

Artificial Intelligence for Innovative Education in City Schools of Decatur



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Big picture

- Artificial intelligence (AI) has the potential to significantly impact education and the workplace.
- CSD has an obligation to ensure student success in all areas, including readiness to participate in an AI-saturated world.
- CSD has an obligation to ensure our AI tools are implemented ethically and transparently.

CSD's posture

Introduction

City Schools of Decatur (CSD) envisions a future where innovative technology supports our mission to inspire and enable student growth through meaningful and engaging learning experiences. We acknowledge the potential of artificial intelligence (AI) to revolutionize education and the world for which we prepare students. We also recognize the potential negative consequences of poorly designed or used AI systems. This position statement outlines CSD's commitment to the responsible integration of AI.

What is artificial intelligence?

Artificial intelligence leverages computers and software to mimic the problem-solving and decision-making capabilities of the human mind.¹ AI is not new: it is a component of health monitors, home "smart" speakers, and phones' facial unlock systems, to name a few. AI became a major focus of media and consumer interest in late 2022 with the popularity of widely-available *generative* AI tools like ChatGPT and DALL-E, which can create sophisticated text and images based on simple prompts.

¹ [What is artificial intelligence \(AI\)?](#) from IBM

Als are developed with different *models*. AI models are “an approximation of reality that is useful for identifying patterns, making predictions, or analyzing alternative decisions.”² The term *model* in this context is inclusive of an AI’s *algorithms* (how an AI makes decisions) and *data* (i.e. the information an algorithm ingests, interprets, and acts on).

AI’s relevance and risks

The increasing accessibility of AI tools makes educators both excited for their potential acceleration of student learning and wary of their shortcomings and misuse.

Potential enhancements to learning from AI include

- **New forms of interaction.** AI tools can expand the viability of new forms of technology interaction. For example, familiar input capabilities that a computer “understands,” such as typing, clicking-and-dragging, and touching/gesturing can be reliably augmented with speaking and drawing. Familiar computer output, like texts and graphics, can expand into instructive conversations, meaningful content annotation, and relevant suggestions/recommendations.
- **Adaptivity in learning.** AI tools can expand how students are able to show what they know and help educators scaffold to meet students’ needs. AI-enhanced learning tools can also respond in-the-moment to students’ demonstrated learning to support re-teaching, reinforcement, and extension.
- **Better understanding of student learning.** We are used to technology tools displaying and organizing student work. AI has the potential to *assist* students and teachers in that learning, to plan and adapt activities, and to reveal patterns in student work. This benefit has the potential not only to better serve students, but also to improve teaching itself by reducing the time teachers spend *looking* for deep patterns in student learning.
- **Amplifying student outcomes.** Generative AI has the potential to return time to teachers by creating compelling first-draft lesson plans, learning activities, and other Tier 1 instruments. This can, in turn, return time to teachers to invest in enrichment and Tier 2 and 3 instruction. AI tools have the potential to provide meaningful feedback and guidance during Tier 1 instruction, allowing teachers to invest in the more personalized learning of Tier 2 and Tier 3 instruction.

Additionally, AI as a field has seen tremendous growth in hiring and investment. We better serve our students by ensuring they have the ability not only to benefit from AI support for learning, but also to learn and even create AI itself.

Risks and uncertainties around AI in education include

- **Academic malpractice.** The versatility of AI models, and their ability to create robust written and visual content on-demand, has educators understandably anxious about cheating and other forms of dishonesty in the classroom. There is an additional level of frustration for educators

² [Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Teaching and Learning](#). This position statement draws heavily from the DOE’s expertise and suggested framework for schools to develop their AI posture.

when it seems the most viable way to prevent academic malpractice (AI-powered or otherwise) is to redesign their core assessments.

- **Balancing human and AI decision-making and feedback.** We recognize the need to teach students and teachers how to evaluate AI models themselves, and to evaluate and analyze information produced by AI. It is important to balance between taking advantage of AI as a resource while also verifying the quality of that output and not ceding decision-making to AI.
- **Bias.** Research into AI models shows many instances of underlying datasets being non-representative of the global majority. Some language datasets include content that is hateful toward certain groups of people. Some datasets meant to help categorize people's disability or productivity are built upon measurements and definitions of "disability" from a hundred years ago or more. These shortcomings can cause AI model outputs to be incomplete, incorrect, or outright offensive. It is critical for AI tools to see and support all students and staff, and not to harm them.
- **Data control and privacy.** Users of AI are also often contributors of it: simple written prompts requesting AI output themselves get ingested into the model, possibly to influence other users' AI-generated content. It is important to have clear parameters and protections around sharing information, particularly sensitive or confidential information, with *any* third-party, including AI models.

CSD's approach to AI

1. **Human-centered AI:** Students and staff are the focus of our use of AI, not the AI tools themselves. Further, education about AI must include the tools to empower students and staff to critically examine both AI models and the human assumptions and values in their development and use.
2. **Leverage opportunities to improve our practice:** AI will continue to pervade our lives in and outside of school, and we want to look for opportunities to responsibly take advantage of AI. At times, this might feel onerous: for example, re-developing student assessment to make them less prone to AI-related academic malpractice.
3. **Seeking AI models aligned to our vision:** Not all AI models are intended to support K-12 learners. CSD will be deliberate in evaluating AI models for compatibility with our mission and vision.
4. **Inspectable, explainable, overridable:** AI adopted by CSD will be transparent in how it derives its content and conclusions, and will have mechanisms for qualified staff to edit or reject AI-generated content or recommendations based on their professional expertise. CSD users will provide clear attribution for AI-generated content.
5. **Compliance with our Student Data Privacy Requirements, Technology Use Requirements, terms of service, and other regulations.** As with other procurements involving a vendor accessing student information, we will remain committed to requiring third-party tools licensed by CSD to meet our stringent data privacy requirements. We will leverage and implement additional regulations to safeguard how employees and students access and develop AI resources. Likewise, we will reinforce the importance of heeding vendors' terms-of-service for appropriate use of their AI models.

6. **Continuous reiteration.** AI is a field of rapid development. As CSD builds its capacity around leveraging AI, instructional and technology leaders will collaborate with stakeholders to ensure our regulations and practices are appropriate for fulfilling students' needs.

Conclusion: “All In” for “AI”

City Schools of Decatur is committed to embracing AI as a transformative force in education. We will do so in a means best suited to empower students to realize their full potential, thrive as productive global citizens, ignite positive change, and create a more just and equitable world.

Additional resources

- [Regulation IFBG-R\(2\) - Employee Use of Generative AI](#)
- [City Schools of Decatur Vision and Mission](#)
- [2022-23 Guidance for Artificial Intelligence Tools and Other Services \(College Board\)](#)
- [Artificial Intelligence \(AI\) in K-12 \(Consortium for School Networking\)](#)
- [Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Teaching and Learning \(US Department of Education\)](#)
- Georgia Standards of Excellence for [Data Science I \(standard 6.1\)](#) and [Data Science II \(standard 5.1\)](#), which invoke AI
- [Google's AI Principles](#)
- [Leveraging AI in the K-12 Setting \(Georgia Department of Education\)](#)
- [Microsoft's AI Principles](#)
- [Statement from the IB about ChatGPT and artificial intelligence in assessment and education \(International Baccalaureate Organization\)](#)
- [There's More to AI Bias Than Biased Data. NIST Report Highlights \(National Institute of Standards and Technology\)](#)
- Brown, Lydia X. Z. "[How Automated Test Proctoring Software Discriminates Against Disabled Students.](#)" November 16, 2020. Center for Democracy and Technology.
- Venzke, Cody. "[Protecting Student Privacy and Ensuring Equitable Algorithmic Systems in Education.](#)" August 31, 2021. Center for Democracy and Technology.
- Williams, Damien P. "[Bias Optimizers.](#)" *American Scientist*. July–August, 2023.