

Professional Learning Facilitation Plan

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Leadership Summary

The purpose of this proposed professional development is to build teacher capacity and confidence in guiding the ethical and effective use of artificial intelligence (AI) within Baltimore County Public Schools' Online Learning Program (BCPS-OLP). As AI becomes increasingly integrated into digital learning environments, it is essential that educators understand both its potential benefits and associated challenges. This professional development aims to promote ethical and informed AI use among students and staff, equip teachers with strategies to integrate AI as a supportive instructional tool, align classroom practices with district technology and academic integrity standards, and foster a professional culture that values innovation, student safety, equity, and authenticity in learning.

Key Strategies and Expected Outcomes

This professional development will follow a three-phase structure designed to build awareness, application, and implementation. In the first phase, teachers will explore current research, ethical considerations, and district policies surrounding AI in education. This foundation will enable participants to critically evaluate the role of AI in teaching, learning, and assessment. The second phase emphasizes the pedagogical potential of AI, encouraging teachers to examine ways AI can enhance instructional design, student engagement, and differentiation while ensuring alignment with curriculum standards. The final phase focuses on practice and implementation, providing teachers with guided opportunities to develop lessons, classroom policies, and student guidance materials that support responsible and effective AI integration.

By the conclusion of this professional learning series, teachers are expected to demonstrate increased confidence and competence in integrating AI tools into instruction. They will model responsible and ethical AI use for students, develop activities and classroom policies that promote digital citizenship and academic integrity, and contribute to a culture of innovation and continuous professional learning within BCPS-OLP. The success of this initiative will be evaluated through teacher self-assessments, participation feedback, evidence of implementation such as lesson examples or student guidelines, and follow-up surveys measuring both teacher and student engagement with AI tools.

Institutional Alignment

This professional development proposal directly supports BCPS's mission to provide equitable, rigorous, and innovative learning environments that prepare students for success in a globally competitive society. It aligns with district priorities by advancing technology integration, fostering digital equity, and developing 21st-century skills for both students and educators. Through intentional and ongoing professional learning, BCPS-OLP will reinforce its role as a model for safe, ethical, and effective technology use in online and hybrid educational settings.

Anticipated Benefits

Teachers will benefit from enhanced digital literacy, increased confidence in emerging technologies, and access to practical strategies for guiding student behavior and AI use. Students will gain a stronger understanding of AI ethics, experience higher engagement, and develop

readiness for academic and career environments where AI is increasingly integrated. For the institution, the initiative will promote consistency in technology practices, strengthen alignment with district goals, and enhance stakeholder trust in the integrity and innovation of online learning.

Institution Background

Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) Online Learning Program is a fully virtual program serving students in grades 5–12 across Baltimore County, Maryland. As the district's only fully online school, the program provides equitable access to rigorous, standards-aligned instruction for approximately 800 students drawn from diverse geographic regions, racial backgrounds, and socioeconomic levels. BCPS is one of the largest school systems in Maryland, serving over 111,000 students across more than 175 schools and programs, according to the Maryland Report Card on Education. The Online Learning Program embodies BCPS's mission to provide a rigorous and comprehensive education that develops lifelong learners who will thrive in a globally competitive society. The program plays a vital role in extending educational opportunities to students who benefit from flexible, technology-driven, and individualized learning environments.

Staff Profile

The Online Learning Program employs approximately 40 educators, including core content teachers, special educators, and specialists in areas such as art, physical education, and

world languages. The teaching staff reflects a wide range of experience levels, from new educators to veteran teachers with over 20 years in the field. While all teachers are highly qualified in their content areas, their comfort levels and experience with emerging technologies vary widely. Administrators and teacher leaders have identified a need for ongoing, targeted professional learning to help teachers adapt instructional strategies to an AI-rich digital landscape. Although current professional development offerings through BCPS Employee Training and Development focus on instructional design, digital tools, and classroom management, they lack specific guidance on the pedagogical and ethical integration of AI tools in virtual settings.

Student Demographics

The Online Learning Program serves a highly diverse student body reflective of the county's overall demographics. Students represent a broad mix of racial, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds, with many families selecting the program for its flexibility, smaller learning environment, or as an alternative to traditional in-person schooling. The population includes students receiving special education services, English learners, and gifted students, highlighting the program's commitment to inclusive and differentiated instruction. Given the fully online format, digital access and literacy are critical for success. While BCPS provides devices and internet access support, disparities in home environments and students' self-management skills continue to influence engagement and academic performance. As part of the professional development implementation, baseline demographic and engagement data will be collected to tailor support and evaluate impact more precisely.

Current Practices and Challenges

Instruction in the Online Learning Program is delivered through both synchronous and asynchronous modalities using BCPS-approved digital platforms. Teachers integrate tools such as Schoology, Google Workspace, and interactive applications including Kahoot and Desmos to enhance engagement and support formative assessment. Staff report varying levels of confidence in navigating emerging technologies, particularly those powered by AI. One challenge is the inappropriate use of AI tools by students, including plagiarism, overreliance on generative text tools, and ethical misuse of digital content. Many teachers are unsure how to address these behaviors constructively or model appropriate AI use within instruction. Without a formal district-wide AI policy or guidance framework, teachers lack consistent expectations and best practices for managing this dimension of academic integrity, underscoring the need for structured professional learning focused on responsible AI integration and digital citizenship in online classrooms.

Contextual Rationale for the Facilitation Plan

Given the Online Learning Program's diverse student population, reliance on digital tools, and lack of systemic AI guidance, there is a clear need for professional development focused on AI literacy, ethical practice, and instructional application. By equipping teachers to model responsible AI use, this facilitation plan supports BCPS's priorities in digital innovation, academic excellence, and equitable access. This will help to move teachers from uncertainty into empowerment and prepare educators to lead with confidence in an AI-driven world.

Learning Facilitation Needs

To ensure that the facilitation plan effectively addresses the authentic needs of staff within the BCPS Online Learning Program, an informal needs assessment was conducted using multiple qualitative methods. Initial data collection included interviews and conversations with a selected group of teachers across content areas to gauge their familiarity, attitudes, and comfort levels with AI tools. In addition, the Instructional Leadership Team provided feedback based on observations of teacher practice and student work samples, highlighting both effective and inappropriate uses of AI.

A review of existing BCPS professional development offerings revealed that while digital learning and technology integration are well supported, specific training on AI integration, ethical considerations, and instructional applications is lacking. Anecdotal data collected from teachers further indicated inconsistent approaches to addressing student misuse of AI tools, such as plagiarism through generative text, and uncertainty about how to model appropriate use in their own classrooms. Together, these sources of feedback revealed both a skills gap and a mindset gap surrounding AI in online instruction.

Identified Needs

The needs assessment highlighted several central learning requirements for improving teaching and learning in the online program. First, teachers require foundational AI literacy and awareness, including an understanding of what AI is, how it functions, and how it is shaping educational practice, with attention to both instructional potential and ethical implications.

Second, staff need practical, discipline-agnostic strategies for instructional integration, including

lesson design, differentiation, formative assessment, and feedback, while maintaining academic integrity. Third, teachers need guidance on ethical use and digital citizenship, developing confidence in supporting students to discern appropriate versus inappropriate AI use, addressing issues such as plagiarism, data privacy, and critical evaluation of AI-generated content. Finally, professional learning pathways must be differentiated, accommodating a wide range of teacher experience to meet staff where they are.

Priority Areas

The priority areas for professional development focus on two critical objectives: building teacher capacity in AI literacy and ethical integration and cultivating a professional culture that normalizes the exploration and modeling of AI tools for students. These areas were prioritized because they directly support BCPS's mission to prepare students for a technology-rich, globally competitive world, address immediate instructional challenges within the Online Learning Program, such as student misuse of AI tools, and foster long-term teacher efficacy aligned with future district policies and technology goals.

Contribution to Plan Objectives

By addressing the identified needs, the facilitation plan establishes a common baseline of AI understanding across staff, promotes responsible, student-centered use of AI through teacher modeling and classroom application, and creates an iterative feedback loop in which teachers learn, apply, reflect, and share strategies for continuous professional growth. Moreover, the plan strengthens equity and access, ensuring that all students benefit from well-informed, ethical use of digital technologies, regardless of their background or content area.

Barriers and Strategies for Overcoming Them

Several potential barriers to successful implementation were identified, including resistance or fear of AI, varying levels of staff experience, time and workload constraints, and the absence of clear district policy regarding AI use. To address resistance or fear, Phase 1 of the professional development plan will build buy-in through exposure to research, examples of effective practice, and low-risk exploration activities. To accommodate varied experience levels, Phase 2 will be differentiated into beginner, intermediate, and advanced pathways, ensuring that learning is personalized and relevant. To mitigate time and workload challenges, “try-it-out” classroom activities will be integrated between Phases 2 and 3, aligned with existing lessons to minimize additional demands. Finally, in the absence of formal BCPS AI guidelines, the PD series will facilitate the development of shared norms and guiding principles that can inform future district-level policies.

Summary of Identified Learning Needs

The following table summarizes the key learning needs identified through teacher interviews, leadership feedback, and analysis of current instructional practices within the BCPS Online Learning Program. Each need is directly connected to evidence from the needs assessment and aligned with the professional development phases outlined in this plan. By addressing these targeted areas through differentiated, collaborative learning experiences, the PD series aims to build teacher confidence, promote ethical and effective use of AI, and strengthen instructional practices across all content areas.

Identified Need	Evidence/Findings	PD Response (Action Steps)	Anticipated Outcomes
1. AI Literacy and Awareness	Teacher interviews revealed uncertainty about what AI is, how it works, and its implications for teaching and learning.	Phase 1: Pros and Cons of AI — Provide research-based background, explore current uses in education, discuss ethical considerations.	Teachers gain foundational understanding of AI and confidence to engage with it critically.
2. Instructional Integration and Pedagogical Application	Teachers expressed a need for examples of how AI can be integrated across content areas for planning, assessment, and differentiation.	Phase 2: AI in the Classroom — Explore classroom-ready AI tools and strategies; model applications in various content areas.	Teachers use AI to enhance instruction and student engagement while maintaining academic integrity.
3. Ethical Use and Digital Citizenship	Student misuse of AI (plagiarism, uncredited work) reported by multiple teachers; no consistent guidance available.	Embed discussion and creation of AI use norms ; model strategies for teaching responsible use	Teachers establish and model ethical AI practices, fostering digital citizenship among students
4. Collaborative Practice and Peer Modeling	Teachers want to see practical examples from peers who use AI effectively.	Phase 3: Practice and Implementation Teachers share lesson examples, student feedback, and reflections with colleagues.	Builds a community of practices where teachers learn from each other and sustain growth.
5. Differentiated Professional Learning Pathways	Wide variance in teacher familiarity— from avoidance to regular use of AI tools	Differentiate PD activities by readiness level (Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced) after Phase 1.	All teachers experience meaningful, relevant learning aligned with their comfort level.
6. Lack of Clear District Policy and Guidance	BCPS currently lacks a formal AI policy or standardized expectations for AI use.	Use PD discussions to draft shared norms that can inform future district-level policies.	School develops internal consistency and contributes to broader district planning efforts.

Literature Support

Recent research on AI in education addresses both the potential and the ethical complexities of integrating AI into teaching and learning. Al-Zahrani (2024) explores the growing influence of AI in education while cautioning against overreliance and emphasizing the need for teacher awareness of its limitations and biases. Similarly, Luckin et al. (2016) argue that AI should serve as a tool to enhance and not replace human instruction. This research highlights the importance of developing educators' capacity to guide students in critical and responsible AI use. These perspectives align directly with the facilitation plan's emphasis on teacher empowerment, ethical literacy, and the thoughtful integration of AI into instructional practice.

Contemporary studies further show how AI is already shaping online and hybrid learning environments. McGehee (2024) reports increasing student use of AI tools for academic support, noting both opportunities for personalization and concerns regarding academic integrity. The U.S. Department of Education (2023) also addresses these themes, calling for intentional professional development that helps educators model ethical AI use, ensure data privacy, and promote digital citizenship.

This research reinforces the core objectives of the BCPS Online Learning Program's professional development initiative. The research validates the plan's focus on building AI literacy among teachers, providing ethical and pedagogical guidance, and cultivating a culture of reflective, responsible innovation. By grounding professional learning in these evidence-based insights, the facilitation plan positions educators to navigate AI confidently and to model the critical, ethical use of technology that today's learners need for future success.

Planned Use of Multi-Year Technology Facilitation

This multi-year facilitation plan outlines a sustained approach to technology integration in instruction, assessment, and professional learning. Over a three-year period, the focus will evolve from foundational awareness to advanced, embedded practice emphasizing AI literacy, digital assessment redesign, and data-informed instruction.

- **Year 1 – Foundation and Familiarization:** Establish baseline technology and AI literacy across staff. Teachers participate in Phase 1 and 2 of the facilitation series to build confidence using instructional technologies (e.g., Kahoot, Desmos, and AI-assisted feedback tools) and to address immediate classroom applications.
- **Year 2 – Implementation and Innovation:** Expand integration through collaborative lesson redesigns, peer modeling, and pilot studies of emerging technologies. Teachers will implement formative assessment practices enhanced by AI feedback, participate in action research cycles, and contribute to shared digital lesson repositories.
- **Year 3 – Evaluation and Institutionalization:** Evaluate technology impact through student achievement data, teacher reflection, and digital engagement analytics. Refine policies around ethical AI use and integrate successful practices into standard operating procedures and onboarding for new staff.

The plan supports iterative implementation: teachers continuously refine technology integration through feedback, peer collaboration, and targeted coaching. A cross-disciplinary Technology Leadership Team will oversee alignment with district strategic goals and ensure coherence with curriculum frameworks and equity initiatives.

Professional Development Strategy

Professional development will remain the primary driver of technology adoption and pedagogical innovation within the BCPS Online Learning Program. Guided by Desimone's framework for effective professional development, the program ensures that learning opportunities are content-specific, sustained, collaborative, and job-embedded. The facilitation plan begins with foundational workshops in which all educators engage in training focused on digital tools, AI ethics, and technology-enhanced formative assessment. These initial sessions establish a baseline of knowledge and provide a shared understanding of ethical and effective technology use in the virtual classroom.

Ongoing coaching and microlearning opportunities supplement these workshops, offering classroom-based support, short modular learning sessions, and peer-led practice groups. This approach allows teachers to apply strategies incrementally, receive immediate feedback, and refine their instructional techniques in real time. Additionally, collaborative learning communities, including Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), will convene quarterly to share lesson exemplars, evaluate outcomes, and mentor colleagues. This structure promotes reflective practice, fosters peer modeling, and reinforces a culture of continuous improvement. Over time, educators will have opportunities to earn professional development credit in areas such as AI literacy, digital assessment, and instructional design, creating certification pathways that incentivize ongoing skill development.

Infrastructure and Resources

Technical support will be made readily available through on-demand assistance, training for support staff, and clearly defined troubleshooting protocols, minimizing disruptions to teaching and learning. All infrastructure and resource allocations will be reviewed annually to ensure compliance with data privacy standards, accessibility requirements, and fiscal sustainability. By providing equitable access to both technology and ongoing support, the program reinforces the instructional goals of the BCPS Online Learning Program while promoting responsible and innovative use of AI and other digital tools.

Sustainability and Scalability

The long-term sustainability of the BCPS Online Learning Program's professional development relies on three key practices. Annual evaluations, including teacher feedback, student data, and focus groups, will drive continuous improvement through ongoing refinement of content, strategies, and technology use. Leadership capacity will be expanded through mentoring and academies that cultivate instructional and technology leaders, embedding expertise across the program. Finally, annual environmental scans by the Technology Leadership Team will guide adaptive planning, ensuring agility and relevance in an evolving digital landscape. Scalability will be achieved through the development of open-access professional development materials, recorded workshops, and the integration of technology modules into induction programs for new teachers. Over time, successful AI and technology initiatives piloted within the BCPS Online Learning Program will be expanded to additional grade levels or schools, guided by standardized templates, policy recommendations, and district partnerships.

Learning Facilitation Plan Standards Alignment

Standards Overview

This facilitation plan is grounded in ISTE Standards for Coaches, specifically Standard 4.1, Change Agent, and Standard 4.5, Professional Learning Facilitator. These standards emphasize the essential role of instructional coaches and leaders in empowering educators to use technology effectively to enhance teaching and learning. They also highlight the responsibility of coaches to lead systemic change through intentional, sustained professional development that promotes innovation, equity, and continuous improvement. The table below breaks down the ISTE standard and the connection to the Learning Facilitation Plan.

Alignment with Standards

ISTE Standard	Facilitation Plan Component	Evidence of Alignment / Implementation Examples
4.1a: Inspire educators and leaders to use technology to create equitable and transformative learning experiences.	<i>Phase 1: Pros and Cons of AI: Introduces AI's potential to promote equity and access through adaptive learning tools.</i>	Teachers explore AI's role in supporting diverse learners and mitigating bias through equitable technology use discussions.
4.1b: Advocate for equitable access to technology and learning opportunities.	<i>Infrastructure and Resource Planning (Multi-Year Technology Facilitation)</i>	Ensures 1:1 device access, integration of accessibility tools, and professional learning for equitable tech use.
4.1c: Model innovative uses of technology for professional practice.	<i>Phase 2: AI in the Classroom: Facilitators demonstrate real classroom examples using AI tools for assessment and differentiation.</i>	Teachers experience AI tools firsthand in modeled lessons and collaborative exploration sessions.

4.1d: Develop capacity for systemic improvement and change.	<i>Phase 3: Practice and Implementation:</i> Teachers pilot and share AI-integrated lessons, refining practices through feedback loops.	Builds a community of practice to sustain innovation and leadership across departments.
4.5a: Design professional learning based on adult learning principles and active engagement.	<i>PD Series Design:</i> Blended model incorporating hands-on application, collaboration, and reflection.	Participants engage in active, inquiry-based sessions tailored to readiness levels.
4.5b: Build the capacity of educators to use technology effectively.	<i>Differentiated PD Pathways</i> following Phase 1 readiness survey.	Targeted support ensures teachers progress from awareness to integration at their own pace.
4.5c: Evaluate the impact of professional learning on educator practice.	<i>Evaluation Framework:</i> Surveys, feedback sessions, and classroom implementation reflections between phases.	Data informs future PD cycles and supports continuous improvement.

Closure

This facilitation plan positions the BCPS Online Learning Program as a leader in ethical, innovative, and effective technology integration. By focusing on AI literacy, responsible use, and instructional application, the professional development initiative empowers teachers to model best practices that prepare students for success in a technology-driven world. Through sustained coaching, collaboration, and reflection, educators will build the capacity to guide students in using AI critically and ethically while strengthening academic integrity and engagement. Ultimately, this plan supports the district’s mission to promote equity, innovation, and excellence in digital learning which will transform uncertainty about AI into a shared vision of confident, informed, and future-ready teaching.

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