

Improving Literacy & Communication

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Identity—Access

The Power of Connection

**AI as a Tool for Inclusive
Bilingual Ed**

**The Science of Reading
with a Multilingual Lens**

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Teaching Students to Use AI Ethically & Responsibly

Teaching Students to Use AI Ethically & Responsibly, published by Corwin, a Sage Publishing company, was written to provide K–12 educators, school leaders, parents, and forward-thinking organizations the information they need to guide students through the most transformative technology of our time. Co-authored by renowned scholars Douglas Fisher and Nancy Frey, along with Sal Khan, founder of Khan Academy, this timely guide provides educators, families, and school leaders with practical tools and an ethical framework for teaching about, for, and with artificial intelligence.

“AI is a powerful, complex, and mostly invisible force that can be used to deepen and extend human intelligence,” said Fisher. “This book and Corwin’s supporting

resources are about helping teachers and families move beyond fear or hype, and instead prepare students to use AI responsibly, critically, and creatively.”

By providing a framework structured around three essential pillars—Teaching About AI, Teaching For AI, and Teaching With AI—the book provides educators and caregivers with the language, strategies, and confidence to harness the power of AI for education. The book offers:

- Clear, age-appropriate explanations of how AI works, including bias, algorithms, privacy, personalization across K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12 grade spans;
- Classroom-ready tools for integrating AI into inquiry-based learning;

- A breakdown of the skills students need for the future of work, including metacognition, curiosity, verification, and digital literacy;
- Practical extensions for multilingual learners, emerging readers, and advanced students; and
- Ideas for families and workplaces, including how parents and tech companies can foster thoughtful AI engagement.

In addition to the book, Corwin is offering professional learning workshops and online courses to help educators navigate AI integration in meaningful ways. [IX](#)

[Corwin.com/books/teaching-students-to-use-ai](https://corwin.com/books/teaching-students-to-use-ai)

ClassDojo for Districts Communication Updates

ClassDojo has added new features to its ClassDojo for Districts platform, designed to help district leaders unify communication, strengthen family engagement, and streamline oversight across schools—all while helping districts adapt to deepening budget pressures. With ongoing cuts to federal education funding, leaders are under increasing pressure to do more with less. These new updates—available for the 2025–26 school year—offer a cost-free solution built directly from feedback from superintendents, chief technology officers, and school public relations officials. The release includes enhancements to messaging, behavior and classroom management, and IT administration.

“Every iteration of ClassDojo is built on feedback from the people who use it,” said Chad A. Stevens, Ph.D., ClassDojo’s Head of K–12 Engagement. “Superintendents were clear that they wanted to use tools that were already rapidly adopted and loved by school staff. So, we built tools that bring the whole district together—with consistency, control, and care.”

Communication and Family Engagement that Scales Districtwide

Districts can now send Announcements to

all families, school staff, or targeted groups. Messages are automatically translated into 130+ languages and include Read Receipts so central offices can confirm delivery. Time-sensitive updates can also be sent as important messages via SMS.

For middle and high schools, the platform now offers a more age-appropriate student experience. Students can customize their own avatars (or use initials), and the redesigned interface helps reinforce routines and independence.

AI-Powered Support for Teachers

To support teachers, ClassDojo created Sidekick, an AI assistant that helps reduce busywork and give teachers more time with students. Sidekick assists with lesson planning, admin tasks, and everyday classroom workflows—and continues to evolve based on teacher feedback.

“Teachers tell us Sidekick saves them hours each week,” said Dr. Stevens. “They feel more prepared and more present with students plus they don’t have to leave a proven tool that they are using on a daily basis.”

Seamless Oversight and IT Control

ClassDojo for Districts now offers automated rostering and integration with

SIS systems, ClassLink, or SFTP—reducing manual setup and syncing data on students, staff, and families daily. Staff logins are secured with Google or Microsoft SSO, and multi-factor authentication (MFA) is available for added protection.

Communication records—including text, images, videos, and files—are easy to audit by authorized personnel. Search by school, date range, or staff member, and export via time-limited secure links.

Coming in 2026

Future updates will include teacher-to-student messaging, attendance-based alerts via SIS, automated voice calls to households, and integration with district social media channels such as Facebook and Instagram.

Dr. Stevens concluded, “Districts are often forced to choose between innovation and affordability—but with ClassDojo, they don’t have to. These upcoming features are designed to replace outdated, expensive systems with something better: a simple, unified platform that helps schools reach families more effectively. And best of all, it’s free.” [IX](#)

www.classdojo.com/

Making School Part of the Community

David Nungaray suggests five ways to support multilingual students and make families feel welcomed

Multilingual learners are the fastest-growing population of students in our country. If you think about the history and legacy of multilingual learners and young people who speak languages other than English in our schools and communities, they've always been here, all along the way, and their numbers are exponentially growing.

Multilingual learners and families are not a monolith, which means the levels of support that we provide have to be nuanced and personalized. We also have to think critically and deeply in terms of how to engage these students and not simply assume they're unable to do something just because they can't speak the English language fluently.

Five Strategies That Work

Two-thirds of multilingual learners nationwide are currently in grades pre-K through five—the very ages when families are learning how to navigate their children's school systems. Many times, those first impressions carry over right into middle and high school, which makes this early learning period especially crucial for families and caregivers who want to know how a school is going to work for their children.

When I became a dual language teacher, it was great to see the blending of languages and cultures. I started in a two-way dual language program, then became an assistant principal academic dean at a middle school that also had dual language growing into it. I founded a school as an associate principal, and then eventually I got to return back to the home campus where I had started my educational career.

Across that whole timeline I consistently saw that when we engaged and built connections with our multilingual families, they would show up when we asked them to participate in their children's education. Here are five different strategies that work well when supporting multilingual families and students:

1. Put on your listening hat. I encourage schools to engage in some sort of initial listening tour focused on hearing from families. You can send out a survey to find out what they're most looking forward to and what kind of information they need. Getting feedback and suggestions from families in really authentic ways makes a big difference. At back-to-school time, for example, think about what families want

to know (e.g., Where can they buy the school spirit shirts? Is there going to be a back-to-school event every single year?). When I was principal, we'd do a summer movie night that gave families a chance to meet teachers and other families.

2. Host events that encourage parent-to-parent connection. Because I was a K–8 principal, we also had a “kinder camp.” Families would come, and the kids would spend some time with their new teachers and get acclimated to their new classrooms. Families engaged in language and culture stories with one another, which gave them yet another opportunity to connect with one another. There's so much value in that relationship between teacher, parent, and family member, but also if you can build relationships between families, it can be an even more powerful engagement tool. That way, families become a part of not just their own kids' education, but they think about the well-being of *all* kids in the community.

3. Use tech to make your communications consistent. When I first became principal, families gave us feedback that there were too many different communications platforms, so we streamlined and talked with the teachers and families. We selected ClassDojo as the tool to help us provide consistency for families, who felt like things were changing every single year. Providing consistency in how we communicated kept families feeling “in the loop” about what was going on with their kids' education and with upcoming opportunities, especially back-to-school. So much information gets disseminated at the beginning of the school year—a juncture where it's important for families to connect with one another and feel like there's an open door (both literally and figuratively). That all starts with good communication and the tools that support it.

4. Translate it for them. Families appreciate being communicated to in their own language, and thankfully the platform we selected offers translation into many different languages. There are times when you strategically want to make sure that you facilitate things in families' languages. In my work now, there are some districts that I work with that have translators for the

top six languages, and that makes a huge difference in terms of giving families access to information. Sometimes it's just nice for them to have the whole conversation in their languages. If someone on your staff speaks Spanish and is willing to serve in that capacity, it really helps break down some of the barriers to good two-way communication. Hosting meetings in families' languages fully engages them.

5. Get families involved. We established a family engagement committee, and through that we learned that families living in an apartment building just a quarter-mile away from the school weren't showing up much. We pretty much only saw them at registration. So, we worked with the apartment complex to get our flyers up in the complex and hosted an event at a nearby location. We got some very useful feedback at that meeting, where we learned that one of the families, which had a grandparent whom they were taking care of, was dealing with a mobility issue in getting a student to the school. Being able to host an event closer to that apartment complex helped us really increase engagement. And all it really took was a teacher-led initiative in which a team called the complex and asked if we could put up our event flyers in both English and Spanish. It was incredible to get the families' input about why that worked and what else they wanted to see.

Think Outside of the Box

Most families want their kids to go to school, grow up, and do great things in life, whether that's in high school, college, or the work world. It often just takes us reaching out to them and being at their door, if you will, to make those aspirations a reality. Sometimes the expectation is that families should come to the school, but I say, let's go to them. Let's get out in the community. Let's show them how much we care. Don't be afraid to do things that are out of the box.

David Nungaray is a national bilingual consultant and co-founder of the Gente Empowerment Network. He also is the co-author of *Breaking Down the Monolingual Wall*. His work spans multiple states, including his home state of California.