MEMORANDUM

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| **To:** | Members of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education  |
| **From:**  | Patrick Tutwiler, Interim Commissioner |
| **Date:**  | April 22, 2025 |
| **Subject:** | Massachusetts K12 Artificial Intelligence Task Force: Recommendations and Department Strategy    |

# Background

Over the past three years, generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools have become widely accessible to students, educators, and school communities. These tools—ranging from large language models to image and audio generators—offer exciting opportunities as well as significant challenges. Educators across the Commonwealth are navigating how to harness these tools to support teaching and learning, while also addressing emerging concerns related to academic integrity, bias, data privacy, misinformation, and instructional quality.

As districts experiment with integrating AI, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Department or DESE) has received an increasing number of inquiries related to policy, curriculum, instructional practice, student safety, and professional development. In the absence of statewide guidance, schools face uncertainty around issues such as student data privacy, ethical use, and instructional alignment. Furthermore, disparities in access to technology and professional learning risk exacerbating educational inequities, particularly for historically underserved communities.

# DESE’s K-12 AI Task Force

To address these emerging needs, the Department’s Office of Educational Technology and Digital Literacy and Computer Science team convened a diverse and representative K–12 Artificial Intelligence Task Force in the summer of 2024 (a list of Task Force members can be found on page 9 of [this report](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edtech/ai/integrating-artificial-intelligence.pdf)). The Task Force was charged with developing recommendations for state actions that would support school systems across the Commonwealth in their use of AI.

The Task Force engaged in a comprehensive process to develop its recommendations. Members participated in multiple convenings focused on building a shared understanding of AI in education, identifying opportunities and risks, and analyzing emerging guidance from across the country and the world. In addition to these meetings, the Task Force reviewed existing resources, examined current practices in Massachusetts schools, and analyzed themes from listening sessions held with students, families, educators, and school leaders. The group prioritized recommendations through an equity lens, grounded in DESE’s Educational Vision and Racial Equity Decision-Making Tool.

# Task Force Recommendations

The Task Force recommendations, which fall into three main categories, aim to establish a shared understanding of AI while addressing safety, equity, and instructional quality across Massachusetts schools.

1. Resource Creation and Curation
* Develop a set of materials for varied stakeholder groups (students, educators, caregivers, etc.) that outlines foundational understandings of AI.
* Curate and maintain a repository of recommended AI tools.
* Explore options for a secure, enterprise-level AI tool for K–12 use.
1. Professional Development
* Offer differentiated, no-cost training opportunities for educators and administrators.
* Provide turnkey training materials on student data privacy.
1. Policy Supports
* Develop sample policies and guidelines for district use.
* Integrate AI literacy into curriculum frameworks.
* Update educator preparation programs to include emerging technologies and ethical considerations.

Additional information about the Task Force recommendations can be found in the full report [here](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edtech/ai/integrating-artificial-intelligence.pdf).

# Department Strategy

After reviewing the Task Force report with leaders across the Department, DESE developed a roadmap to respond to the recommendations with a multi-year strategy.

* Year 1: Develop foundational resources that establish a shared understanding of and vision for AI across schools in the Commonwealth, including AI literacy materials, student data privacy trainings, and guidance for developing local AI policies.
* Year 2: Provide technical assistance for schools to adopt resources developed in Year 1 and integrate AI strategically into practice.
* Year 3: Consider state policies that may be revised to sustain longer-term, more strategic AI integration, including embedding AI literacy into MA Curriculum Frameworks and updating related educator preparation program expectations.

Several major initiatives are already underway in response to Task Force recommendations.

Resource Development

* A dedicated [web page](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edtech/ai/default.html) has been launched on the DESE website to serve as a central repository for resources and updates. The page currently features information about the Task Force and its recommendations report, as well as resources that have been reviewed by DESE team members and selected for their quality and relevance.
* DESE has contracted with vendors to develop the resources identified in Year 1. Vendors are currently gathering stakeholder input and drafting resources with the goal of publishing final versions in the summer of 2025.

District Support

* DESE contracted with ISTE+ASCD, an international organization focused on the effective use of technology to improve learning, to launch the “District Leadership in the Age of AI” learning cohort. This cohort experience provides a collaborative learning opportunity for 17 LEA teams[[1]](#footnote-1) that are currently developing strategies to support AI integration. 48 LEA teams applied, signaling the level of demand for this type of support.
* DESE has contracted with local technology and AI integration leader Greg Kulowiec to add internal capacity and expertise for resource development, and to design workshops and webinars to translate resources into actionable steps for all schools and districts across the Commonwealth.

# Additional Context

In December 2024, Governor Healey released a bold vision for Massachusetts as a leader in Artificial Intelligence, referred to as the [Massachusetts AI Hub](https://www.mass.gov/doc/massachusetts-ai-strategic-task-force-2024-report-to-the-governor/download), that will “serve as the central entity for coordinating and managing key assets required for AI innovation.” The strategy entails building out in-state infrastructure to develop and utilize AI, as well as establishing an innovation and talent ecosystem comprised of research, business development and application support, and workforce development pathways. DESE is coordinating with the AI Hub on the role of schools in preparing students to actively engage in this post-secondary environment.

# Conclusion

By centering equity, collaboration, and capacity-building, DESE’s approach will provide schools and districts with the guidance, tools, and professional development needed to navigate AI thoughtfully and responsibly. At the April 29 meeting, Jackie Gantzer, Director of School Support and EdTech, AJ Coté, Assistant Director of EdTech, Paula Moore, Digital Literacy & Computer Science Support Lead, and Greg Kulowiec, contracted AI leader, will present to the Board, invite discussion, and respond to your questions.

1. District teams participating include: Attleboro, Boston Collegiate Charter School, Boston Public Schools, CREST Collaborative, Dennis-Yarmouth, Everett, Falmouth, Framingham, Greater Lawrence Technical, Lawrence, Leominster, New Bedford, Pioneer Charter School of Science, Quincy, Salem, Stoughton, and UP Academy. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)