

READ THIS AS AN EXAMPLE, NOT A TEMPLATE. Our principles come directly from our mission. Yours should come directly from yours, which means a good copy of this document would be a bad document for your school. The notes in the right margin are about how it's built, and each one ends with the questions we'd ask ourselves if we were writing it again. The approach was settled in July 2025; this document came after, as the way we conveyed it. Published January 2026; abridged here for length.

Eastside Prep Artificial Intelligence (AI) Approach

AI is a paradigm-shifting tool that is rapidly changing how we humans engage with the world. This assertion isn't a blanket approval of all that AI is capable of or how it is utilized. It is a recognition of our institutional commitment to ensuring that students are not only ready to navigate our current moment but also the future.

Because of the ambiguity presented by AI, EPS recognizes that no policy could fully encompass what our practices should be. Instead, we hope to develop a living document, guided by our mission and vision and grounded in relationship, for navigating a changing landscape, encouraging discussion and experimentation, and acknowledging the spectrum of usages and distinctions in each of the spaces in which we teach and serve students.

Guiding Principles

A Better World begins with individual students improving their own learning journeys, and extends to their classmates, the broader school community, and beyond... AI does not necessarily make for a better world, but like all tools, its thoughtful use has the potential to make the world a better place.

Critical Thinking requires effort and is, by its nature, mentally demanding. AI use in this area should ultimately deepen thinking, pose conflicting considerations, and reveal more complex solutions. AI can be used to simplify tasks in pursuit of critical thinking; however, using AI to bypass productive struggle defeats the purpose of an EPS education.

Responsible Action with AI requires care, integrity, and respect for others. This means understanding its impact, being transparent about its use, and ensuring that it supports, rather than replaces, human judgment and ethical decision-making.

Compassionate Leadership requires recognition that comfort with AI varies from person to person. EPS will provide learning and leadership opportunities with this dynamic tool while fostering patience and understanding as we grow together at different paces. This leadership may come from any constituency in the school as all of humanity are novices in this domain.

Wise Innovation requires a measured approach to making meaningful change. AI use will lead to intended as well as unintended consequences, both of which can be fruitful with reflection... EPS acknowledges that this is uncharted territory for society, and through discussion and collaboration (with adults and students), we will develop a positive path forward.

WHERE IT STARTS

The principles come directly from our vision and our four mission verbs. Each section asks what AI does to that commitment, and what that commitment asks of AI.

What are your anchors? Can each one be written about? If one can't, what does that tell you?

WHAT KIND OF DOCUMENT THIS IS

The second paragraph says this is a living document rather than a policy, because no policy could cover what our practices should be. Worth knowing: the document is not the approach. The approach was settled first, in discussion; this is how we carried it to the community, and the writing tested how clear we actually were.

Which parts of yours are stable enough to be policy? Which belong in the ambiguous middle? What will you call the thing you're writing, and who is it for?

WHAT'S THIN HERE

Read the five principles looking for what they rule out. We find one: using AI to bypass productive struggle.

As you write each principle: what does this rule out? Who would notice? What would we have to give up to mean it?

WHY THERE ARE NO PRODUCT NAMES

No product is named anywhere in the document. What's here is about data and about responsibility.

Which of your sentences depend on what a tool can do this year? Would they still hold when the tools change?

Guiding Practices *(selected)*

- Personally Identifiable Information should never be included in prompts. Ensure settings are set to not use data to train.
- Faculty should include guidelines about appropriate AI use for each assignment, or post an umbrella policy in the syllabus.
- EPS has no recommendation on specific tools, so be diligent about research prior to use, especially regarding how the platform stores your information.
- Share broadly; when you discover ways in which AI allows you to spend more time building relationships and less on rote tasks, share it.
- Expect the tools to change; what was true six months ago may already be outdated.
- There is no substitute for personal experience with these tools; if you have an excitement, wonder, or concern, validate it, ideally with multiple models.
- Be transparent about the use of AI.
- Since we are responsible for the work we produce, whether we use AI or create it ourselves, be sure to review it. Consider the degree of your authorship.
- Be mindful that in a world where AI begins to outperform humans in that which is measurable, our greatest value is to help students develop in all the ways that are difficult to measure — kindness, creativity, collaboration, perspective taking, civil discourse, curiosity, metacognition.
- We expect this list to evolve and grow over time as we continue to learn more and as AI capabilities continue to evolve.

“May I use AI for...?”

Grading & Assessment	Yes, but you are responsible for the grade you give and must be able to back up the rationale.
Assignment Construction	Yes, and you are responsible for the assignments you create. Be sure they meet your personal standards.
Lesson Planning & Writing	Yes, but you are responsible for what you present. Don’t use it to shortcut your preparation. Use it to challenge your approach and hone it.
Comment Writing	Yes, and teachers are responsible to authentically connect to their experience with the student and the student’s learning and growth.
Curricular Design	Think critically about AI’s output. Does it meet the objectives for the course, unit, or lesson? Did you ask for critique and alternate perspectives?
Communication with families, students, colleagues	Yes. Make sure it sounds like “you,” and you are responsible for the content.

When a teacher suspects prohibited AI use

- Talk to the student directly; inform Division leadership of the conversation.
- Plagiarism and AI are different, but may have similar negative impacts on student learning. If an assignment is meant to represent student thinking and it doesn’t, that is detrimental to the educational experience.
- Avoid accusatory language. Approach in the spirit of genuine inquiry; evaluate the work against the criteria you established. *“This prose is flat and generic. It sounds like poor writing”* — not *“You didn’t write this.”*
- Shift the evaluation to the process, not the product. It is much harder to simulate a full creative process than a final product.

YES, AND...

Each row answers yes, and names what the person stays responsible for.

For each use case: what are we saying yes to? What does the person remain responsible for? Does the answer still work if nobody checks?

KNOWING WE’LL BE WRONG

The document says we expect the list to evolve. It doesn’t say when, or who.

When would you expect to read yours again? Who convenes that conversation? Who notices when it stops describing you?

WHEN SOMETHING GOES WRONG

The integrity section is written in the same voice as the principles: inquiry rather than accusation, and the process rather than the product.

What happens at your school on the day this goes wrong? Does that procedure sound like your mission, or like someone else’s?

WHAT WE’D ADD NOW

An expectation for the year, written down. Ours never was: *think what you like about AI, but not engaging the question isn’t really an option here.* Nobody can be held to something that lives only in institutional memory.

What will you ask of everyone this year? An ask like that requires institutional support — what will the school provide so people can meet it?