

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT #877 POLICY

Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose

INDEX TITLE Educational Programs SERIES NO. 600

POLICY TITLE Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence CODE NO. 625

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear and actionable guidelines for the responsible, ethical, and transparent use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) within the school district. This policy seeks to support and enhance teaching, learning, and administrative efficiency while upholding academic integrity, protecting privacy, and ensuring equitable access for all students and staff.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) language models can assist with various tasks, from teaching and learning to writing support to data analysis. School district staff who have access to AI tools should understand underlying behaviors and the potential benefits and limitations associated with use.

The school district recognizes that the use of AI can, when used appropriately, enhance student learning by improving the efficiency of education, providing new and creative ways to support learning, and encourage independent research, curiosity, critical thinking, and problem-solving. The school district also recognizes the limitations and potential for misuse of AI. This policy seeks to ensure student learning remains focused on requisite cognitive skills and productive struggle. Students must be provided with the opportunity to develop the skills needed to conceptualize, reason, and write, as well as edit their work, free of AI first and foremost.

The school district authorizes staff to utilize AI as a tool in fulfilling their work responsibilities as consistent with federal and state law and school district policies.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

A. Human Agency and Oversight

The school district supports AI use only as an augmentative tool rather than as an autonomous decision-maker. The district maintains an approach where professional discernment drives the educational process. Staff and students remain the final arbiters of all work produced, ensuring that human intellect remains the primary catalyst for learning and the ultimate authority for all outcomes.

The superintendent will designate at least one school district AI Coordinator to monitor advancements, risks, and best practices in the field of AI persons. The AI Coordinator will also serve as a professional resource and advisor for the school district on these topics. The AI Coordinator may consult with experts or others outside the school district, but may

share critical or confidential data only under appropriate confidentiality or nondisclosure agreements.

B. Responsible Use and the Productive Struggle

The school district supports the use of AI in ways that uphold academic integrity and foster critical thinking. AI use must serve the learning process without undermining the "productive struggle" that is essential to authentic learning. AI is not a default tool for every task; rather, staff and students shall utilize the district's Responsible Use Scale to make conscious, intentional choices about when and how AI is employed.

C. Data Privacy & Protection

The security of student and staff data is a prerequisite for the adoption of any AI technology. The school district will only utilize AI tools that operate within a vetted, gated environment. All tools must comply with federal and state law, including the Minnesota Student Data Privacy Act, and security must be established and verified before any tool is introduced into the district's digital ecosystem.

D. Developmental Appropriateness

The school district recognizes that AI strategies must be tailored to the developmental stages of learners. Implementation shall be differentiated across the K-12 spectrum, acknowledging that what is appropriate for a high school student may not be suitable for a primary learner. This distinction shall drive all level-specific instructional decisions regarding AI.

E. Administrative Operations

The school district supports the use of AI to enhance administrative operations, communication, and organizational efficiency, provided such use remains consistent with the standards defined in this policy.

III. CURRICULUM INTEGRATION AND AI LITERACY

A. The school district will provide Responsible Use Guidelines for staff and students.

B. Selection and implementation of student-facing AI resources and use is part of the school district's curriculum development and instructional materials selection process. The AI Coordinator will direct implementation of the AI Use Plan for student-facing AI to provide guidance to professionals making these selections. The AI Coordinator may also serve as an advisor and resource throughout the selection process, particularly when new products and services are considered.

C. The AI Coordinator will ensure that the AI Use Plan supports acceptable AI tool selection and use in the school district and will be updated as new issues emerge.

D. Any use of AI in the classroom or on class assignments must align with the teachers' instructions and use expectations. Teachers will provide direction when students are

authorized to use AI in an assignment. Teachers will direct student use of AI, ensuring that it aligns with the school district guidelines and policies.

- E. Use of AI must comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), and other federal and state laws.
- F. Students will indicate AI use on assignments as required by the teacher and the assignment.

STUDENT USE GUIDELINES

Students may use school district-approved AI tools for educational purposes only as directed by teachers and in compliance with assignment guidelines. All AI-generated content must be verified and properly cited. Students are prohibited from inputting personal, confidential, or sensitive information into AI tools, whether such information is about themselves or others. Staff will provide regular training on safe, ethical, and effective AI use, and will review and update guidelines annually. Violations will be addressed according to the Student Discipline Policy, with corrective action and support provided as needed.

G. Verification and Academic Integrity

1. Students must verify AI-generated information using reliable sources such as textbooks, scientific papers, or reputable educational websites.
2. Any content generated or significantly assisted by AI must be transparent and cited as required by the teacher and the assignment.
3. Submitting AI-generated content or content significantly assisted by AI as original work without attribution is prohibited.

H. Privacy and Data Protection

Students must not upload or input personal, confidential, proprietary, or sensitive information into any AI tool.

I. Prohibited Student Uses of AI

Students may not use AI tools to:

1. Create, access, or display harmful, threatening, obscene, disruptive, or sexually explicit material;
2. Engage in harassment, discrimination, bullying, or disparagement of others based on race, ethnicity, national origin, sex, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, or political beliefs;
3. Violate any school district policy, classroom rule, or applicable law; or
4. Utilize AI to create deep fakes, synthetic media, voice cloning, or similar content. Staff may not create synthetic images, audio, video, or texts concerning another individual without the individual’s explicit and legally permissible consent.

STAFF USE GUIDELINES

When using AI to enhance educational experiences, Staff may only use school district-approved AI tools, provided all use complies with applicable laws and school district policies. Staff must not input confidential, proprietary, or sensitive information into AI tools. Staff are responsible for guiding and supervising student use, setting clear expectations, and ensuring proper attribution. The school district will provide ongoing training and support and will review staff guidelines regularly. Violations may result in disciplinary action as outlined in school district policy.

- J. Staff should guide students in AI use, including creation of clear expectations for AI tool use, attribution guidance, fact-checking, and proofreading.
- K. Staff should carefully evaluate the appropriateness of AI for educational purposes on a case-by-case basis, considering their appropriateness for each educational context, accuracy, reliability, and alignment with curriculum standards.
- L. Staff must implement human agency and oversight for any AI use involving students.
- M. Privacy and Data Protection: Staff must not upload or input personal, confidential, proprietary, or sensitive information into any AI tool.
- N. The school district supports AI use by school staff to assist with work responsibilities, improve efficiency, and support students and their families, staff, and the school district. These uses include, but are not limited to, document assistance, research support, administrative tasks, data analysis, and automation.
- O. Staff must ensure that their use of any AI tool complies with applicable laws, including those governing data and student privacy, and school district policies, including, without limitation, those regarding student information.

IV. DATA AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

All data use involving AI must comply with applicable state and federal laws, school district regulations, and acceptable use policies. The school district will train staff and students on data stewardship, privacy, and legal compliance, and will update procedures as laws and technologies evolve. Data privacy safeguards will be reviewed annually, and any changes to AI products or services will be carefully evaluated for impact on data security.

All data use must comply with all state and federal laws and school district regulations and requirements, including the school district's acceptable use and data policies. All school district users must ensure that all AI interactions comply with state and federal laws, especially regarding student data under FERPA, IDEA, CIPA, and COPPA.

Although AI products may claim to have some privacy safeguards in place, users should assume that all consumer AI products make data publicly available unless otherwise indicated pursuant to explicit official agreement with the school district.

Legal References: Minn. Stat. § 13.02 (Definitions)
Minn. Stat. § 13.03 (Access to Government Data) Minn. Stat. § 13.05 (Duties of Responsible Authority) Minn. Stat. § 13.32 (Educational Data)
Minn. Stat. § 604.32 (Cause of Action for Nonconsensual Dissemination of a Deep Fake Depicting Intimate Parts or Sexual Acts)
Minn. Stat. § 609.771 (Use of Deep Fake Technology to Influence Election)
Minn. Stat. § 617.262 (Nonconsensual Dissemination of a Deep Fake Depicting Intimate Parts or Sexual Acts)
15 U.S.C. §§ 6501-6506 (Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act) 18 U.S.C. §§ 2510-2523 (Electronic Communications Privacy Act) 18 U.S.C. §§ 2701-2713 (Stored Communications Act)
20 U.S.C. § 1232g (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) 20 U.S.C. § 1232h (Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment)
20 U.S.C. §§ 1400-1419 (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) 29 U.S.C. § 701 et seq. (Rehabilitation Act of 1973)
42 U.S.C. § 2000e et seq. (Title VII of the Civil Rights Act) 42 U.S.C. § 12101 et seq. (Americans with Disabilities Act)
34 C.F.R. Part 99 (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act)

Cross References: ISD #877 Policy 506 (Student Discipline)
ISD #877 Policy 524 (Internet, Technology and Cell Phone Acceptable Use and Safety)
ISD #877 Policy 406 (Public and Private Personnel Data)
ISD #877 Policy 514 (Bullying Prohibition)
ISD #877 Policy 515 (Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records)

Resources: Minnesota Department of Education: Artificial Intelligence in Education (accessed August 2026)

Administrative Offices
Buffalo, Minnesota 55313

DATE OF ADOPTION _____

DATE OF REVIEW _____

DATE OF APPROVAL _____