AI in Our School: A Staff Discussion Guide

10 Minute Teacher Podcast | Episode 973 | Ronn Nozoe, CEO, National Principals Association

This guide turns a 15-minute podcast into a 30-minute staff conversation. It is built around one finding: the schools making progress with AI are not the ones with all the answers — they are the ones where principals and teachers are figuring it out together.

How to use this

Ask everyone to listen to Episode 973 beforehand (15 minutes) — or play the 8:43 to 9:45 segment live, which is the heart of it. Work through as many rounds as your time allows. Round 4 is the one that produces an actual next step, so protect time for it.

Listen: coolcatteacher.com/e973

What the survey found

Ronn Nozoe's members at the National Principals Association and my Classroom Matters subscribers answered the same questions. Share these four numbers before you open discussion.

7 in 10	schools are already immersed in AI and moving forward with it
3 in 10	say plainly: we are not there yet
~18%	of leaders feel VERY confident about leading AI implementation this year
40%	named TIME for staff training and planning as what they need most

A note on that 18%: it is not a failing grade. As Vicki said on the show, overconfidence in AI right now would be the real warning sign. There are no experts yet.

ROUND 1 — Where are we, honestly? (7 minutes)

Ronn's read on the confidence gap: "a lot of that is more self-imposed pressure… we never believe that we're there. We're always in search of the best. And so I think they're a little hard on themselves."

- If we answered that survey today, which group would we be in — the 7 or the 3? Be honest.
- Who in this building is already using AI in some way? (Ask for hands. The number is usually higher than leadership thinks.)
- What are we each using it for right now — and what have we been quiet about?

ROUND 2 — What do we actually need? (7 minutes)

The number one ask was not money and not tools. It was time. Ronn: "so many good things come out of really well-planned and well-resourced, dedicated time for planning and collaboration."

- If we had four protected hours this semester to work on this together, what would we do with them?
- What is one thing currently on our plate that AI could genuinely take off it?
- What do we need to know before we would feel comfortable letting students use these tools?

ROUND 3 — Are we doing this together? (8 minutes)

Ronn on his years as a state deputy superintendent: "we could solve any problem. We just needed the time and space to involve folks… I had a teacher round table. They were amazing. Teacher leaders solved so many problems in our system." And: "when everybody's at the table like that, the solution's always better."

- When a decision about technology gets made here, who is in the room?
- Teachers: what would you tell leadership if you knew it would be received well?
- Leaders: what have you assumed teachers do not want to be bothered with — that maybe they do?
- Ronn's advice was to have that conversation privately, not with a raised hand in a faculty meeting. Do we have a way for that to happen here? What is it?

ROUND 4 — What do we do next? (8 minutes)

Do not leave without this part. Ronn's ask of teachers was specific: "I can help us get there in a more effective and efficient way if you just give me some space." Someone has to say it out loud.

- Name ONE thing we will try before the next time we meet. One. Not five.
- Who is going to lead it? (Ronn: "if you just put me in, I might be able to help a little bit.")
- What will we look at to know whether it worked?
- Do we need written guidance, or do we need to update the responsible use policy we already have? (Most schools need the second one.)

Our commitment

One thing we will try: _____

Who is leading it: _____ By when: _____

How we will know it worked: _____

Free resources to take with you

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Usage — Policy Brief (National Principals Association) — your own association's official position, with separate recommendations for district leaders and for school leaders. Downloadable PDF. principals.org → Advocacy → Policy Issue Briefs

AI Guidance for Schools Toolkit (TeachAI) — free and editable, with sample guidance language, a ready-made staff presentation, and parent communication templates. teachai.org/toolkit

K-12 Gen AI Maturity Tool and **Our AI Approach** (CoSN) — a seven-domain readiness self-assessment, and a one-page values graphic you can add your logo to and post. Both free at cosn.org/ai

State guidance — thirty U.S. states have published official AI guidance, Georgia included. The full list is at teachai.org/toolkit-resources

Every link, plus the research behind these numbers, is at **coolcatteacher.com/e973**

Survey conducted June 2026 by Vicki Davis and the National Principals Association among NPA members and Classroom Matters subscribers. This guide may be freely copied and shared for school use. © 2026 Cool Cat Teacher, LLC.