navigate, and critically engage with AI.
- AI is **here now**, influencing industries, decision-making, and learning.
- Hands-on AI experiences build **college, career, and digital literacy skills**.
- Structured, ethical AI integration promotes **responsible and creative use.**
- AI can **personalize learning,** support diverse needs, and **enhance engagement**.
- Equitable access ensures **all students develop AI literacy**, regardless of background.

Mindset | Empowerment | Culture

Growing a “Benefit” Mindset

- **Normalize AI** as a **Learning Tool**
  - How does AI “benefit” us
  - Position to **support, aid,** but **not replace**

- **Encourage Curiosity & Adaptability**
  - Promote openness to “try” and “learning alongside students”

- **Foster a Growth-Oriented AI Culture**
  - Frame AI as “opportunity to enhance”, not “challenge to overcome”

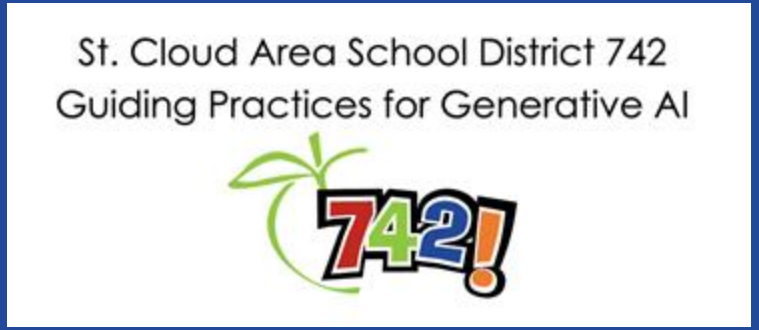
- **Lead by Example**
  - Model responsible AI use in decision-making, communication, etc

Empowering the Most Important People

Teachers	Students
• Provide Time and Space for Exploration • Encourage Collaboration both in School and Beyond • Trust Educators as Leaders • Recognize and Celebrate	• Give Students a Voice • Foster Digital Citizenship and include AI Ethics • Encourage Student Led Projects using AI tools

Safe and Supportive AI Culture

- Promote a Culture of “Learning”
- Establish Clear AI Guidelines
- Promote Ethical AI Engagement
- Address Concerns & Misconceptions
- Communicate Transparently
- Support Educators in Adoption



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My original stance on AI

If you can’t do it yourself, then how do you know if the AI is doing it right?

Corollary: Students who use AI are short-circuiting their own learning.

Be the teacher - evaluate this

To succeed in life, you need two things: ignorance and confidence.

5 points possible.

-1 point for each grammar or punctuation error.

When finished: Show your score with your fingers.

Be the teacher - evaluate this

I love hamburgers I think Im gonna have one now

5 points possible.

-1 point for each grammar or punctuation error.

When finished: Show your score with your fingers.

Be the teacher - evaluate this

Is toil leam a bhith ag ithe ceapairean ach chan e hama.

5 points possible.

-1 point for each grammar or punctuation error.

When finished: Show your score with your fingers.

Be the teacher - evaluate this

```
C010 B6 80 04   INCH    LDA A  ACIA      GET STATUS
C013 47                 ASR A            SHIFT RDRF FLAG INTO CARRY
C014 24 FA              BCC    INCH      RECIEVE NOT READY
C016 B6 80 05           LDA A  ACIA+1    GET CHAR
C019 84 7F              AND A  #$7F      MASK PARITY
C01B 7E C0 79           JMP    OUTCH     ECHO & RTS
```

Some unanswered questions

What if I'm wrong?
What if the learning actually *increases?*

Scary question: If I let my students use AI all they want, will I be able to tell the difference?

A small experiment

Student A

- Has an A
- Does all the work
- Understand it

Student B

- Struggling
- Unmotivated
- Strongly interested in certain things

Results

Student A

- Work quality down to a B.
- No learning improvement.
- “It made me lazy”

Student B

- Work quality up, almost to passing.
- Definite learning increase.

...but what about the scary question?!

I can definitely tell when a machine wrote it.

...for now.

Do you allow unrestricted calculator usage throughout elementary school?

Teachers put these icons into the school's LMS.

(Schoology, Moodle, Blackboard, etc.)

AI Free

AI is not allowed for activities.
Examples include quizzes and assessments that assess individual understanding.

AI Assisted

AI is used to support activities but not for generating final content.
Examples include brainstorming, planning, feedback, outlining, ect.

AI Enhanced

AI is used to boost learning and creative processes, students are responsible for the final content.
Examples include collaboration with AI for exploring ideas, refining work, ect.

takeaway 1

Student AI Integration: 0 to Infinity

Student AI Usage Continuum for Empowered Learning

To prepare ALL students for the AI-rich future that awaits them, it is imperative that they ALL learn ABOUT AI, and have opportunities to learn WITH AI in increasingly interactive and complex ways.

AI Free

- Work must be completed entirely without any AI assistance.
- Students must rely entirely on their own knowledge, understanding, and skills.
- Any AI use is a violation of student academic integrity policy.
- An academic honesty pledge that AI was not used may be required.

AI Assisted

- AI is used for tasks as specified such as brainstorming, planning, feedback etc.
- No AI content is allowed in the final submission.
- Usage beyond specified tasks is a violation of academic integrity.
- Disclosure statement should be submitted with final product; be prepared to share links, screenshots etc as evidence of all AI Chats

AI Enhanced

- AI is used interactively throughout to enhance your knowledge, efficiency, & creativity.
- Student must provide human oversight and evaluation of all AI generated content.
- Interactivity with AI and critical engagement with AI-generated content is required.
- Student is responsible for the accuracy and fairness of all AI-generated content.
- Disclosure statement should be submitted with final product; be prepared to share links, screenshots, etc as evidence of all AI Chats

AI Empowered

- The full integration of AI allows for the creation of things that were previously impossible, empowering students as critical thinkers, creatives, and problem solvers.
- Student must provide human oversight and evaluation of all AI-generated content.
- Student is responsible for the accuracy, fairness, & originality of all AI-generated content.
- All AI tools used and how they were used should be cited in a disclosure statement.

Adapted by Vera Cubero 4/28/24 for the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) from the work of Dr. Leon Furze, Dr. Mike Perkins, Dr. Jasper Roe FHEA, & Dr. Jason Mcvaugh
Link to Original Work


create
evaluate
analyze
apply
understand
remember

takeaway 2

Consider letting students earn the right to use AI.

- With demonstrated mastery first, they’re equipped to evaluate.
- We already do this with calculators.

takeaway 3

Teach AI Literacy!

- Prepare your students for the real world.
- Teach them what responsible and ethical usage looks like.
- Teach them to use it effectively.
- Show them how to enhance their learning and improve themselves with AI help.
- Staff PD too!
- curriculumredesign.org

AI as a *Learning Partner*

“Evaluate my writing and give me suggestions for improvement.”

“Explain this concept to me.”

“Show me five alternative ways of achieving the same thing with my code.”

“I need 10 ideas for a project.”

“Explain what I did wrong here.”

“Create a 20-problem practice set about ionic bonding.”

“But they’re just going to use it to cheat!”

Teach AI Literacy!

takeaway 4

Extra Credit:

Teach AI Creation

- Missing Assignment Predictor
- Dog Breed Recommender
- Is your animal cat-sized?

Curriculum provider: code.org

Questions?

St. Cloud Area School District 742!

Thank you!

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