

Practitioner's Guide

Amira Instruct AI Lesson Planner

Release: February 2026

Abstract

This guide provides educators, instructional leaders, and district teams with a clear overview of the upgraded Amira Instruct AI Lesson Planner. It explains how the tool supports instructional planning through data-informed recommendations, teacher decision-making, and alignment to curriculum and literacy best practices.

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What Is the Amira AI Lesson Planner?

The Amira AI Lesson Planner is a teacher-facing planning tool that supports weekly literacy instruction by combining student mastery data, district-selected curriculum alignment, and instructional time considerations.

Rather than replacing teacher expertise, the Lesson Planner helps educators review, refine, and confirm a weekly instructional plan for their class. Amira provides recommendations designed to increase instructional effectiveness, while teachers remain in full control of final decisions.

Key principles of the AI Lesson Planner:

- Teacher-in-the-loop decision making
- Class-first planning with student-level adjustments
- Data-informed recommendations
- Flexible implementation within district instructional frameworks

View a full walkthrough of the AI Lesson Planner.

Benefits for All Practitioners

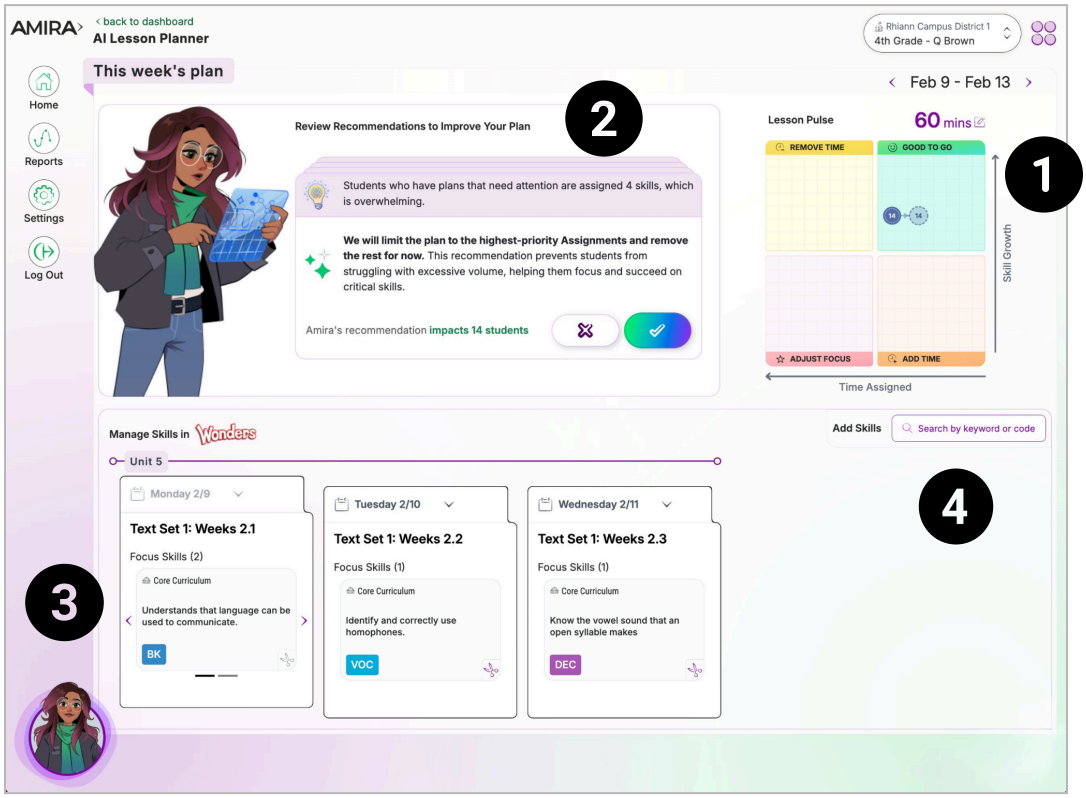
The AI Lesson Planner enables differentiated instruction with several key characteristics that benefit various educational roles:

- **Aligned to the Science of Reading:** Reading specialists and teachers can be confident that instructional recommendations are grounded in research-based literacy instruction principles.
- **Evidence-based:** Educators know that suggestions are informed by real-time student data and proven instructional strategies.
- **Coherent with your District's curriculum, scope & sequence, and pacing calendar:** Ensures alignment across the district, promoting consistency and efficiency.
- **Constructed to align core instruction, intervention, supplemental digital instruction, and practice:** This comprehensive alignment helps teachers integrate various instructional components seamlessly, and allows leaders to see a unified approach to student learning.
- **Tailored to the time available:** Offers flexibility and practicality for teachers in managing their lesson time.
- **Optimized to match the specific needs of each student:** Plans are customized, allowing teachers to provide individualized support and leaders to ensure equitable and effective instruction for all students.

Overview of the Lesson Planner

The Lesson Planner follows a **Review → Enhance → Confirm** workflow. Teachers access the Lesson Planner from their **Growth Dashboard**, where they can view their current and future plan at a glance.

The Weekly Lesson Planner view shows:



1. **Lesson Pulse Quadrant:** At-a-glance view of the "health" of the students' weekly lesson plans, taking into consideration time assigned and skills mastery.

2. **Enhance Plan Recommendations:** Amira will provide the teacher with recommended plan enhancements to make quick adjustments to time assigned and bring alignment to students' plans, taking into consideration skill focus and instructional time needed for growth. This helps students move to the green in the Lesson Pulse Quadrant, while keeping the focus on mastery.

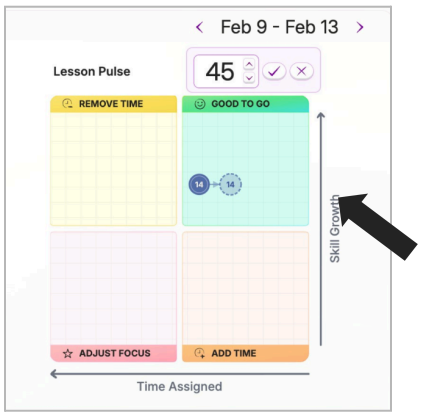
3. **Lesson Cards:** Assigned lessons and skills for the class, with quick access to delete, change, or edit assignments during the calendar week.

4. **Open Search:** Access to additional skills and resources that can be added to the pre-planned lesson plan cards.

Teacher Workflow in the Lesson Planner

Step 1: Use Amira's Recommendations to Improve Your Plan

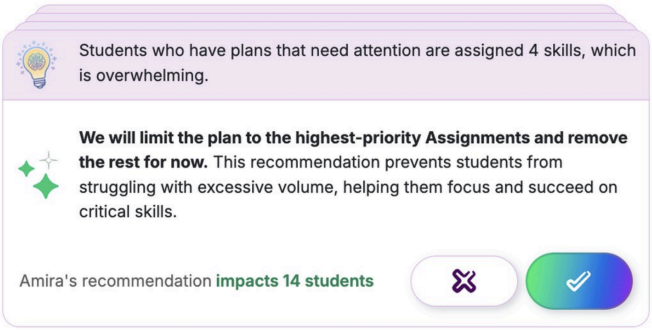
View a walkthrough or read the deep dive.



Amira analyzes the weekly plan and may offer recommendations to improve instructional balance or opportunities for improvement.

Teachers begin by glancing at the Lesson Pulse Quadrant to get a snapshot of overall plan health. They should **adjust the time setting** to reflect their available instructional time for the week (see image to the right).

Next teachers can review the AI-generated insights and recommendations, consider how suggested adjustments may improve the plan, and use their professional judgment to accept or decline recommendations—ensuring students receive an optimal lesson plan for the week.



This ensures that the teacher remains the final decision-maker while benefiting from AI-supported insights and efficiencies.

Accepting or declining recommendations will result in adjustments to the Lesson Pulse Quadrant.

💡***Best Practice:*** *Because these recommendations consider total weekly time and planned lessons, it's best to review and act on Enhance Plan Recommendations on the* ***Friday before*** *the week begins or on* ***Monday before students start learning****. As the week progresses, fewer actions will be available to meaningfully impact that week's plan health.*

Step 2: Review the Weekly Lesson Cards

Teachers can explore the weekly plan using lesson cards that represent instructional focus by date and skill.

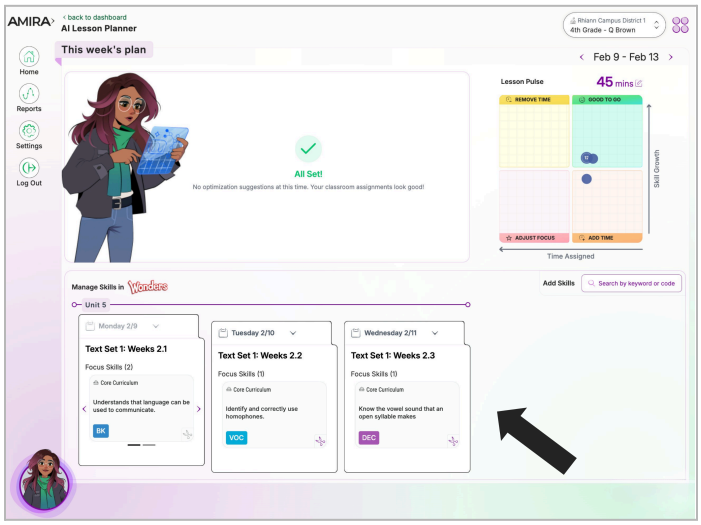
Within the Lesson Cards, teachers can:

- Review aligned skills & domains in lesson cards
- See the curriculum coherent aligned Lesson Title
- Adjust the planned delivery date of lesson cards *in the future*.

Step 3: Make Optional Adjustments

View a walkthrough or read the deep dive.

Teachers may also choose to manually adjust the plan. Please note that manual adjustments *may* undue some of the balancing actions engaged in step 1 (Enhance Plan Recommendations).



Available actions include:

- Adding new skills, assignments, or resources to existing Lesson Cards via Open Search.
- Clipping skills, assignments, or resources from Lesson Cards.
- Adjusting lesson dates for Lesson Cards in the future.

Confirm & Deliver the Plan

Once adjustments are complete in the Lesson Planner, students will receive assignments from Amira following the confirmed plan. Students should click the Amira Reading card, then click "New Assignment" to complete their Instruct assignments.





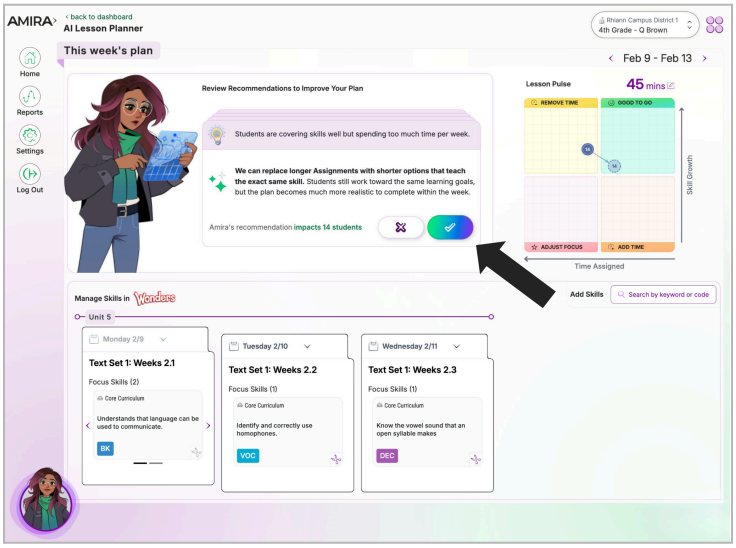
Deep Dive: Review Recommendations to Improve Your Plan

Recommendations to Improve Your Plan is a built-in planning support that helps teachers quickly improve the overall health of their weekly lesson plan without taking away their professional judgment. Its goal is simple: to help as many students as possible have a well-balanced plan that matches their current skills, instructional needs, and the time available during the week. Rather than asking teachers to start from scratch, Amira reviews the existing plan and surfaces optional, high-impact recommendations that teachers can choose to accept or decline. Teachers stay fully in control of the final plan at all times.

What does "Review Recommendations" help teachers do?

Recommendations help teachers:

- See where the weekly plan may have too much assigned, not enough assigned, or may have assignments misaligned with individual student mastery.
- Improve opportunities for student growth without adding unnecessary work
- Make efficient, class-level adjustments before moving into more detailed planning



The focus is on directional improvement, not perfection. A healthy plan doesn't mean every student has identical assignments, it means the plan is reasonably balanced given the time, constraints of the week, and individual student needs.

View a walkthrough on how to use Amira's recommendations in the AI Lesson Planner.

How does "Review Recommendations" work?

When a teacher opens the Lesson Planner, Amira:

1. **Analyzes the current weekly plan** using student mastery data, assigned instructional time, and curriculum alignment
2. **Compares instructional time assigned** to an estimate of the time that may support growth for the skills being taught
3. **Generates optional recommendations** that could improve overall plan balance or growth opportunity

Teachers can then:

- Review each recommendation
- See how accepting it may improve overall plan health
- Accept or decline based on their professional judgment

As decisions are made, the lesson plan health indicators update in real time, helping teachers understand the impact of each choice.

Enhance Plan is **not**:

- A mandate or auto-change to the district's core coherent plan
- A replacement for teacher expertise
- A guarantee of outcomes or required minutes

All guidance is designed to inform planning, not prescribe it.

Why teachers might use "Review Recommendations" first

Amira's recommendations are designed as the first high-leverage first step in weekly planning. By making smart, class-level adjustments upfront, teachers can spend less time troubleshooting later, move into detailed lesson review and student-level adjustments with a stronger foundation, and feel confident that their plan is aligned, intentional, and realistic for the week ahead.

💡***Best Practice:*** *Because these recommendations consider total weekly time and planned lessons, it's best to review and act on recommendations on the* ***Friday before*** *the week begins or on* ***Monday before students start learning****. As the week progresses, fewer actions will be available to meaningfully impact that week's plan health.*

Deep Dive: Add Skills

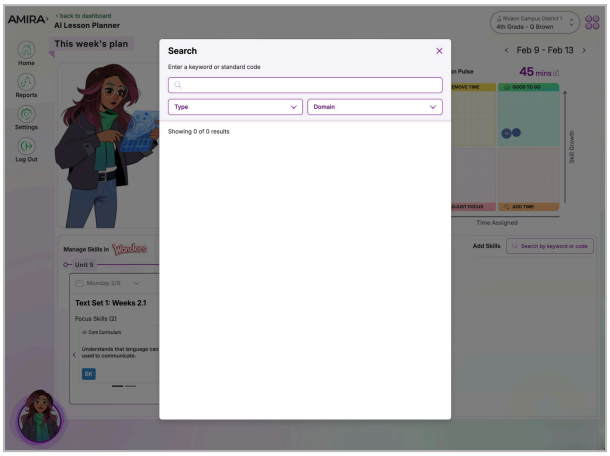
What is "Add Skills"?

Add Skills gives teachers the flexibility to add skills and instructional resources to their weekly lesson plan when they want to go beyond the pre-planned recommendations.

It is designed to support teacher expertise by making it easy to:

- Find specific skills or resources
- Respond to instructional needs that arise during planning
- Customize instruction while staying aligned to curriculum and pacing

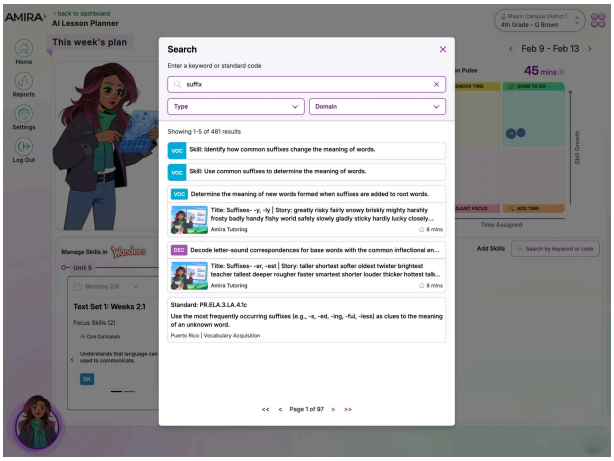
Add Skills is always optional and works alongside Amira's recommendations—not in place of them. However, please be advised that adding assignments will impact the Lesson Pulse Quadrant, as new assigned time and skills are being added to the week.



[View a walkthrough] on how to use Add Skills in the Lesson Planner.

How does Add Skills work?

When using Add Skills, teachers can:



1. **Search for skills or resources** using keywords, standards, skill names, or titles
2. **Review available options**, including skills, Microlessons, Activities, Tutor Stories, and Teacher Resources
3. **Select where to place the item** within the existing weekly lesson plan cards. This is a skill-forward process, so all resources will inherit the skill they are aligned to.
    - **When adding a skill**: No activities or resources are automatically assigned. You can add student activities from the Weekly Skills Overview page.
    - **When adding a student activity or resource**: The aligned skill is automatically added to the lesson card and will appear on both the Weekly Skills Overview page and the Lesson Cards.

Once added, the new skill or resource becomes part of the weekly plan and is reflected in lesson cards and Lesson Pulse Quadrant health indicators, helping teachers see how changes affect the overall plan.

Add Skills is **not**:

- Required for weekly planning
- A signal that the existing plan is "wrong" or incomplete
- Restricted to a single correct choice

It is a flexible planning tool, meant to empower teachers to further customize their weekly lesson plan.

Preview Assignments via Add Skills Before Assigning

Before finalizing assignments, teachers can preview many instructional materials to better understand what students will experience.

Notes about previews:

- Microlessons and most digital activities can be previewed
- Previews open in a separate browser tab
- Previewing does not count as student usage
- Some content types (such as Targeted Tutors) may not be previewable

When teachers might use Add Skills

Teachers often use Add Skills when they:

- Want to add a specific skill they know the students in their class need
- Need to supplement instruction
- Want to incorporate an additional resource aligned to their instructional goals

Add Skills works best after reviewing Amira's recommendations, ensuring that manual additions build on a well-balanced foundation rather than unintentionally undoing it. However, please be advised that adding assignments via Add Skills will impact the Lesson Pulse Quadrant, as new assigned time and skills are being added to the week.

Why Add Skills Matters

Add Skills reinforces a core principle of the Lesson Planner; teachers remain the decision-makers.

By combining AI-supported recommendations with flexible search and add tools, teachers can plan more efficiently, respond confidently to individual student needs, and maintain full ownership of their instructional decisions.

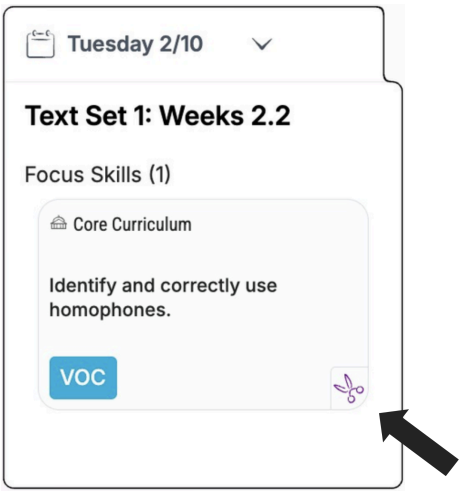
The result is a weekly plan that is both intentional and adaptable—grounded in data, guided by AI, and shaped by teacher expertise.

Deep Dive: Skill Clipping in Lesson Cards

What is *Skill Clipping*?

Skill Clipping gives teachers the ability to remove skills from the week's lesson plan. It is designed to support teacher expertise by making it easy to:

- Put teacher priorities first by centering student work on teacher-selected skills
- Adjust instructional time in seconds by quickly reducing scheduled assignments that don't align with current goals
- Keep weekly plans focused and intentional by prioritizing the skills that matter most for that week's lesson plan



Skill Clipping is always optional and works alongside Amira's recommendations, not instead of them. However, please be advised that removing skills and their aligned assignments from the lesson plan via Skill Clipping will impact the Lesson Pulse Quadrant, as removed time and skills are adjusting the balance.

View a walkthrough on how to clip skills in the Lesson Planner.

How does Skill Clipping work?

When using Skill Clipping teachers can:

1. Remove the skill and all aligned assignments/resources for the whole class by selecting the scissors icon on the skill in the Lesson Card.
2. Review the impact of this skills removal on the Lesson Pulse Quadrant prior to confirming.

Once removed, the skill and all aligned assignments and resources will be removed from all students' inbox for that week.

Skill Clipping is **not**:

- A replacement for Amira's instructional recommendations
- A required step—using it is always optional
- A way to permanently remove skills from a student's overall learning plan, it only affects the current week being adjusted
- A change to student placement, assessment, or long-term skill progression

It's also important to note that clipping skills will impact the Lesson Pulse Quadrant, since removing skills and aligned instructional time changes the overall balance of the lesson plan.

When teachers might use Skill Clipping

Teachers often use Skill Clipping when they:

- Want to focus instruction on a small set of priority skills for the week
- Have limited instructional time due to testing, shortened weeks, or schedule changes
- Want to reduce cognitive load by limiting the number of skills students work on at one time

Why Skill Clipping Matters

Skill Clipping reinforces a core principle of Lesson Planner: teachers remain the decision-makers.

By allowing teachers to remove skills that don't align with current goals, Skill Clipping helps them:

- Keep instruction focused on the skills that matter most
- Adjust instructional time quickly and intentionally
- Align student practice with real-time classroom priorities

The result is a weekly plan that is streamlined and purposeful—grounded in Amira's recommendations, responsive to classroom realities, and shaped by teacher expertise.

Deep Dive: Weekly Skills Overview Page

What is the Weekly Skills Overview?

The Weekly Skills Overview is a reflection and insight page that helps teachers understand how skills are showing up across the week and how students are interacting with them. Instead of looking at lessons day by day, this view organizes the plan by skill, making it easier to see patterns, readiness, and potential gaps before or during instruction. Its purpose is to support thoughtful instructional decisions by giving teachers a clearer picture of what's being taught, to whom, and how students are progressing in mastery.

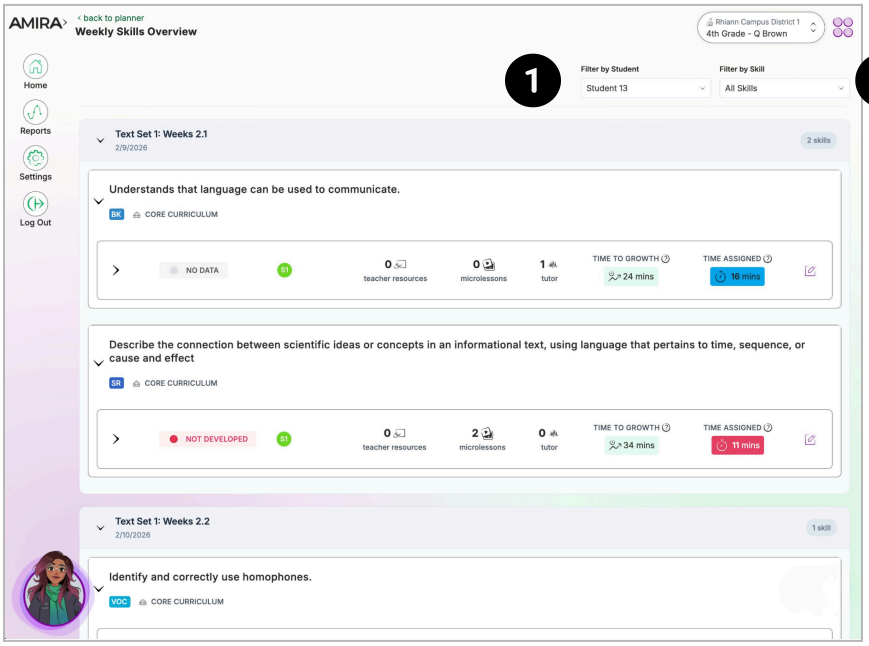
View a walkthrough of how to use the Weekly Skills Overview.

Two Ways to View the Weekly Skills Overview

The Weekly Skills Overview can be viewed in two ways, depending on the question you're trying to answer:

1. **View by Student**
   Use this view when you want to understand how an individual student is experiencing the week's instruction. It highlights the skills each student is working on and their readiness across those skills, supporting more targeted instructional decisions.

2. **View by Skill**
   Use this view when you want to understand how a specific skill is playing out across your class. It shows which students are likely ready, developing, or may need more support with that skill, helping you decide whether to move forward, reinforce instruction, or adjust pacing.



Together, these views help teachers move easily between class-level patterns and individual student needs, without losing sight of the overall weekly plan.

What does the Weekly Skills Overview help teachers do?

The Weekly Skills Overview helps teachers:

- See all skills that are being taught during the week at a glance
- Understand how students are distributed across readiness levels for each skill
- Identify skills and mastery groups that may need more time, reinforcement, or adjustment

It supports teachers to spot trends that aren't always obvious in daily lesson views, make informed decisions about pacing and focus, and decide whether to adjust instruction for the class, groups, or individual students. It can be especially useful after reviewing Amira's recommendations and before or during manual adjustments, helping ensure changes are intentional and differentiated on an individual student level.

How does the Weekly Skills Overview work?

In the Weekly Skills Overview, teachers can:

1. View all skills planned for the week, rather than individual lesson cards
2. See student readiness signals for each skill (such as students who are likely ready, developing, or not yet measured)
3. Drill in by skill or by student, depending on the question they're trying to answer

From this view, teachers can quickly navigate to make adjustments such as adding activities or resources, reviewing assignments, or removing activities or resources while keeping the broader weekly plan in mind.

The Weekly Skills Overview is designed to be informational and reflective, helping teachers understand the plan before making changes.

The Weekly Skills Overview is **not**:

- A required step in weekly planning
- A judgment on teacher effectiveness
- A mandate to change instruction

It is a decision-support view, offering clarity and context without prescribing actions.

Weekly Planning & Rollover

At the end of each instructional week, the Lesson Planner supports reflective planning for the upcoming week. View a walkthrough of the Weekly Planning and Rollover process.

End-of-Week Options

At noon on Fridays (local time), teachers are prompted to choose one of two paths:

- **Plan for Next Week/Manage Plan**: Move forward with the next week's plan and dismiss incomplete assignments for all students in the class
- **Rollover from Last Week**: Review incomplete work and decide what should carry forward

Reviewing the Previous Week

During rollover, teachers can review:

- Assignment completion trends
- Students ready to move forward
- Students who may need more time or additional support
- Students with limited data

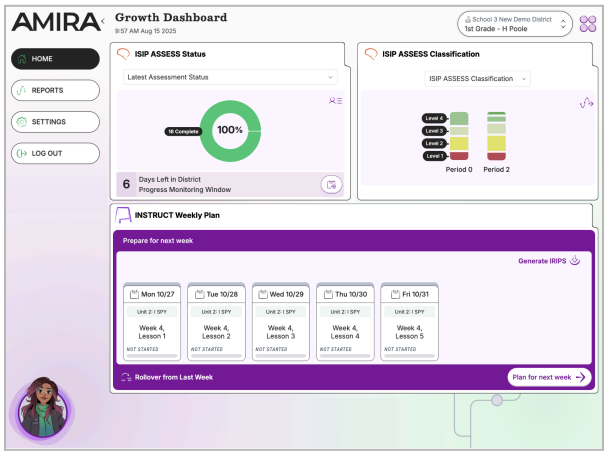
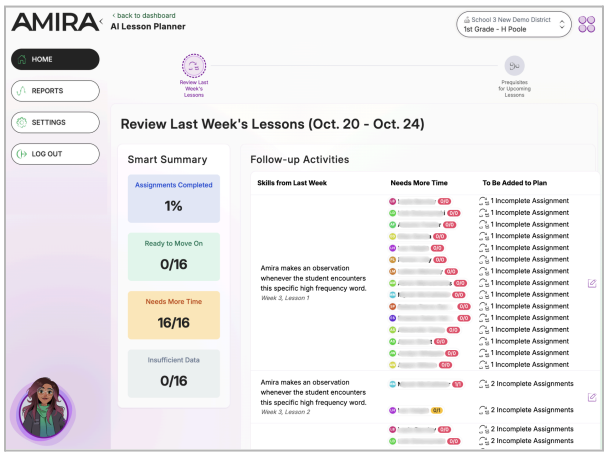
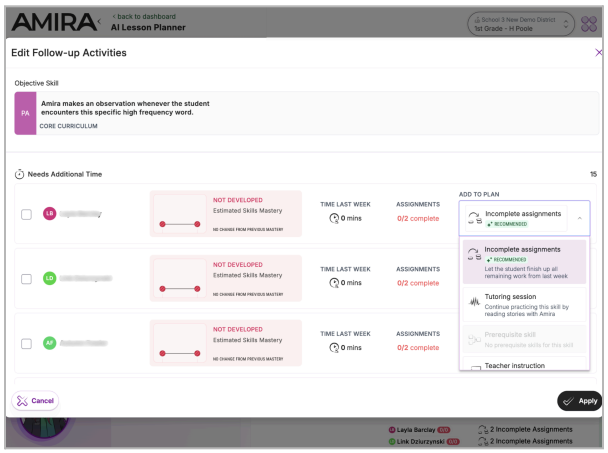
Readiness for Upcoming Skills

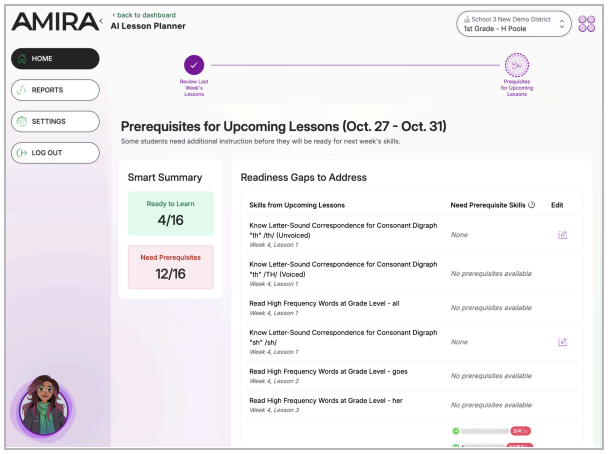
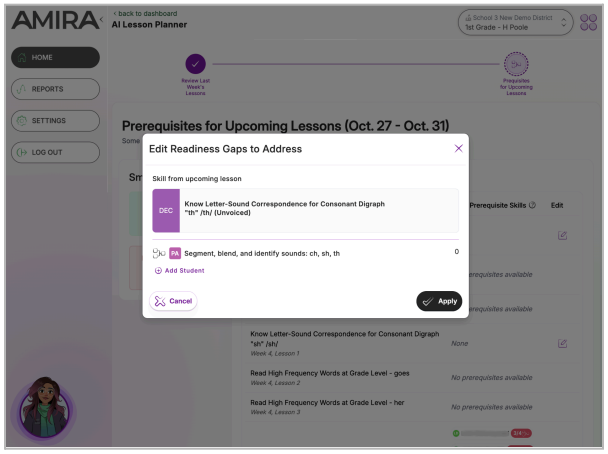
During the Rollover Process, Amira will highlight:

- Students likely ready for upcoming skills
- Students who may benefit from prerequisite instruction

Based on mastery signals, Amira may recommend prerequisite lessons for students who may benefit. Teachers review and confirm these recommendations before they are added to the plan.

Steps of the Rollover Process

1. Educators can select “Plan for Next Week/Manage Plan” to dismiss incomplete assignments and move on to next week’s core coherent lesson plan, or they can select “Rollover from Last Week” to review and rollover incomplete assignments from the week that has just passed.	
2. Review Last Week’s Lessons. See a snapshot of the current week’s instruction, including: ● Percentage of lesson assignments completed ● Number of students ready to move forward ● Number of students needing additional time with skills ● Students with insufficient data	
3. Identify Students Who Need More Time ● View a list of students and the specific skills they may need to revisit. ● Click the **Edit** button next to each skill to review Amira’s recommendations. Choose to add assignments to the student’s plan for next week or move on. ● Once all adjustments have been made, click **Continue** to move to the next part of the planning process.	

4. Review Readiness for New Skills • Amira displays recommendations for students ready to learn next week's skills and students who may need prerequisite instruction to address readiness gaps • Based on mastery data, Amira automatically assigns prerequisite lessons to students who haven't yet developed the upcoming skills.	
5. Customize Assignments • Click the **Edit** button next to a skill to assign additional students to a prerequisite lesson if needed. • Click **Create Assignments for Rollover & Prerequisites** to confirm the plan.	

FAQs

1. **Do I have to accept Amira's recommendations?**
   No. All recommendations in the AI Lesson Planner are optional. Amira is designed to support teacher decision-making, not replace it. Teachers always remain in control of the final plan and can accept or decline recommendations based on their professional judgment.

2. **What happens if I don't interact with the Enhance Plan at all?**
   Nothing changes. The existing lesson plan will still be delivered as scheduled. Enhance Plan is a support tool meant to help teachers reflect on balance and opportunities for growth, but it is never required for instruction to proceed.

3. **Do all students need to be in the green in my Lesson Pulse Quadrant?**
   No. The Lesson Pulse Quadrant is an informational indicator, not a scorecard. A healthy plan reflects reasonable balance given the time and constraints of a specific week—not perfection. Mixed or yellow indicators are common and can still represent strong instructional decisions.

4. **If I manually add or remove lessons, will I "break" the plan?**
   No. Manual adjustments are supported. However, adding or removing skills or assignments may change the overall balance of instructional time, which is why updates are reflected in the Lesson Pulse Quadrant. This visibility helps teachers understand the impact of their choices—not avoid making them.

5. **What happens when I clip a skill from the weekly plan?**
   When a skill is clipped, all aligned assignments for that skill are removed from students' inboxes for that week only. Clipping does not prevent the skills from being in future weeks' lesson plans.

6. **Can I use the Lesson Planner in the middle of the week?**
   Yes. Teachers can review lesson cards, student readiness, and skill distribution at any point during the week. However, the most impactful time to use Enhance Plan is before the week begins, like Friday afternoon or Monday morning, when the plan can be set up for the full week.

7. **Does using Open Search mean my original plan was wrong?**
   Not at all. Open Search is designed to extend teacher expertise, not correct mistakes. Teachers often use it to respond to emerging needs, supplement instruction, or add a specific skill they know their students need.

8. **Will administrators or district leaders see whether I accept or decline recommendations?**
   No. Recommendation decisions are part of a teacher's planning workflow and are not intended to evaluate teacher performance. The AI Lesson Planner is a planning support tool, not an observation or compliance system.

9. **How does Amira determine student readiness for skills?**
   Readiness signals are informed by student mastery data, recent performance, and curriculum alignment. These signals help highlight patterns and possibilities but should always be interpreted alongside teacher knowledge of students.

10. **If a student has limited data, what should I do?**
    Students with limited data may appear as "not yet measured." Teachers can use their professional judgment to decide whether to proceed with planned instruction, add support, or monitor progress as more data becomes available.

11. **Do I need to use every feature every week?**
    No. The Lesson Planner is intentionally flexible. Teachers may rely heavily on certain features one week and not at all the next, depending on instructional goals, time constraints, and student needs.

12. **Is the AI Lesson Planner meant to replace my existing planning process?**
    No. The AI Lesson Planner is designed to fit within district instructional frameworks and existing planning routines. It supports reflection, efficiency, and alignment—but teachers determine how it fits into their workflow.