DRAFT 2025-2026

AI POLICY GUIDANCE

FOR STAFF AND STUDENTS

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF LA CROSSE

www.LaCrosseSchools.org

Using AI in the
School District of La Crosse

As artificial intelligence (AI) becomes more common in our daily lives, the School District of La Crosse is committed to helping students and staff use AI responsibly and effectively. This document outlines how AI can be used in our schools, ensuring that it enhances learning while promoting critical thinking and ethical use. Our AI guidelines will continue to evolve as technology changes, ensuring that we provide the best support for students and educators.

AI tools have been in development for decades but became widely accessible in recent years. Generative AI tools generate content based on user prompts and are now embedded in many platforms. Because AI is increasingly shaping the way we work and learn, it's important that students and staff understand how to evaluate its output, use it appropriately, and recognize its limitations.

The School District of La Crosse encourages students and staff to use AI as a tool for learning, creativity, and problem-solving. We are committed to providing clear expectations and support to ensure students develop strong AI literacy skills while using AI in a responsible and ethical way.

Our Vision for
AI in Education

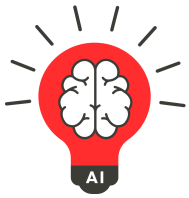
The School District of La Crosse believes AI should be used to enhance learning, encourage innovation, and prepare students for the future. Our vision is:

To equip students with the skills and knowledge to use AI effectively, responsibly, and ethically while understanding digital citizenship and the legal aspects of AI use.

How Teachers Will

Guide AI Use

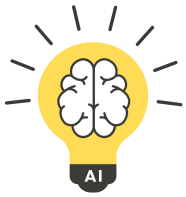
Teachers play an important role in helping students use AI appropriately. Clarity is kindness, and educators in the School District of La Crosse **will clearly communicate how AI can or cannot be used for each assignment**. Teachers will specify whether AI is limited, allowed or required, as outlined below.



LIMITED

LIMITED

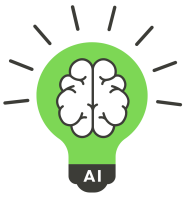
AI can be used for certain parts of an assignment but not others, especially when independent thinking is required.



ALLOWED

ALLOWED

Students may use AI to assist with research, brainstorming, or drafting, as long as they acknowledge its use.



REQUIRED

REQUIRED

Some assignments may require AI to help students learn how to use it effectively and responsibly.

All student and staff use of AI should follow the Human > AI > Human Approach, in which the human gives AI a prompt, the AI responds, and the human checks it for accuracy and bias.

It is required that students view our AI Literacy video before interacting with AI.

An AI Canvas module has been created to provide teachers with resources to get started working with Magic School. The AI Literacy video is also embedded in this module.

DPI AI Guidance and additional AI Resources are available.

Teachers will also model AI use, provide guidance on ethical considerations, and ensure students understand both the opportunities and challenges AI presents in education and beyond.

Ethics Guidelines

Ethics guidelines for the use of AI have been established for both students and staff to promote responsible, fair, and ethical use of artificial intelligence. These guidelines outline expectations for integrity, transparency, and appropriate AI usage to support learning and decision-making. It is essential that all individuals follow these standards to ensure AI is used ethically, responsibly, and in alignment with our values.

Student Guidelines

- ☐ **Be Respectful**: AI systems are not to be used to access or share private or sensitive information of oneself or others.
- ☐ **Be Honest**: Submitting AI generated work that is represented as your own may be considered dishonest and plagiarism. AI generated information must be cited and referenced as such.
- ☐ **Be Responsible**: Students are to adhere to the Acceptable Use Policies of the School District of La Crosse when using AI tools. Students are expected to use AI as a tool, as directed by teachers.
- ☐ **Be a Positive Skeptic**: AI may be wrong. Analyze all AI generated information before using it. AI systems may lack empathy and emotional intelligence. Be mindful of this limitation when using AI tools and consider your social, emotional, and physical well-being.
- ☐ **Be a Noticer and Concerned Digital Citizen**: Students who notice unethical, biased, inappropriate and/or inaccurate information generated by AI tools are to report these concerts to an adult staff member or trusted adult.

Staff Guidelines

- ☐ **Privacy & Security:** AI systems are not to be used to access or share private or sensitive information of oneself or others. Staff are to safeguard and monitor the safe use of AI among students. The use of AI tools must be in compliance with the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA).
- ☐ **Pedagogical Integrity:** AI is to be used to enhance the teaching and learning paradigm. AI does not replace human interaction or instruction. Educators are to explore and implement strategies that allow students to demonstrate their learning as new AI technologies emerge.
- ☐ **Responsible Use:** Staff are to model ethical behaviors for our students when using AI tools. AI may be wrong. Monitoring AI generated information for accuracy, bias, and/or harm is an essential part of the roles and responsibilities of all educators and staff members. Student Rooms in Magic School should be set up with required login to ensure monitoring is available.
- ☐ **Digital Well-Being:** AI systems may lack empathy and emotional intelligence. Staff are to be mindful of this reality and guide students to understand the limitations of AI.
- ☐ **Concerned Digital Citizenship:** Staff are expected to align all pedagogical practices to the Acceptable Use Policies of the School District of La Crosse. Staff are to be alert and willing to notice and report potential unethical use of AI to administration.

Citing AI and
Academic Honesty

If students or staff use AI to generate content, they must be upfront about it. AI-generated material should never be passed off as original work.

Proper citation when using AI is required, just as it is for any other source.

MLA (used in language and literature subjects)
APA (used in science, social studies, and education fields)

Students should always include an AI Use Statement alongside their work. An AI Use Statement is a short, transparent declaration explaining how AI was used in their submitted work. It ensures academic integrity and helps educators understand the student's role in the creation process.
Example: *"I used AI to assist with brainstorming ideas and checking grammar in this essay. All writing and final edits are my own."*

Additionally, it's important to read and understand the terms of any AI tool to ensure proper use and compliance with content ownership rules.

We aim to ensure that all students, including those in special education, are empowered to use AI as a tool to enhance their learning and skills, rather than being unfairly targeted by its use. Our focus is on training all students to leverage AI ethically to improve the quality of their work.

If there's a suspicion of unethical AI use, the situation should be approached with curiosity. Instead of making assumptions or accusations, we encourage staff to ask questions to understand how AI was used in the specific situation. Our goal is to inspire students to use AI responsibly and ethically.

Please remember to consult the existing handbook language on Academic Honesty. It outlines expectations for academic integrity and the potential consequences of violating those expectations, with or without the use of AI. We believe that with the right guidance, our students can use AI to reach their full potential while upholding the highest ethical standards.

AI and Student Learning

AI will continue to change the way students demonstrate what they've learned. The School District of La Crosse supports fair and effective assessment strategies that:

- **Promote Creativity and Deeper Understanding:** Enable students to demonstrate their learning through connected, creative, collaborative, and personalized experiences that foster critical thinking.
- **Integrate Technology Thoughtfully:** Recognize AI's proficiency with basic text-based tasks and design assessments that require higher-level thinking skills and effective technology integration. Move beyond purely text-based assessments.
- **Humanize Learning:** Incorporate social and emotional elements to create a more engaging and personal learning experience.
- **Encourage Original Thought with AI as a Tool:** Foster original thinking while allowing students to explore AI as a resource.
- **Monitor Learning Progress:** Use checkpoints like rough drafts to track student understanding throughout the learning process.
- **Balance Technology with Critical Thinking:** Design assessments that balance technology use with critical thinking, ensuring students develop deep knowledge (DOK levels 3 and 4) instead of simply relying on AI for shortcuts.

Recognizing
AI Bias and Inaccuracies

AI is a powerful tool, but it isn't perfect. Sometimes, it can provide biased, incomplete, or incorrect information. Additionally, AI-generated images may not always represent diverse groups of people or individuals with varying abilities.

When generating images, teachers should encourage students to be specific in their prompts to ensure representation of different racial and ethnic backgrounds, as well as people with disabilities (e.g., including individuals using wheelchairs or other assistive devices).

Students and staff should:

- Verify AI-generated information using trusted sources.
- Recognize that AI may not always reflect multiple perspectives.
- Question AI responses and think critically about its suggestions.
- Remember the value and importance of the Human > AI > Human approach.

Teachers will help students develop strong research and fact-checking skills to ensure they can use AI thoughtfully and responsibly.

Protecting Privacy and Data Security

For privacy and security reasons, **the only AI platform endorsed for student use in the School District of La Crosse is Magic School**, who has entered into a contract with the district and has signed the Wisconsin Student Data Privacy Agreement. Students should **not** be required to use any platform that has not entered into this agreement.

Students and staff who choose to use other AI platforms do so with the understanding that it may put the privacy of their personal data at risk.

The safety of our students and staff is a top priority. When using AI tools, users must:

- **Prioritize Data Privacy and Security:** Always protect personal and sensitive information (like full names, addresses, school-related data, or phone numbers). Ensure compliance with all relevant data protection laws and district policies to maintain confidentiality and integrity. For more information, visit the Wisconsin DPI AI Guidance.

- **Maintain Human Oversight:** Use AI to augment educational processes, not replace human judgment. Educators should supervise AI applications to ensure they align with educational goals and ethical standards.

- **Promote Equity and Accessibility:** Implement AI tools that are accessible to all students, including those with disabilities, and avoid biases that could disadvantage any group.

- **Engage in Continuous Professional Development:** Stay informed about AI advancements and best practices through ongoing training and professional development opportunities.

- **Foster Transparent Communication:** Clearly inform students, parents/families, and staff about the use of AI tools, including its purposes and any data collected or analyzed.

These measures help ensure that students and staff use AI safely while maintaining control over their personal and academic information.

Helping Teachers
Learn About AI

To help teachers integrate AI into their classrooms, the School District of La Crosse will offer ongoing professional development opportunities. Teachers will be encouraged to:

- Attend AI training sessions to explore new ways of using AI in education.
- Experiment with AI tools to enhance instruction and engagement.
- Share experiences and insights with colleagues to support district-wide AI literacy.

Additionally, teachers are encouraged to complete **Magic School's certifications** and **Canva AI certification**. By staying informed and prepared, educators can help students use AI in ways that support their growth and success.

Our Commitment to
Responsible AI Use

The School District of La Crosse is dedicated to making AI a positive and valuable part of education. Our goal is not just to allow AI use but to actively teach students how and when to use AI in a responsible way. Through clear guidelines, hands-on learning, and ethical discussions, we aim to help students develop the skills they need to navigate a world where AI is an essential tool.

By embracing AI thoughtfully,
we ensure that students are prepared for the future—ready to use AI wisely in school, work, and life.

AI was used as a starting point to adapt the language of this policy for use in the School District of La Crosse. All policy was then reviewed and agreed upon by the Director of Secondary Education, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, Supervisor of Information Technology and Technology Integration Specialist.

Citations:
ChatGPT. (2025, March 18). *Reflection questions for AI policy rollout.* OpenAI. https://chat.openai.com

Google Gemini. (2025, March 18). *Chat on revisions to AI policy* [AI-generated response].

Pewaukee School District. (n.d.). *AI guidance packet for staff and students*. Retrieved from https://drive.google.com/file/d/1VR8SDHL4JBH2rH9e-eMFMhU1AgPL_9lI/view