

BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY: USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN EDUCATION
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Board of Education Policy: Use of Artificial Intelligence in Education

Section 1: Purpose and Commitment:

The Board of Education is committed to fostering high levels of learning, critical thinking, and opportunities for self-expression through innovative and effective educational practices. In alignment with our [Portrait of a Graduate](#), this policy acknowledges the transformative potential of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education, while emphasizing responsible, ethical, and equitable use. By leveraging AI tools, we aim to enhance teaching and learning outcomes while equipping students with essential skills for the digital age. The use of AI in Stratford Public Schools shall be aligned with the mission and vision of the school district.

This policy applies to AI software, services, and appliances and encompasses the use of AI tools on school premises, during school-sponsored activities, and in the completion of school-related assignments and/or projects. It also applies to developed, procured, and embedded AI.

As per PA 23-16, Artificial Intelligence (AI) means an AI system that:

- Performs tasks under varying and unpredictable circumstances without significant human oversight or can learn from experience and improve such performance when exposed to data sets,
- Is developed in any context, including, but not limited to, software or physical hardware, and capable of solving tasks that require human-like perception, cognition, planning, learning, communication, or physical action,
- Is designed to think or act like a human, including, but not limited to, a cognitive architecture or neural network or act rationally, including, but not limited to, an intelligent software agent or embodied robot that achieves goals using perception, planning, reasoning, learning, communication, decision-making or action,
- Is made up of a set of techniques, including, but not limited to, machine learning, that is designed to approximate a cognitive task.

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Section 2: General Guidelines for AI Use

The use of AI in educational settings must adhere to principles of:

- **Ethical Responsibility:** Ensuring transparency, fairness, and inclusivity.
- **Privacy and Security:** Protecting personal and private information as mandated by Connecticut's student privacy laws including (but not limited to) FERPA and COPPA.
- **Critical Thinking:** Promoting thoughtful and informed engagement with AI tools, recognizing their limitations and potential biases.
- **Equitable Access:** Guaranteeing all students have access to the necessary tools and training to use AI effectively.

Section 3: Staff Use of AI:

Staff are encouraged to explore the potential of AI tools provided by the district to support instructional practices and administrative tasks while maintaining their central role in the teaching and learning process. Staff AI prompting and vetting of AI-generated content must prioritize content area and grade-level standards and take into consideration an understanding of best practices in high-quality task design.

3.1. Sample Permitted Uses:

- **Instructional Design:** Generating lesson plans, writing prompts, and project ideas.
- **Assessment Support:** Developing rubrics or providing feedback on staff and student success.
- **Content Generation:** Using AI for brainstorming, topic exploration, or producing supplemental materials.
- **Research Assistance:** Employing AI as a smart search tool to gather and analyze information efficiently.

3.2. Professional Development:

- Staff will be offered training on (including but not limited to):
 - The effective and ethical use of AI tools.
 - Recognizing and mitigating potential biases in AI-generated content.
 - Integrating AI into teaching and learning while adhering to academic integrity standards.

3.3. Instructional Practices:

- Create assignments that challenge students to integrate AI tools responsibly, fostering higher-order thinking.

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- Incorporate discussions about the ethical implications of AI and its role in modern society.
- Emphasize augmentation over automation, ensuring AI supports rather than replaces instructional roles.

3.4. Collaborative Planning:

- Engage in professional collaboration to:
 - Develop consistent guidelines for AI use.
 - Share best practices for integrating AI into teaching.
 - Address complex ethical and pedagogical challenges posed by AI technologies.

3.5. Equity and Access:

- Teachers must ensure all students have access to AI tools required for assignments.
- Students must be informed about user agreements and compliance with privacy laws before using AI tools.

Section 4: Student Use of AI:

Students are encouraged to use specified age appropriate AI tools as partners in their learning journey, provided such use aligns with principles of academic integrity and responsible technology use.

4.1. Sample Permitted Uses:

- Academic Support: Using AI to generate ideas, refine essays, or receive feedback on drafts to support learning and comprehension.
- Research Assistance: Employing AI for summarizing information or exploring topics including the enhancement of subject-specific learning and skill development.
- Skill Development: Enhancing digital literacy and critical thinking skills by understanding AI's capabilities and limitations. Students are encouraged to use AI to learn coding, data analysis, machine learning, and other technical skills relevant to 21st century careers.
- Creative Projects: AI tools may be used for creative applications such as art generation, music composition, or design, provided they align with the academic objectives and ethical standards outlined in that specific course curriculum.

4.2. Instruction and Training:

- Students will be offered explicit instruction on:
 - When and how to cite AI-generated content.

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- The ethical boundaries of AI use, distinguishing between support and cheating.
- The potential biases, inaccuracies, and risks of AI-generated content.
- Privacy concerns and the importance of not sharing personal or private data with AI tools.

4.3. Academic Integrity:

- Students must disclose when they use AI tools to assist in creating assignments or projects. Proper attribution to the AI tool or platform must be included as per teacher or district guidelines. For example, students may include:
 - How AI was used to enhance their work.
 - Which AI-generated suggestions they adopted or rejected and why.
- AI should augment student effort rather than replace it.
- Prohibited Uses:
 - Students are prohibited from using AI tools to plagiarize, cheat, or otherwise misrepresent their own work. This includes using AI to:
 - Generate essays, problem sets, or answers without appropriate attribution or authorization and/or fabricate data or sources.
 - AI must not be used to engage in activities that harm others, such as cyberbullying, harassment, or the creation of inappropriate or offensive content.
 - Students must not use AI tools to collect, share, or misuse personal information about peers, teachers, or others.
 - The use of AI tools not approved by the district for school-related purposes is prohibited.
- Guardrails for AI Use:
 - AI tools should not replace critical thinking or independent learning. Students are encouraged to engage with materials personally before seeking AI assistance.
 - AI-generated content must be verified by students for accuracy and relevance.
 - Students must ensure that AI use aligns with assignment guidelines and teacher expectations.

4.4. Equity and Access:

- Teachers must ensure all students have access to AI tools required for assignments.
- Students must be informed about user agreements and compliance with privacy laws before using AI tools.

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Section 5: Oversight and Continuous Improvement

5.0 Procurement:

Any district-approved resources with embedded AI, as well as any AI platforms specifically designed for educational application and adopted by the district, must be in compliance with the points outlined in this section of the AI policy.

5.1 Compliance with Legal and Ethical Standards

- AI platforms must adhere to all federal, state, and local laws regarding data privacy, accessibility, and educational technology standards.
- Vendors must provide transparency regarding data collection, storage, and usage, ensuring compliance with FERPA, COPPA, and other relevant regulations.
- AI tools must align with ethical AI principles, including fairness, accountability, and transparency.

5.2 Data Privacy and Security

- AI platforms must use secure encryption protocols for data transmission and storage.
- Personally identifiable information (PII) of students, teachers, and staff must be safeguarded against unauthorized access.
- Vendors must disclose data retention policies and provide options for data deletion upon request.

5.3 Educational Value and Pedagogical Alignment

- AI tools must align with district curricula, instructional goals, and state learning standards.
- Platforms should support differentiated instruction, assistive learning, and inclusivity for diverse student needs.
- Platforms must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and provide accessibility features such as screen reader compatibility and language translation.
- AI tools should not create or exacerbate inequities among students based on socioeconomic status, language, or learning ability.

5.4 Transparency and Explainability

- Vendors must provide clear documentation on how AI-driven decisions are made, including algorithms used and potential biases.
- Staff must have access to explanations of AI-generated recommendations or insights.

5.5 Cost and Sustainability

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- Pricing must be transparent, with clear breakdowns of initial costs, licensing, maintenance, and potential future upgrades.
- The platform should be scalable and adaptable to evolving educational needs and technological advancements.
- AI solutions must demonstrate cost-effectiveness in terms of long-term benefits and support requirements.
- When applicable, platforms adopted by the district will utilize a train the trainer model.

5.6 Vendor Accountability and Support

- Vendors must offer dedicated customer support with defined response times for technical and operational issues.
- Service level agreements (SLAs) must outline uptime guarantees, troubleshooting procedures, and update policies.
- Vendors must be responsive to district feedback and willing to make necessary adjustments for optimal implementation.

5.7 Bias and Fairness Mitigation

- Vendors must disclose efforts to mitigate biases in AI models and provide mechanisms for educators to flag and report potential bias.

5.8 Pilot Testing and Evaluation

- Platforms should undergo a pilot phase within the district before full-scale implementation.
- Measurable outcomes and educator feedback must inform final procurement decisions.
- The district reserves the right to discontinue use if the platform does not meet expectations for effectiveness, safety, and ethical compliance.

By adhering to these procurement expectations, the school district ensures that AI platforms contribute positively to education while upholding ethical, legal, and pedagogical standards.

Section 6: Establishment of AI Taskforce

6.1. AI Taskforce:

The district has established an AI Taskforce comprised of staff, administrators, students, parents, board of education members, community members and legal experts (when necessary) to continually:

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- Study the potential advantages and challenges of AI in education to maintain an ability and willingness to recognize and adapt to shifting risks and opportunities.
- Recommend training programs for teachers, students, and parents/legal custodians.
- Develop policies ensuring safe, equitable, and effective use of AI tools in a human-centered manner testing for and protecting against bias.
- Ensure that training related to AI use and the input of data into AI systems complies with applicable laws, regulations, and policies.
- Complete impact assessments on adopted AI systems pursuant to PA 23-16.
- Appointment and/or removal of taskforce members will be determined by the Superintendent.

6.2 Privacy and Data Security:

- The district will evaluate any systems and/or tools with embedded AI prior to implementation to ensure they comply with privacy laws, including FERPA and COPPA as well as district policies.
- Staff and students must not input sensitive information into AI systems.
- AI tools must not be used to store or process confidential or sensitive school-related data without district approval.
- Consequences of misuse:
 - Violations of this policy will be addressed in accordance with the Stratford Public Schools [Code of Conduct](#).
 - Consequences may include loss of access to AI tools, academic penalties, or other disciplinary actions as deemed appropriate.

6.3 Policy Review:

This policy will be reviewed regularly by the AI Taskforce to adapt to evolving AI technologies and educational needs. Updates will reflect ongoing research, technological advancements, feedback from stakeholders, and evolving educational needs.

6.4 Community Engagement:

The Board will actively engage the school community to:

- Discuss ethical and practical implications of AI use.
- Promote transparency and understanding of AI's role in education.
- Ensure all families understand how AI is being used in the school system as well as how to monitor its use at home.



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Section 7: Conclusion

As AI technologies continue to evolve, this policy serves as a framework for fostering innovation while addressing the complex ethical, pedagogical, and practical challenges they present. By promoting responsible and equitable use of AI, the Board of Education reaffirms its commitment to preparing students for success in an increasingly digital world.