Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) Statement and Recommendations for the 2025/26 School Year

Background: In the 2024/25 school year, Lethbridge School Division, under the leadership of the Director of Technology, formed a Division AI Committee. The committee included 32 members representing students, parents, teachers, support staff, school administrators, Division leadership, and community interest groups.

The full committee met in person in the fall and spring, and a smaller staff subcommittee met twice to synthesize the feedback and data gathered from those meetings. This document reflects the diverse perspectives shared throughout the process.

Purpose:

The purpose of this document is to provide a general belief and understanding of how generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools will be integrated into the educational environment. Many teachers, parents, and students have already started to access generative AI tools as part of their workflow and learning process. This document aims to outline beliefs at various levels and make recommendations on how to proceed securely and cautiously as generative AI models continue to integrate into our educational system. As this technology evolves rapidly, we must put necessary measures in place to ensure a safe and effective learning environment.

General Statement:

In today's ever-changing world, Artificial Intelligence (AI) is becoming a part of many types of software, helping users discover and create new information. For the purposes of this document, we will focus on generative AI models. These models are powerful tools that can support learning but can also hinder learning if not applied thoughtfully. Some commonly used generative AI models include ChatGPT, Gemini, Copilot, Claude, and DeepSeek.

Belief Statement for Lethbridge School Division:

Lethbridge School Division believes that generative AI, when used thoughtfully and responsibly, can enhance teaching and learning by supporting creativity, critical thinking, and personalized learning, while upholding our commitment to student safety, privacy, and ethical use of technology.

Division Office Statement:

Lethbridge School Division recognizes that generative AI has the potential to transform education by supporting personalized learning, fostering creativity, and enhancing critical thinking. The Division Leadership Team will ensure that generative AI models are used responsibly, ethically, and in alignment with our educational goals and policies.

Recommendations and Actions for Division Office:

- **Provision of generative AI Models:** The Division Office will provide access to generative AI models for schools and students who may require them for educational purposes. These models will comply with all Government of Alberta Privacy regulations and Division policies. The cost of implementing and supporting these tools will be borne by the individual school, student, or department requiring the tool. A full Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) must be completed before any generative AI model is approved at the Division level.
- **Ongoing Learning:** The Division Office will collaborate with schools, teachers, and parents to remain open to new opportunities and advancements in technology. The Division will continue learning about generative AI models and will engage in open conversations regarding their advantages and disadvantages.
- **Keeping Current:** Due to the speed at which this technology is changing, a sub-committee will meet at least semi-annually to reflect and update on these guidelines and provide direction to Administrators.
- **Policy Development:** The Division Office will explore potential policies and procedures around the use of generative AI models in schools, ensuring their use aligns with our responsible use of technology policies.
- **Safety and Security:** The Division Office will ensure that generative AI models permitted on the network are equipped with safeguards to prevent compromising student information and security. All generative AI models will be regularly evaluated, and if they pose unacceptable risks to students or staff, they may be restricted or blocked from the network.
- **Critical Evaluation:** Generative AI content can be inaccurate, biased, or even generate misinformation. Users should seek to demonstrate skills to evaluate, fact-check, and critically assess the information and attempt to verify, with reliable sources, information obtained from generative AI.

School Administration Statement:

- School administrators recognize that generative AI has the potential to be a powerful tool that supports teaching, learning, and administrative functions. However, it is essential that its integration is done thoughtfully, ethically, and with a focus on student well-being

and academic integrity. Administrators should collaborate with the school community and stakeholders to establish guidelines based on the actions below.

Administrator Recommendations and Actions:

- **Student Learning:** As with any educational tool, the primary goal is to promote and encourage creativity, critical thinking, and collaboration (among many others) and be transparent around delivery and implementation. Our approach should be proactive and not reactive when developing recommendations and actions. Generative AI is no different and its use should reflect these priorities.
- **Instructional Capacity:** Administrators are encouraged to engage in conversations with staff and provide appropriate learning opportunities/resources on how to use generative AI effectively in instruction, planning, assessment, and communication. Administrators will seek to have strong communication and understanding of how and for what purpose generative AI might be used.
- **Privacy and Safety Awareness:** Administrators shall support practices that maintain privacy and safety for all users.
- **Communication:** Administrators shall invite open communication with stakeholders, having the ability to explain the role/use of generative AI in the school, its benefits, and the safeguards in place when utilizing these tools.
- **Critical Evaluation:** Generative AI content can be inaccurate, biased, or even generate misinformation. Users should seek to demonstrate skills to evaluate, fact-check, and critically assess the information and attempt to verify, with reliable sources, information obtained from generative AI.

Teacher Statement:

Teachers are encouraged to communicate clearly with students and families about how generative AI will be used and ensure that usage aligns with Division policies. Teachers shall maintain ethical, safe, and appropriate practices when using generative AI.

Teacher Recommendations and Actions:

- **AI Detectors:** Generative AI tools should be used with caution. AI detectors may not be reliable.
- **Terms and Guidelines:** Teachers should be aware of generative AI user guidelines and terms.
- **Professional Learning:** Teachers are encouraged to continuously learn and explore opportunities to build their professional capacity around generative AI.
- **Paid Generative AI Services:** Teachers will not subscribe to any paid generative AI services using division or school funds without Division Office approval. Any paid services must undergo a Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) before being implemented.

- **ATA GUIDELINES AND POLICY:** Teachers are encouraged to refer to the Alberta Teachers Association guidelines on generative AI use within classrooms and ascertain safe use of Students Data Privacy.
- **Critical Evaluation:** Generative AI content can be inaccurate, biased, or even generate misinformation. Users should seek to demonstrate skills to evaluate, fact-check, and critically assess the information and attempt to verify, with reliable sources, information obtained from generative AI.

Student Statement:

Students are encouraged to work with teachers when using generative AI, ensuring student usage is thoughtful, protects their own and others' privacy, upholds academic integrity, and may further support their own thinking and learning. Generative AI should be used as a learning tool and is not meant to replace a student's active role in thinking and learning.

Student Recommendations and Actions:

- **Conferencing with Teacher and Staff:** Students should check with their teachers or refer to the specific assignment guidelines before using Generative AI tools for learning tasks.
- **Documentation:** Students should be prepared to explain how they used generative AI and how it supported and enhanced their learning.
- **Privacy Awareness:** Students should be aware and take caution of the potential risks and harm associated with inputting personal or sensitive information into generative AI models.
- **Critical Evaluation:** Generative AI content can be inaccurate, biased, or even generate misinformation. Users should seek to demonstrate skills to evaluate, fact-check, and critically assess the information and attempt to verify, with reliable sources, information obtained from generative AI.

Parent/Guardian Statement:

Lethbridge School Division encourages parents and guardians to play an active role in supporting their child's responsible and ethical use of generative AI. By working with teachers and schools, families can help students use GENERATIVE AI tools to enhance creativity, critical thinking, and build confidence.

Parent/Guardians Recommendations and Actions:

- **Encouraging Ethical Use:** Parents/Guardians should encourage their children to use generative AI, when specified by the teacher or school, ethically and responsibly. They should stress the importance of using generative AI to support learning and not as a shortcut for completing assignments.
- **Monitoring Usage:** Parents/Guardians are encouraged to monitor their child's use of generative AI tools at home while working on school related learning tasks.
- **Developing Independent Thinking:** Parents/Guardians are encouraged to help their child develop problem-solving and critical thinking skills while using generative AI tools.