CREATING AN EFFECTIVE AI POLICY FOR YOUR HOMESCHOOL GROUP

Why Your Homeschool Group Needs an AI Policy

AN AI POLICY SERVES AS A HELPFUL FRAMEWORK THAT

- Protects student learning and educational integrity
- Establishes clear expectations for teachers, students, and families
- Addresses parent concerns about AI use in classes
- Ensures AI tools enhance (rather than replace) genuine learning
- Provides teachers and families with guidance on appropriate practices
- Builds trust within your homeschool community

Essential Components of an Effective AI Policy

1. PURPOSE STATEMENT AND DEFINITIONS

- Clearly explain why your group is addressing AI use
- Define key terms in parent-friendly language:
  - What is AI? (e.g., ChatGPT, image generators, AI writing assistants)
  - What is "appropriate use" versus "academic dishonesty"?
  - What does "AI-assisted work" mean?
- Keep terminology simple and accessible to all families

2. SCOPE OF APPLICATION

- Specify which situations this policy covers:
  - Co-op classes and assignments
  - Field trip planning and communication
  - Student projects and presentations
  - Parent/volunteer use for group activities
- Clarify who must follow the policy (students, teachers, volunteers)
- Note what's outside the policy's scope (home learning, parental decisions for their own children)

3. STUDENT USE GUIDELINES

Addresses how students may or may not use AI in your group's activities.

PROHIBITED USES

- Submitting AI-generated work as their own
- Using AI to complete assignments meant to develop specific skills
- Bypassing the learning process in foundational subjects
- Generating work without proper disclosure

PERMITTED USES (WITH DISCLOSURE)

- Brainstorming and idea generation
- Checking grammar and spelling
- Getting explanations of difficult concepts
- Creating study guides or practice questions
- Other uses as specifically approved by teachers

REQUIRED DISCLOSURE

- How students should indicate when AI assisted their work
- What level of AI involvement requires disclosure
- Consequences for failing to disclose AI use

4. TEACHER AND VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES

Outline how adults in your group may use AI.

HELPFUL APPLICATIONS

- Planning lessons and activities
- Creating discussion questions or project ideas
- Drafting communications to families
- Organizing schedules and logistics
- Generating teaching resources

IMPORTANT BOUNDARIES

- Never input student names or private family information into AI tools
- Review all AI-generated content before sharing
- Maintain personal connection and oversight
- Ensure AI enhances rather than replaces human judgment

5. PARENT COMMUNICATION AND PARTNERSHIP

- Explain your plan for communicating with families about AI
  - Initial presentation (at a meeting, in co-op handbook, Facebook group, on website)
  - Ongoing updates (policy changes, reminders, examples of good use vs. problematic use)
- Invite parent input and questions
- Acknowledge that families may have different views
- Clarify that the policy applies to group activities, not home education
- Provide resources for parents who want to learn more

6. BEST PRACTICES FOR EDUCATIONAL INTEGRITY

- Emphasize that learning happens through the process, not just the product
- Encourage critical thinking about AI outputs
- Teach students to evaluate AI-generated information
- Design assignments that are meaningful even with AI access
- Focus on understanding, not just completion

7. REVIEW AND ADJUSTMENT PROCESS

- Designate who oversees the policy (leadership team)
- Establish how often you'll review it (annually or as needed)
- Create a simple way for families and teachers to suggest improvements
- Acknowledge that technology changes quickly and your policy will evolve
- Set a date for next policy review

Implementation Considerations

INVOLVE YOUR COMMUNITY

- Gather input from teachers, parents, and (age-appropriately) students
- Consider forming a small committee to draft the policy
- Share drafts for feedback before finalizing

PROVIDE CLEAR COMMUNICATION

- Present the policy in writing and discuss at an orientation meeting
- Create simple one-page summaries or FAQs
- Include examples that relate to your specific classes and activities
- Make the policy easily accessible (website, handbook, group files)

OFFER SUPPORT AND EDUCATION

- Provide brief training for teachers on detecting and addressing AI use
- Share resources with parents about AI tools
- Help students understand why the policy exists
- Create examples of appropriate vs. inappropriate AI use

KEEP IT PRACTICAL

- Make the policy simple enough that busy volunteers can follow it
- Focus on educational values, not complex legal language
- Be realistic about what you can enforce
- Build in grace for honest mistakes

STAY FLEXIBLE

- Recognize that AI technology is evolving rapidly
- Be willing to adjust your approach as you learn
- Create a process for handling unusual situations
- Remember that your goal is education, not punishment

Sample Policy Statement Starter

[Group Name]'s AI policy aims to support genuine learning while acknowledging that AI tools are part of our world. We want students to develop their own thinking, writing, and problem-solving skills while learning to use technology wisely. This policy guides how AI may be used in our co-op classes and group activities, with an emphasis on honesty, learning, and growing together as a community.

Sample Communication Plan

We'll introduce our AI policy at fall orientation and include it in registration materials. Throughout the year, we'll share occasional tips in our newsletter about helping students use AI responsibly. Parents with questions can contact [leadership contact]. We'll review the policy annually and welcome your input anytime via [email/form].

Remember: Your policy doesn't need to be perfect. Start with what makes sense for your group, communicate clearly with families, and refine as you go. The goal is supporting education and building trust, not creating bureaucracy.

This document was created with help from Claude.ai