



K-12 IT Leadership Roundtable: Ensuring Information Technology is Understandable

1. Keeping the Internet On

- Reliable connectivity is the foundation of teaching, learning, and operations.
- Downtime impacts classrooms, business functions, and community trust.
- Success looks boring—when nobody notices the network, it's working.

As district leaders, how do we communicate the value of investing in network reliability when success is often measured by the absence of disruption?

2. Cybersecurity and Risk Management

- Cybersecurity is now a student safety issue, not just a technology issue.
- We focus on reducing risk, not eliminating it.
- Every employee is part of the district's security team.

What strategies have been most effective in creating a culture where every employee understands their role in reducing cybersecurity risk?

3. Data Privacy and Governance

- Student and staff data are among our most valuable assets.
- Privacy requires clear policies, training, and accountability.
- Good governance ensures data is accurate, secure, and trusted.

How do we balance the growing demand for data-driven decisions with our responsibility to protect student and staff privacy?

4. Operationalizing Generative AI

- Moving from AI experimentation to responsible implementation.
- Establishing guardrails, use cases, and staff expectations.
- Helping employees work smarter while protecting privacy and security.

What governance structures and guardrails are necessary to move Generative AI from pilot projects to sustainable district-wide implementation?

5. Critical Media Literacy

- Students need to evaluate information as carefully as they consume it.
- AI-generated content increases the need for verification skills.
- Digital citizenship is becoming an essential life skill.

What role should school districts play in preparing students to identify misinformation and evaluate AI-generated content?



6. Digital Accessibility

- Technology should work for everyone, regardless of ability.
- Accessibility benefits all learners, not just those with accommodations.
- Inclusive design reduces barriers before they become problems.

How can we ensure accessibility is embedded into every technology decision rather than addressed only after barriers emerge?

7. Learner Personalization

- Technology can help students where they are academically.
- Data and AI can support differentiated learning pathways.
- Personalization should enhance teaching, not replace teachers.

How do we leverage AI and data-driven personalization while preserving the essential role of teachers in the learning process?

8. Data Visualization and Decision Support

- Leaders need insights, not spreadsheets.
- Turning data into dashboards helps drive informed decisions.
- Visualizing trends helps identify opportunities and challenges sooner.

What are the most impactful ways district leaders can use dashboards and visual analytics to improve student and operational outcomes?

9. Budget and Cost Control

- Every technology dollar should support student outcomes.
- Strategic purchasing creates sustainability and reduces duplication.
- The goal is maximizing value, not simply minimizing costs.

When resources are limited, how do we determine which technology investments deliver the greatest long-term value for students and staff?

10. Staff Retention and Workforce Development

- Technology success depends on people, not devices.
- Recruiting and retaining skilled IT staff remains a growing challenge.
- Investing in professional growth builds organizational capacity.

What innovative approaches are districts using to recruit, develop, and retain highly skilled technology professionals in a competitive market?



11. Technology Operations and Service Excellence

- IT is a customer service organization.
- Measuring response times and user satisfaction improves support.
- Consistent service builds confidence in technology initiatives.

How should we measure IT success beyond uptime and ticket closure rates to reflect true customer service excellence?

12. Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity

- Schools must be prepared for cyber incidents, weather events, and outages.
- Recovery planning is just as important as prevention.
- Resilience keeps learning and operations moving forward.

What lessons have recent cyber incidents, hurricanes, or outages taught us about strengthening district resilience and recovery capabilities? [\[Leadership...rstandable | PDF\]](#)

13. Community Engagement and Trust

- Technology decisions should reflect community values and expectations.
- Transparency increases understanding and support.
- Families are important partners in digital learning.

How can district technology leaders increase transparency and community understanding around major technology decisions and investments?

14. Strategic Leadership

- Technology is no longer a support function; it is a strategic enabler.
- The CIO's role is aligning technology investments with district priorities.
- Success is measured by improved outcomes for students, staff, and the community.

How do we ensure technology discussions remain focused on advancing district priorities and student success rather than on technology itself?

Closing Thoughts

- **From "Keeping the Internet On" to "Strategic Leadership," modern K-12 IT is about enabling learning, protecting resources, empowering people, and preparing schools for the future.**