Leveraging AI in the K-12 Setting

Ensuring the ethical, effective, and secure use of AI tools and systems in Georgia's schools

Georgia Department of Education

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This document provides guidance and considerations for the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in K-12 public schools in Georgia. As AI technologies continue to evolve, their integration into educational settings offers both opportunities and challenges. This document outlines general information and best practices to ensure the ethical, effective, and secure use of AI tools and systems within our schools. AI is a tool to increase efficiencies and effectiveness, not a replacement for human interaction during the teaching and learning process.

The use of AI in education has the potential to revolutionize learning and administrative processes by providing personalized learning experiences, automating administrative tasks, and offering new educational tools. However, it is important to implement these technologies thoughtfully and responsibly to avoid potential pitfalls and ensure that they serve the best interests of all students and educators.

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Overview of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Artificial Intelligence, commonly referred to as AI, encompasses a broad range of computer science techniques and technologies that enable machines to perform tasks that typically require human intelligence. These tasks include learning from data, recognizing patterns, making decisions, and understanding natural language. AI systems can operate through algorithms, machine learning models, and neural networks, which allow them to adapt and improve over time based on the data to which they are exposed.

Generative AI refers to a subset of AI that creates new content, such as text, images, music, or code. It does this by learning patterns from a massive amount of data and then generating new content that is similar to the training data.

When integrated thoughtfully and responsibly, AI has the potential to transform the educational landscape, making learning more efficient, effective, and engaging for all students.

Ethical & Responsible Use of AI

The ethical use of AI in education is paramount. AI applications must be designed and deployed in ways that respect all students, parents, and educators.

Educators, administrators, and students must:

- Ensure AI applications are used in a supportive, not high-stakes manner.
- Use AI to enhance, not replace, human judgment and interaction.
- Promote transparency about when and how AI is being used.
- Respect privacy and ensure data protection in all AI endeavors.

Like any tool and technology, AI can be leveraged appropriately or inappropriately. Generally, when AI is used for high-stakes purposes (i.e. directly impacting and influencing the performance and evaluation of students and educators) its use must be reassessed. Streamlining administrative processes at the detriment of the human element can lead to mistrust and challenges associated with AI's ethical use in the classroom setting.

For example, a teacher may find using AI to write IEP goals as a benefit to save time, but the parent/guardian of a student with a disability might view the use of AI as disconnected from the individual needs of his or her child. See the table below for examples of appropriate support uses of AI.

In the educational setting, educators and leaders should refrain from using AI in a high-stakes manner.

Potential Risks of AI in Education: High Stakes Uses for AI	Potential Benefits of AI in Education: Non-high stakes Uses for AI
Examples: • Write IEP goals for individual students. • Evaluate lesson plans. • Evaluate educators. • Evaluate the resumes and applications of job candidates to narrow a group of finalists. • Grade student assignments or projects that are subjective. • Analyze student data to predict future success, recommend class placements, or flag potential disciplinary issues.	Examples*: • Assist in creating learning targets for a class. • Assist in creating lessons, lesson plans, and instructional activities. • Assist in the development of job descriptions/announcements. • Assist in the development of a rubric for an assignment. • Provide feedback on a non-graded assignment/project. • Grade multiple choice exams. • Modify the reading level of a grade-level text to meet individual learners' reading abilities. *It is essential that content generated by AI has human oversight, undergoing review and quality checks. Final decision-making should always involve human judgment.

Transparency is also vital; stakeholders should be informed about how AI systems make decisions and what data they use. Protecting the privacy of students and staff is another key ethical consideration, requiring robust data protection measures. See *Safeguarding Privacy: Protecting Personally Identifiable Information in AI Systems.*

District Self-check	*Considerations:* 1. Has the district defined when AI tools and applications should be used and not used? 2. What safeguards has the district implemented to ensure AI is not used in a high-stakes manner? 3. How does the district ensure content generated by AI undergoes responsible human oversight and review?

Safeguarding Privacy: Protecting Personally Identifiable Information in AI Systems

To protect Personally Identifiable Information (PII), the following practices must be adhered to:

- Never input PII, such as social security numbers, home addresses, health information, academic information, employee performance, or other sensitive data into AI systems.
- Utilize anonymized or aggregated data (utilizing a locally determined n size) whenever possible so specific students and staff cannot be identified.
- Educate all users about the risks and responsibilities of handling PII and integrate this into annual professional learning requirements.

Protecting student and staff privacy is a top priority. AI systems can process vast amounts of data, and it is essential to ensure that this data does not include sensitive personal information. Schools should implement strict data handling policies and provide training to all staff on data privacy best practices.

Key Federal Statutes and Regulations

Children's Online Privacy Protection Rule (COPPA):

- 47 USC §231
- 16 CFR Part 312

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA):

- 20 USC §1232g
- 34 CFR Part 99

Privacy Act of 1974:

- 5 USC §552a
- 22 CFR Part 1101

Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA):

- 20 USC §1232h
- 34 CFR Part 98

Section 504: Rehabilitation Act applies to both physical and digital environments. Schools must ensure that their digital content and technologies are accessible to students with disabilities.

IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act): AI must not be implemented in a way that denies disabled students equal access to education opportunities.

District Self-check	*Considerations:* 1. How have AI and PII best practices been integrated into annual student privacy professional learning for all educators and staff? 2. Are all district staff trained on the importance of protecting personal and private information when interacting with AI systems? 3. Is there a monitoring process to ensure compliance with data privacy practices and federal regulations?

Process for Districts to Adopt AI Policies

A structured approach to policy adoption includes:

- Evaluating and updating existing policies that intersect with AI (e.g. Grading, Code of Conduct, and Acceptable Use).
- Engaging stakeholders in the policy development process.
- Conducting a needs assessment to identify specific AI applications.
- Drafting policies that align with district goals and policies.
- Implementing policies through training and clear communication.
- Regularly revisiting and updating policies based on feedback and technological advancements.

Developing AI policies should be an open and transparent process that involves input from a diverse group of stakeholders, including educators, parents, students, and community members. A needs assessment can help identify the most promising AI applications for the district.

Policies should be clearly communicated and supported with training to ensure they are effectively implemented. Regular reviews and updates are necessary to keep pace with technological changes and feedback from the school community.

Developing and Adopting AI Policies

Steps	Considerations
Engage Stakeholders	Include educators, parents, students, IT staff, and community members in the policy development process.
Conduct Needs Assessment	Identify specific AI applications that will benefit the district and align with educational goals.
Draft Policies	Ensure policies align with district goals and policies, covering ethical use, data privacy, grading, code of conduct, and acceptable use.
Pilot Testing	Implement pilot tests of AI tools and collect feedback from participants to identify potential issues and benefits.
Finalize and Implement Policies	Incorporate feedback from pilot tests, clearly communicate policies, and provide training for effective implementation.
Regular Review and Update	Periodically review and update policies based on technological advancements and feedback from the school community.

Including AI in District Student and Employee Handbooks

AI policies should be clearly outlined in handbooks, addressing:

- Grading policies
- Plagiarism and ethical use of AI-generated content
- Acceptable Use policies for AI tools
- Codes of Conduct for Students and Staff
- Responsibilities and consequences for misuse of AI

Incorporating AI policies into district handbooks ensures that all students and employees are aware of the expectations and guidelines for AI use. These policies should cover issues such as plagiarism, ethical use of AI-generated content, and acceptable use of AI tools. Clear definitions of responsibilities and consequences for misuse can help maintain a safe and productive learning environment.

It is essential that once these policies are established, educators and leaders receive training and clear communication is provided to students and parents.

District Self-check	*Considerations:* 1. What AI policies and processes are needed at the district, school, and classroom levels? 2. What existing policies (i.e. academic integrity, acceptable use, discipline, grading, and codes of conduct, etc.) need to be updated or expanded to address AI use? 3. How does the district use an open and transparent process that engages a wide-range of stakeholders to ensure buy-in and trust in AI policies? 4. What is the communication plan for sharing AI expectations with students and parents? What training will be provided to educators and leaders? 5. How does your district ensure AI policies and practices will be regularly reviewed and updated since it is an emerging technology?

Having Formal Agreements with AI Systems and Tools

Districts and schools should establish formal agreements with AI vendors to protect the school district, staff, and students, which should include:

- Clear terms of use and service-level agreements.
- Data privacy and security commitments from the vendor.
- Regular audits and compliance checks.

Formal agreements with AI vendors are essential to ensure that AI tools are used responsibly and effectively. These agreements should outline the expectations and responsibilities of both parties, including data use and privacy as well as security measures. Regular audits and compliance checks can help ensure that vendors adhere to these agreements and that any issues are promptly reported and addressed.

TrustEd Apps™	**TrustEd** Apps is a catalog of applications and software vetted for use. Each application in the catalog has been researched and validated to ensure security and data privacy. The TrustEd Apps data privacy rubric examines four key areas: data collected, security, third-party sharing, and advertising

Having a Process for Formally Vetting and Adopting District and School Level AI Tools

A rigorous vetting process is essential before adopting AI tools. Steps include, but are not limited to:

- Forming a review committee with diverse expertise and backgrounds, including student, parent, and educator voice.
- Conducting pilot tests and collecting feedback.
- Evaluating tools against ethical, educational, and technical standards.
- Developing a list of district-approved AI tools and applications.

The adoption of AI tools should be a collaborative and thorough process. A review committee with representatives from various stakeholder groups, including teachers, administrators, IT staff, and parents, can provide valuable perspectives on the potential benefits and drawbacks of proposed AI tools. Pilot tests can help identify any issues before full-scale implementation, and feedback from these tests should inform the final decision. Consider starting these tests at the high school level and working down grade levels as appropriate.

District Self-check	*Considerations:* 1. How will the district structure a review committee to vet potential AI tools and applications for district adoption? 2. Does the district have a list of recognized AI tools and applications? 3. What types of formal agreements does the district have with the recognized AI tools and applications?

Evaluation Process Rubric

Implementing a structured process for evaluating and adopting AI tools involves considering various factors to ensure their educational value and privacy implications.

The following sample rubric provides a framework for this evaluation:

Criteria	Considerations	Scoring
Educational Value	Alignment with curriculum standards, enhancement of learning outcomes, support for all learners.	
Data Privacy	Compliance with privacy laws and regulations, data encryption, anonymization practices.	
Usability	User-friendliness, accessibility, technical support availability.	
Cost	Initial (e.g., licensing, installation) and ongoing costs (e.g., subscriptions, training, support), potential for long-term savings or value.	
Scalability	Ability to expand usage across different grades and schools, adaptability to varying needs.	
Vendor Reputation	Experience in K-12 education, past performance, customer reviews, vendor support and reliability.	
Age restrictions	Evaluate age requirements for utilization to ensure alignment with implementation.	

Importance of AI Professional Learning for Educators

Ongoing professional development is essential for effective AI integration. Suggested topics include:

- Fundamentals of AI and its applications in education.
- Ethical considerations and data privacy.
- Practical strategies for incorporating AI into the curriculum.
- Identifying and addressing AI inaccurate information.

Professional learning opportunities help educators stay informed about the latest AI developments and best practices. Training should cover the basics of AI, including how it works and its potential applications in education. Ethical considerations and data privacy are critical topics that need to be addressed. Practical strategies for integrating AI into the curriculum can help teachers use these tools effectively. Additionally, educators should learn how to identify and mitigate inaccurate information in AI systems.

Districts may consider a phased approach to organizing their rollout of AI adoption, prioritizing initial professional learning (e.g. district-adopted AI tools and processes, ethical use, integration of district-adopted tools) and then ongoing professional learning (e.g. leveraging AI tools within the classroom setting, personalized learning, data analysis).

District Self-check	*Considerations:* 1. How is AI integrated into existing professional learning requirements for educators and leaders? 2. What new professional learning opportunities are needed to properly equip your district's educators and leaders to ensure the ethical, effective, and secure use of AI?

Using AI in the Classroom

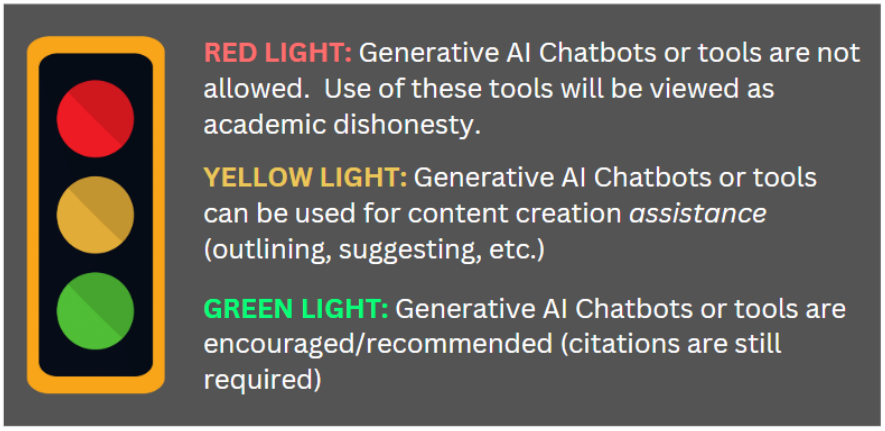
Specifying When Students Can Use AI

For responsible and effective use of AI in the classroom, it's important that district and school leaders as well as educators set clear expectations and procedures of using AI tools.

To support learning while maintaining academic integrity:

- Define specific assignments where AI tools can be used (e.g., research projects).
- Clearly state when students must rely on their own knowledge (e.g., during exams or assessments).

Based on district and school level policies, educators may use a 'redlight system' to communicate to students when AI use is allowable and to what extent.



Graphic above is based on Phil Hintz's THINK: Quick Guide to AI Use

AI tools can be powerful aids in the learning process, but it is important to set clear boundaries on their use. For example, students might use AI to assist with research, but they should not rely on AI for tasks that are meant to assess their individual understanding, such as exams.

Clear guidelines help maintain academic integrity and ensure that students develop their own critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

General Best Practices for Classroom Use

To maximize benefits and mitigate risks:

- Integrate AI tools in a way that complements traditional teaching methods.
- Encourage critical thinking about AI limitations.
- Provide training and resources for both students and educators.

Effective use of AI in the classroom involves integrating these tools in ways that support and enhance traditional teaching methods.

The following are additional examples of how the responsible use of AI can support student learning:

Student Learning

- **Aiding Creativity:** Students can harness generative AI to spark creativity across diverse subjects, including writing, visual arts, and music composition.
- **Collaboration:** Students can partner with Generative AI tools in group projects by contributing concepts, supplying research support, and identifying relationships between varied information.
- **Communication:** AI can offer students real-time translation, personalized language exercises, and interactive dialogue simulations.
- **Content Creation and Enhancement:** AI can help generate personalized study materials, summaries, quizzes, and visual aids, help students organize thoughts and content, and help review content.
- **Tutoring:** AI technologies have the potential to democratize one-to-one tutoring and support, making personalized learning more accessible to a broader range of students. AI-powered virtual teaching assistants may provide non-stop support, answer questions, help with homework, and supplement classroom instruction.
- **Documentation:** Please include the following narrative. "It is suggested that there is need to document AI use for generating ideas. However, for thorough research with AI, request websites when giving the prompt. Verify information and cite in school's preferred format (APA, MLA, etc.). When AI generates a substantial amount of text, give credit in the school's preferred format.

Source: AI Framework from the Utah DOE

Educators should help students understand the strengths and limitations of AI, encouraging them to think critically about the information and recommendations provided by AI systems. Ongoing training for both teachers and students is essential to ensure that everyone uses AI tools effectively and responsibly.

District Self-check	*Considerations:* 1. For classroom use, what expectations will be set district-wide and at the school-level versus what discretion will classroom teachers have regarding AI? 2. How will expectations be communicated to parents, students, and educators?

Attributing Work to AI

Proper attribution of work generated by AI is crucial. With the increasing capabilities of AI to generate content, it is important to clearly distinguish between human and AI-generated work.

Guidelines include:

- Clearly identify AI-generated content in student submissions.
- Encourage honesty and integrity in acknowledging AI assistance.
- Educators should model appropriate attribution practices in their own work.

Students should be taught to recognize the contributions of AI in their work. This not only fosters academic integrity but also helps students understand the role of AI in their learning process.

Educators should clearly outline the expectations for attribution in their assignments and provide examples of how to properly cite AI-generated content.

Leaders should consider the need for district-wide, school-level, and classroom-level policies for AI attribution and its interaction with existing academic integrity policies.

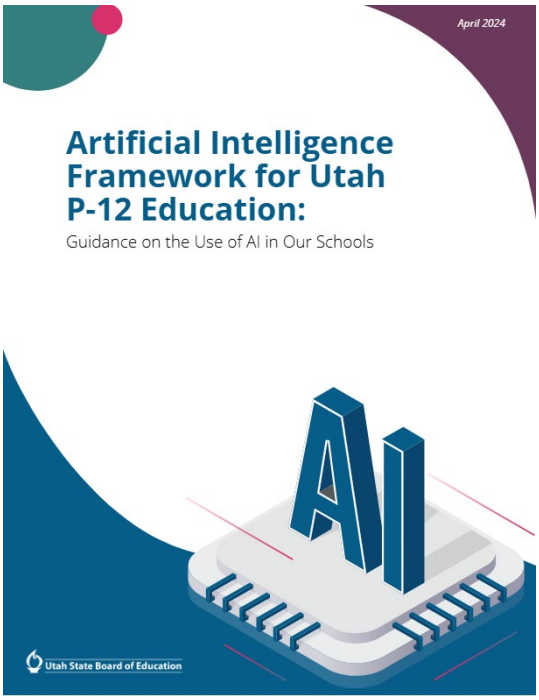
District Self-check	*Considerations:* 1. Does the district have an AI attribution policy for students, educators, and leaders? 2. How is AI attribution part of the district's existing academic integrity policy?

Looking Ahead

The thoughtful and informed use of AI in K-12 education has the potential to greatly enhance learning and administrative processes. By following this guidance and these best practices, Georgia's public schools must ensure that AI is used ethically, responsibly, and effectively, benefiting all members of the school community.

The Georgia Department of Education is committed to supporting schools in the responsible adoption and use of AI technologies. Through continued collaboration, training, and adherence to these guidelines, we can harness the power of AI to create a more personalized, efficient, and innovative educational environment for all students.

Additional Resources



[AI Framework from the Utah DOE]

[AI Guiding Principles from Richmond Co. Schools]

[U.S. Department of Education Artificial Intelligence (AI) Guidance]

[AI for Education]

[How to Cite AI Generated Content - Artificial Intelligence (AI) - Research Guides at Purdue University Libraries]

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