



AI Is a Tool, Not the Toolbox.

with Cindy Blackburn



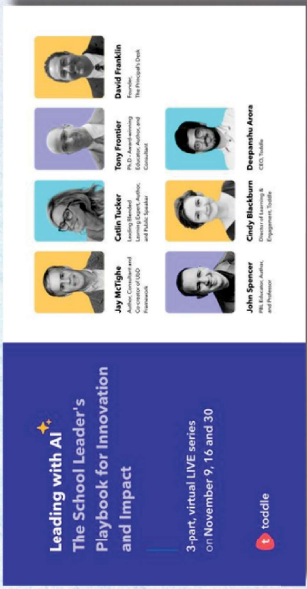


US Independent Schools AI Summit

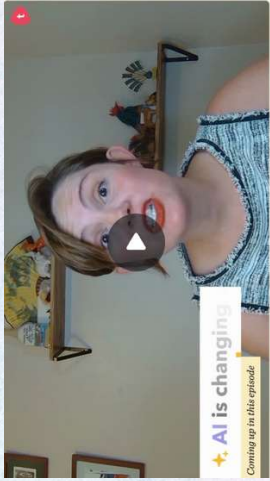
Virtual event | October 21-23 | 12:00 ET // 9:00 PT



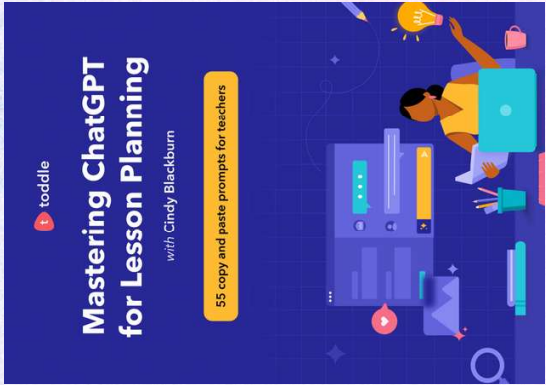
Scan the QR to
register for the event



trainer



podcast

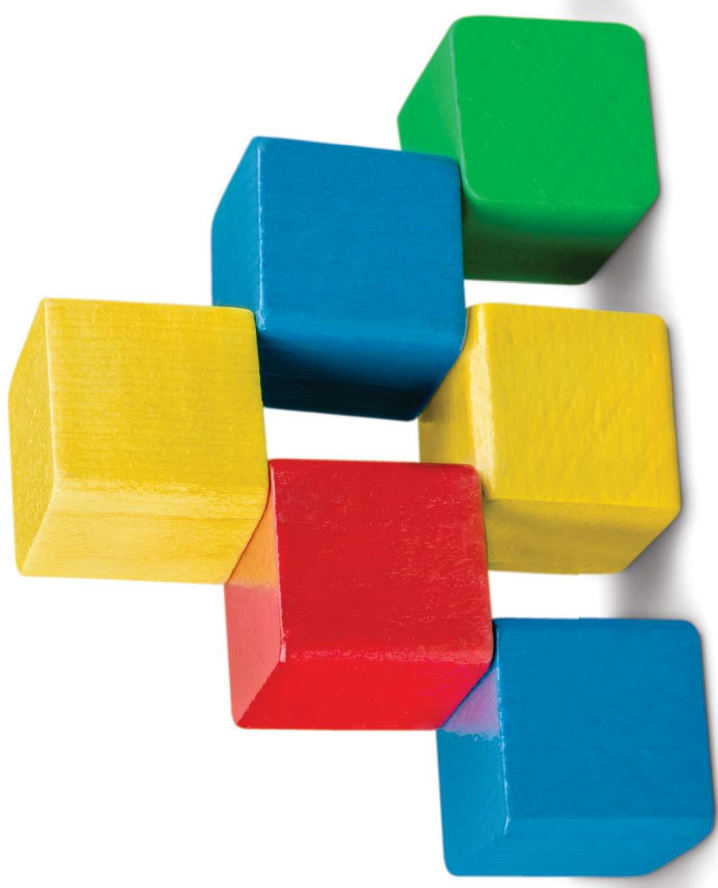


author

**what's one word to describe where you
are on your AI journey right now?**

building blocks of today's session

- current national policy direction
- 3 levers for AI leadership



excited about the next step.



The Evolving Privacy Landscape

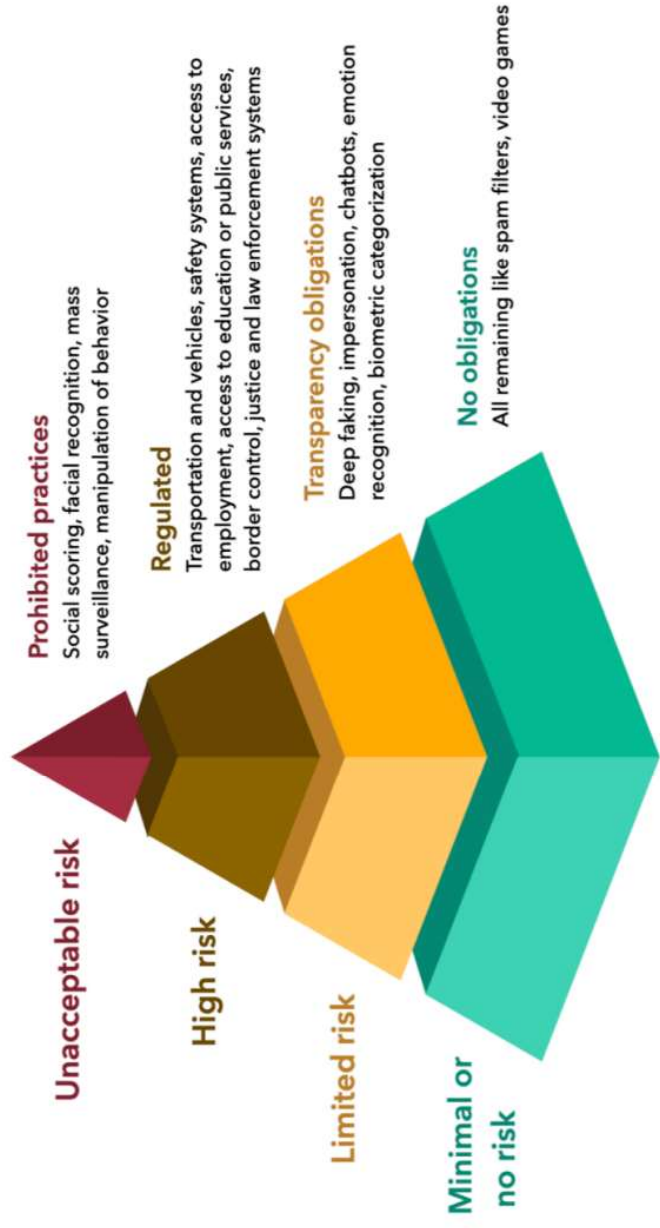


AI introduces new privacy challenges
Training on data, storage, and potential exposure of personal information

Educational data is especially sensitive
involving PII of minors, learning journeys, and outcomes

Growing international focus on regulating AI.

most national/state policies are following a similar model.



based on the European Union model of acceptable risk

released July 2025:



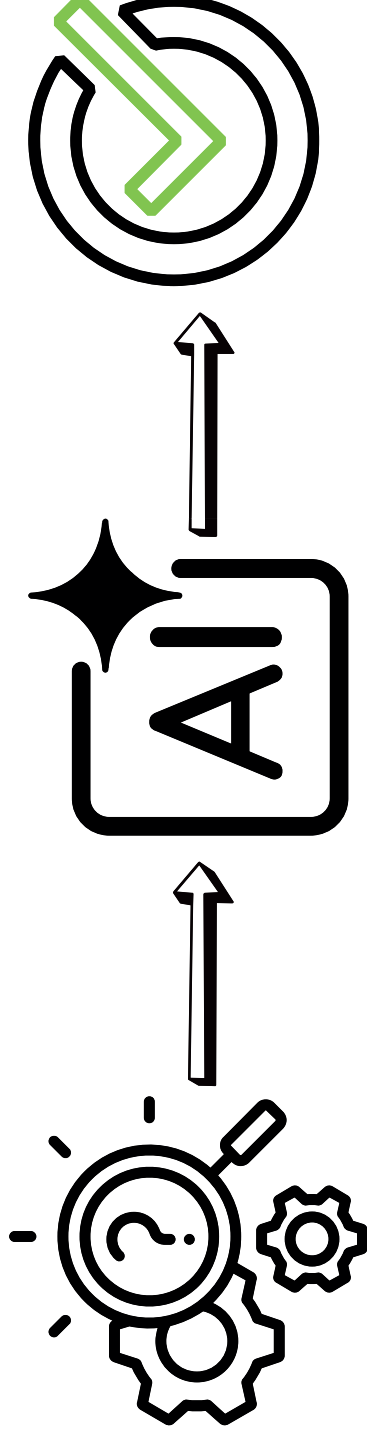
Principles for Responsible Use

The Department affirms the following principles for all AI-related educational initiatives:

- **Educator-led:** AI should support teachers, providers, tutors, advisors, and education leaders.
- **Ethical:** Within the K-12 realm in particular, educators should help students navigate AI to be able to evaluate the validity of AI outputs, to understand the appropriate use of AI in the context of social media, to learn with – rather than exclusively from – AI, and to leverage the promise of AI to be contributing members of a free society.
- **Accessible:** AI tools or systems should be accessible for those who require digital accessibility accommodations, including children, educators, providers, and family members with disabilities.
- **Transparent and explainable:** Stakeholders, especially parents, should understand how systems function and participate meaningfully in decisions about the adoption and deployment of new technologies.
- **Data-protective:** Systems must comply with federal privacy laws including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

Guidance on the Use of Federal Grant Funds to Improve Education
Outcomes Using Artificial Intelligence (AI), US Secretary of Education

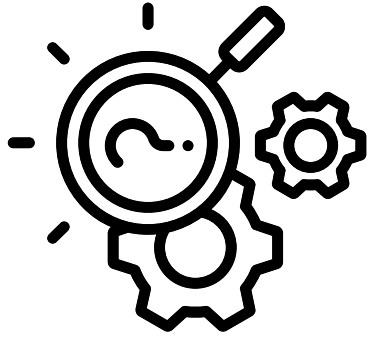
what we want to avoid...



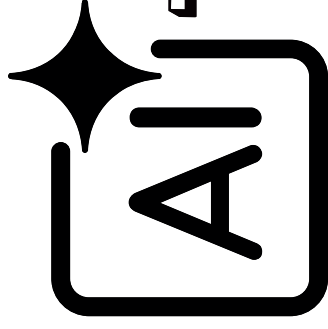
human in the loop

human in the loop

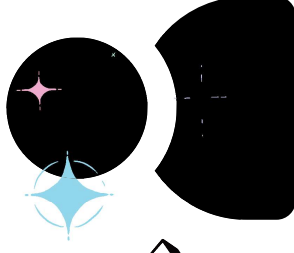
best practice...



grading and
providing feedback
= 5 hours//week of
teacher time



use AI for
first pass



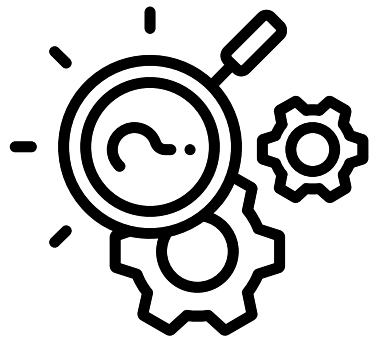
teacher
checks
output



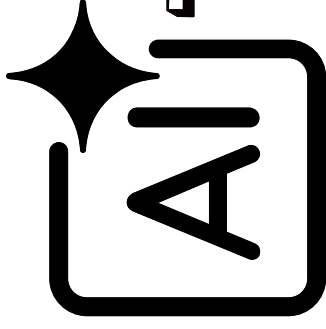
student
receives
feedback

human in the loop

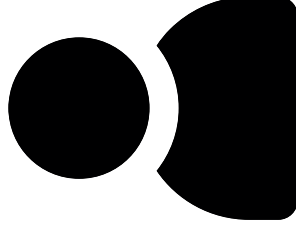
FERPA compliant space



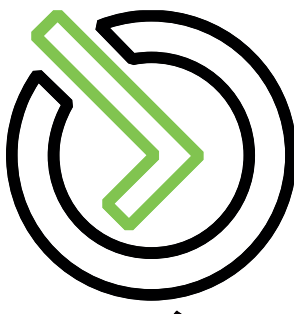
grading and
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= 5 hours//week of
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use AI for
first pass



teacher
checks
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student
receives
feedback

a "low risk" AI tool...

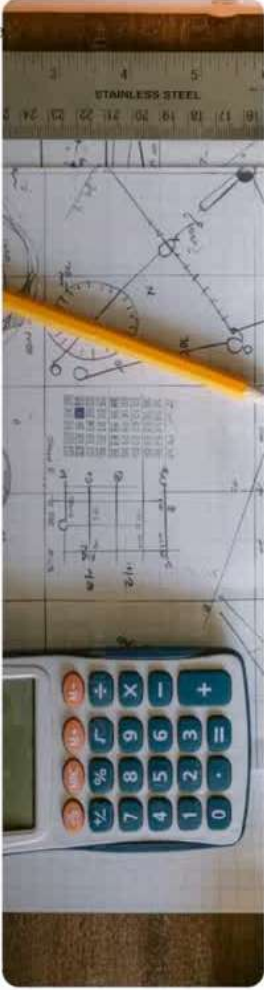


LE

Create a learning experience

+

Assign



Algebra math problems

Unit

Algebra in Action: Understanding Linear Relationships

Term

Term 2 (13 Mar 2025 - 18 Mar 2025)

Submission template

Assessment tools

AI evaluation New

Next 1: Identifying Linear Relationships

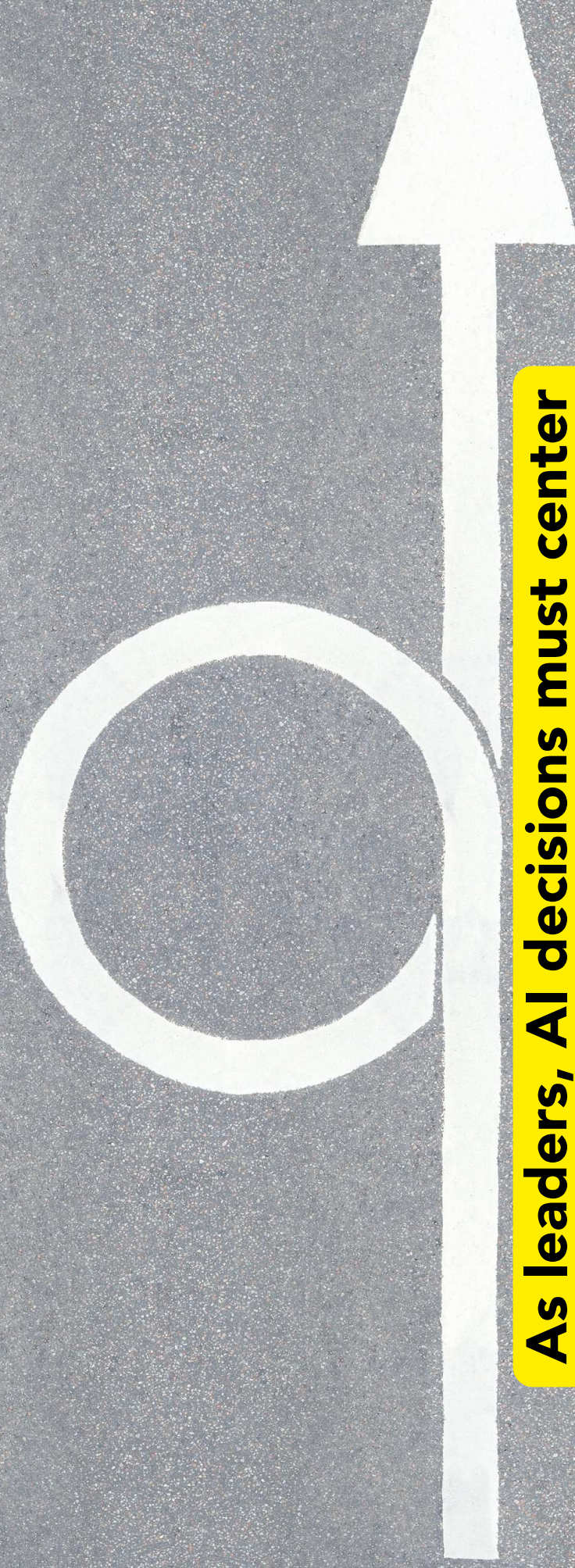
Next 2: Identifying Linear Relationships

Next 3: Identifying Linear Relationships

Next 4: Identifying Linear Relationships

Toddle AI does not qualify as high-risk because: CAIA Section 6-1-1701(9)(b) provides exemptions for systems that assist, rather than replace, human judgment, which is how Toddle AI functions.





**As leaders, AI decisions must center
on keeping humans in the loop.**

3 Levers for AI Leadership



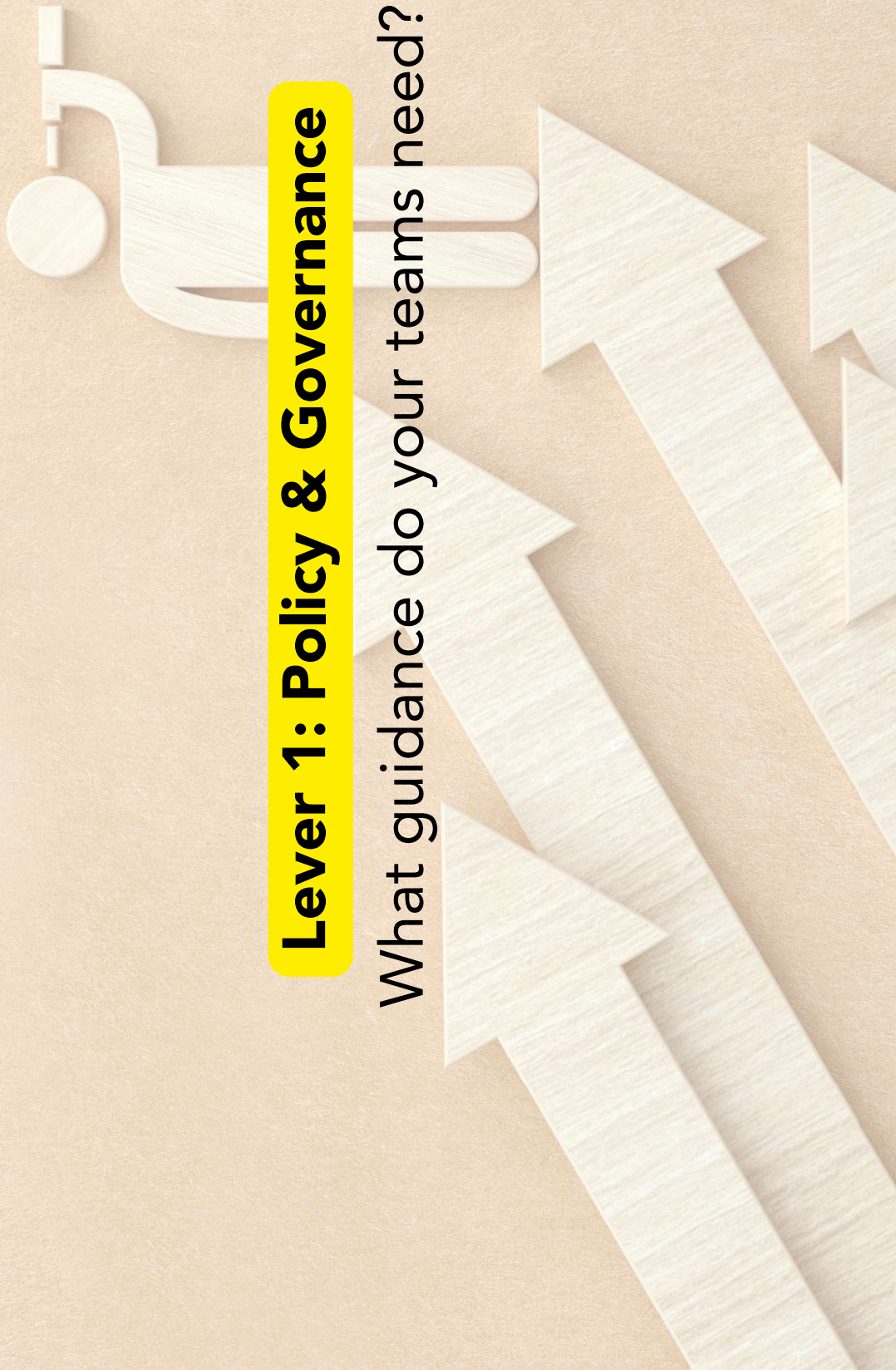
Policy & Governance



Culture & Pedagogy



Investment & Capacity

The background of the slide is a light brown, textured surface resembling cardboard. In the upper left, there is a wooden cutout of a person standing with arms slightly out. Below and to the right of the person are several large, light-colored wooden arrows pointing towards the bottom right corner. The title 'Lever 1: Policy & Governance' is centered on the slide, enclosed in a bright yellow rectangular box.

Lever 1: Policy & Governance

What guidance do your teams need?

Lever 1: Policy & Governance



Lever 1: Policy & Governance



Winner of the 2025 Jeffrey Shields Innovation
in School Business Operations Award

a story of strong, clear policy





GENERATIVE AI ACCEPTABLE USAGE MENU





No Use

AI is not permitted on this assignment for any reason

Reading: You must complete all reading without any help from AI.

Content Creation: You must create your own content using only your own knowledge, skills, and creativity.

Problem-Solving: You must solve problems using only your own knowledge, skills, and reasoning.



AI as a Thought Partner

AI can be used only for initial inquiry, brainstorming, and to help generate ideas.

Reading: You must read the original text as assigned, but AI can help you understand the text.

Content Creation: You can use AI to help you generate ideas, but you must create the final content.

Problem-Solving: You must solve problems, but may use AI to suggest strategies, explore concepts, and provide helpful ideas.



AI as an Editor

AI can be used to edit and receive feedback on original content.

Content Creation: You can use AI to help you edit and revise your original content.

Problem-Solving: You may use AI to improve the clarity of a solution you have created, but not to correct errors.



AI as an Analyst

AI can be used to analyze data, identify patterns, and help you analyze the reading, but you must read the text assigned.

Content Creation: AI can be used to help you identify new patterns or complete the assignment yourself.

Problem-Solving: You may use AI to help identify errors and misapplication of principles, but you must correct your work by yourself.



AI as a Co-Creator

AI can be used to help complete assignments and projects.

Reading: You can create and read the original text.

Content Creation: You can use AI to create parts of an assignment as permitted. You must create the final work to ensure its accuracy.

Problem-Solving: You may use AI to generate solutions when solving problems. You must check and verify your solution.

Students must disclose AI usage. Copies of chat(s) must be submitted

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Students must cite AI usage in appropriate format. Copies of chat(s) must be submitted

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The Kinkaid School approved AI Platforms are FlintK12, Canva, Typing Mind, and tools in the Adobe Creative Suite

(Version 2.2 - as of October 28, 2024)

Adapted by The Kinkaid School from Woodward Academy and Vera Cubero's work for the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. This work was inspired by the work of Dr. Linda Ward Beech, Dr. Mike Thierens, Dr. Jasper Bos, Phil A. & Dr. Jason Anthony. <https://doi.org/10.21203/rs.3.rs-3812312/v1>

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THE KINKAID SCHOOL

The Kinkaid School Guiding Principles on Artificial Intelligence and Generative Artificial Intelligence

The use of artificial intelligence (AI) and generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) tools will start with learning outcomes or by specific tasks, and not simply as a technological possibility or curiosity.

AI and GenAI tools, when used will be

- Intentional
- Purposeful
- Safe
- Ethical
- Appropriate

In support of the delivering our mission

clear, shared used agreements



- **collaborative:** collaborated with math and physics teachers to add problem solving
- **iterative:** first focused on reading and content creation; merging analyst and editor to create “explorer”
- **connected** to grade level AI curricular expectations

GENERATIVE AI ACCEPTABLE USAGE MENU

No Use AI is not permitted on this assignment for any reason Reading: You must complete all reading without any help from AI. Content Creation: You must complete the assignment using only your own knowledge, skills, and creativity. Problem-Solving: You must solve all parts of assigned problems using your own knowledge, skills, and reasoning. No disclosure statement required	AI as a Thought Partner AI can be used only for initial inquiry, brainstorming, and to help generate ideas. Reading: You must read the original text as assigned, but AI may be used to help you understand the text. Content Creation: You can use AI tools only for initial idea-gathering, and not to complete the assignment. Problem-Solving: You must generate your own solutions to problems, but you may use AI to suggest strategies, explore concepts, and provide helpful ideas. Students must disclose AI usage. Copies of chat(s) must be submitted	AI as an Editor AI can be used to edit and receive feedback on original content. Content Creation: You can use AI feedback to help edit and revise your original content. Problem-Solving: You may use AI to check your work for organization and simplicity of a solution you have created, but not to correct errors. Students must disclose AI usage. Copies of chat(s) must be submitted	AI as an Analyst AI can be used to analyze data, identify patterns, and identify themes. Reading: AI may be used to help you analyze the reading, but you must read the text assigned. Content Creation: AI can be used to help you create visualizations or graphs to help identify patterns or themes, but you must complete the assignment yourself. Problem-Solving: You may use AI to help identify mathematical processing errors and misapplication of concepts, but you must correct your work by yourself. Students must cite AI usage. Copies of chat(s) must be submitted	AI as a Co-Creator AI can be used to help complete assignments and projects. Reading: You can create and read an AI summary instead of reading the original text. Content Creation: You can use AI to create parts of an assignment as permitted. You must read and verify the work to ensure its accuracy. Problem-Solving: You may use AI to help you with solving problems. You must check and verify your solution. Students must cite AI usage. Copies of chat(s) must be submitted
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THE KINKAID SCHOOL

principles as guides for decision- making



The Kinkaid School Guiding Principles on Artificial Intelligence and Generative Artificial Intelligence

End in mind AI design →

The use of artificial intelligence (AI) and generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) tools will start with learning outcomes or by specific tasks, and not simply as a technological possibility or curiosity.

AI and GenAI tools, when used will be

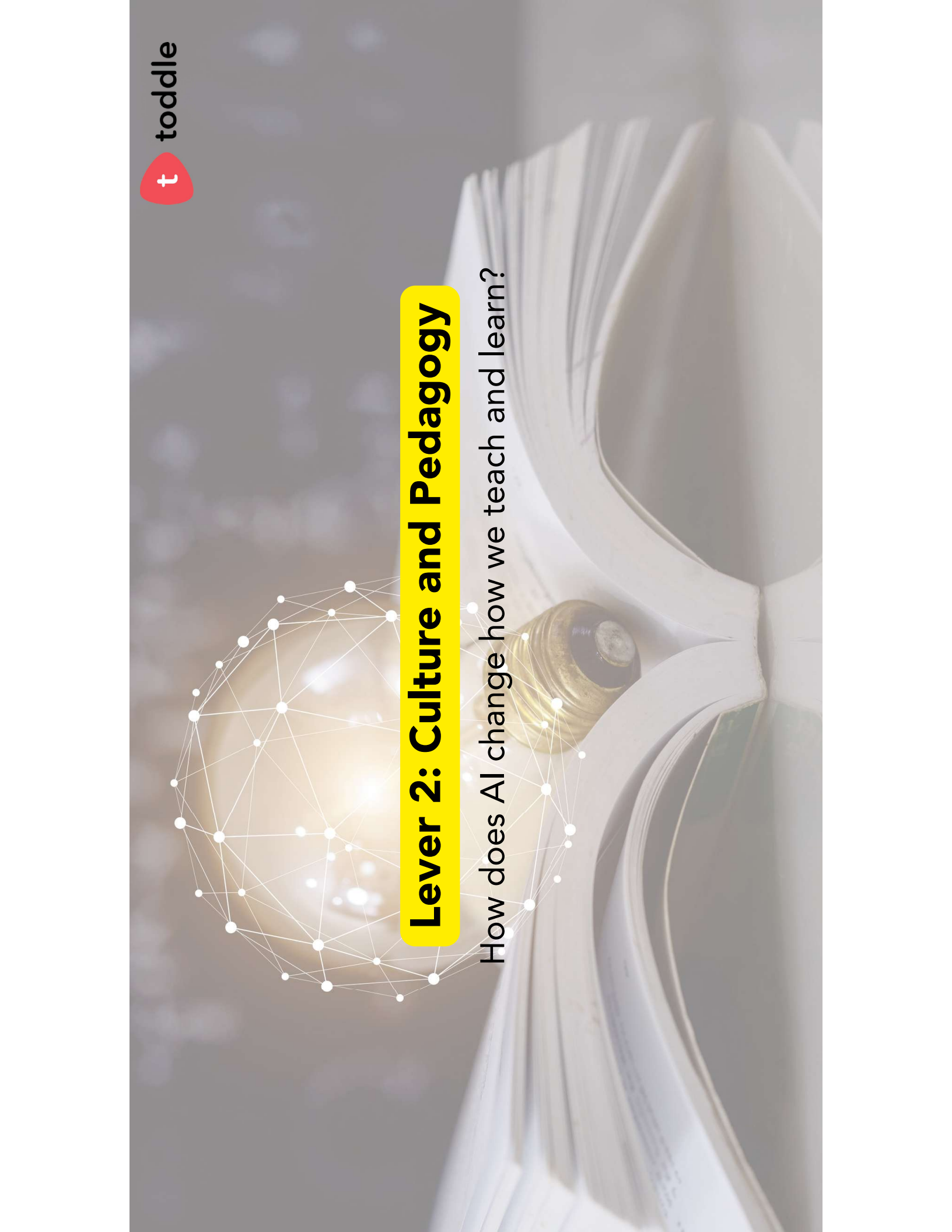
- Intentional
- Purposeful
- Safe
- Ethical
- Appropriate

Vinnie is planning to add “human in the loop” as the first AI principle to this list in the coming year →

In support of the delivering our mission

**clear policies, principles, and use
agreements get everyone rowing in the
same direction.**



The background of the slide is a composite image. On the right side, there is a close-up of an open book with its pages fanned out. On the left side, there is a glowing lightbulb with a network of white dots and lines connecting them, resembling a neural network or a complex web. The text 'Lever 2: Culture and Pedagogy' is centered over the lightbulb.

Lever 2: Culture and Pedagogy

How does AI change how we teach and learn?



- Over 1,200 students on a 37–40 acre campus
- Focus on CBE, design thinking and project-based learning. Students collaborate on real-world challenges with partners like Delta, Porsche, Chick-fil-A, and Magic Wheelchair,
- Campus includes VR labs, multiple Maker Spaces, art studios, fine-arts studios, black-box theaters,



Challenge: Disconnected systems quadrupled teachers' work and obscured student progress



"We were using a mix of Seesaw, Google Docs, and Google Sheets, and it became increasingly hard to get a cohesive view of student growth when everything was so disconnected."

-Katie Cain



AI-powered planning and analytics



“Within weeks of using Toddle, we could see the connections across every aspect of teaching and learning.

Our teachers could plan units with customized standards, create engaging learning experiences and assessments, and tag the specific standards they were targeting.

This seamless integration between planning and assessment was game changing in helping us implement the CBE effectively.”

Deep analytics on your curriculum

Get in-depth curriculum insights with powerful analytics across standards, skills, and grades.

Unit analytics View of all standards across English subject				Download
	Grade 1			
	Standards	No. of times addressed in Units	No. of times addressed in Tasks	
Pre-K				
K1				
K2				
Grade 1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.	4	4	
Grade 2	Print many upper- and lowercase letters.	1	1	
Grade 3	Use frequently occurring nouns and verbs.	1	1	
Grade 4	Form regular plural nouns orally by adding /s/ or /es/ (e.g., dog, dogs; wish, wishes).	1	1	
Grade 5	Understand and use question words (interrogatives) (e.g., who, what, where, when, why, how).	0	0	
Grade 6	Use the most frequently occurring prepositions (e.g., to, from, in, out, on, off, for, of, by, with).	1	1	
	Produce and expand complete sentences in shared language activities.	0	0	
	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalisation, punctuation, and spelling when writing	6	6	
	Capitalise the first word in a sentence and the pronoun I	1	1	
	Recognise and name end punctuation.	1	1	

engaged students, engaged families



1/3

Mike has balloons, and his friends gives him more.
How many balloons does Mike have now?

H	T	O
		8
		3
		1
	+	
		1

Keep up the excellent work, Ria!

Aa

Rita Krishnan tagged Noah Nate

Nov 23

Today, Noah showed a genuine interest in our lesson on animals. He was highly engaged during the book reading and asked thoughtful questions about the different animals we discussed. During our mini-zoo visit, he was especially fascinated by the deers and kangaroos, eagerly absorbing details about their habitats.

Inquiry-based activities

Curiosity

24

3

Experiment lab

Liked by Darrel Stewart and 3 others

Mary Nate

2h

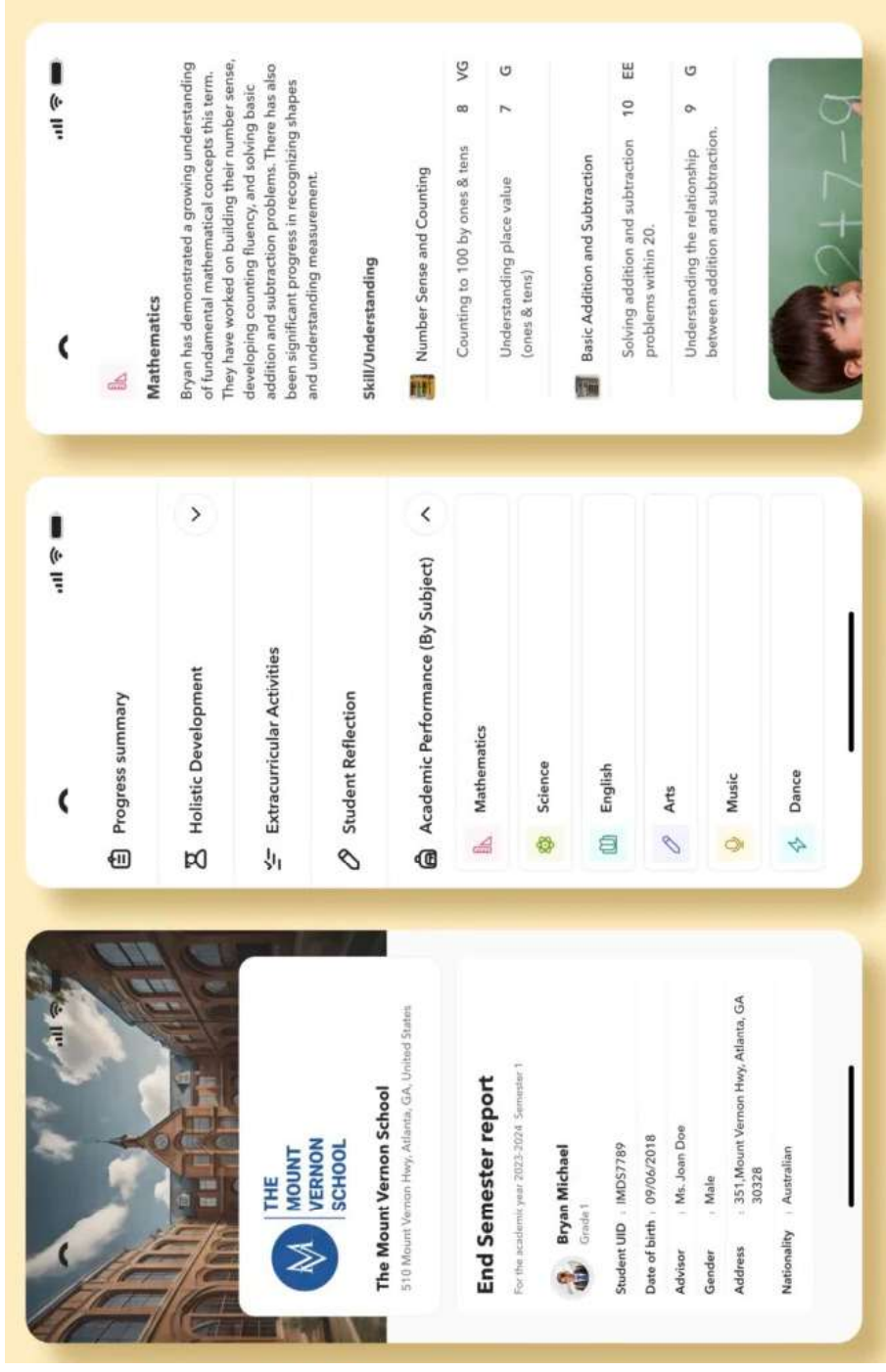
We're so happy to see Noah's excitement for learning about animals! He came home talking non-stop about the deers and kangaroos. His constant questions about the world around him always amaze us, and we love seeing his passion grow!

AI-powered reporting



“Toddle’s magic came alive for the teachers during their first progress reports at the end of the trimester.

What used to take hours now happens in minutes, with far greater depth and meaning.”



At Toddle, our big hairy audacious goal
is to **give each teacher**
10 additional hours every week while
helping you **elevate your practices.**



AI Tutors



Lesson
Planning



Report
Cards



Worksheets



Writing
assistant

when we give teachers the right tools, and the
right training, they can soar.

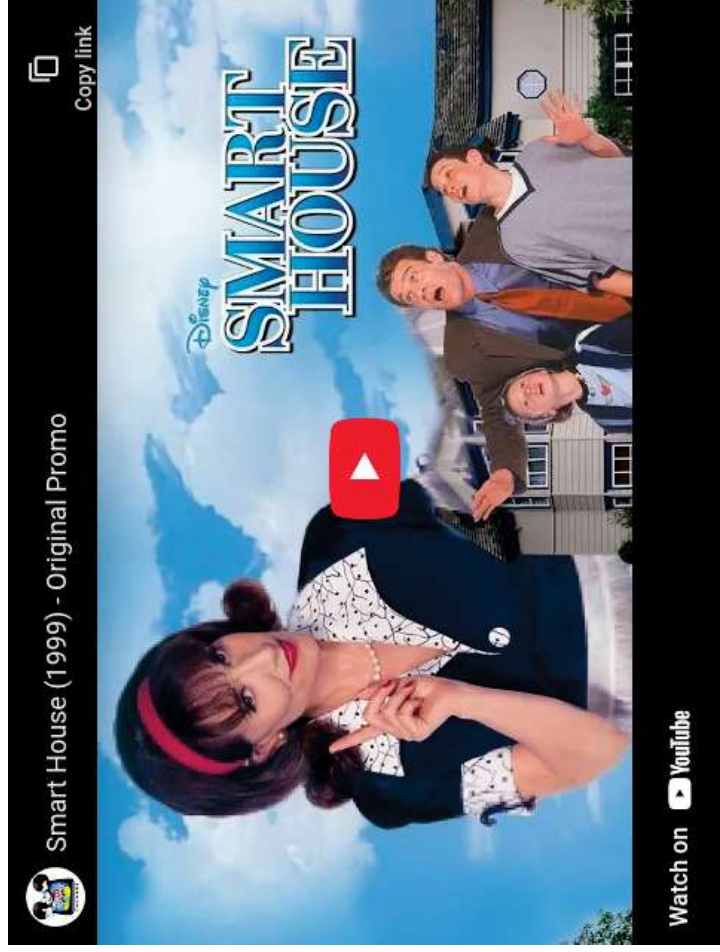


Lever 3: Investment & Capacity

How can we leverage AI to save time
and increase our capacity?



where it's going...

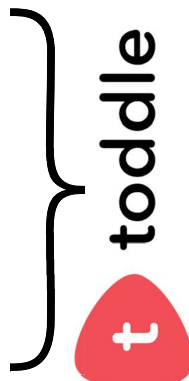


Disney. (1999). Smart House (commercial) [Video]. YouTube.
<https://youtu.be/oI0Jf2KqBdY>

Every organization will have a constellation of agents — ranging from simple prompt-and-response to fully autonomous.
(Microsoft CMO, 2024)

what exactly is an agent?

- AI agents perceive, decide, and act autonomously.
- They interact with other agents to complete complex workflows.
- They are goal-oriented, tool-using, and adaptive.

$$\text{ai agent} = \text{ai model} + \text{tool} + \text{memory}$$


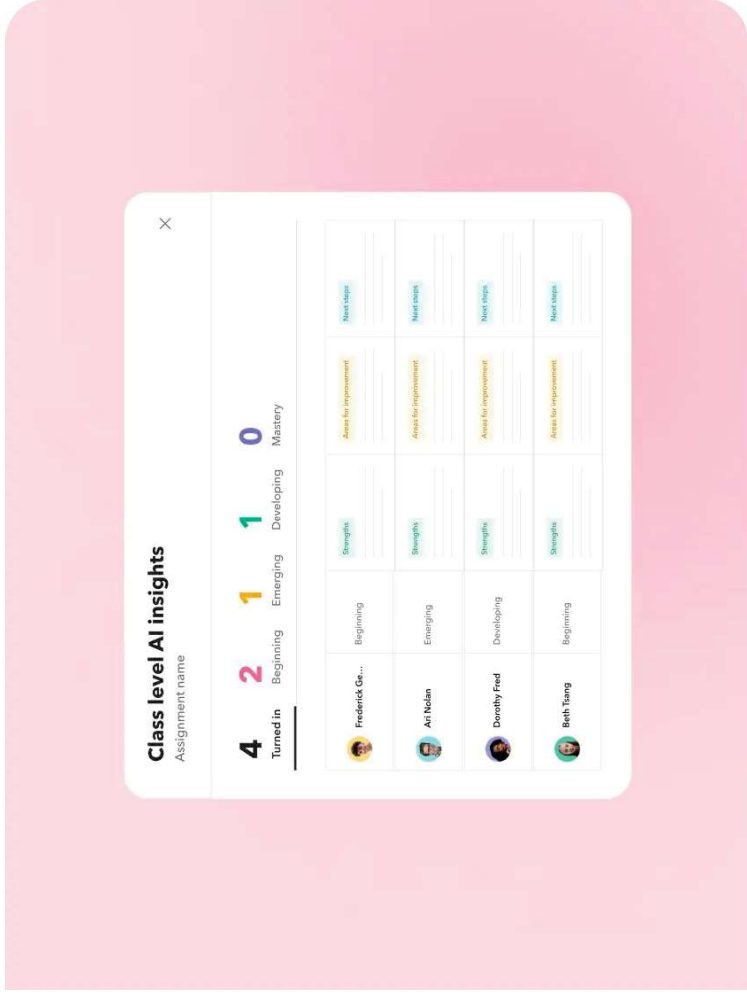
The diagram shows the equation $\text{ai agent} = \text{ai model} + \text{tool} + \text{memory}$. A curly bracket groups the terms ai model , tool , and memory . Below the bracket is the Toddle logo (a red teardrop with a white 't') followed by the word 'toddle'.

understanding the power of agents:

Feature	AI Tool (Current)	AI Agent (Future)
Trigger	Human-initiated	Self-initiated via data
Purpose	Single-use	Goal-oriented
Behavior	Reactive	Proactive
Collaboration	Isolated	Works with other agents
Adaptability	Static	Learns & adapts over time

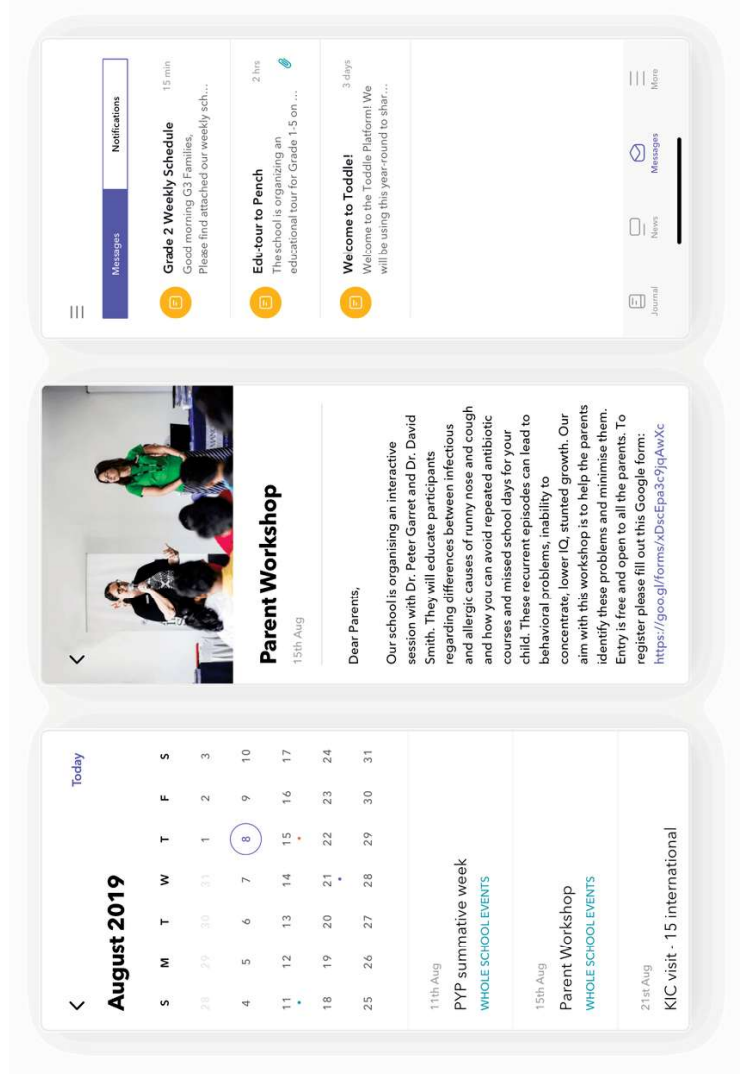
ex: report card agent

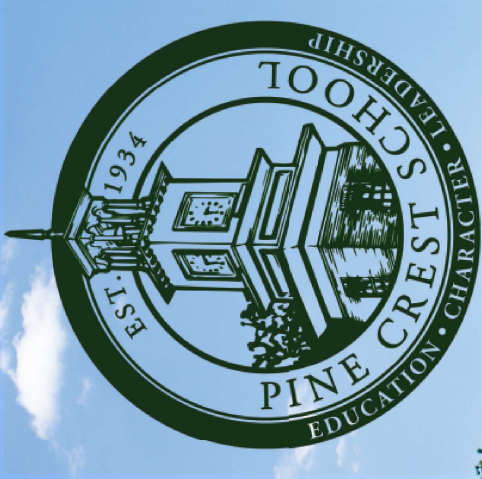
- Data Aggregation Agent
- Insights & Analytics Agent
- Report Formatting Agent
- Orchestrator Agent



Parent Engagement Agent

- Engagement Tracking Agent
- Personalized Communication Agent
- Celebration & Milestone Agent
- Orchestrator Agent



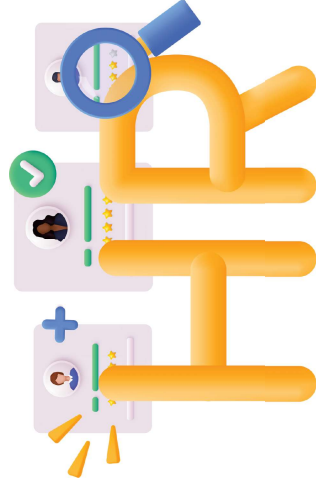


#TwerkTeamRacing

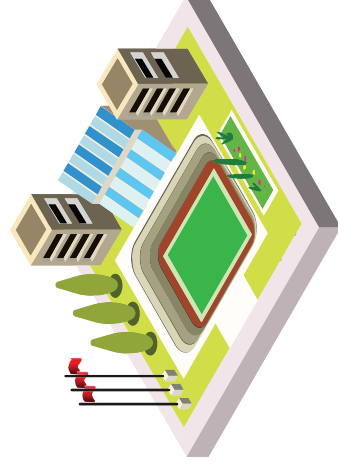
began with brainstorming



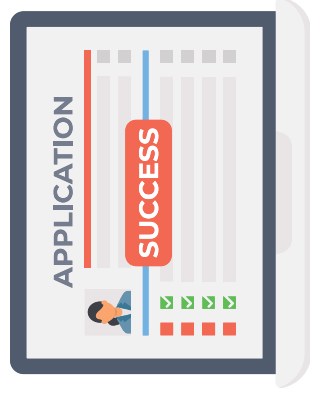
finance



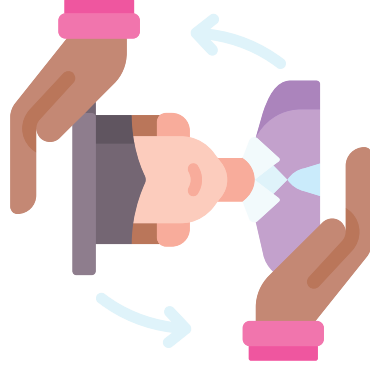
HR



facilities



admissions



college counseling

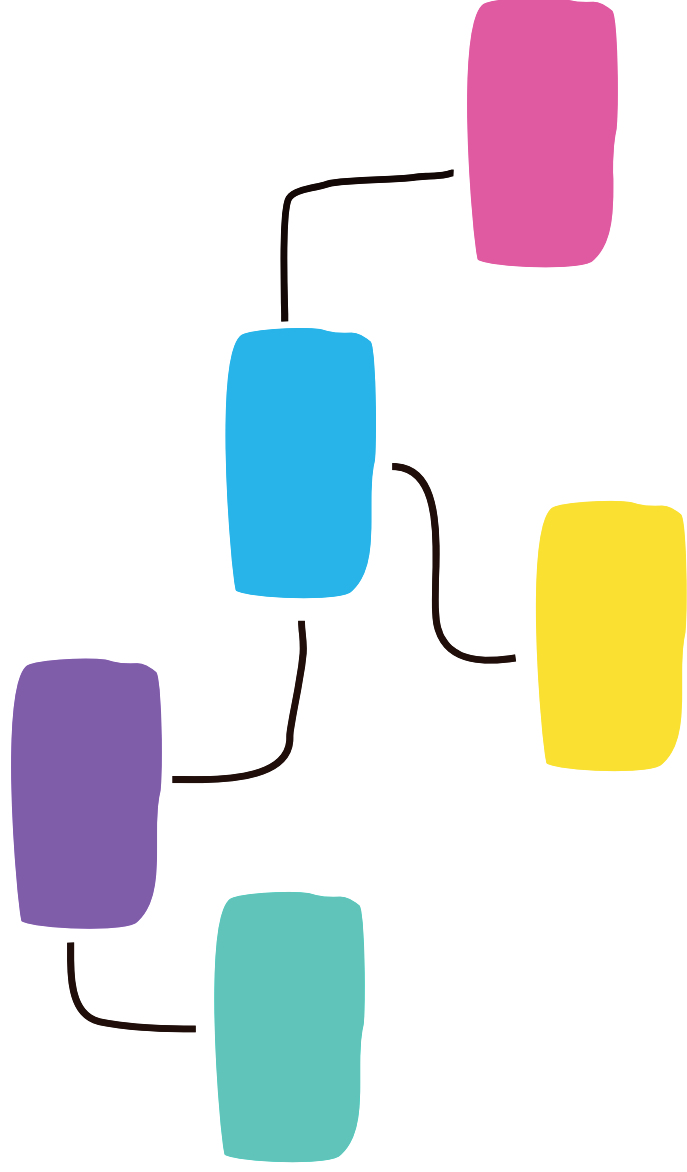


health



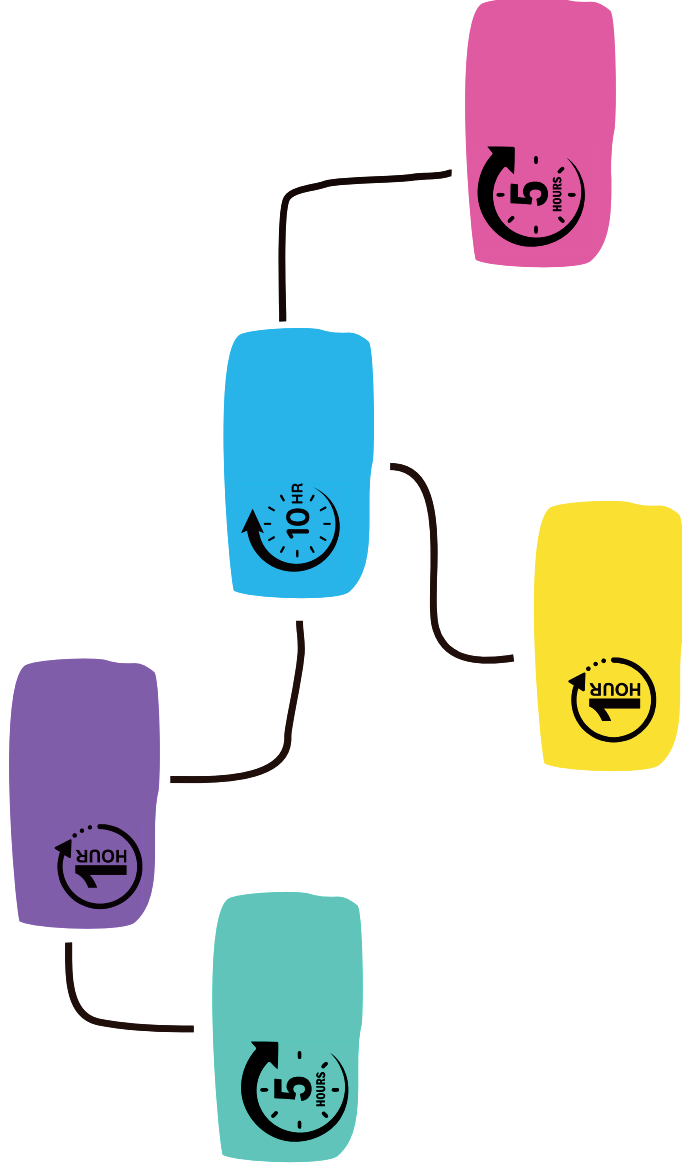
academic support

**each department made a
flowchart of their operations**

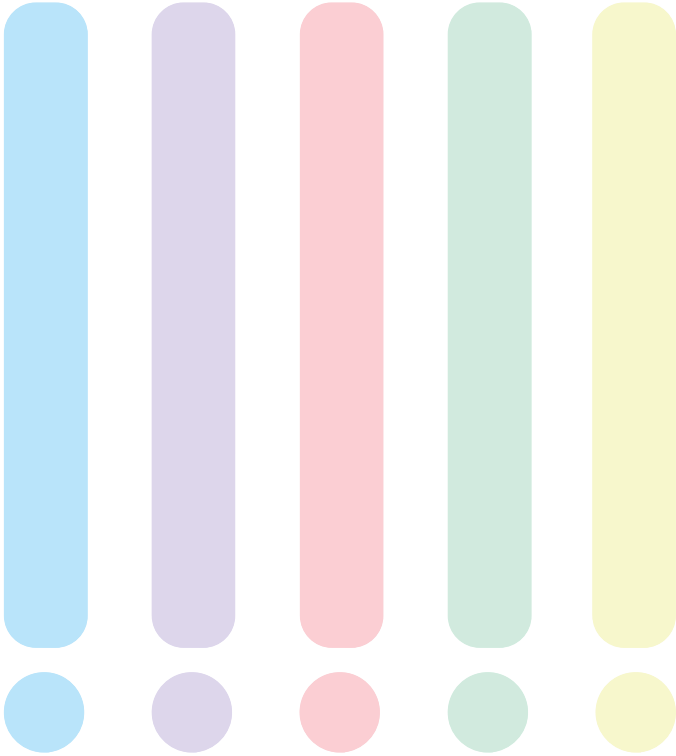


each department made a flowchart of their operations

and the amount of time each task took



they made a list of 20 opportunities for automation and their potential ROI



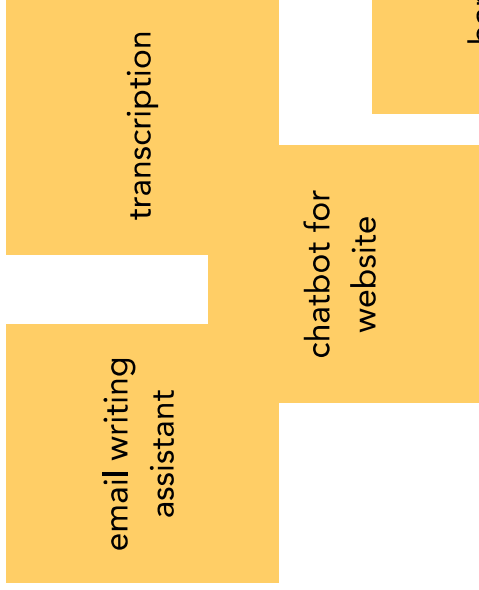
RETURN ON INVESTMENT

ROI DATA		Cost		Benefit	
		Data Direct	Data Indirect	Data Direct	Data Indirect
Corporate website		200	400	500	430
Social media engagement		100	130	402	230
New product		800	900	1,000	1,300
New office		3,000	1,320	18,430	1,900

they made a heat map to choose the top 8



easy win



inexpensive

expensive



very complex



		toddler	
14-03-20	Cash Withdrawal	105,990.00	413,800.00
14-03-20	Cash Withdrawal	3,600.00	400,328.54
24-03-20	Cash Withdrawal	385,286.00	14.54
26-03-20	Cash Withdrawal	28,514.00	371,814.54
28-03-20	Cash Withdrawal	8,500.00	363,314.54
02-04-20	Cash Withdrawal		777,114.54
02-04-20	Cash Withdrawal		774,114.54
04-04-20	Cash Withdrawal		768,114.54
05-04-20	Cash Withdrawal		755,029.54
05-04-20	Cash Withdrawal		757,029.54
05-04-20	Cash Withdrawal		792,971.54
06-04-20	Cash Withdrawal		799,471.54
06-04-20	Cash Withdrawal		796,221.54
06-04-20	Cash Withdrawal		792,971.54
06-04-20	Cash Withdrawal		796,971.54
06-04-20	Cash Withdrawal		802,671.54
06-04-20	Cash Withdrawal		817,671.54
06-04-20	Cash Withdrawal		992,671.54

one example:

categorizing expenses once took
around 40 hours/week and is now
fully automated.

We are just beginning to dream and create.

leveraging AI can save time and increase capacity.



We've explored 3 Levers for AI Leadership

now, it's your turn to practice being the human in the loop.



Policy & Governance



Culture & Pedagogy



Investment & Capacity

**have you been curious?
pick a color.**

Six Thinking Hats

DeBono's Six Thinking Hats

A tool for exploring problems through different lenses.

Each "hat" represents a role you can step into:

- White Hat** → Facts: What information do we have? What's missing?
- Red Hat** → Emotions: What's my gut telling me? How do people feel?
- Yellow Hat** → Benefits: What's the value? What's the upside?
- Green Hat** → Creativity: What new ideas or alternatives can we try?
- Blue Hat** → Big Picture: How do we organize thinking? What's next?
- Black (purple) Hat** → Caution: What could go wrong? Where are the risks?



White:
Facts



Yellow:
Benefits



Black:
Cautious



Green:
Creativity



Blue:
Big Picture



Red:
Emotions

practice.

let me see your inner thespian:
**should dogs be allowed in
the workplace?**



White Hat → Facts: What information do we have? What's missing?
Red Hat → Emotions: What's my gut telling me? How do people feel?
Yellow Hat → Benefits: What's the value? What's the upside?
Green Hat → Creativity: What new ideas or alternatives can we try?
Blue Hat → Big Picture: How do we organize thinking? What's next?
Black Hat → Caution: What could go wrong? Where are the risks?

ok, your turn.



Policy & Governance



Culture & Pedagogy



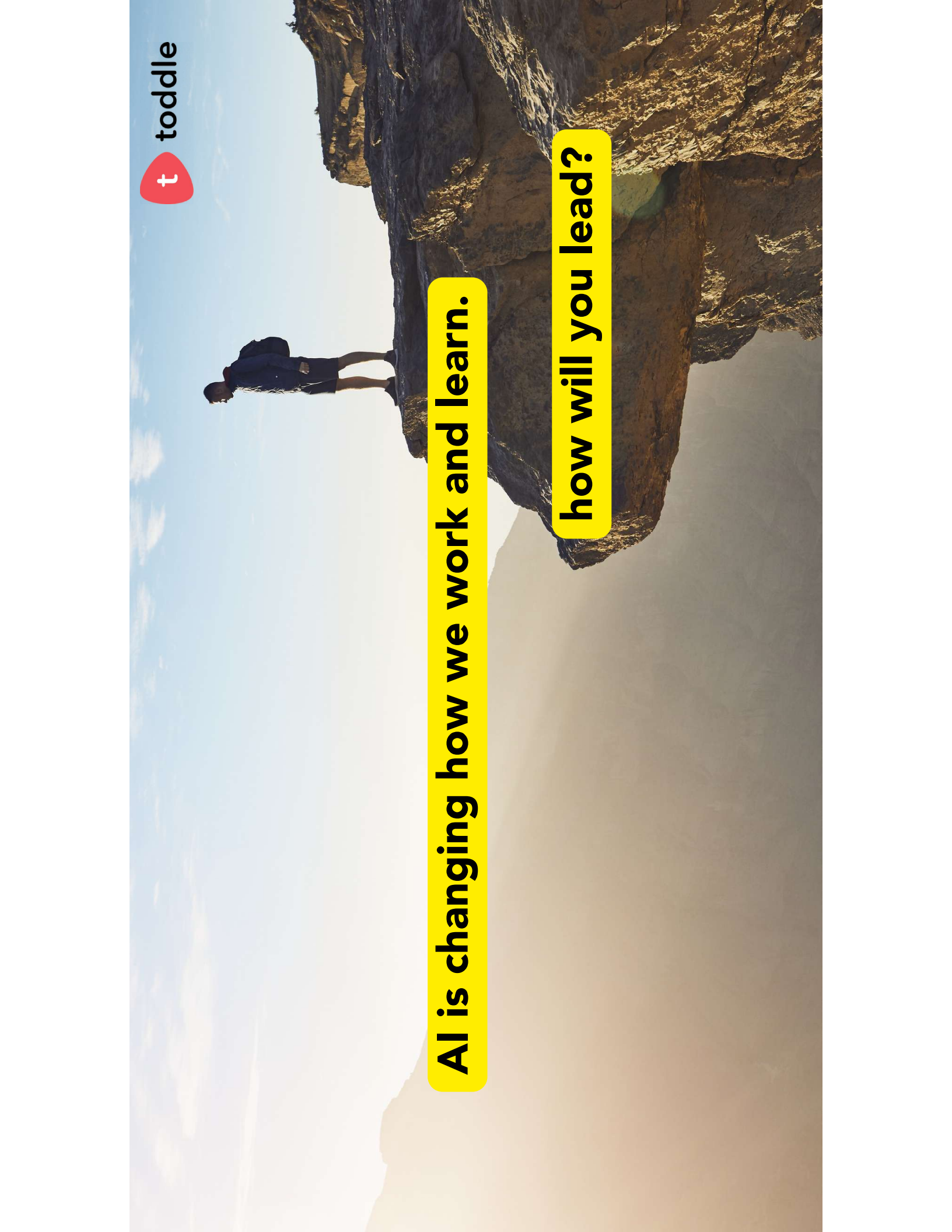
Investment & Capacity

let's practice being the human in the loop.

Reflection Prompt

Which hat(s) do you default to?

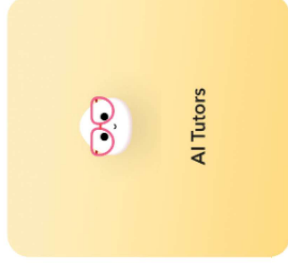
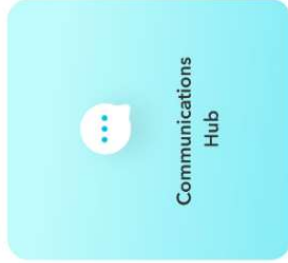
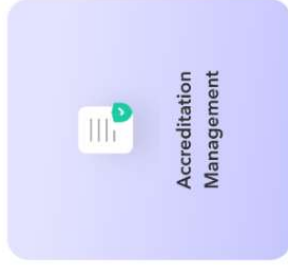
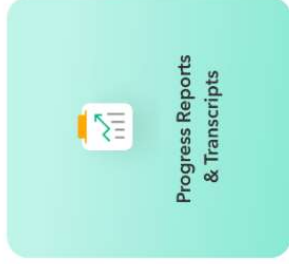
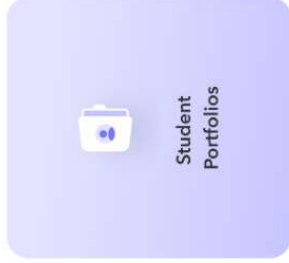
Which hat(s) do you need to bring more into your leadership thinking?

A person wearing a backpack and shorts stands on a narrow, dark rock ledge that juts out from a massive, layered rock formation. The person is looking down at the edge of the rock. Below the ledge is a deep, wide canyon with a river visible at the bottom. The sky is a pale blue with soft, wispy clouds. The overall scene conveys a sense of risk, balance, and looking forward.

AI is changing how we work and learn.

how will you lead?

and who will you partner with?



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AI Tools for School Leadership

Navigate AI implementation with our set of three comprehensive resources. Use the workbook to understand the nitty-gritties of AI use in education. Test out the 10+ prompts to simplify your most common leadership responsibilities. Develop your vision for AI with our policy guide and checklist.



Cindy Blackburn

3 min read



