

STAFF USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

This policy establishes guidelines for the responsible, ethical, equitable, and evidence-supported development and implementation of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies by staff within the Merrimack School District. The School Board, NH Board of Education, and National Education Association acknowledges the significant potential of AI tools to improve educational and administrative functions. The District considers access to secure and efficient AI technology a fundamental resource for all students and staff, regardless of their background or ability. This policy is guided by the core principle that students and educators must remain at the center of education. AI should function as a supportive instrument, enhancing human abilities and interpersonal connections that drive academic achievement, critical thinking, emotional well-being, and creativity, rather than substituting them. AI is intended to aid educators and education and not supplant meaningful human interaction and ensure that authentic educator-to-student relationships are prioritized.

Definitions

Artificial Intelligence (AI): A branch of computer science focused on building machines and software capable of performing tasks that usually require human intelligence, such as learning, reasoning, solving problems, understanding language, and interpreting sensory inputs. AI systems use algorithms and models to analyze data, identify patterns, and make decisions or predictions with minimal human input.

Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI): A type of AI that creates new content, such as text, audio, video, images, or code, using machine learning models. Unlike traditional AI, which focuses on recognizing patterns or classifying data, generative AI produces outputs that mimic human-created content.

AI Tools: Software applications and platforms that utilize AI technologies to perform specific tasks and solve problems that typically require human intelligence. This might include generative AI tools (e.g., Gemini, ChatGPT, DALL-E), AI-powered learning platforms, or other applications that use AI.

Personally Identifiable Information (PII): Information that can be used to identify a specific individual.

Guiding Principles

The use of AI by staff in the Merrimack School District shall be guided by the following principles:

STAFF USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE**Human-Centered Approach:**

AI should augment human capabilities, with educators at the heart of the learning process. It should enhance, not replace, human interaction, pedagogical principles, and the professional judgment of educators.

AI is an emerging branch of computer science and educators should exercise care to fact-check and review the veracity, credibility, quality and authenticity of the information generated by AI. In particular, educators are reminded that AI tools may not always generate outcomes or products that meet the quality standards expected of the District's educators or its students. In addition, educators should exercise care to ensure that the AI tools do not provide bias in content.

Educational Enhancement:

AI should directly support and enhance teaching and learning, aligning with educational goals. It should promote personalized learning and increase student engagement.

Access and Inclusion:

AI should promote access and reduce bias, ensuring all learners benefit. AI tools should be accessible to all learners, including those with disabilities.

Privacy and Security:

Learner and staff data must be protected and used responsibly, adhering to strict privacy regulations, including FERPA, COPPA, RSA 189:66 V, and other state-specific laws. Personally identifiable information should not be shared with consumer-based or open AI systems.

Transparency and Accountability: AI systems should be transparent, with understandable decision-making processes where applicable. Stakeholders, including educators, learners, families, and the public, should understand how AI is being used in schools.

Ethical Use: AI should be used ethically, avoiding harmful or discriminatory applications. Staff should model responsible and ethical AI use.

Human Oversight: Human oversight is essential in all stages of AI implementation and decision-making processes, especially critical decisions or high-stakes interactions.

Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement: Educators, learners, parents, and policymakers should be involved in discussions about AI use. Staff should collaborate with colleagues and share best practices.

AI Literacy: All stakeholders should be equipped with the knowledge and skills to use AI effectively and ethically. Staff should be trained to effectively integrate AI into their practice and guide students.

STAFF USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE**Permitted Uses by Staff**

Staff are permitted to use district-approved AI tools to enhance their professional practice and support student learning, provided such use aligns with this policy and district guidelines.

Examples of permitted uses include, but are not limited to:

Instructional Planning and Content Creation: Staff are permitted to use district-approved AI tools to enhance their professional practice and support student learning, provided such use aligns with district policy and guidelines. Examples of permitted uses include streamlining lesson planning, organizing lessons efficiently, brainstorming ideas for assignments and research, creating differentiated learning materials, developing presentations, graphics, writing prompts, rubrics, and datasets (AI-created rubrics and materials require educator review), and generating explanations of complex concepts. AI can also support assessment and feedback by quickly assessing objective assignments, providing preliminary feedback on writing for educator refinement, analyzing learner response patterns, generating practice problems and error analysis, and using AI-powered assessment tools with educator oversight for formative and summative evaluation.

Administrative and Communication Tasks: Automating routine tasks can free up valuable time so more attention can be spent on helping students and teachers. AI tools can assist in drafting communications to parents and learners, with the added benefit of potentially translating content for multilingual families. Furthermore, AI can enhance various operational functions within the school district, such as scheduling and data analysis.

Professional Learning and Research: AI tools can support professional growth by suggesting resources on teaching strategies, subject knowledge, and classroom management. They can also help staff stay informed about the latest innovations in education. Furthermore, AI can be used for exploring and analyzing data or complex systems relevant to educational research or practice.

Prohibited Uses by Staff

Staff are prohibited from using AI tools in ways that violate academic integrity, compromise data privacy and security, or disrupt the educational environment. Prohibited uses include, but are not limited to:

Sharing Confidential or Sensitive Information: Inputting any personally identifiable information (PII) or sensitive/confidential district information (e.g., student records, staff personnel data, copyrighted student/staff work) into unvetted, public, or unsecured AI tools. All use of AI must comply with current data privacy laws and regulations.

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Misrepresenting Work: Submitting AI-generated content as their own original work without appropriate disclosure or using AI to complete tasks in a way that falsely represents the work as solely their own. While AI can be used as a starting point or tool, the final output must be the product of the staff member's critical thinking, expertise, and refinement.

Making Critical Decisions without Human Oversight: Relying solely on AI tools for critical decisions regarding students (e.g. grading final assessments, determining academic performance, making disciplinary decisions, or determining student placement, without rigorous human oversight and judgment). AI can support, but not replace, the educator's professional judgment.

Using Unvetted or Unapproved Tools: Using AI tools with students that have not been vetted and approved by the district, particularly those that do not comply with privacy and security standards (FERPA, COPPA, RSA 189:66 V) or authorizing students to use unapproved AI tools.

Creating or Spreading Harmful Content: Using AI to create or spread content that is inappropriate, biased, discriminatory, harmful, misleading, or violates copyright laws. Staff must critically evaluate AI outputs for accuracy, bias, and appropriateness.

Disrupting the Environment or Invading Privacy: Using AI tools to disrupt classroom activities, hinder others' learning, engage in inappropriate online behavior, or collect, share, or manipulate personal data of self or others without consent.

Engaging in these prohibited uses shall be considered a potential violation of the State Department of Education's Code of Conduct and Ethics for educators, a potential violation of District Policy EHAA as well as the District's standards with regard to educator conduct and professionalism. Hence, an employee may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, depending on the severity of the infraction.

Data Privacy and Security

Protecting the privacy and security of student and staff data is extremely important. Staff must adhere to the following requirements:

- All use of AI tools must comply with applicable laws and regulations, including FERPA, COPPA, NH RSA 189:66 V, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act privacy requirements as well as District Policy EHAA.
 - Only district-approved AI tools may be used, they have undergone a rigorous vendor vetting process, and comply with data privacy and security standards.
- Staff must never input personally identifiable information (PII) or sensitive/confidential district information into public or unvetted AI tools.
- Staff should take part in training provided by the district on data privacy and security best practices related to AI.

STAFF USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE**Academic Integrity and Transparency**

Staff play a critical role in fostering academic integrity in the age of AI and promoting transparency about its use. Staff responsibilities include:

- Modeling ethical and responsible AI use for students and colleagues.
- Teaching students about ethical use, disclosure, and citation of AI tools.
- Clearly communicating to students when and how AI use is permitted or prohibited for specific assignments, consistent with district policy and guidelines.
- Requiring students to disclose when they have used AI tools to assist with assignments and establishing clear guidelines for citing AI-generated content where appropriate.
- Designing assignments that focus on process, critical thinking, reflection, and higher-order skills that make it harder to use AI output to complete.
- Critically evaluating all AI-generated content (e.g., lesson materials, rubrics, student feedback) for accuracy, bias, developmental appropriateness, and alignment with learning standards before use. Do not use AI output without review.
- Addressing suspected plagiarism or academic dishonesty involving AI in accordance with district procedures.

Professional Learning and Support

The district is committed to providing ongoing professional learning and support to equip staff with the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively, ethically, and responsibly use AI in education. Staff are expected to actively participate in district-provided professional learning opportunities focused on AI literacy, ethical considerations, pedagogical strategies for AI integration, data privacy, and the evaluation of AI tools.

Human Oversight and Decision Making

AI is a tool to support human expertise and judgment, not replace it. Staff must maintain human oversight in all stages of AI implementation and use. Critical decisions, especially those impacting student learning, assessment, well-being, or personnel matters, must remain under rigorous human oversight and judgment. Staff must retain agency in decision-making and ensure AI use aligns with educational goals and values.

Policy Review and Updates

Recognizing the rapid pace of AI advancements, this policy is subject to regular review and updates to ensure its guidance remains relevant and effective. The district will periodically review AI strategies, policies, and approved tools, with input from stakeholders.

The School Board will review this policy yearly.

STAFF USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE**Resources**

New Hampshire Generative AI Framework.

State of New Hampshire Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Technologies Policy (Doc. No.: NHS0229 Version: 2, Effective Date: 11/1/23).

New Hampshire Code of Ethics for the Use and Development of Generative Artificial Intelligence and Automated Decision Systems (AI System).

Report of the NEA Task Force on Artificial Intelligence in Education (National Education Association, published: June 26, 2024, last updated: October 22, 2024).

CCSD Policy on Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) Integration (Policy 5110, Adopted: August 29, 2024).

Nashua Board of Education Policy IKL-R: Ethical and Responsible Use of Generative AI (Board Approved: 02/19/2024).

Bedford School District AI Statement (Bedford School District, June 2024).

Bedford School District Parent Letter- Student Use of GenAI in Schools (Bedford School District, March 2024).

Bedford School District School Board Presentation: AI in Education (Bedford School District, August 2023).

AI Committee Document (Bedford School District, August 2023)

Policy 2365: Acceptable Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) (Strauss Esmay Associates, LLP, Aug 24).

Guidance on AI in education (Office of Educational Technology, U.S. Department of Education, 2023).

United Nations Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on the Teaching Profession: Transforming the Teaching Profession: Recommendations and Summary of Deliberations (International Labour Office, Geneva, 2024)

Presidential Actions: Advancing Artificial Intelligence Education for American Youth (Executive Order, April 23, 2025)

RSA 189:68-a - Learner Online Personal Information Protection

*Research analysis was aided by Google's NotebookLM, which assisted in navigating, summarizing, and extracting key information from the provided resource documents.

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Legal References

FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act).

COPPA (Children's Online Privacy Protection Act).

CIPA (Children's Internet Protection Act).

NH Student Online Personal Information Protection Act (SOPIPA or otherwise known as HB520).

RSA 5:D, Use of Artificial Intelligence by State Agencies.

Education Law 2-d

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