Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation

Preparing Educators for AI-Supported Instructional Planning

EPP Considerations for Developing Teachers' Professional Judgment for Responsible Practice with AI

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How to Use This Resource

The Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) has established broad groundwork for educator preparation programs (EPPs) considering artificial intelligence through *Navigating AI in Educator Preparation: Considerations for EPPs* (CAEP, n.d.). This resource carries that work into the practice of teaching. It focuses on how EPPs can help candidates and practicing educators use—or decide not to use—AI while planning instruction, without relinquishing the pedagogical knowledge, disciplinary expertise, relational understanding, and professional accountability that define teaching.

The primary audience is EPP leaders, faculty, clinical educators, and P–12 and community partners. Programs may use the resource to examine current preparation, create a shared language for candidate learning, strengthen connections between coursework and clinical practice, and support professional learning for the educators who prepare and mentor candidates. The five-action process and four quality questions are adaptable guides rather than a prescribed lesson-planning method.

The scope is intentionally specific: teacher use of AI in instructional planning and the professional learning needed to support that practice. It does not address student AI literacy or establish protocols for students' direct use of AI. It does not endorse a product, provide legal advice, or create an accreditation requirement. Application remains governed by applicable law, institutional and partner policies, approved systems, and role-specific authority.

The resource has three parts:

- Part I establishes the conceptual foundation.
- Part II translates that foundation into a practical planning process and quality questions.
- Part III suggests how EPPs can develop this practice and understand its relationship to CAEP, InTASC, and ISTE expectations.

Part I. Foundations for Responsible Practice

1. Purpose, Audience, and Scope

Artificial intelligence (henceforth AI) increasingly influences the settings in which educators learn and work. AI appears in curriculum materials, instructional resources, assessment platforms, communication systems, and general-purpose applications that educators may use to organize information, compare ideas, create drafts, or adapt materials. The capabilities and interfaces will continue to change. The durable preparation challenge is therefore not mastery of a particular tool, but instead the development of teachers who can recognize when AI may add educational value, place appropriate limits around its contribution, judge what it produces, explain consequential choices, and remain responsible for the resulting instruction.

This resource uses **AI-supported instructional planning** to mean planning in which an educator intentionally involves an AI system in some bounded part of the work. AI might help organize a set of resources, compare an objective with proposed evidence of learning, suggest alternative representations of a concept, or identify possible weaknesses in a draft. In each case, AI contributes to the work and does not acquire professional authority.

The central proposition is straightforward: AI can expand what educators are able to examine, imagine, compare, and create. The accountable educator remains responsible for educational purposes, the quality of the design, the protection of people and information, and the consequences of the decision.

This proposition makes non-delegation a through line rather than a final checkpoint. The educator identifies the instructional purpose, decides which information may be used and determines what AI may contribute. Throughout the process, the educator verifies important content and claims and judges the design against professional criteria, seeking relevant human expertise when appropriate. The same responsibility includes declining AI when it does not materially improve the work or when a validated resource, direct professional conversation, or non-AI process is more appropriate.

For this resource, responsible stewardship means the capacity to use, limit, question, explain, monitor, revise, or decline AI in service of learning while retaining human accountability. Stewardship is not passive oversight of a nearly completed AI product; it is active authorship of the planning decision. A teacher should be able to explain the plan without treating an AI output as the rationale and defend the content and

pedagogical choices. In addition, they should be able to identify what was independently checked, acknowledge meaningful uncertainty, and specify what will be observed when the plan is enacted.

These expectations are extensions of established professional practice. This resource will make continual reference to three major standards frameworks:

- The CAEP 2022 Initial-Level Standards address candidate knowledge of learners, content, instructional practice, professional responsibility, technology integration, collaboration, clinical preparation, and progressive development (CAEP, 2021).
- The InTASC standards and learning progressions describe context-responsive planning, assessment, instructional strategy, ethical practice, reflection, and collaboration (Council of Chief State School Officers [CCSSO], 2013).
- The ISTE Standards for Educators place technology in the service of learning and professional practice rather than treating tool operation as the end goal (International Society for Technology in Education [ISTE], 2024).

None of these standards requires the use of generative AI. Together, they provide an established professional foundation for judging its use.

The subject of this resource is the teacher's planning practice. Assessment is considered only insofar as teachers identify acceptable evidence of learning, design or evaluate assessments, and interpret evidence to improve a plan. Institutional policy, procurement, cybersecurity, legislation, and broad organizational governance are important but are not re-developed here; readers should use earlier CAEP guidance and current local requirements for those purposes.

Responsibility for preparation is shared but not interchangeable. EPP leaders create coherent conditions for learning; faculty integrate the practice into content, methods, assessment, and instructional-design experiences; clinical educators help candidates interpret it in authentic settings; and P–12 and community partners contribute local knowledge, policy expectations, and professional expertise. Candidates assume increasing responsibility as their knowledge develops, but they do not exceed the authority granted within a clinical placement. The teacher of record and designated program or partner personnel retain the formal responsibilities assigned to their roles.

2. A Learner-Centered View of AI-Supported Planning

Responsible AI-supported planning begins with learners and learning rather than with the availability of a tool. The first professional questions regarding AI use are, "What learning matters here, what do I know about this setting, and what planning decision needs to be made?" A polished activity may still be factually wrong, instructionally incoherent and inaccessible, culturally narrow, misaligned with the curriculum, or even impractical to enact. The relevant measure of the quality of AI-supported instructional materials is the quality of the resulting learning design and not the speed, novelty, volume, or apparent sophistication of the output.

Instructional planning is an act of professional interpretation and judgement. Teachers bring disciplinary and pedagogical knowledge as well as conceptual awareness including knowledge of learners and communities, understanding of curriculum and standards, and awareness of resources and constraints. They decide how those elements relate in a particular setting. AI does not share the teacher's relationships, history with learners, ethical obligations, or responsibility for what happens next. It can process descriptions and detect patterns in supplied information; information about people is not equivalent to knowledge with people. A generated profile, simulated perspective, or inferred preference cannot replace what learners, families, colleagues, and communities communicate through appropriate human relationships.

Within those limits, AI can make useful contributions. It may help a teacher—

- organize or compare planning information;
- examine whether proposed evidence is aligned with a learning goal;
- surface assumptions, inconsistencies, or unanswered questions;
- generate several possible approaches, explanations, representations, or sequences;
- challenge a favored option by identifying counterexamples or implementation risks;
- draft or adapt material for subsequent teacher review; or
- reduce low-value work through summarizing, reformatting, or other routine transformations.

These uses can widen the possibilities a teacher considers and return time to higher-value professional work. Yet efficiency and educational value are not synonymous. Producing ten activities instead of two is not an improvement if the additional volume

creates decision burden, weakens coherence, or consumes time that would be better spent understanding learners, conferring with a colleague, examining student work, or refining a strong existing resource. The OECD cautions that improved performance on a task with generative AI does not necessarily produce learning and emphasizes purposeful use guided by clear teaching principles (OECD, 2026a). The same distinction applies to planning: Faster production does not by itself indicate better teaching.

AI outputs should enter the process as hypotheses, proposals, and prototypes. Their confident language may contain invented details, fabricated citations, inaccurate calculations, flattened disciplinary ideas, biased representations, or pedagogical assumptions that do not fit the context. Asking the same system to critique its own response can be useful for generating possible objections; but it is not independent verification. Important claims and materials must be checked against authoritative sources, validated curriculum, reliable evidence, and qualified human expertise.

Planning also remains provisional. A responsible design is a well-reasoned hypothesis about how to support learning in a particular setting. Enactment provides new information: what learners understood, where confusion emerged, who participated, whether supports were accessible, how pacing worked, and whether the intended evidence actually became visible. Teachers interpret that evidence and decide what to retain, adjust, or discontinue. AI may help organize appropriately protected observations or generate possible explanations, but it cannot determine their meaning or establish causation.

This view protects teacher agency and educator sustainability. International guidance emphasizes that AI should augment teachers' work while preserving professional autonomy, participation, expertise, dignity, and wellbeing (International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030, 2025; OECD, 2026b). In addition, AI-enabled planning practice that generates unnecessary materials or turns every design into a technology project is not sustainable. Productive use should strengthen the teacher's ability to reason, collaborate, and respond without eroding the ability to plan without AI. Importantly, AI must never displace the human relationships at the center of education.

For EPPs, the developmental target is therefore accountable professional judgment. Candidates should learn to use AI without confusing access with authority, assistance with expertise, or production with learning. They should be able to make an initial judgment without a tool, recognize the limits of their own expertise in order to seek help appropriately, and explain how AI did or did not improve a specific planning

decision. Faculty and clinical educators can make this reasoning visible by modeling not only successful uses, but also verification, revision, uncertainty, and informed decisions to proceed without AI.

3. Guiding Principles for Preparation and Practice

The following principles describe conditions that should remain true whenever AI contributes to instructional planning. They are not a compliance checklist. Together, they establish the professional commitments that the process in Part II puts into action.

Learning and Disciplinary Purpose Come First

AI-supported planning should begin with a defensible instructional purpose. Before involving AI, the educator should be clear about the intended learning outcomes, the disciplinary ideas or practices, and the standards or curriculum that anchor the work. The educator must also identify the evidence that would indicate progress. AI may help examine or refine these elements, but it should not establish them simply because it can quickly produce plausible objectives, activities, or assessments.

Validated curriculum, authoritative content sources, evidence-informed pedagogy, and professional knowledge remain anchors. An AI-produced lesson is not a neutral starting point: It may embed a weak theory of learning, treat a standard as a set of matching words, alter the construct an assessment was intended to measure, or simplify content until disciplinary meaning is lost. Teachers should be able to articulate the learning logic connecting purpose with design and evidence.

Learning-first use also requires proportionality. AI should have a material reason to be present. It may add value by enabling comparison across options, offering a genuinely useful alternative, helping detect a misalignment, or reducing a routine burden. If its contribution is cosmetic, duplicative, or disconnected from learning, use is difficult to justify.

EPPs can reinforce this principle by locating AI-supported planning within content methods, instructional design, assessment, and clinical practice. Candidates should encounter AI in the same places where they are already expected to demonstrate content accuracy and pedagogical reasoning. Any AI-assisted instructional planning should be judged by whether it produces a coherent and defensible learning design.

Learners, Context, and Equity Shape Professional Decisions

Planning is situated in a real community with relevant context. Consider the many factors that influence instructional decisions: learner development, language, culture, strengths, interests, prior experiences, accessibility needs, the curriculum, available resources, community expectations, and the educator's own positionality. These factors are among the critical data which inform instructional planning.

More information is not automatically better context. Responsible educators select the minimum information necessary for the planning decision and determine whether it is accurate, relevant, and sufficiently objective. They represent assets alongside needs, preserve uncertainty where the evidence is incomplete, and avoid allowing prior performance to predetermine future opportunity. This is the human-led professional judgement that safeguards against harmful bias that may appear in AI-generated instructional planning. Context should be revisable as teachers learn more.

Equity requires attention to both representation and consequence. Teachers should ask whose experiences informed the plan and which assumptions are being treated as normal; they must also consider who may benefit, who may carry additional burden, and whose voice may be missing. AI can suggest perspectives to investigate; however, AI cannot testify to lived experience. When a decision has meaningful implications for learners, families, or communities, human perspectives should be sought through authorized and role-appropriate channels.

This principle also resists superficial personalization. Changing reading level, format, or examples may improve access in some circumstances. However, variation is not automatically responsive and can unintentionally lower expectations, narrow opportunity, or reduce a learner to a category. A responsive plan maintains rigor and belonging while adjusting pathways, supports, representations, or conditions for participation.

AI Supports Professional Thinking without Replacing Judgment

The educator should give AI a bounded contribution tied to a real planning need. “Generate a lesson” collapses multiple professional decisions into a single request. A more responsible approach separates the work:

- compare an objective with the proposed evidence
- identify assumptions in the framing
- generate several alternatives under stated constraints

- challenge a selected approach
- transform a teacher-approved resource into another format for review.

Bounded contributions make it easier to evaluate what AI added and where human judgment remains necessary.

Every output remains provisional. Teachers should independently verify all AI output with a particular focus on consequential facts, calculations, quotations, citations, and recommendations. They should compare proposed pedagogy with established knowledge and examine whether the AI has changed the intended learning, cognitive demand, or assessed construct.

Professional judgment also includes metacognition about the interaction itself. For instance, an early AI suggestion may anchor later thinking. In addition, repeated reliance may reduce a teacher's confidence in unaided planning or weaken the ability to notice when a proposal rests on poor pedagogy. Candidates should learn to monitor these effects and pause before accepting a polished response. They should also work without AI often enough to maintain professional capability.

Human accountability is therefore substantive. The accountable educator must understand and be able to defend the design, identify AI's material influence, explain what was checked or changed, and accept responsibility for whether the plan is used.

Safety, Privacy, Transparency, and Integrity Are Part of Planning

Safe and ethical practice begins before information enters an AI system. Educators should use only authorized systems and should determine what information is needed for the planning purpose. Personal, sensitive, confidential, or protected information should not be entered without legitimate authorization and appropriate safeguards. Where information may be used, it should be minimized and de-identified as required by law and policy.

Integrity extends beyond privacy. Teachers should verify accuracy, examine bias and representation, preserve accessibility, and respect intellectual property. They should understand what transparency is required in their setting and be able to explain AI's material contribution when that contribution matters to professional review or trust. This is a global concept: The Australian framework, European Commission guidance, and UNESCO guidance all connect responsible educational AI use with human oversight, privacy, fairness, transparency, and educational purpose (Australian

Government Department of Education, 2023; European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, 2026; Miao & Holmes, 2023).

A non-AI alternative should remain available when it better protects learning, privacy, fairness, access, safety, or trust. The responsible question is whether AI use is proportionate to the educational benefit and defensible within the educator's role.

EPPs should not place candidates in situations where they must infer rules for themselves. Faculty and partners should identify approved systems and applicable boundaries, make role-specific authority clear, and align expectations across coursework and clinical settings. Candidates should practice making decisions within those boundaries rather than learning safety as an abstract list detached from instructional work.

Responsible Practice Develops Through Collaboration and Reflection

No teacher or AI system holds all the knowledge needed for every planning decision. Colleagues and specialists may recognize disciplinary errors, accessibility barriers, cultural assumptions, ethical concerns, or practical constraints that an individual misses. Learners, families, and community members may contribute knowledge that cannot be generated from a dataset. Collaboration strengthens judgment when it brings relevant expertise and human perspectives to a consequential decision.

The depth of review should be proportionate: A familiar, low-stakes adaptation using no sensitive information may warrant a brief peer check or ordinary supervisory conversation. A major departure from validated practice, uncertain content outside the teacher's expertise, or use involving protected information may require additional specialist, leadership, or policy review.

Collaboration does not transfer ownership. The person with formal responsibility owns the final decision with regard to AI-assisted outputs and the judicious use of AI in instructional planning. In clinical preparation, candidates should learn to seek feedback and exercise judgment within the authority established by the teacher of record, the EPP, and the partner setting.

Reflection on AI within the instructional planning process continues through enactment. Teachers examine evidence of learning through observation of student engagement and assessment data. They make warranted adjustments including revision, discontinuation, or retention of a AI-generated content. Continuous learning around the use of AI includes reflection and response to evidence.

Part II. From Principle to Practice

4. An Adaptable Five-Action Process for AI-Supported Instructional Planning

The following process gives EPPs and educators a concise way to translate the principles of human-led AI-enabled instructional planning into practice. These steps can be integrated with established approaches including backward design, universal design for learning, and curriculum-based planning. Though the specific actions associated with AI in instructional planning are presented in a useful order, planning is not always linear. For instance. verification may reveal that the instructional need was poorly framed; human review may expose missing context; enactment may change what the teacher understands about learners or the design. Returning to an earlier action is a sign of responsive judgment, not a process failure.

Across all five actions, the division of responsibility remains stable: AI may contribute information, possibilities, drafts, comparisons, or critiques; an authorized and accountable human establishes purpose, judges quality, makes consequential decisions, and ultimately learns from what occurs.

What becomes increasingly evident throughout the process that follows is that effective AI-supported instructional planning depends on teachers' pedagogical and content-area expertise. At every stage, teachers must exercise human oversight and make consequential judgments about the accuracy, appropriateness, and instructional value of AI-generated outputs. Without preparation that develops the knowledge and professional judgment required for these decisions, teachers may lack a defensible basis for determining whether an AI contribution is suitable for a particular learning purpose, group of learners, or instructional context.

The five actions that follow are written in direct, declarative language to make the professional responsibilities within each step clear. Although they may read like instructions, they should be understood as adaptable recommendations rather than a fixed script or required program model. EPPs can interpret and embed these actions within their existing curricula, clinical experiences, instructional-planning frameworks, policies, and partnership contexts. The intent is to offer a shared starting structure from which programs can develop approaches suited to their local conditions.

Process at a Glance

Action	Teacher's professional work	AI may contribute
1. Prepare and Bound	Define the learning decision, evidence, context, constraints, and limits on AI use.	Organize approved information, compare stated elements, or surface questions and inconsistencies.
2. Explore	Decide whether AI adds value and consider more than one feasible pathway.	Generate, compare, challenge, or adapt bounded possibilities under explicit constraints.
3. Verify and Select	Independently check quality and choose, combine, revise, or reject AI-generated outputs.	Apply teacher-supplied criteria, identify possible weaknesses, or support comparison.
4. Review and Own	Seek proportionate human expertise and decide how to respond; make accountability explicit.	Organize feedback or show differences among revisions without determining whose judgment prevails.
5. Enact and Learn	Implement within authorized roles, interpret evidence, adjust, and decide what to retain or change.	Organize protected observations or generate hypotheses for human examination.

Action 1: Prepare and Bound

Begin by defining the instructional decision before asking AI for a solution. The educator may decide to use AI at any point along the instructional planning process. To effectively participate in this process, AI must have access to critical content including the intended learning, the disciplinary or curricular anchor, and the acceptable evidence of progress. The educator then states the focused planning need. Example needs include improving the sequence of an existing lesson, considering another representation of a difficult concept, examining alignment between an assessment and an objective, or adapting a validated resource to a known constraint. A focused need helps prevent the tool from quietly defining the problem.

The teacher also identifies the context needed for a sound planning decision, grounding the work in verified knowledge of learners and their prior learning while accounting for accessibility, available resources, and the expectations of the curriculum and setting. Information should be accurate, current, authorized, and limited to what

the planning decision requires. Observations should be distinguished from interpretations, and uncertainty should be named.

Before any interaction, the educator establishes boundaries. Consider the following questions:

- Which systems are authorized for this work?
- What information may and may not be entered?
- Which curriculum, standards, content sources, or professional criteria are nonnegotiable?
- What decisions must remain with the teacher, teacher of record, specialist, or other designated authority?
- What constraints—time, resources, access, workload, policy, or setting—must a viable option respect?
- Would AI add enough value to justify its use?

AI can assist at this point by organizing already-approved planning information, comparing the stated objective with the proposed evidence, identifying apparent inconsistencies, or generating questions the educator has not yet answered. It should not decide whether contextual information is trustworthy, necessary, fair, or permissible. Those judgments require professional and local knowledge.

At the end of this step, the educator should be able to explain the process to another person and trace how the learning purpose and context shaped the decision, including why AI was involved and what boundaries governed its contribution. This reasoning should remain provisional and be revisited as evidence or circumstances change rather than preserved as a permanent account of learners.

For teacher candidates, this action makes professional reasoning visible before the quality of an AI output can influence judgment. Novices may need a structured planning brief, validated context sources, and direct guidance about approved systems. With greater expertise, candidates can assume more responsibility for deciding what context matters and how tightly to bound the interaction.

Action 2: Explore

Exploration should widen professional thinking without displacing the teacher's purpose. After establishing the planning brief, the educator decides whether AI can make a useful contribution. That contribution should be named in plain language through prompting that directs AI tools to a specific action: compare, organize,

suggest alternatives, expose assumptions, challenge a draft, adapt a teacher-approved resource, or create a limited prototype for review. The task asked of any AI tool should never be to "make the lesson;" rather, AI should be leveraged to help the teacher examine a particular part of the design.

When AI is used to generate possibilities, the educator should request a small number of substantively different options under the established constraints. Prompting AI tools to provide options invites human review and judgement into the design of the workflow. However, superficial changes in wording or format are not meaningful alternatives if the instructional approach remains the same. Useful variation might involve a different sequence, representation, form of practice, source of feedback, structure for participation, use of materials or space, or way to make disciplinary thinking visible. The teacher decides which dimensions are educationally relevant.

AI-generated ideas should be considered alongside validated curriculum, teacher-generated options, available resources, and human expertise. Existing materials are not merely content for the AI to replace. They often carry hard-won knowledge about what sound, accessible instruction requires in that setting—knowledge a newly generated option may lack. Exploration can involve combining a promising idea with an established resource rather than discarding what already works.

The educator should resist two predictable pressures: The first is treating the initial polished AI response as the plan and spending the rest of the process polishing it. The second is continuing to generate alternatives until comparison becomes impractical. A useful stopping point is reached when the educator has a manageable set of different, context-feasible possibilities that can be evaluated against explicit criteria.

AI can also support exploration by challenging a favored idea. It may be asked to identify assumptions, generate counterexamples, or simulate likely implementation difficulties. This use can create productive friction; but the resulting critique remains another proposal. The teacher determines whether the concern is credible and whether it warrants evidence or human consultation. The educator should also be able to say what AI contributed, how the options differ, and why each remains connected to the original learning purpose.

Action 3: Verify and Select

AI outputs influence professional design through human-led judgment. The educator now compares any AI-generated alternatives and independently verifies the claims and

materials that matter. Verification should be proportional to the decision, but it should not be skipped because an output is familiar, confident, or well formatted.

At minimum, the teacher examines each of the following:

- **Content and sources:** Are facts, examples, calculations, quotations, and citations accurate? Does the material preserve disciplinary meaning and appropriate nuance?
- **Learning logic:** Do the experience, practice, feedback, and evidence support the intended learning? Is cognitive demand appropriate? Does the assessment still elicit the knowledge or performance it is intended to reveal?
- **Learners and access:** Are participation, language, culture, accessibility, support, and productive challenge addressed without lowering expectations or assigning learners to fixed categories?
- **Ethics and integrity:** Is information use authorized and minimized? Are bias, fairness, attribution, intellectual property, transparency, and foreseeable harm adequately addressed?
- **Viability:** Can the design be prepared, enacted, monitored, and revised with the available people, time, materials, spaces, technology, and support?

Independent verification means going beyond the AI tool itself. The teacher may consult authoritative disciplinary sources, adopted curriculum, standards, research, policy, a content expert, a specialist, or another qualified professional. Asking an AI system to provide citations does not establish that the sources exist or support the claim. Asking the system whether its own answer is correct may produce useful critique but does not establish accuracy.

Selection is not limited to accepting or rejecting a whole output. The teacher then decides whether any generated idea merits use and, if so, how it should be adapted; an established non-AI resource may remain the stronger instructional choice. The professional should retain a concise rationale for consequential choices: why the selected design fits the purpose and context, what was independently checked, what was changed or rejected, and what uncertainty remains.

This is a critical point for EPP learning. Candidates should not be rewarded for rescuing a weak AI output through extensive effort when a stronger validated resource was already available. Nor should they be expected to discover every error without access to content expertise. Programs can design tasks that require candidates to locate

authoritative support, recognize the limits of their knowledge, and seek review when a claim exceeds their competence.

Action 4: Review and Own

Some planning decisions warrant another human perspective before enactment. The educator determines the appropriate level of human review and seeks expertise suited to the decision. Scrutiny should increase in proportion to the design's departure from established practice and the uncertainty or consequences it creates, particularly when sensitive information is involved. The aim is proportionate review: enough scrutiny to strengthen the decision without converting routine planning into a burdensome approval system.

A brief peer conversation may be appropriate for a familiar, low-stakes adaptation. More consequential work may require a content specialist, special educator, multilingual-learning specialist, accessibility expert, clinical educator, instructional leader, community partner, or designated policy authority. AI should not impersonate these perspectives during a review phase. It can leverage that perspective as a context cue to develop a first draft output or, even better, generate questions that a specialist might raise. However, AI cannot provide the situated expertise, formal authority, or accountable voice of the person.

Meaningful review requires enough transparency to evaluate the reasoning, not merely the finished material. The educator should provide a concise account of the design and the reasoning behind it, making clear how AI influenced the work, how that influence was checked, and what will require attention during enactment. This account should give reviewers enough visibility to determine whether the instructional reasoning is sound and the design is responsible and workable in context. A signature or general approval without access to that reasoning is not substantive review.

Ownership should be explicit before the plan is used. In a classroom, the teacher of record retains responsibility for instruction. In clinical preparation, a candidate may propose, analyze, and revise a design while acting under the authority and expectations of the teacher of record and the partnership. The plan should identify who can authorize use, who will monitor implementation, and who will make immediate or subsequent revisions.

Action 5: Enact and Learn

A reviewed and verified AI-assisted instructional plan is a reasoned design that must now encounter the actual learning setting. The educator enacts the plan within the

authorized role and attends to the intended evidence of learning as well as the conditions surrounding it: participation, understanding, confusion, accessibility, pacing, relationships, resource use, and unexpected consequences.

Teachers make immediate adjustments when professional judgment warrants them. They may make targeted adjustments in response to what they observe or return to a validated resource when it provides the sounder instructional path. Fidelity to a plan should not override responsiveness to learners. At the same time, one isolated event should not be treated as a stable pattern, and correlation should not be presented as proof that AI—or any single feature—caused an outcome.

AI may assist after enactment by organizing appropriately protected observations, comparing the intended and actual sequence, summarizing patterns in non-sensitive information, or proposing hypotheses for examination. The educator determines what the evidence means. Reflection should rely on the minimum information needed and should not become continuous monitoring or surveillance. Learner information remains governed by authorization, confidentiality, and professional purpose.

The teacher then decides what to retain, revise, or discontinue. Revision may concern the design, the original framing, the contextual assumptions, or the way AI was involved. If evidence supports the plan, retaining it is a legitimate outcome. Iteration should increase quality and professional understanding.

For EPPs, enactment closes the distance between a compelling planning artifact and actual professional practice. Candidates need opportunities, under appropriate supervision, to see how plans meet reality and to revise their reasoning accordingly. Clinical evidence should be interpreted cautiously and in combination with other information with the goal of examining whether the candidate planned, enacted, interpreted, and improved instruction responsibly.

5. Four Questions for Judging Planning Quality

The five actions describe what an educator does. The following questions provide a compact lens for judging quality throughout the process. They are deliberately broad so that EPPs can connect them to existing planning models, course expectations, clinical conversations, and professional criteria. A serious concern may require the educator to pause, revise, seek expertise, or choose a non-AI approach. The questions should support reasoning rather than function as a mechanical pass–fail checklist.

Is the Design Educationally Worthwhile and Trustworthy?

The plan should have a defensible learning purpose and disciplinary foundation. The educator should be able to—

- explain how the learning goal, experience, practice, feedback, and evidence relate;
- verify important content and sources; preserve appropriate rigor;
- and show that the assessment or other evidence still reveals the intended learning.

Standards alignment should be substantive, not a superficial match of phrases. Accessibility and support should expand participation without quietly changing the construct or lowering expectations.

Trustworthiness also depends on provenance and independent checking. The educator knows which elements came from validated curriculum, which were adapted or assembled, and where AI materially influenced the work. Claims are checked through authoritative sources or qualified expertise rather than through the generating system alone.

Does the Design Honor People, Communities, and the Wider Environment?

Any AI use should protect human dignity, agency, belonging, access, and opportunity. Responsible AI-assisted instructional planning approaches learners from a strengths-based perspective and treats data as partial evidence rather than a complete account of who they are or what they can achieve. When human experience is consequential to the design, human perspectives from learners, families, colleagues, specialists, or communities should be included through appropriate channels. AI-generated personas, simulated viewpoints, and statistical patterns are not substitutes for human voice.

Responsible stewardship also considers the wider environmental resources that AI use depends upon. AI systems operate through data-center infrastructure with significant energy demands and associated environmental effects (International Energy Agency [IEA], 2025). The exact impact of an individual use may be difficult for an educator to determine, and systemic decisions belong partly to institutions and providers. Still, teachers and EPPs can apply a proportionality principle:

- avoid resource-intensive generation that does not materially improve learning, student outcomes, or teacher capacity

- use lower-resource or non-AI approaches when they adequately meet the need
- reserve AI for contributions with a defensible educational benefit

Can the Design Be Enacted Responsibly and Sustained?

A strong idea must work in the classroom setting. The educator considers whether the design can be implemented and sustained under the actual conditions of the setting, including how it would hold up when resources are limited or technology fails. Added complexity should be proportionate to the expected benefit. A design that depends on unavailable technology, creates hidden work for the teacher, or shifts burden to learners or colleagues without support is not viable because it is innovative on paper.

Responsible enactment includes a workable non-AI or lower-technology alternative when access, reliability, privacy, or educational purpose requires one. It also protects time for relationships, observation, interpretation, feedback, and collaboration. Sustainability should be judged by whether the practice strengthens human capacity and can be maintained responsibly.

Can an Accountable Human Explain, Monitor, and Revise the Decision?

The responsible educator can explain how the design was developed, how AI influenced the decision, and why the resulting plan is defensible. The account should make the basis for professional judgment traceable while acknowledging what remains uncertain and what evidence may warrant revision. Formal authority is clear. In clinical practice, the candidate's role and the teacher of record's responsibility are not conflated.

Accountability requires the real ability to change course. The teacher can reject an AI recommendation, revise the plan during enactment, escalate a concern, or discontinue the use. Traceability should be sufficient for professional learning and trust without demanding exhaustive prompt archives or creating surveillance. The essential record is the human decision path: what mattered, who decided, what was checked, whose expertise informed the choice, and what will happen next.

Representative Failure Warnings

Several recurring patterns can signal that professional judgment is weakening:

- **Purpose follows production.** A lesson is generated first and a standard or objective is attached afterward.

- **More data is mistaken for better context.** Unnecessary personal information is supplied, interpretations become fixed facts, or a learner is represented primarily through deficits.
- **The first fluent answer becomes the plan.** Cosmetic revisions replace comparison among meaningful alternatives.
- **AI self-critique is treated as verification.** The same AI system is relied upon to establish the accuracy of its claims, sources, or design.
- **Human approval becomes ceremonial.** The teacher cannot explain the rationale or meaningfully change the design because judgment has already been delegated.
- **Innovation creates unexamined burden.** AI-generated complexity consumes more time, energy, attention, or environmental resources without a commensurate improvement in learning.
- **Reflection becomes surveillance or compulsory novelty.** More information is collected than can be responsibly used, or a strong design is changed merely to demonstrate iteration.

Part III. Supporting Teacher Practice in Educator Preparation Programs

6. Relationship to Earlier CAEP Guidance

This resource should be used with *Navigating AI in Educator Preparation: Considerations for EPPs* (CAEP, n.d.). The earlier guidance provides the broader institutional orientation to AI integration. EPPs should continue to use that resource, current CAEP materials, and applicable institutional and partner guidance when addressing those responsibilities.

The present resource moves from institutional readiness to a narrower professional question: How should EPPs begin preparing teachers to act responsibly when AI contributes to instructional planning? Its contribution is a teacher-practice lens: learning-first purpose, minimum-necessary context, bounded AI assistance, independent validation, human review, accountable decision-making, and learning from enactment. It also offers EPPs a way to consider candidate development and faculty or clinical-educator learning without treating AI proficiency as a separate professional identity.

The two resources therefore serve different but connected functions. Organizational safeguards make responsible practice possible; capable educators make those safeguards meaningful in actual planning decisions. Accordingly—

- A policy can identify which systems are approved, but educators still need to decide whether a proposed use is educationally worthwhile.
- A privacy rule can prohibit certain data, but educators still need to practice context minimization and distinguish human knowledge from data accumulation.
- A technology standard can establish broad expectations, but educators still need to verify content, defend pedagogy, and own the consequences of a design.

EPPs can use the earlier guidance to examine the environment in which preparation occurs and this resource to examine the professional practice being developed within that environment. Doing so keeps institutional and instructional responsibilities connected without duplicating the same work.

7. Supporting Teacher Practice within EPPs

The five-action process is a starting architecture for AI-enabled instructional planning that programs can use to examine what they already teach, identify gaps, and create progressively more authentic opportunities for responsible practice. The aim is coherence: Candidates should encounter consistent expectations about purpose, verification, privacy, human accountability, and reflection across coursework and clinical settings.

Map the Practice into Existing Preparation

EPPs can begin by locating where the underlying professional abilities already live within existing courses. Content and methods courses address disciplinary integrity, planning, and instructional strategy. Assessment coursework addresses evidence, validity, and interpretation. Courses addressing learners and learning develop contextual, developmental, cultural, linguistic, and accessibility knowledge. Educational technology experiences address tool evaluation and responsible integration. Clinical practice connects these forms of knowledge to real learners, local policy, enactment, and professional accountability.

A program-level conversation can ask the following guiding questions:

- Where do candidates define learning purpose and acceptable evidence before using a tool?
- Where do they practice selecting minimum-necessary context and protecting information?
- Where must they compare more than one option rather than accept a first output?
- Where do content faculty or other qualified professionals examine AI-influenced materials for accuracy and disciplinary meaning?
- Where do candidates explain AI's material contribution and their own decision path?
- Where do they receive feedback, enact a design, and revise from evidence?

The answers may point to a need for a new learning experience, but they may also reveal opportunities to strengthen an existing assignment, observation protocol, clinical conference, or portfolio. Integration is preferable to isolating AI-supported

planning in a tool demonstration with little connection to content, pedagogy, or practice.

Develop Capacity Progressively

Candidates need structured opportunities that reflect their developing expertise. Early experiences can take place within a tightly bounded environment in which candidates use approved systems and appropriately protected context while faculty model and closely review evaluation against trusted curriculum and clear professional criteria. A novice might compare a teacher-developed plan with several AI-assisted alternatives, identify factual or pedagogical weaknesses, and explain which elements should be rejected or revised. The task should make professional criteria visible without expecting the candidate to manage every uncertainty independently.

As candidates develop, they can assume greater ownership of the planning process, making increasingly independent decisions about the problem being addressed, the appropriate role of AI, and the limits of their own expertise. Clinical experiences can ask candidates to adapt planning to real constraints, explain their decisions to a teacher of record, interpret enactment evidence, and revise within partnership expectations. Independence should grow with demonstrated knowledge and judgment, not merely with time in the program.

Progress is best understood as a change in professional capability. A developing candidate moves from—

- following supplied boundaries to helping establish defensible boundaries;
- detecting obvious inaccuracies to evaluating disciplinary nuance and learning logic;
- reporting that AI was used to explaining how it influenced a decision;
- and revising a product to revising the reasoning and assumptions behind it.

Prompt complexity, output volume, and the number of tools used are weak proxies for that growth.

This developmental approach is consistent with UNESCO's progression from acquiring foundational AI competence to deepening and creating with greater professional agency, while keeping human-centered values and ethics across all levels (Miao & Cukurova, 2024).

Programs should also maintain meaningful non-AI planning opportunities. Candidates need to preserve the ability to reason from content, curriculum, evidence, and context without machine assistance. This supports appropriate dependence: AI becomes one possible resource within professional practice rather than the condition under which planning can occur.

Build Faculty and Clinical-Educator Coherence

Candidate learning depends on what faculty and clinical educators model. Programs can support these educators in making their reasoning visible: naming the instructional purpose, choosing or declining AI, limiting contextual information, independently verifying a claim, acknowledging uncertainty, consulting expertise, and revising after enactment. Modeling should include cases in which AI added value and cases in which it did not.

EPPs and partners should establish a common minimum language while respecting differences in discipline and setting. "Authorized AI tool," "minimum necessary information," "independent verification," "material contribution," "human review," and "teacher of record" are examples of terms that benefit from shared understanding. Partners can clarify local policy, the uses candidates may encounter, the information that may not enter a system, and who holds decision authority. Faculty can connect these boundaries to content and pedagogy rather than treating them as a separate compliance exercise.

Professional learning is most useful when centered on authentic planning decisions. Faculty and clinical educators can bring a real objective, curriculum resource, adaptation need, or anonymized case and work through the five actions. This creates an opportunity to compare disciplinary expectations, surface conflicting assumptions, and identify where specialist or community knowledge is needed. It also helps programs notice when candidate expectations are inconsistent across courses or placements.

Use a Focused Portfolio of Practice and Human Traceability

A small portfolio can help candidates and practicing educators show the development of professional ability over time. Its purpose is to preserve enough evidence for the educator and reviewers to follow the human decision path and understand how professional judgment changed.

Illustrative artifacts include the following:

- **Annotated planning artifact.** A lesson, sequence, assessment plan, or resource adaptation with concise annotations showing the intended learning, key contextual considerations, selected design choices, and places where AI materially influenced the work.
- **AI-contribution and decision trace.** A brief account of the bounded task given to AI, the alternatives or claims considered, what the educator accepted, combined, changed, or rejected, and why. Representative excerpts may be included when useful; an exhaustive prompt transcript is usually unnecessary.
- **Professional review record.** Notes from a peer, content expert, specialist, clinical educator, teacher of record, or other relevant reviewer, together with the candidate's response. The record shows how human expertise informed the decision and who held authority.
- **Enactment and revision reflection.** Selected evidence of learning and professional observation, followed by a cautious interpretation of what should be retained, revised, or discontinued. The reflection distinguishes evidence from hypothesis and avoids attributing an outcome to AI without an appropriate design.
- **Portfolio synthesis.** A periodic explanation of how the educator's planning judgment has developed—for example, stronger context selection, more reliable verification, better recognition of expertise limits, or more purposeful decisions to use or decline AI.

Human traceability is the connective feature. A reviewer should be able to follow the human decision path, see how AI and relevant expertise informed it, and understand how the educator verified the work and planned to address remaining uncertainty. The level of traceability should remain proportionate to the significance of the decision. It is a support for learning, trust, and professional accountability.

Portfolios should be interpreted with other evidence: observation, candidate explanation, content-based evaluation, and clinical feedback. An attractive artifact cannot establish readiness if the candidate cannot explain its learning logic or enact it responsibly. Likewise, a simple artifact may show sophisticated judgment. Programs should ensure equitable access to approved learning opportunities and should not advantage candidates because they have prior experience with commercial AI tools.

Learn at the Program Level

EPPs can draw on evidence from coursework, clinical practice, and partnerships to improve preparation. Their inquiry should examine whether candidates encounter coherent and equitable opportunities to develop transferable judgment and whether those experiences strengthen verification without creating unnecessary workload. Program inquiry should enter the existing quality assurance system rather than create a freestanding AI reporting structure.

The program should treat any new AI-related measure cautiously. Evidence should have a clear purpose and be relevant, verifiable, representative, cumulative, and actionable. AI-generated scoring or feedback should not be assumed valid because it is fast or consistent, and it should not be the sole basis for a high-stakes candidate decision. Program learning should involve relevant stakeholders and document how evidence informed retention, revision, expansion, or discontinuation of an approach.

8. Standards Anchors and Accreditation Boundary

The CAEP 2022 Initial-Level Standards provide the primary accreditation anchor for this resource. The connections below are applications of existing expectations to AI-supported instructional planning; they do not add AI requirements to the standards.

- **Standard R1: Content and Pedagogical Knowledge** contains the most direct teacher-practice connections. Components R1.1–R1.4 address knowledge of learners and learning, content, instructional practice, assessment, planning, varied instructional strategies, technology integration, ethical professional responsibility, and collaboration. The five-action process offers one way for EPPs to help candidates apply these established responsibilities when AI contributes to planning.
- **Standard R2: Clinical Partnerships and Practice** supports co-constructed, coherent, and sufficiently substantive opportunities to develop the practice with P–12 partners and prepared clinical educators. It reinforces the importance of authentic settings, real problems of practice, shared expectations, and clear supervisory roles.
- **Standard R3: Candidate Recruitment, Progression, and Support**, particularly R3.2 and R3.3, provides the foundation for progressive development, transparent support, effective technology integration, and multiple measures of competency at completion. Programs may use these expectations to consider

how responsible planning judgment becomes more independent over time. AI use itself is not a completion competency.

- **Standard R4: Program Impact** invites EPPs to examine completer effectiveness and the perceived relevance of preparation. Programs might ask whether completers can make and explain sound planning decisions in AI-influenced environments. They should not treat visible AI use as evidence of effectiveness or infer that AI caused P–12 learning growth.
- **Standard R5: Quality Assurance System and Continuous Improvement** supports integrating this inquiry into a functioning, sustainable system that uses evidence from multiple measures and stakeholder participation to improve programs. Any AI-related measure remains subject to the same expectations for evidence quality and responsible interpretation as other measures.

These CAEP connections can be understood more fully alongside InTASC and the ISTE Educator Standards, which offer complementary perspectives on teacher practice and technology-supported learning. Taken together, InTASC Standards 4–10 connect planning with the disciplinary expertise, instructional judgment, ethical responsibility, and professional learning on which this process depends. Standard 7 is especially relevant because it presents planning as context-responsive work grounded in knowledge of content and learners and refined through evidence and collaboration (CCSSO, 2013).

The ISTE Educator Standards add a complementary lens by placing technology in service of thoughtful design and continuing professional learning. Across the standards most relevant here—2.1, 2.3–2.5, and 2.7—technology-supported planning is treated as a collaborative, evidence-informed practice that protects learner data and accommodates variability (ISTE, 2024). These standards reinforce purposeful and responsible technology use, but they do not independently establish generative-AI requirements. CAEP R1.3 likewise does not prescribe ISTE as the technology standard for every EPP.

The CAEP standards do not explicitly require an EPP or candidate to use AI. This resource creates no new standard or required procedure. Where an EPP includes AI-supported instructional planning, relevant evidence may contribute to an existing component-level case. A curriculum map might show intentional preparation; candidate work and observations might show application; partnership records might show co-construction; and quality-assurance records might show how evidence

informed improvement. These materials support a claim only through their quality, analysis, and connection to the standard.

EPPs should use current CAEP materials for self-study, evidence submission, annual reporting, and review procedures.

Conclusion

AI will continue to change, but the central responsibilities of teaching remain durable. Educators must understand learners and know their disciplines to design coherent and equitable learning. They must protect people and information, collaborate with others, and learn continuously. AI may expand the possibilities available within that work; however, it cannot own its purposes or consequences.

EPPs do not need to predict every future capability. They can instead prepare teachers to approach AI-supported planning through a stable professional discipline that begins with learning, keeps AI within purposeful and authorized boundaries, and subjects its contributions to independent verification and relevant human expertise. The educator retains responsibility for the decision and uses enactment to deepen professional judgment.

Effective preparation to integrate AI into instructional planning should leave teachers more pedagogically prepared to explain their choices as they protect time for relationships, interpretation, and responsive instruction. Human voice and agency remain primary. When EPPs embed these commitments throughout their programs, they help educators use AI selectively and constructively while remaining steadfast in their work as pedagogical and disciplinary professionals.

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VISUAL COMPANION | FIVE-ACTION FIELD GUIDE

AI-Supported Instructional Planning

Use AI for a bounded part of planning. The educator owns the purpose, decisions, and results.

Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation

HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY Set purpose | Judge quality | Own the result

WORK THROUGH THE FIVE ACTIONS

Return to an earlier action when evidence or context changes.

1 PREPARE AND BOUND

EDUCATOR DOES

Define the learning goal, evidence, focused need, minimum necessary context, constraints, and human authority. Decide whether AI adds enough value.

AI MAY HELP

Organize approved information, compare objectives and evidence, or surface unanswered questions.

USE AI - OR DO NOT USE IT

2 EXPLORE

EDUCATOR DOES

Request a small number of meaningfully different, feasible options. Keep validated curriculum and teacher-developed ideas in view.

AI MAY HELP

Create bounded activities, resources, handouts, activity sequences, or assessment items; compare, organize, adapt, or challenge ideas.

BUILD A MANAGEABLE SET

3 VERIFY AND SELECT

EDUCATOR DOES

Independently check content, learning logic, learner access, ethics, and feasibility. Choose, combine, revise, or reject.

AI MAY HELP

Apply teacher-supplied criteria or identify possible weaknesses. AI self-checking is not verification.

CHOOSE - COMBINE - REVISE - REJECT

4 REVIEW AND OWN

EDUCATOR DOES

Seek human review appropriate to the risk. Identify who authorizes, monitors, and revises the plan. Be able to explain the decision.

AI MAY HELP

Organize feedback or compare revisions, without deciding whose judgment prevails.

MAKE OWNERSHIP EXPLICIT

5 ENACT AND LEARN

EDUCATOR DOES

Observe learning and implementation, adjust as needed, and decide what to retain, revise, or discontinue.

AI MAY HELP

Organize protected observations or suggest hypotheses for human examination.

RETAIN - REVISE - DISCONTINUE

CHECK QUALITY THROUGHOUT

A serious concern means pause, revise, seek expertise, or use a non-AI approach.

1 WORTHWHILE + TRUSTWORTHY?

Does it support the intended learning, with accurate content and sound learning logic?

2 HONORS PEOPLE + COMMUNITIES?

Does it protect dignity, agency, access, opportunity, and appropriate human voice?

3 WORKABLE + SUSTAINABLE?

Can it be enacted under actual conditions without hidden burden or fragile dependencies?

4 EXPLAINABLE + REVISABLE?

Can an accountable human explain the decision, monitor it, and change course?

AT ANY POINT

The responsible path may change.

PAUSE | SEEK EXPERTISE | REVISE THE APPROACH | PROCEED WITHOUT AI

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