

CHANGE MANAGEMENT FOR EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY

**A Practical Guide
for District Leaders**

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BLASCHKE REPORT

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Change Management for Education Technology: A Practical Guide for District Leaders

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Why Change Management?

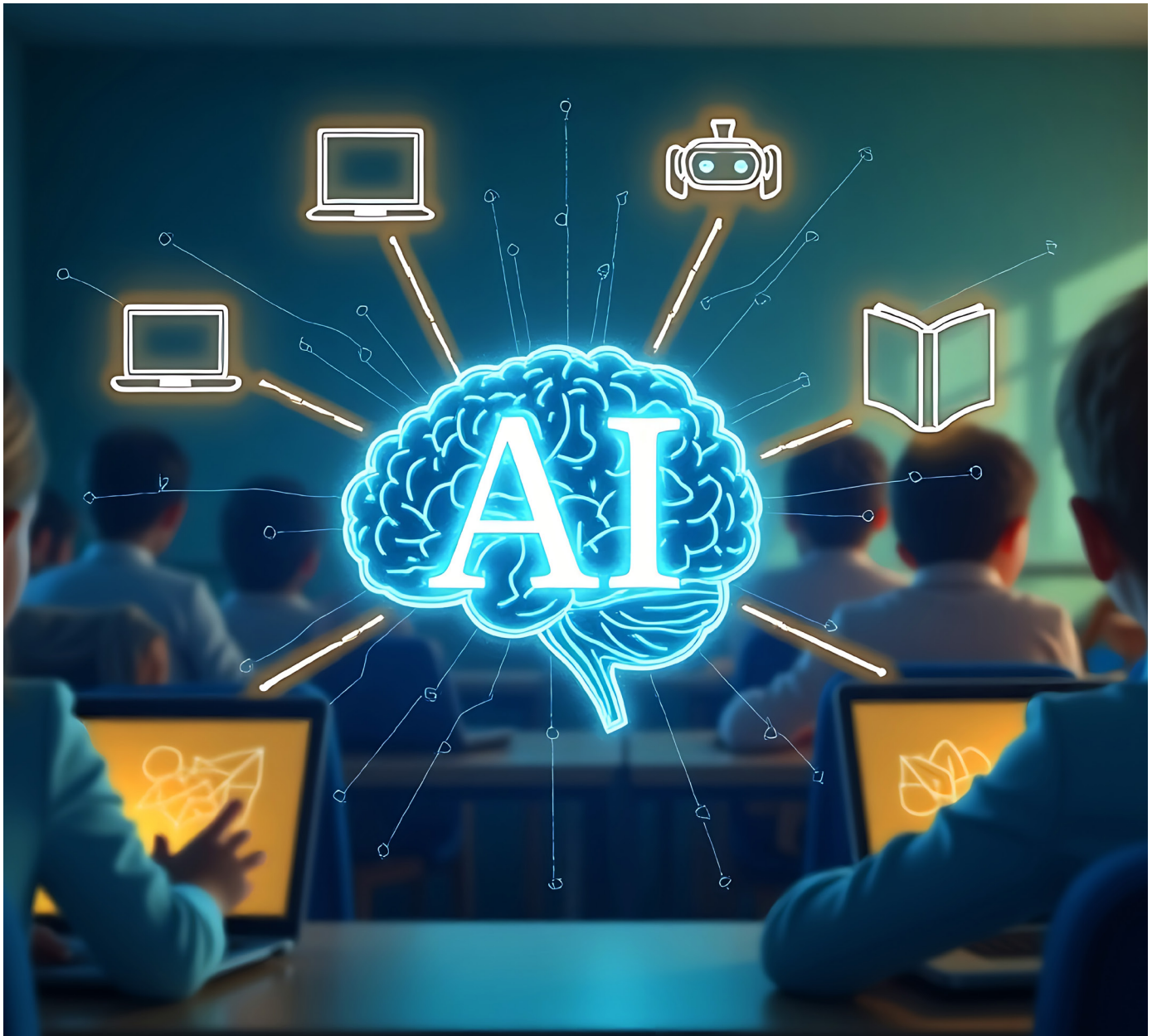
The Technology change in K-12 education is rarely only a technology problem. CoSN's *Driving K-12 Innovation 2026* report identified Building the Human Capacity of Leaders as a leading accelerator, trend, or catalyst driving the push for innovation for the fifth consecutive year (8). This capacity is developed through professional learning, coaching, and leadership pathways that prepare educators and staff to develop new skills, experiment responsibly, and respond to emerging technologies. The report also emphasized that "leadership capacity is inseparable from the readiness of staff to use emerging technologies ethically and pedagogically" (CoSN, 20). Districts therefore need leaders who can do more than understand emerging tech; they must be able to communicate the shared purpose and provide key stakeholders with the preparation and support needed to adopt new practices.

This report aims to help school officials, including superintendents, chief technology officers (CTOs), chief information officers (CIOs), principals, school board members, and other stakeholders, navigate the change process involved in adopting new technology. By explaining the change management process and offering practical strategies with district examples, CoSN can help leaders build school cultures that give equal attention to the technical and human sides of technology adoption. The report also positions CoSN as a national leader in effective K-12 edtech change leadership at a time when a clear vision is urgently needed.

The Rapidly Increasing Need for Change Management

The pace and stakes of technological change within schools have only accelerated with the emergence of generative artificial intelligence (AI) applications. RAND research found that the share of K-12 teachers using generative AI for instructional planning or teaching more than doubled, from 25% in the 2023-2024 school year to 53% in the 2024-2025 school year (Berne et al.). In a separate RAND survey, the percentage of districts reporting that they had provided teachers with AI training increased from 23% in fall 2023 to 48% in fall 2024 (Diliberti et al.). Nevertheless, comprehensive policy has not kept pace with adoption and training. A 2026 Gallup study revealed that while many educators rely on informal guidance, such as verbal conversations or shared workplace norms, only 18% of teachers had received formal AI guidance in the form of written, official policies (Ash and Senseman).

As AI's presence in education grows with each passing school year, district leaders must adopt a robust change management framework. Approaching each initiative without an established change management practice carries significant financial, operational, and cultural costs. Poorly managed change has the potential to waste the limited funding on misused technology, increase workload and frustration, and weaken the trust between leadership and the educational community. A consistent framework prepares stakeholders, addresses risks, and ensures that technology investments produce lasting value.



Executive Summary

The Challenge

Frequently, technology implementation in K-12 education is not hampered by the technology itself. A district can successfully purchase, configure, and launch a system yet still struggle because the people expected to use it do not understand its purpose, do not support the decision, lack the necessary knowledge, or do not receive sufficient assistance. Change management addresses this human side of implementation by preparing and supporting stakeholders as they adopt and sustain new technologies, policies, and practices. It should begin alongside project management and continue after technical implementation is complete.

The ADKAR Framework

This report uses the ADKAR model, a technique originally developed by the change management firm Prosci, to organize the change process around five outcomes:

Awareness: Stakeholders understand why the change is necessary.

Desire: Stakeholders choose to participate in and support the change.

Knowledge: Stakeholders learn what they need to know and perform.

Ability: Stakeholders can apply that knowledge in actual working conditions.

Reinforcement: Continued feedback, support, and monitoring sustain the change.

Districts should begin ADKAR by determining whether a genuine need exists, establishing baseline data, assessing readiness, identifying affected stakeholders, involving technology leaders, and assigning responsibility. Completing ADKAR should then establish a new organizational baseline to inform and guide future initiatives.

What District Leaders Should Do

1. Integrate change management with project management so the human and technical sides of implementation are planned together.

2. Hire dedicated change managers when possible or assign qualified employees and give them sufficient time, training, and authority to perform the role.

- 3. Establish a network of change champions** who can represent different groups of impacted stakeholders, communicate information, and surface concerns.
- 4. Create dedicated communication channels** so stakeholders can receive updates, ask questions, provide feedback, and get support.
- 5. Utilize data to guide the change** by establishing a baseline, monitoring adoption, and adjusting implementation based on evidence.
- 6. Give end users a formal role in procurement** so that their practical needs inform product requirements, demonstrations, testing, and evaluation.
- 7. Establish a change management council** to review proposed changes, identify risks and dependencies, coordinate implementation, and preserve lessons for future initiatives.

The central message is straightforward: To achieve a successful implementation process, districts need to manage both the technical and human factors. By developing a repeatable change management practice, district leaders can reduce disruption, strengthen stakeholder trust, and increase the likelihood that new technology is accepted and sustained.



About the Blaschke Fund

CoSN (Consortium for School Networking)

CoSN is a world-class professional association at the forefront of education innovation. It supports K-12 education technology leaders by providing community, knowledge, and professional development that help cultivate engaging learning environments. CoSN represents more than 2,000 school districts serving over 14 million students, with 38 chapters across 39 states, and continues to grow nationwide.

The Blaschke Fund

The Blaschke Fund was created by CoSN in 2019 to support emerging leaders in education technology policy and advocacy. The fund honors the late Charles Blaschke, an influential member of the CoSN community and a pioneer in the education landscape with over 50 years of experience. The fund features two components: The Blaschke Fellowship and the Blaschke Internship. The Blaschke Fellowship, for which this report was written, is for graduate students in public policy and/or education, providing them with the opportunity to work part-time with CoSN on pressing national education technology issues and to provide guidance for district leaders.

The 2024 Blaschke Report, [AI and Accessibility in Education](#), explored how artificial intelligence could improve educational accessibility, particularly for students with disabilities. The 2025 report, [Screens in Balance: Education, Technology, and Community Conversations](#), examined the different forms of screen use affecting children and encouraged more productive conversations among schools, families, and policymakers. This year's report builds on the prior work by examining the process by which school districts can prepare necessary stakeholders to adopt and sustain technological change.



Methodology

This report is the product of a summer-long, qualitative approach that combines reviews of change management literature and semi-structured interviews with nine education and technology leaders across the nation. Interview participants represented small, mid-sized, and large public school districts. Eight interviews, including one joint interview, were conducted through Microsoft Teams between June 9 and Aug. 25, 2026.

Interview questions addressed why a change was necessary, how stakeholders were impacted, the rollout of communication and training, which barriers emerged, which practices proved most successful, what struggles they faced, and what advice they would offer other districts. Appendix A identifies the interview participants and the initiatives they discussed, while Appendix B lists the questions asked in varying forms across the interviews.

Interview transcripts were reviewed to identify recurring themes and practical examples. These findings were then organized, applied to the ADKAR model, and used to develop the report's recommendations. The analysis was supplemented by research and guidance from Prosci, RAND, McKinsey & Company, Capgemini Invent, Gallup, and other sources concerning organizational change, data-driven decision-making, and technology adoption.

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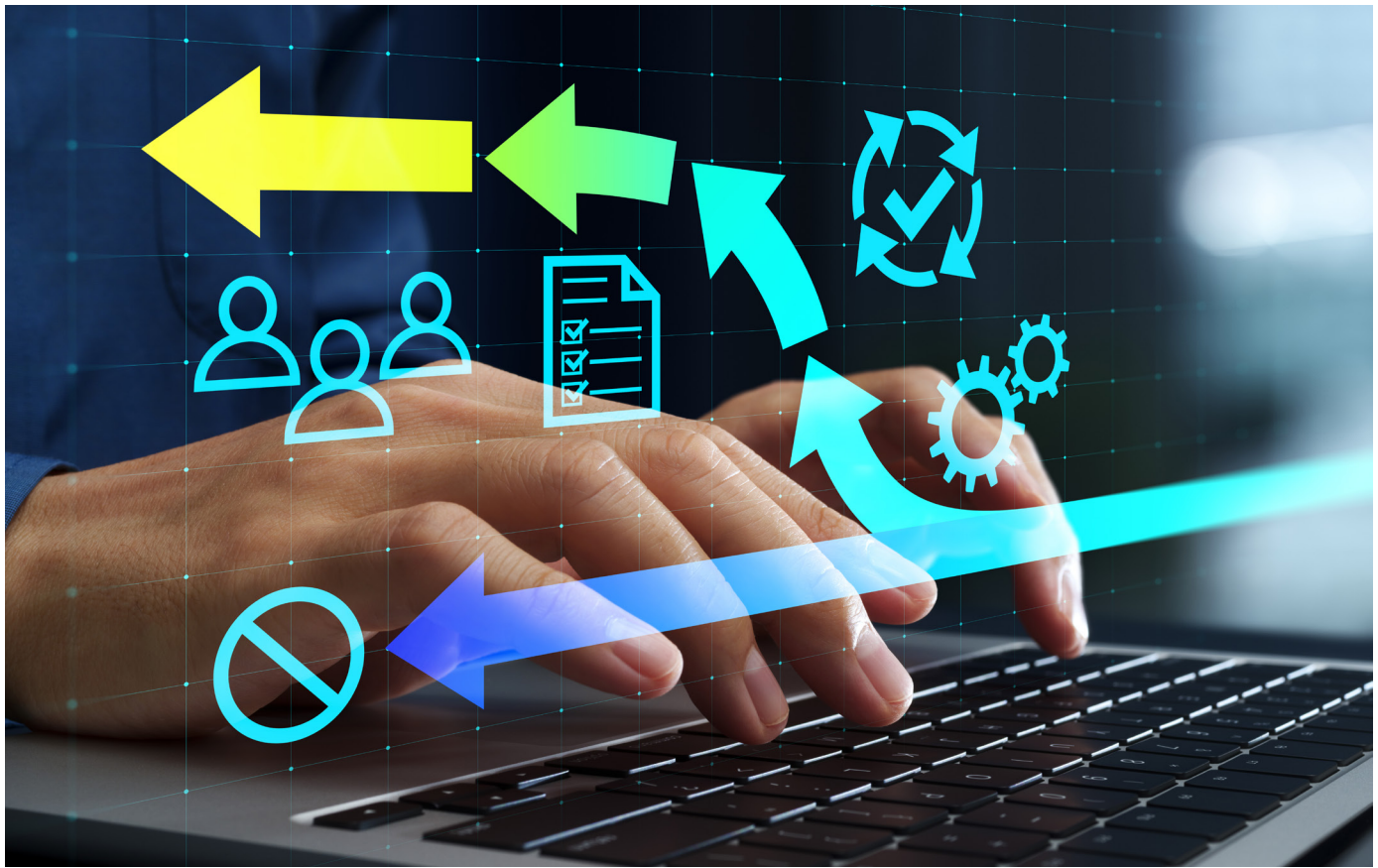
Introduction

School districts must continually adapt to evolving technologies, expectations, and challenges. These changes encompass classroom hardware, such as tablets, interactive whiteboards, laptops, and other digital displays, as well as software and infrastructure, including learning management systems (LMS) and the expanding use of artificial intelligence (AI). Their effects extend throughout the school community, shaping how educators teach, students learn, administrators manage operations, and families interact with district systems. Although technology can transform school operations and provide substantial benefits, successful implementation depends on both technical and human factors. Staff need adequate time, training, and support to prepare for and adapt to these changes through a structured process known as change management.

In K-12 schools, this process is both essential and complex. School districts are multi-layered communities that include administrators, teachers, support staff, families, students, and community partners, each of whom may experience technology changes differently. An implementation decision may appear straightforward but can have consequences that hinder individuals' ability to perform their roles. In a dynamic school environment with multiple county and federal deadlines each year, any part of this structure that does not function effectively poses a significant risk. To take advantage of innovative new technologies, K-12 schools must implement effective change management to ensure that the people who use advanced educational technology are properly prepared.

What Is Change Management? How Does it Differ From Project Management?

Change management is a structured process that helps people understand, navigate, and adopt new practices, systems, or ways of working. Initially developed for businesses and corporations navigating organizational transitions, change management is now increasingly applied within educational settings. While project management addresses the technical aspects of implementation, such as defining goals, tracking progress, assigning trainers, and managing vendor agreements, change management focuses on the people who make the change successful. It involves engaging stakeholders in decisions, addressing concerns, providing training and support, and allowing opportunities for feedback. In simple terms, project management deals with the process, while change management deals with the people.



Consider a school district that is implementing a new learning management system (LMS) for the upcoming academic term. From a project management perspective, district leaders must select a vendor, verify compliance with privacy laws (FERPA, COPPA, etc.), assign tasks, determine a budget, migrate current student data, and create an implementation timeline. Completing the steps in project management gets the technology into school environments, but it doesn't make everyone comfortable with it. As Vijay Patel noted from his experience with change management at the Boulder Valley School District in Colorado as an IT architect, even a technically successful rollout can struggle if educators, families, and support teams are not prepared to adopt new routines.

Change management addresses the people directly affected by the change. Before the selection process occurs, district leaders should speak with key stakeholders such as teachers, parents, and even students; explain why the change is needed; answer their questions; and accept any feedback. Training needs to be provided so people can be competent with whatever LMS is ultimately chosen. After launch, monitoring and support for faculty and staff using the new LMS is critical, with adjustments as needed. Change management and project management play different roles, but they are equally important in the implementation process.

“Change management is structured process that helps people understand, navigate, and adopt new practices, systems, or ways of working.”

At times, change management and project management may be at odds. When dealing with large projects, project managers may become so focused on meeting strict deadlines that they forgo training. In contrast, the change manager might want to ensure everyone is ready before moving forward. Maybe the change manager’s suggested training and additional support stretch the budget, making a project manager wary of supporting the effort. Districts need to ensure that project managers and change managers work closely together, leveraging their unique expertise to improve the prospects for the final outcome.

What Comes Before Change Management?

Before implementing new technology, programs, or policies, the first question should be whether a change is necessary. Steven Langford, chief technology officer of Beaverton School District (OR), provides a clear example of why change may be necessary. Beaverton’s ERP (enterprise resource planning) system, in place since 1999, had become increasingly difficult to maintain, secure, and upgrade due to accumulated customizations and insufficient governance. These conditions clearly indicated a need for change, as the current system could no longer reliably meet Beaverton’s operational needs.

Sarah Radcliffe, director of future-ready learning at the School District of Altoona (WI) emphasized not “chasing shiny objects” or pursuing trendy ideas that do not address a genuine need. Change management is not another trend; it is a repeatable process that helps districts determine whether a proposed change is necessary and supported by evidence. Is the current system failing or outdated? Can we still function effectively without the change? District leaders should answer these questions using a combination of quantitative evidence — such as system usage, costs, security incidents, and troubleshooting requests — and qualitative information gathered through surveys, town hall meetings, focus groups, interviews, and other observations.

The information gathered through quantitative and qualitative analysis allows leaders to understand the experiences of affected stakeholders and establish a benchmark for what the change management process should address. A 2023 Capgemini Invent study of 1,175 professionals and managers found that organizations with a high-level of data maturity (those deemed effective in organizing, collecting, managing, and using data) experienced a 27% increase in change success (Capgemini). If the evidence supports moving forward, leaders should then define the desired outcome, assess the district’s readiness, identify affected stakeholders, assign ownership, and establish measurable indicators of success.

Technology leaders, especially CIOs, should be involved at this stage of planning. Involving CIOs empowers them to apply their districtwide knowledge of how changes may affect digital infrastructure, cybersecurity, data privacy, and other aspects of technical support. Their input helps ensure that an initiative is both organizationally valuable and technically sustainable.

Districts should consider hiring external professionals to serve as change managers before initiating the formal change process. Langford described how the Beaverton school district hired professional change managers during the ERP modernization to identify knowledge gaps, communicate with employees, raise concerns, and help colleagues navigate new processes. These change managers then established a network of trusted employees from the impacted groups, whom they referred to as change champions. These change champions communicated with their colleagues, gathered feedback, and reported needs to the change managers.

Together, data-driven decision-making, a professional network of change managers, a network of internal change champions, and clearly assigned ownership provide a clearly defined foundation to ensure the change process succeeds.

The ADKAR Model

There are several models for change management, each focusing on transitioning an organization from a current state to a future state. Many change management models (McKinsey 7-S Framework, The Bridges Transition Model, The Agile Change Management Model, etc.) analyze organizations at a broad level, with little attention paid to individual stakeholders.

This report will focus on the ADKAR model because of its emphasis on individual change, its impact on organizational change, and its clear sequencing. Developed by Prosci founder Jeff Hiatt, the ADKAR model divides the change management process into five sequential blocks: Awareness, Desire, Knowledge, Ability, and Reinforcement. The ADKAR model recognizes that change succeeds only when the people affected understand the need for change, choose to participate, learn what they need to do differently, develop the ability to put the change into practice, and receive ongoing support to sustain it.

1. Awareness of the need for change
2. Desire to participate and support change
3. Knowledge of how to change
4. Ability to implement required skills and behaviors
5. Reinforcement to sustain the change

A central tenet of ADKAR is that organizational change occurs through individual change. Whatever new technology or policy the school district may approve will not become fully realized until administrators, teachers, staff, students, and other impacted parties adopt and accept the changes. When applied to K-12 technology implementation, ADKAR provides district leaders with a framework for addressing the human dimensions of change, ensuring that all involved have the resources needed to maximize progress. The following sections will explore each block of ADKAR, showing how it can help school communities adopt and sustain new technologies, with real-world examples of each step.

Desire: Choosing to Participate in the Change

Knowing change is necessary does not automatically make it desirable within the community. After that awareness is established, stakeholders must also be willing to support the change and see it through. An effective way to create buy-in for the proposed



Awareness: Why Change Is Necessary

If change is necessary, leaders must communicate that need to all stakeholders, especially those directly affected. Diane Doersch, CTO at the Green Bay Area School District during laptop adoption, emphasized that district leaders must “share the why” by explaining the problem being addressed, providing supporting evidence, connecting the initiative to district priorities, and describing what success will look like. Awareness is not simply announcing a change; it requires helping stakeholders understand why maintaining the status quo is no longer desirable or sustainable.

Gustavo Balderas, former superintendent of Beaverton, provided an example of how to explain the need for change, drawing on his experience during the ERP modernization. Although an administrative system may be less visible to the community than a new building or classroom, Balderas described the ERP as a part of the district’s operational backbone. Leaders, therefore, have to explain how modernizing it would improve efficiency, produce more reliable information, and support essential workforce functions such as payroll. Connecting the initiative to operational needs that employees recognize helps them understand why the change deserves attention and resources.

Desire: Choosing to Participate in the Change

Knowing change is necessary does not automatically make it desirable within the community. After that awareness is established, stakeholders must also be willing to support the change and see it through. An effective way to create buy-in for the proposed change is to speak with impacted stakeholders and review it with them. When discussing the transition from Google Classroom to Blackboard for elementary schools in North Allegheny School District (PA), Richard Platts, CTO during the transition, identified his meetings with teachers' unions and the eventual co-signed memorandum as key factors in Blackboard's adoption.

Ximena Núñez del Prado, director of technology and learning innovation at Colegio Franklin Delano Roosevelt in Peru, similarly described the importance of involving teachers, and even students and families, in conversations about artificial intelligence and its role within the school community. These discussions gave stakeholders the opportunity to raise concerns, consider appropriate uses, and help shape shared guidance. Because they were heard before expectations were finalized, stakeholders became active participants in the change and were more invested in its success. As Núñez del Prado explained, "This is coming from the teachers for the teachers, so the teachers love it. It's not coming from the tech director who is completely disconnected from a high school social studies class." By drawing on teachers' experience, the produced guidance was more relevant to their work while also giving them a meaningful stake in change's success.

Keeping people informed and involved in adopting new technology empowers them and gives them a stake in the successful implementation process. Radcliffe attributed strong teacher adoption of new programs in Altoona partly to involving teachers in deciding whether a tool was needed, identifying necessary features, and evaluating potential products. While the decision to participate in change is ultimately the individual's decision, staying engaged with stakeholders can influence that choice.

Practical Takeaway: Before asking people to support a change, make sure that they understand why the change needs to happen and why the status quo is no longer sustainable.



Practical Takeaway: Involve impacted stakeholders early and respond visibly to their input. Giving them a voice makes them want the initiative to succeed.

Knowledge: Learning How to Change

Once stakeholders have awareness and desire, the next step is to ensure all affected parties receive the knowledge and training needed to perform their roles successfully. Technology adoption is a long process involving dozens of stakeholders with varying degrees of technical expertise. Developing knowledge means providing ample opportunities for stakeholders to learn and ask questions along the way.

When discussing the introduction of AI guidance, Ximena Núñez del Prado emphasized that publishing the guidelines without providing training was insufficient. As part of the American School of Lima, Peru, del Prado helped lead revisitations of technology-integration frameworks such as SAMR and TPACK to consider when technology adds instructional value. The training also addressed appropriate levels of AI use, establishing guidance teachers could apply when planning classroom instruction. In Del Prado's own words, "I can write all sorts of guidelines, but if the teachers do not get the training, nothing happens."



Practical Takeaway: Provide role-training that helps stakeholders understand both what is expected and how they must apply it.

Ability: Transitioning Knowledge to Practice

Knowing what is expected of you is important, but it does not guarantee that stakeholders will fulfill their responsibilities successfully. Ability develops when people have opportunities to apply what they have learned in actual work settings. This requires practice, feedback, and coaching, as well as sufficient time to become familiar with the process.

This is also where change facilitators can identify gaps in the training process, ensuring that knowledgeable employees have the opportunity to demonstrate their learning. Platts described North Allegheny's LMS transition as extending beyond summer training: "We had... coaches that were dedicated to provide support to the teachers that needed that support throughout the year." Classroom coaches and administrators were present in schools throughout the implementation to help teachers set up and operate Blackboard while teaching in hybrid and virtual settings.

Reinforcement: Maintaining the Change

Once people understand the need for change, are motivated to embrace it, have the knowledge to implement it, and can carry it out, the change must be reinforced consistently. It is important not to implement technology, train users, and then believe that the change process ends there. Reinforcement requires districts to monitor how the change is working and address issues when they arise.

During the transition from desktops to laptops in the Green Bay Area Public School District, Doersch described how a shared Google Doc served as an ongoing channel for users to

Practical Takeaway: Support must continue beyond formal training. Allow stakeholders to prove that they can consistently perform the change.

record questions, concerns, and other laptop issues. Doesrch advised leaders to “have your ear to the ground during this time so that you can pick up on the small things that are starting to go bad or wrong, or maybe identify some gaps that you didn’t even know were there, and then you can do something about them.” This type of continuous feedback shows stakeholders that their experiences remain important and will be addressed even after implementation.

Practical Takeaway: Monitor adoption after launch and use continuing feedback, coaching, and adjustments to prevent stakeholders from returning to previous practices.



Establishing a New Baseline

Completing the ADKAR process should leave a district with more than a new technology, practice, or policy. It should establish a new baseline for the change process: a documented set of practices, expectations, responsibilities, and performance measures that represent how the district will now operate.

Janelle Reyes, Director of Technology Services, and Erin Villarreal, Director of Information Systems, explained how the Corpus Christi Independent School District (TX) established a new baseline for change management. Previously in Corpus Christi, technology requests had arrived through fragmented channels, limiting visibility into priorities, risks, dependencies, and stakeholder effects. In response, a change management council was created to review proposed changes; assess risks; coordinate schedules; and confirm that communication, testing, support, and a rollback plan were all in place. Reyes emphasized that establishing the council was only the beginning: “Consistency in change management practices is what’s going to drive the adoption of it by teams.”

Technology leaders are essential to this process because they have a deep understanding of digital infrastructure, cybersecurity, system integrations, and digital support capacity. At Corpus Christi, their involvement greatly helped the district anticipate how changes could affect technical operations. Reyes and Villarreal also explained that representatives from other departments were invited when changes affected their work.

Corpus Christi’s experience also demonstrates that districts don’t need a large dedicated budget to establish a new baseline. Reyes and Villarreal explained that the district began when it had “no budget for change management”; they also emphasized that a budget is not necessary to launch the program. Instead of purchasing software, the district used existing Microsoft 365 tools to document requests and coordinate the council’s work. Although a great deal of staff time, leadership, and consistent participation was required in the setup process, Corpus Christi was able to demonstrate the program’s value before transitioning to a dedicated enterprise platform.

Practical Takeaway: After ADKAR is complete, establish a council to oversee future changes. Ensure that council members have clear responsibilities and represent the diverse stakeholder groups that future changes will affect. A dedicated budget or specialized platform is not necessary at the outset; districts can begin with existing tools, staff time, and leadership support.





Do's for District Leaders

With an understanding of the importance of change management, and following the ADKAR model, the following recommendations are designed to create the best possible environment for change.:

1. Integrate Change Management with Project Management

In the change process, the human and technical sides are equally important and should be managed together from the beginning of the initiative. While project management focuses on tasks such as budgeting, vendor selection, data migration, and the logistical rollout of training, change management prepares stakeholders to understand, adopt, and sustain all the changes.

Don't treat change management and project management as separate efforts. Technology

adoption cannot succeed without a clear technical implementation process, but it also cannot succeed without considering people's perspectives, helping them understand and embrace the change, and giving them time to adjust.

2. If Possible, Hire Dedicated Change Managers

Change management is a specialized discipline requiring expertise in organizational readiness, communication, training, data collection, and reinforcement. For large and complex initiatives, districts should consider hiring professional change managers to coordinate the overall change management strategy. If resources do not allow for a dedicated position, districts should clearly assign these responsibilities to qualified staff and provide them with the time, training, and authority necessary to perform the role.

Don't assign change management responsibilities to an employee without providing sufficient time, training, and authority. Treating this work as an additional duty and not a full-time commitment can leave key aspects of the change process underdeveloped. If a dedicated change manager cannot be hired, the designated employee's role and capacity should be clearly established.

3. Establish a Network of Change Champions

Districts should identify trusted members of stakeholder groups affected by the change initiative to serve as change champions and representatives for their respective groups. These champions can become trusted connections within each stakeholder group, helping change managers and officials understand how they are responding and what additional support may be needed.

Don't select change champions solely based on their titles or enthusiasm for the initiative. Champions should be trusted by their colleagues, represent the various groups affected by the change, and be willing to communicate concerns and provide support. It is important to select these champions for their reputations in the community and other trusted measures.



“Districts should provide ways for stakeholders to ask questions, provide feedback, get updates, and access other pertinent information.”

4. Create Dedicated Communication Channels

Communication should be ongoing throughout the change process, not just at the beginning when making the initial announcement. Districts should provide ways for stakeholders to ask questions, provide feedback, get updates, and access other pertinent information. These channels may include, but are not limited to, shared documents, surveys, office hours, and regular meetings.

Don't rely on a single announcement or one-way communication. Stakeholders need continuing opportunities to ask questions, provide feedback, and raise concerns. The change process is a large initiative, and the people involved and/or affected cannot be left in the dark.

5. Utilize Data to Guide the Change

Establish a baseline before entering the ADKAR process by using evidence from observations, interactions, surveys, and other sources to identify pain points. Continue the data collection efforts throughout ADKAR to understand ability, adoption, and satisfaction, and use these metrics to augment the change process.

Don't collect data and then fail to use it to make decisions. Surveys, usage information, support requests, and other evidence have limited value if not used to adjust communication, training, or implementation. Districts should also not rely on one single measure to declare successful implementation.

6. Give End Users a Formal Role in Procurement

End users expected to use a new technology should have a clearly defined role in selecting it. Because these stakeholders understand their day-to-day needs best, they are often well-positioned to assess which features will most effectively support their work. Districts should formalize this participation by including end users on selection committees and giving them opportunities to evaluate all technologies under consideration.

Don't limit stakeholder involvement to announcing or explaining a product after it has already been selected. End users should have a meaningful opportunity to evaluate whether potential solutions meet their needs before committing. Consultation without a defined role in the selection process can make stakeholder engagement feel symbolic rather than substantive and may lead districts to choose tools that do not fully meet users' needs.

7. Establish a Change Management Council

A cross-functional council that can serve as a repeatable foundation for change management should be established. The council should review proposed future changes and assess the risks and organizational impact. The council's membership should include technology leaders and representatives from other departments, especially those whose work will be affected.

Don't let the council become representative of one or just a few stakeholder groups. The council will be at its best when representatives from all impacted groups have a seat and can voice their needs and concerns in a place where they are heard.





Conclusion

As technology continues to evolve, schools must practice ongoing change management to ensure essential services and instruction keep pace. Successful implementation requires more than completing a technical task list; it depends on preparing and supporting the people responsible for making change work. District leaders can ensure changes are not only implemented, but also accepted and sustained by integrating change management with project management, using a framework such as ADKAR, engaging stakeholders, communicating consistently, making data-driven decisions, involving stakeholders in technology procurement, and establishing a change management council for future initiatives.

The accompanying School District Change Management Toolkit translates these principles into action through adaptable resources, including a change readiness checklist, communication plan, and change champion guide. Together, the report and toolkit provide districts with a practical foundation for managing current initiatives and preparing for the changes ahead.

Appendix A

The following education and technology leaders were interviewed for this report. Their experiences and observations informed its discussion of change management in K–12 technology implementation. All interviews were conducted through Microsoft Teams in 2026.

Participant and affiliation	Experience discussed	Enrollment and classification	Source
Steven Langford Chief Information Officer, Beaverton School District, Oregon	ERP modernization, professional change managers, change champions, governance, and stakeholder readiness	38,000+ Large	Beaverton School District 48J
Richard Platts Director of Technology, Allegheny Intermediate Unit; formerly of North Allegheny School District, Pennsylvania	North Allegheny's transition from Google Classroom to Blackboard during hybrid and virtual instruction	8,500+ (North Allegheny) Medium	North Allegheny School District
Diane Doersch Education technology leader; formerly of Digital Promise and Green Bay Area Public School District, Wisconsin	Communicating the purpose of change, stakeholder engagement, continuous feedback, and implementation support	18,000+ (Green Bay) Large	Green Bay Area Public School District
Sarah Radcliffe Director of Future-Ready Learning, School District of Altoona, Wisconsin	Identifying genuine technology needs, involving teachers in product evaluation, and avoiding the tendency to “chase shiny objects”	1,800+ Small	Altoona School District
Vijay Patel IT Architect, Boulder Valley School District, Colorado	Integrating communication and training into technology projects, managing system transitions, and learning from implementation challenges	28,000+ Large	Boulder Valley School District No. Re2
Ximena Núñez del Prado Director of Technology and Learning Innovation, Colegio Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the American School of Lima, Peru	Continuous technological change, collaborative artificial intelligence guidance, teacher training, and communicating the value of technology to families	1,620 Small*	American School of Lima
Gustavo Balderas Superintendent, Puget Sound Educational Service District, Washington; former Superintendent, Beaverton School District, Oregon	Executive leadership, sustained communication, organizational trust, and the conditions supporting systemwide change	424,000+ across 35 districts Regional service agency	Puget Sound Educational Service District
Janelle Reyes Director of Technology Services, Corpus Christi Independent School District, Texas	Establishing a change management council, technology governance, communication, operational risk, and beginning change management without a dedicated budget	33,000+ Large	Corpus Christi Independent School District
Erin Villarreal Director of Information Systems, Corpus Christi Independent School District, Texas	Establishing a change management council, cross-departmental participation, coordinating system changes, continuous improvement, and using existing tools to begin change management	33,000+ Large	Corpus Christi Independent School District

Notes: CoSN defines Small as fewer than 2,500 students; Medium as 2,501–9,999; Large as 10,000–49,999; and Mega-Large as 50,000 or more (Consortium for School Networking). Figures reflect the latest counts or estimates available from the cited sources.

*The American School of Lima is classified descriptively using these thresholds. Puget Sound ESD is identified by its organizational type; its service area includes 35 districts serving 424,000+ public school students as of October 2025 (Puget Sound Educational Service District). Reyes and Villarreal participated in one joint interview.

Appendix B

The wording varied between conversations, but the following questions were asked in some form across the interviews conducted for this report.

- What technology or policy change was being implemented?
- Why was the change necessary?
- How were stakeholders involved?
- What resistance or concerns emerged?
- What training and support were provided?
- What worked well?
- What would you do differently?
- What advice do you have for school district leaders who are beginning the change?





Glossary

Ability: The fourth stage of ADKAR. Demonstrated when individuals can apply what they have learned and perform the behaviors required by the change in actual working conditions.

ADKAR: A sequenced change-management model developed by Jeff Hiatt, founder of the change management firm Prosci. The acronym represents Awareness, Desire, Knowledge, Ability, and Reinforcement.

Artificial Intelligence (AI): Digital systems and machines capable of performing tasks commonly associated with human intelligence, including generating content, identifying patterns, and supporting decision-making.

Awareness: The first stage of ADKAR. Involves understanding why a change is necessary and why maintaining the current practice may no longer be desirable or sustainable.

Baseline: A measurement of current conditions used as a point of comparison. A pre-change baseline identifies the conditions and problems existing before implementation, while a post-change baseline represents the practices and expectations established after the change.

Change champion: Concept created by change managers hired at Beaverton School District (OR). A trusted employee who supports change within an affected department or stakeholder group. Change champions share information, model new practices, gather feedback, and connect colleagues with change leaders.

Change management: A structured process in which people are prepared and supported as they understand, adopt, and sustain new technologies, policies, programs, processes, or ways of working.

Change management council: A cross-functional governance group that reviews proposed changes, assesses risks and organizational effects, identifies dependencies, coordinates schedules, and plans out future change initiatives.

Change manager: A professional or designated employee responsible for coordinating the “people side” of change. Responsibilities may include assessing readiness, planning communication and training, addressing resistance, collecting feedback, and monitoring adoption.

Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA): A federal law governing the online collection of personal information from children younger than the age of 13.

Desire: The second stage of ADKAR. Desire reflects an individual’s willingness to participate in and support a proposed change.

Enterprise resource planning (ERP) system: An integrated system used to manage organizational functions such as finance, procurement, payroll, human resources, and other administrative operations.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA): A federal law protecting the privacy of students’ education records.

Knowledge: The third stage of ADKAR. Includes the information, instruction, and training individuals need to understand how to perform their roles after a change.

Learning management system (LMS): A digital platform used to organize instructional materials, assignments, communication, assessments, and other learning activities.

Project management: The planning and coordination of the technical and operational work needed to produce an outcome. It includes managing scope, tasks, schedules, budgets, risks, vendors, and deliverables.

Reinforcement: The final stage of ADKAR. Includes monitoring, communication, feedback, recognition, refresher training, and continued support intended to sustain new practices.

Rollback plan: A documented procedure for returning a system or process to its previous condition if an implementation creates unexpected problems.

Stakeholder: Any person or group that affects, participates in, or is affected by a proposed change, including employees, students, families, unions, vendors, and community members.
task owner: The individual accountable for leading or completing a particular task or workstream, such as training, communication, data migration, or help-desk preparation.

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