Better Communication Through AI
New America School Aurora, Charter School Institute
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New America School Aurora celebrated its 20th year this year. The Aurora campus primarily serves immigrants, refugees, and under-served populations in grades 9-12. There are over 10 languages represented in the student body of approximately 70 students. Many students are over-age and under-credited with limited academic English language skills.

Many electronic translation services are only applicable to online or email communication, which many New America families do not access due to a variety of factors including resource limitations. To increase communication accessibility and reduce burden on school staff, New America has utilized AI (ChatGPT and Google Translate) to create on-demand translation of hard copy communication and resources.

The Principal at New America Aurora has experimented with several AI tools to increase efficacy and decrease workload. Due to the small size of the school, all staff at New America fill multiple roles. The transient nature of the student population means that the languages represented in the student body change over the course of the year. After experimenting with different AI tools, the Principal realized that the most effective way to connect with families and students is hard-copy communication. Additionally, by translating all materials into all represented languages, students can choose which language is most accessible to their family.

The Principal translated all family communication in real-time and printed on a daily basis. The school used hanging file folders to organize communication by language, and students selected which language was most relevant to their family on their way out of the door each day. Teachers also had copies of the communication to send home with students to ensure everyone has access to the right information at the right time. Additionally, families received a text message in their selected language notifying them that important information was coming home with their student. In addition to hard copies of communication, students could scan a QR code which would generate the same information in their language of choice. Since implementing this practice, family attendance at conferences and events has increased notably.

AI products are both cost effective and time-saving. Using AI to streamline and increase efficacy of communication is a great way to dip your toe into the waters of AI.