



Education | Healthcare | Public Services

# NATIONAL ACADEMY FOR AI INSTRUCTION

---

## THE AI ACADEMY BRIEF MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

---



March 2026 · Issue #1

*Insights, educator voices, and practical ideas from the National Academy for AI Instruction.*

---

# What's Inside

**3**

## **Opening Message & Where We Stand**

The Academy's perspective on AI in education and the principles that guide our work.

**4**

## **Rob's Reflections**

Thoughts from Rob Weil on the evolving role of AI in teaching and learning.

**5**

## **Voices from the Academy**

Educators share how the learning has carried into their classrooms.

**6**

## **Academy Highlights**

Moments from Academy sessions and events.

**7-8**

## **Upcoming Sessions**

Opportunities to join upcoming Academy professional learning.

**9**

## **Cranston Coaches Corner**

A look inside Pete Guyon's newsletter, featuring AI updates, educator resources, and practical tools.

---

## Opening Message

Artificial intelligence is no longer a future question in education. It is already here, shaping lesson planning, influencing student work, informing district policies, and entering the day-to-day choices educators are required to make.

Too often, the conversation is framed as a choice: adopt AI or ban it. Teaching and learning haven't ever worked that way. Great instruction depends on nuance, guided by professional judgment, experience, and context. The real question is not whether AI will be present in schools, but who will decide how it is used. As with all changes, this moment calls for educators' expertise to shape thoughtful decisions, not quick conclusions or one-size-fits-all solutions.

This newsletter is dedicated to supporting that work. Each month, we will focus on the practical decisions educators face, share examples from classrooms and districts, and highlight how teachers can lead the responsible use of AI in ways that protect students, strengthen instruction, and sustain the profession.



## Where we Stand

A recent RAND survey on AI in K-12 schools (AI Use in Schools Is Quickly Increasing but Guidance Lags Behind: Findings from the RAND Survey Panels | RAND) found that while AI use is growing fast, schools are struggling to keep up. Teachers aren't getting enough training, students aren't being taught how to use AI responsibly, and clear school or district policies just aren't there yet.

If you have been around schools for a while, educators not getting the training they need for new initiatives isn't new. That's been happening for years. But AI is different. The speed, the scale, and the impact on teaching and learning are unlike anything we've seen before. The usual "one workshop and you're good" approach to professional development just isn't going to cut it.

That's why the National Academy for AI Instruction was created. It's built on a simple but powerful idea: educators need to have a real voice in how AI shows up in their classrooms. The Academy focuses on helping educators use AI tools in ways that are safe, smart, and practical. Every session starts with AFT's Commonsense Guardrails for Using Advanced Technology in Schools (Commonsense\_Guardrails\_AI\_0604.pdf), so the conversation begins with responsibility and clarity, not hype.

The Academy also puts a strong emphasis on AI tools that support educators directly. The goal is simple, make sure educators stay in the driver's seat of their profession, not sidelined by new technology.

If you care about shaping the future of teaching and learning instead of having it shaped for you, the Academy is the place to start. Join us and help shape the change.

---

# Rob's Reflections

## **Black, White, and Gray**

In a world where we may want issues to be black or white, many live in the gray. Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education is no exception. Despite clickbait headlines that paint AI as something schools should either adopt completely or ban entirely. The reality is much more complicated – an even smokier shade of gray.

First is the phase itself, “AI in education.” What does that really mean? As we know at the National Academy for AI Instruction (the Academy), teacher use of AI is fundamentally different than student use or administrative use. And although we want to have simple and clean policies in schools, each use of AI requires its own exploration, research, development, and implementation.

Since the beginnings of the Academy in 2024, when AFT partnered with Microsoft for a two-day event to train and empower educators on practical use of AI in the classroom, we understood the complex nature of these tools and their role in each aspect of education. And in many ways, what was uncertain then remains just as uncertain today. But living in the gray does not mean we wait for a change. It means we must proceed thoughtfully, with caution, and with healthy skepticism with our eyes wide open.

At the Academy, we take privacy, safety, and appropriate use of AI very seriously. Every session starts with an overview of these fundamentals. We also focus our trainings on educator-facing use of AI and strongly caution about student-facing use. The Academy has always been against unsupervised use of AI by young people. Recent research aligns with our hard stance against AI companion chatbots.

And we stand at the forefront of addressing all the other legitimate concerns people have about AI.

Artificial Intelligence has a long history, but it is now firmly embedded in many aspects of our world. That makes the role of AI in education an issue for everyone, and it is not something that will ever be black or white in our lifetimes. So, be ready for all the pros and cons for the foreseeable future. Welcome to a part of the world that is stunningly gray.

— Rob Weil, Chief Executive Officer of the National Academy for AI Instruction

---

# Voices from the Academy

*Educators from JHS 125 in District 25 (Queens) participated in an AI Academy session and reflected on the ways the learning carried into their classrooms. Here's what they had to say.*

“The AI Academy was incredibly helpful, especially in streamlining lesson planning and creating modified texts for my newcomer English learners. Exploring tools like Gemini, Notebook LM, Suno, Copilot, and ChatGPT’s advanced features has already improved student engagement and my instructional decisions. The session also strengthened my understanding of safe and ethical AI use through AFT’s Common Sense Guardrails.”



— Jessica Tran, 8th grade ENL teacher

---

“Before the Academy, I had played around with AI tools, but I wasn’t using them with real purpose in my classroom. One thing I really appreciated right away was that the guardrails were acknowledged. As teachers, stepping into new and sometimes uncharted technology can feel overwhelming, and it was reassuring that the Academy addressed those real concerns head-on.

What I valued most was the focus on how AI can support our everyday practices while still honoring our professional autonomy. The sessions emphasized that AI is not meant to replace our skills, but to build on our strengths as educators. I’ve started thinking more intentionally about how to use it to enhance planning, differentiate for students, and streamline tasks—while still keeping my voice, expertise, and decision-making at the center of my classroom.”

— Nicole Brisotti, UFT Teacher Center Site Coach — Special Education/ELA

---

# Academy Highlights

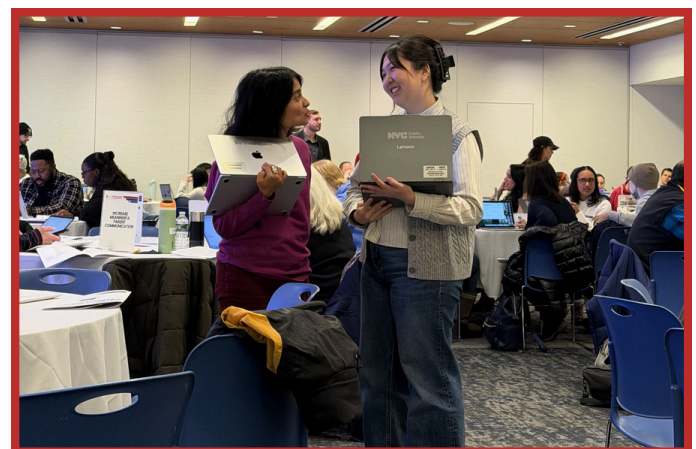


CSI Leadership Institute 2026  
Harnessing AI to Empower Educators and Enrich Learning  
January 22-24, 2026



Transforming Teaching and Planning: Clarity and Confidence in the Age of AI  
October 22-23, 2025

November 17-18, 2025



Agents in Action: Building Classroom Partners with AI  
January 29, 2026

---

# Upcoming Sessions

The Academy offers both in-person and virtual sessions so educators can participate in the way that works best for them. We offer beginner and more advanced courses, so no matter your experience with AI, there is a training designed for you. Each session focuses on practical strategies you can apply right away.



[aiinstruction.org](https://aiinstruction.org)

## **In-Person:**

### **3/30/26- EMPOWERING EVERY LEARNER: AI IN ACTION FOR DIVERSE CLASSROOMS**

Learn how AI can increase access to grade-level content for multilingual learners and students with disabilities through scaffolds, adapted materials, and visual supports — all while protecting student data.

### **5/21/26- CRITICAL THINKING IN THE AGE OF AI**

Discover how to strengthen critical thinking in the age of AI by questioning claims, evaluating sources, and refining prompts — helping educators model responsible AI use in the classroom.

### **6/11/26- UNLOCKING POTENTIAL: AI-POWERED ASSESSMENT FOR MEANINGFUL PROGRESS IN-PERSON SESSION**

Explore how to use AI to support formative assessment and provide timely, meaningful feedback — helping educators identify misconceptions and guide next instructional steps.

---

# Upcoming Sessions

## Virtual:

### **4/23/26 & 6/16/2026- CRITICAL THINKING IN THE AGE OF AI**

Discover how to strengthen critical thinking in the age of AI by questioning claims, evaluating sources, and refining prompts — helping educators model responsible AI use in the classroom.

### **4/27/26 & 6/30/26- SMART SUPPORTS: USING AI TO SCAFFOLD AND DIFFERENTIATE FOR ENGLISH LEARNERS**

Learn how to use AI to differentiate instruction and scaffold grade-level content for English Learners — supporting language development and equitable access across proficiency levels.

### **5/11/26- UNLOCKING POTENTIAL: AI-POWERED ASSESSMENT FOR MEANINGFUL PROGRESS**

Explore how to use AI to support formative assessment and provide timely, meaningful feedback — helping educators identify misconceptions and guide next instructional steps.

### **5/26/26- AI FOR EDUCATORS: A FOUNDATIONAL GUIDE**

Learn practical ways to use AI to streamline planning, spark creativity, and support instruction — while keeping teacher voice, safety, and responsible use at the center.

### **6/23/26- AGENTS IN ACTION: BUILDING CLASSROOM PARTNERS WITH AI**

Discover how to design custom classroom AI agents that support planning, feedback, and instruction — while prioritizing safety, privacy, and teacher control.

*MORE IN-PERSON AND VIRTUAL SESSIONS ARE COMING SOON. ON-DEMAND SESSIONS CAN ALSO BE FOUND HERE, ALONG WITH A WEALTH OF OTHER FREE AI RESOURCES: [WWW.SHAREMYLESSON.COM/NAAIL](http://WWW.SHAREMYLESSON.COM/NAAIL). TO REGISTER OR VISIT THE AI ACADEMY WEBSITE, SCAN THE QR CODE ABOVE. THE NATIONAL ACADEMY FOR AI INSTRUCTION COURSES ARE ELIGIBLE FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDIT AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT POINTS.*

---

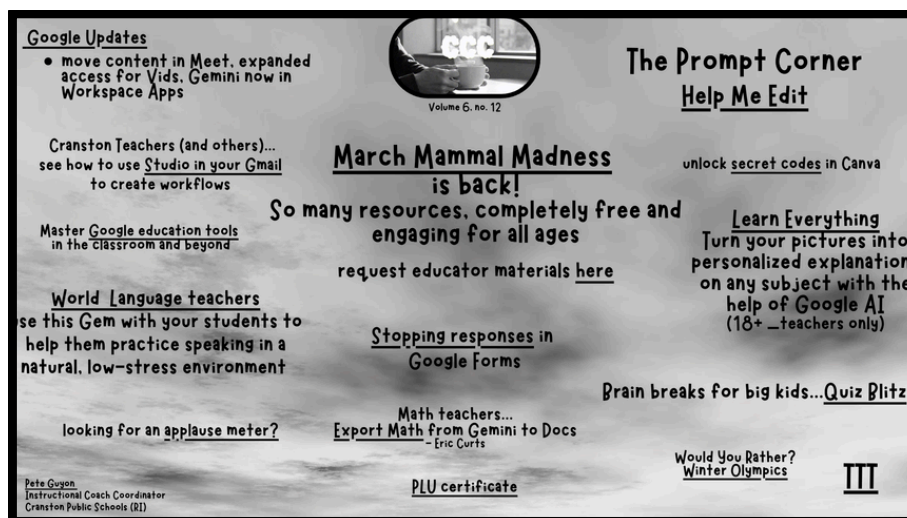
Each issue, we spotlight one practical AI tool, explain what it does, and show how educators can use it responsibly. This month:

## Your New AI Instructional Partners

Microsoft's Copilot, Open AI's ChatGPT, and Google's Gemini allow you to create custom versions that you can program with specific instructions to perform specific tasks. They are called either Agents, custom GPTs or Gems and for educators, they serve as specialized assistants for lesson planning, differentiation, assessment and much, much more. Instead of writing a long prompt every time, you can open a dedicated "Instructional Partner" that already knows its role based on your directions. Learn how [here](#).

## Cranston Coaches Corner (CCC) Ideas You Can Actually Use

Pete Guyon is the Instructional Coach Coordinator for Cranston Public Schools (RI), where he leads district efforts in blended and personalized learning and artificial intelligence. As a national trainer for the AI academy, he supports educators nationally in integrating innovative practices into teaching and learning through his Cranston Coaches Corner (CCC) newsletter. Subscribers receive updates on AI implementation, effective prompting examples, technology tips, Google updates, and more, along with a professional learning certificate. It's completely free - to sign up, [click here](#).



**NATIONAL ACADEMY  
FOR AI INSTRUCTION**