From Curiosity to Community:

Launching a Teacher-led Gen AI Professional Development Initiative

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What AI professional development has your school done thus far?

Agenda

- ❖ Sharing our Process
  - ➢ Adult Learning Principles
  - ➢ The Structure
  - ➢ The Culmination
  - ➢ Materials
- ❖ Challenges & Next Steps
- ❖ Activity
- ❖ Q&A

Why did we create a faculty Gen AI Working Group?

- Faculty was hungry to learn more

- To identify & practice using AI professionally & in classroom

- To responsibly address emerging technology

- Faculty/staff ownership

Rooted in Adult Learning Principles

- Lead learners who will teach others

- Peer-led PD = greater engagement

- Lots of entry points, because lead learners ranged in experience

- Attendee choice of workshops

- Practical applications in day to day work

- Sandbox time to practice learning

Our Approach

- Solicited volunteers (~22)
- Rachel Prepared a "Vision"
  - Make thinking *visible*: leaders want to know your vision
  - Teacher AI literacy for ethical & productive use in administrative & pedagogical tasks
  - Student AI literacy
- Objectives
  - Develop knowledge & expertise in this growing field
  - Develop faculty & staff as Lead Learners to support others
  - Collaborate & learn around Gen AI use in community

Our Structure

❖ Launch the committee as a collective group

➢ Rachel & Heidi met to plan meetings and roadmap

❖ Divide into cohorts (connected by specific focuses, and areas of experience / expertise)

❖ Explore research & Gen AI platforms

❖ Workshops to transfer knowledge to faculty & staff

Getting up and running...

Prior to the First Meeting:
➢ Data on group members' availability

In the First Meeting:
➢ Sharing of Vision
➢ Exploration of Gen AI Resources & Platforms
➢ Avenues for Research and Exploration
➢ Long Term Plan

Creation of Cohorts

- Cohorts of faculty from across disciplines and schools (middle, upper) & staff

- Cohorts were organized by expertise, **availability** and **interest**

- 5 cohorts: Lesson Planning & Admin. (1), Assessment (1), and AI Literacy & Curriculum Use (3)

- Cohort managed by a facilitator group member

Creation of Monthly Agendas

- Cohorts met **once** per month → *specific purpose* for each meeting

- We created **agendas** before each meeting

- Ahead of meetings, cohort members **prepared** by:

  - engaging with available resources

  - and exploring the platforms/tools of their choice

- In meetings, members **shared findings** w/ cohort; cohorts reported back

Cohort Meetings Overview

- **Meeting 1** → Pick resources & platforms to explore within cohort focus

- **Meeting 2** → Engage with second set of resources & report pros, cons, and key takeaways of specific Gen AI platform use

- **Meeting 3** → Specialize in Gen AI platforms & tools; with cohorts, share takeaways & brainstorm workshop topics

Cohort Meetings Overview (Cont.)

- **Meeting 4** → Choose workshop topic and create workshop proposal

- **Meeting 5** → Workshop proposals approved in full, or approved with revisions; cohorts created descriptions for their workshops

- **In Preparation for PD Day** → Faculty and staff reviewed workshop descriptions and selected their top 3 choices with the ability to attend 2 of them

Key Factors to the Cohorts' Success

- Agendas set **concrete tasks** & **outcomes** we hoped they would generate

- Secured *funding* for members to subscribe to a few Gen AI platforms

- Rachel sat in on at least **one meeting** with every cohort to observe their discussions and be available for questions

February PD Workshop Day!

- 2 hours of concurrent workshops → geared toward varying levels of knowledge and expertise

- Workshops were led by **Lead Learners** from each cohort

- Workshops consisted of:

  - **Presentation** of main concepts & Gen AI tools

  - **Practical application** or hands on exploration by participants

  - **Sharing** of learning and discussion of next steps

PD Workshop Topics

AI Tools to Create & Manipulate Images

The Art of the Ask: Crafting Effective AI Prompts for Educators and Non-Educators

Create Rubrics Using AI

Empowering Critical Thinkers: Teaching AI Literacy Across Disciplines

Eduaide: Helping You Create Material to Meet Your Needs from A-Z

Harnessing the Power of AI to Create a Scaffolded or Self-Paced Classroom

Using AI for Assessment & Feedback

Post-PD Workshop Day

- We gathered **data** on the project

  - We surveyed *workshop participants* on what they learned in each session and what questions and concerns about Gen AI they had moving forward

  - We surveyed *cohort members* on what they enjoyed about the process of participating in the group and what they would like to do differently in the future

- We met to **process this data** and **recognize our strengths** and **areas for improvement**

Challenges & Solutions Pt 1

- Scheduling complications (finding time to meet, issues across middle and upper school schedules etc.)

  - ***Solution*** → Create cohorts using members' preferred availability and be open and flexible – adapt cohort meeting times when necessary

- Faculty struggling to balance the demands of the Working Group with their other responsibilities and time commitments (completing tasks before meetings / by deadlines)

  - ***Solution*** → Be upfront about tasks and deadlines; encourage faculty to plan around existing workload

Challenges & Solutions Pt 2

- Miscommunications within cohorts re: workshop topic selections and different members' roles

    - ***Solution*** → Create more opportunities for engagement as needed; empower faculty and staff to adapt their roles within the cohorts, or create additional workshops, if interest exists

Ultimately, we learned to:

➢ be ***open and direct*** with tasks and deadlines,

➢ be ***flexible and supportive*** when negotiating faculty schedules and relationships

➢ focus on ***faculty development*** in the short ***and*** long term!

Long Term Impact

This has led to:

- **Policy conversations and change**
  → Using Working Group insights to inform policy decisions.
  → Shaping how faculty & students use Gen AI
- **Increased knowledge & expertise** for faculty / staff
- **Bringing an expert in the field** (Eric Hudson) to KO in 25–26 to lead an interactive session for all faculty *and* to collaborate with Cohort Lead Learners in an advanced workshop
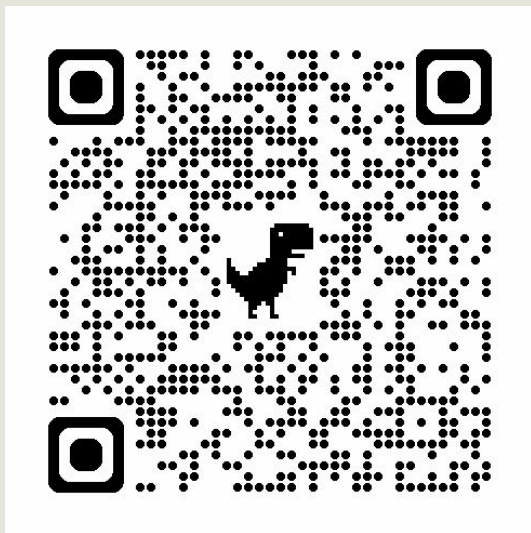
Your Turn

➔ Thinking back on the PD you have done on AI at your schools so far, consider priorities or directions you'd like to explore with AI use at your school.

◆ Choose a priority & sketch out how you would adapt a similar lead learning model approach to AI PD at your school.

◆ What do you think the snags might be?

◆ How can you plan for them?

Q & A

Sample Materials

Thank You!

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Thanks!

For those who lead PD, check out the Transforming Teaching Summer Collaborative at the Episcopal Academy

ASchultz@episcopalacademy.org runs a monthly meetup of folks who work providing PD, coaching, & onboarding