

# Research Note

March 2026

## Artificial Intelligence in Education

### Introduction

Artificial intelligence (AI) is shifting the goalposts of teaching and learning in ways that are at once compelling and concerning. As teachers experiment with AI in lesson planning, instruction, assessment, and administrative tasks, they are also grappling with how to ethically and judiciously access and use AI tools in professional and pedagogical capacities.

The accelerating integration of artificial intelligence in K–12 public education classrooms and systems is generating a range of policy, research, and advisory responses from education authorities, including teacher unions, around the world. K–12 educators bear unique responsibilities related to AI given their professional duty of care towards children and youth. Canadian education ministries and school districts are racing to throw up Artificial Intelligence in Education (AIED) policy guardrails as “the ground itself is shifting faster than the frameworks built to stand on it.”<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile, teacher union organizations are determining how to best advise members about potential benefits and risks of using AI in their work and classrooms.

Opinions on AI are often highly polarized. Critics caution about potentially harmful trade-offs of using AI to alter personalized and group instruction, streamline administrative tasks, and generate curriculum content. There are concerns that AI adoption is escalating the deprofessionalization of teacher work, privatization of access to resources, and the replacement

---

1 Machado de Oliveira (2025, August). p.6. Standing in the fire: A speculative inquiry into meta-rationality and generative AI <https://decolonialfuturesnet.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/standing-in-the-fire-interim-report-2025.pdf>

of human-centric learning and experiences. As some within the public education field enthusiastically embrace AI, there is accompanying uncertainty and anxiety about “a future that is already being imagined without us.”<sup>2</sup>

It is important that teacher unions play a role in both envisioning and constraining uses of AIED. For one, teacher unions are the only bodies fully dedicated to centering teachers’ perspectives and needs as professionals, practitioners, and employees. Secondly, unions are well positioned to critically consider AIED through a social justice lens. Teacher unions hold a moral imperative to discern if AIED can be implemented in ways that are ethical, safe, inclusive, equitable, and environmentally sustainable. Thirdly, unions can serve as spaces for teachers to critically negotiate diverse perspectives on what place AI should (or should not) have in K–12 teaching and learning spaces. As Wayne Holmes wrote in a report for Education International, “Teachers and teacher trade unionists play a crucial role in ensuring that teaching with AI and teaching about AI supports human rights and social justice, strengthens education as a democratic and accountable public good, empowers teachers, and supports student agency.”<sup>3</sup>

Though many BC school districts are already actively using AI platforms and applications,<sup>4</sup> teachers are calling for more clearly articulated policy and guidance. This report offers an overview of what artificial intelligence is, how some BC teachers are using it, what potential concerns are emerging, and what existing research and policy resources might inform and support the creation of a robust union response to AIED.

## What is artificial intelligence (AI)?

It is important to consider what is meant by artificial intelligence before exploring its applications in education. Broadly, artificial intelligence refers to a set of technologies, techniques, and tools designed to simulate aspects of human cognition, including learning, reasoning, communication, problem-solving, and decision-making. Although AI has gained widespread public attention through recent advances in systems that generate human-like content in response to natural-language prompts such as ChatGPT, Gemini, and DeepSeek, the term itself was first introduced at the Dartmouth Summer Research Project on Artificial Intelligence in 1956.<sup>5</sup>

---

2 Morin, K. (2026, February 1). It's time for the humanities and social sciences to carry hope into public life. *Academica Forum* [https://forum.academica.ca/forum/illuminating-hope-13-karine-morin?utm\\_source=hootsuite&utm\\_medium=linkedin&utm\\_term=521deae9-1cf0-4621-8d96-877dcb56bd52](https://forum.academica.ca/forum/illuminating-hope-13-karine-morin?utm_source=hootsuite&utm_medium=linkedin&utm_term=521deae9-1cf0-4621-8d96-877dcb56bd52)

3 Holmes, W., (2023). The unintended consequences of artificial intelligence and education. *Educational International*. <https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/10179267/1/Holmes%20-%202023%20-%20The%20Unintended%20Consequences%20of%20Artificial%20Intellig.pdf>

4 For example, these recent Teacher articles illustrate ways AI is being taken up in BC classrooms:

Smith, S. (2025, September 16). Beyond recall: Forging future-ready learners with concept-based teaching and AI as our ally. *BCTF*. <https://www.teachermag.ca/post/beyond-recall-forging-future-ready-learners-with-concept-based-teaching-and-ai-as-our-ally>

5 See History of Data Science. (2021, September 30). Dartmouth Summer Research Project: The birth of Artificial Intelligence <https://www.historyofdatascience.com/dartmouth-summer-research-project-the-birth-of-artificial-intelligence/>

From an academic perspective, AI is generally understood as a field of computer science focused on developing systems capable of performing tasks that typically require human intelligence. Still, there is no single universally accepted definition of AI and definitions vary across different research and policy contexts.

International organizations have contributed to influential operational definitions. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) defines an AI system as “a machine-based system that, for explicit or implicit objectives, processes input to generate outputs such as predictions, recommendations, content or decisions that influence physical or virtual environments.”<sup>6</sup> This definition has been widely adopted in regulatory and policy frameworks of the European Union, the United Nations, Canada, and other jurisdictions.

Similarly, UNICEF describes AI as “machine-based systems that, given human defined objectives, can make predictions, recommendations, or decisions that influence real or virtual environments.”<sup>7</sup> These systems appear to operate with varying degrees of autonomy and can adapt their behaviour by learning from data and context.

One of the most popular forms of AI is generative artificial intelligence (GenAI). GenAI refers to systems that automatically generate text, images, audio, code, or other content in response to prompts written in natural language. These systems function by identifying and reproducing statistical patterns within large datasets rather than by understanding meaning in the human sense.

AI extends far beyond generative systems and includes a broad range of applications such as data analysis (identifying patterns in educational data), recommendation systems (suggesting resources or interventions), automation (performing routine administrative or instructional tasks), predictive modelling (estimating the likelihood of future outcomes), adaptive learning technologies (adjusting instruction based on learner needs), and decision-support tools (providing information to inform professional judgement).

---

6 Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2024). Recommendation of the Council on Artificial Intelligence. <https://legalinstruments.oecd.org/en/instruments/oecd-legal-0449>

7 UNICEF. (2021, November). Policy guidance on AI for children. p. 17. <https://www.unicef.org/innocenti/media/1341/file/UNICEF-Global-Insight-policy-guidance-AI-children-2.0-2021.pdf>

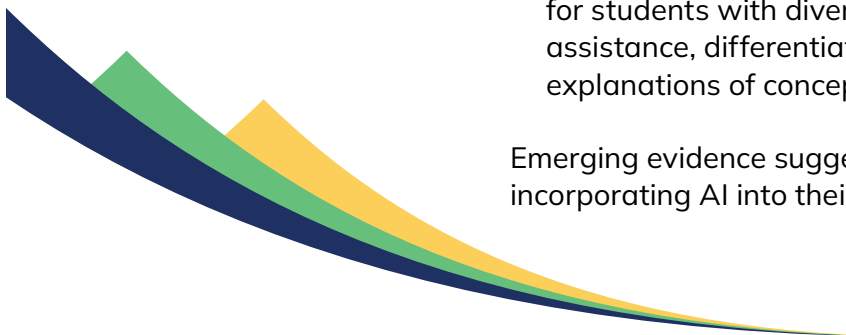
Despite appearances of ‘autonomy,’ AI systems produce probabilistic outputs and do not possess consciousness or intelligence. Humans play a central role in the design, development, deployment, and oversight of AI systems and predictions, and AI outputs are based on the available dataset these systems are trained on. This raises concerns about the extent to which AI systems may reproduce structural bias and inequities present in training data. In addition, some systems may generate inaccurate or fabricated information (i.e., ‘hallucinations’), which can be presented confidently and require careful human review. AI should be understood as a tool that can *support* but not *replace* professional expertise, critical judgement, and ethical responsibility in educational contexts.

## The ‘promises’ of Artificial Intelligence in Education

There are many ‘promises’ in relation to AI and education, promoted by organizations such as the OECD. These include:

- **Supporting data-informed decision-making**  
(e.g., identifying patterns associated with student success, estimating the likelihood of dropout, recognizing students who may require additional support, and informing strategic allocation of resources)
- **Addressing teacher workload**  
(e.g., streamlining administrative and routine tasks such as scheduling, organizing records, tracking report cards, and managing other time-consuming duties)
- **Supporting instructional design**  
(e.g., generating lesson plans, adapting curriculum materials, and producing resources tailored to diverse learning contexts)
- **Enhancing inclusion and accessibility**  
(e.g., supporting differentiated instruction, enabling the creation of personalized learning pathways tailored to students’ diverse needs, and providing effective support for students with diverse learning needs, such as language assistance, differentiated reading levels, and alternative explanations of concepts).

Emerging evidence suggests that teachers are increasingly incorporating AI into their daily practice despite ongoing



concerns. For example, a 2023 Alberta Teachers' Association survey found that although more than 80 percent of teachers expressed concern about potential negative impacts of AI, approximately half reported using AI tools in their professional or personal lives within the six months prior to the survey.<sup>8</sup>

Similarly, in a recent BCTF *Teacher* article,<sup>9</sup> the author advocates for the proactive and responsible integration of AI, emphasizing teachers' roles in helping students navigate the digital world ethically and engage critically with AI technologies. Teaching students how AI works and how to use it responsibly is framed as an important consideration.

Recent examples from across British Columbia show how school districts and teachers are integrating AI across multiple areas of practice:

- In School District 36 (Surrey Schools), tools such as Sidekick are being used to support students' learning under teacher supervision. Sidekick functions as an AI tutoring and support assistant that helps students understand concepts and work through problems. It is positioned as a learning coach that complements teacher guidance.<sup>10</sup>
- Surrey Schools has also recently approved three AI tools for classroom use: MagicSchool, SchoolAI, and TeachAid. Access is granted by teachers, with parental consent required for student use.<sup>11</sup> MagicSchool is an AI platform designed to support both teaching and learning, assisting educators with lesson development, instructional planning, and administrative tasks. SchoolAI focuses on personalizing student learning by enabling individualized lesson pathways, monitoring progress, and supporting both instructional and administrative functions. TeachAid is a curriculum-focused tool that assists teachers in developing instructional

8 See McRae, P. (2024, February 6). Alberta teachers have mixed views on AI. The Alberta Teachers' Association. <https://teachers.ab.ca/news/alberta-teachers-have-mixed-views-ai>

9 See Smith, S. (2025, September 16). Beyond recall: Forging future-ready learners from concept-based teaching and AI as our ally. BCTF. <https://www.teachermag.ca/post/beyond-recall-forging-future-ready-learners-with-concept-based-teaching-and-ai-as-our-ally>

10 See Charach, K. (2025, September 15). Surrey schools embrace AI in the classroom. CTV News. <https://www.ctvnews.ca/vancouver/article/surrey-schools-embrace-ai-in-the-classroom/>

11 See Surrey Schools (2025, November 12). A look ahead at artificial intelligence: Surrey Schools approves three AI platforms for student use <https://www.surreyschools.ca/a-look-ahead-at-artificial-intelligence--surrey-schools-approves-three-ai-platforms-for-student-use.195950>

materials and tracking the implementation of curriculum in classroom practice.

- The Vancouver School Board has partnered with Microsoft<sup>12</sup> to pilot the use of Copilot, an AI assistant integrated across platforms such as Word, Outlook, Teams, and Excel. Teachers are using Copilot to support writing, research, organization, and lesson preparation.
- The New Westminster School District's Artificial Intelligence Resource Hub describes how a teacher might evaluate a student's work, record key observations, and then use Copilot to generate a concise feedback paragraph that integrates those notes and suggests additional learning resources.<sup>13</sup>

Collectively, such examples reflect a growing sense of inevitability regarding the use of AI by both students and teachers in schools, even as district guidelines position AI as a supplementary tool that should remain guided by teacher pedagogical practice.<sup>14</sup> While AI is being framed primarily as a supportive tool, AI use comes with significant professional and pedagogical concerns, which are examined in the following section.

## Concerns about AIED

As AI tools become integrated into schools, they raise significant concerns not only for teachers' professional work, but for the broader structure and governance of public education. These concerns extend from the potential replacement and deskilling of teachers to deeper questions about knowledge hierarchies, data surveillance, and the privatization of educational infrastructure.

### *The purpose of education: Competing visions*

Debates about AI in schools are inseparable from broader questions about the purpose of public education and the professional role of teachers. What counts as knowledge, and who decides what forms of knowledge are privileged within

---

12 Charach, K. (2025, May 20). It's going to change everything: A look into a Vancouver school's class dedicated to AI. CTV News. <https://www.ctvnews.ca/vancouver/article/its-going-to-change-everything-a-look-into-a-vancouver-schools-class-dedicated-to-ai/>

13 See New Westminister Schools (n.d.). Artificial intelligence in New Westminister Schools

14 See Appendix for a list of publicly available BC district policies and guidelines as of March 2026.

the data sets used to train AI systems? Who defines the educational problems these tools are promising to solve?

AI tools often present themselves as neutral and value-free, while insufficient attention is paid to the datasets used to train them or the educational assumptions embedded within them. AI training datasets may exclude or marginalize certain perspectives, reinforcing dominant epistemologies. For example, many AI systems are predominantly trained on English-language data produced in the Global North. Such datasets may marginalize Indigenous Knowledge, community-based ways of knowing, or non-Western curricular traditions.

Algorithmic bias can lead to misrepresentation or under-representation of certain groups, which may then be amplified in AI-driven educational tools. These tools embody particular visions of education, defining what counts as effective teaching, legitimate knowledge, and appropriate roles for teachers and students.

### *Teacher replacement*

While large-scale teacher replacement may appear speculative in many public systems, examples such as the Alpha School<sup>15</sup> in the United States suggest that this possibility should not be dismissed. Alpha School is a private school that employs AI systems to personalize pacing and content, while adult staff serve primarily as 'coaches' responsible for monitoring progress and mentoring. The school claims that students learn substantially faster than in traditional settings and relies mostly on standardized benchmarking to measure progress.

Such models are significant not only because of their claims about efficiency, but because they present AI instruction as a potential solution that addresses workload problems and students' diverse needs. The school program revolves around the idea that AI systems can replace teacher professional judgment effectively. Framing AI as a substitute for pedagogical work and expertise risks redefining teaching as facilitation rather than the exercise of professional discretion in shaping what and how students learn.

---

<sup>15</sup> See Alpha School <https://alpha.school/>

### **Deskilling and workload**

Even if replacement does not happen, deskilling presents a longer-term structural risk. AI tools promise to save time in lesson planning, assessment, and feedback. However, reliance on AI-generated materials may gradually erode teachers' capacity for pedagogical design and professional discretion.

In addition, the integration of AI in teaching and learning environments may alter or intensify, rather than reduce, workload demands. Continuous professional development will be required for teachers to meaningfully evaluate and integrate AI tools. Teachers may also be required to monitor AI-generated analytics, interpret predictive risk scores, and document interventions. Rather than reducing workload, AI systems may shift it toward data management and compliance reporting, intensifying accountability pressures.

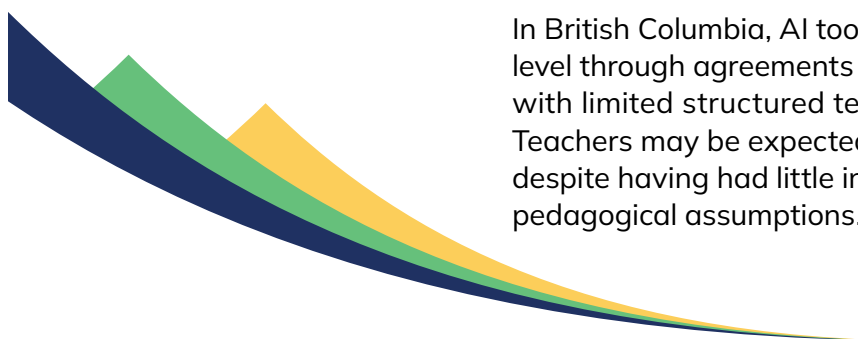
### **Data privacy and surveillance**

There are also significant data privacy and surveillance concerns. AI systems that collect, monitor, and analyze student and teacher data, often under the promise of predicting success, identifying risk, or optimizing administration, may also function as tools of surveillance and performance auditing. This raises questions such as: What types of data are collected by AI tools? Where are they storing the data and for what purposes? Is student and teacher data being commercialized or repurposed beyond educational use? Overall, these questions of data ownership, storage, retention, and commercialization are central to public accountability.

### **Democratic governance and privatization**

It is crucial that decision-making processes around AI adoption be transparent and ensure broad, continuous teacher participation. Currently, the role of teachers and unions in designing, approving, implementing, or rejecting AI tools remains limited and poorly defined.

In British Columbia, AI tools have been adopted at the district level through agreements with technology companies, often with limited structured teacher participation or evaluation. Teachers may be expected to integrate these tools into practice, despite having had little influence over their design and pedagogical assumptions.



In the absence of robust regulatory frameworks, AI adoption risks not only reshaping teachers' professional roles and practices but also deepening privatization by increasing schools' reliance on privately owned AI infrastructure. Long-term dependency on technology companies may constrain BC schools' autonomy over renewal decisions, discontinuation of tools, and future directions.

### ***Standardization and narrowing conceptions of student learning***

While AI tools are often framed as enabling personalized learning, it is important to question whether these tools genuinely support students in pursuing their interests or whether they merely offer differentiated pathways toward the same pre-established standardized objectives. AI systems tend to prioritize measurable outcomes, potentially narrowing curricular aims and reinforcing standardization rather than expanding educational possibilities.

In addition, students' overreliance on AI systems to complete tasks and find answers may negatively affect the development of writing, reasoning, and critical thinking skills. Intellectual struggle, uncertainty, and interpretive engagement are central to learning and are facilitated through skilled pedagogical guidance. If AI systems increasingly mediate these processes, there is a risk that teacher instructional judgment is sidelined in favor of automated feedback.

The dialogical and social dimensions of learning are crucial for students' social and emotional development and for their understanding of democratic processes. If AI tutors or digital coaches occupy increasing portions of the school day, opportunities for peer-to-peer interaction and meaningful teacher-student engagement may decrease. The substitution of human relationships with machine interactions risks weakening the affective and relational dimensions of education that are foundational to democratic schooling.

Finally, predictive AI tools that claim to identify which students are at risk of academic failure or behavioral concerns rely on probabilistic models that categorize students based on patterns in data. While presented as instruments of early intervention and support, these systems may also create labels that follow students across grades, programs, or schools. Algorithmic risk scores and performance indicators can

shape expectations and narrow opportunities, particularly for students from historically marginalized communities. Reducing complex educational trajectories to predictive classifications risks reinforcing deficit narratives and limiting students' access to rich educational experiences.

## Existing AIED policies and guidelines

A range of policies are currently in effect in K–12 public education systems across Canada, and within British Columbia, to guide appropriate and responsible use of AIED. Despite efforts to roll out policy, some Canadian teachers report experiencing a 'governance gap' where the speed of AI adoption is outpacing the ability of local authorities to communicate guidance and provide assurances that tools are safe.<sup>16</sup>

### Canada

The Canadian Teachers' Federation has called for more robust policy supports, arguing "with policies that ensure AI systems in schools are safe and trustworthy, educators can focus on making sound pedagogical decisions about how to best leverage these systems to meet the learning needs of their students."<sup>17</sup>

An overview of provincial AIED policies points to four key risk areas and their potential effects on teaching and learning in public schools: privacy, security, and well-being; commercial exploitation; discrimination and bias; and deprofessionalization of teaching. The CTF has called for provincial education authorities "to enact policies which mitigate the emerging risks of AI systems and reduce the likelihood of harms to students and educators."<sup>18</sup> Drawing on a UNESCO AI policy framework for a "human-centred future of AI use in education,"<sup>19</sup> the CTF outlines eight areas that the federal government and Canadian Ministries of Education (CMEC) need to address—which may

---

16 See Wilson, J (2026, February 26). Canadian teachers report rising stress from rapid AI rollout: study. Human Resources Director. <https://www.hcamag.com/ca/specialization/transformation/canadian-teachers-report-rising-stress-from-rapid-ai-rollout-study/566722>

17 Canadian Teachers' Federation. (2024). Towards a responsible use of Artificial Intelligence in Canadian public education, p. 7. <https://www.ctf-fce.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/3-ENAI-policy-brief-AGM-2024.pdf>

18 Ibid., pp. 3-4.

19 UNESCO. (2020). Recommendation on the ethics of artificial intelligence. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000381137>

serve potential focus points for union policy and advocacy at provincial and district levels:

- Promote inclusion, equity, and linguistic and cultural diversity
- Protect human agency
- Monitor and validate GenAI systems for education
- Develop AI competencies including GenAI-related skills for learners
- Build capacity for teachers to make proper use of GenAI
- Promote plural opinions and plural expressions and ideas
- Test locally relevant application models and build evidence base
- Review long-term implications in an intersectoral and interdisciplinary manner.

### **British Columbia**

The BC Ministry of Education and Child Care's (MECC) policy guidelines discuss privacy legislation, district impact assessment requirements, and potential uses of AI in BC education settings. The MECC document outlines a provincial framework “to facilitate thoughtful consideration and decision-making processes”<sup>20</sup> for the responsible integration of AI in classrooms, schools, and districts. The framework addresses seven areas: ethical uses, needs and impact, accessibility and usability, integration and compatibility, data security and privacy, teaching and learning, and inclusive learning.

The MECC further states that “[s]chool boards, district leaders, school leaders, teachers, and support staff must engage in collaborative efforts, fostering open communication to discern potential implications.”<sup>21</sup>

### **BC School Districts**

Many BC school districts have publicly accessible policy and guidelines related to AIED (see Appendix). However, it is unclear how effectively current policies and mechanisms are working to ensure AI is implemented appropriately.

---

20 BC Ministry of Education and Child Care. (2024). Considerations for using AI tools in K-12 schools. <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/ai-in-education/considerations-for-using-ai-tools-in-k-12-schools.pdf>

21 Ibid., p. 5.

## Union responses to AIED

Numerous efforts are currently underway in teacher and labour union organizations to assess and respond to the implications of AI. Teacher union actions can broadly be categorized into three areas: 1) articulating a vision for public education that anchors teaching and learning in human(e), relational, and democratic principles, 2) developing bargaining structures and collective agreement language that protect teachers' rights to employment, consultation, fair working conditions, and protections in the face of technological change, and 3) providing AI usage guidelines, advice, and support for members.

### *Visioning and principles*

In December 2025, over 200 union representatives at Education International's first *Global Conference on Artificial Intelligence* concluded that “technological change must strengthen, not erode, the democratic mission of public education.”<sup>22</sup> Delegates called for “a human-centered, ethical, and rights-based approach to AI” that recognizes the student-teacher relationship as part of the “common heritage of humanity.”

The conference developed several principles for teacher engagement in AI implementation such as:

- inclusion of the teaching profession in any discussions and decision-making about AIED policy and practice
- agency about how AI is used in classrooms, schools, and unions
- trust in and support for professional autonomy of teachers
- opportunities for teachers' professional development and growth.

In terms of concrete actions, delegates asked member unions to take the lead in their local jurisdictions to develop, implement, and share strategies on the use and regulation of AI in education, research, and bargaining.

---

22 Education International. (2025, December 5). Conclusions of EI's Global Conference on Artificial Intelligence Education International [https://eiwebsite.blob.core.windows.net/uploads/20251205\\_141223\\_2025%20-%20AI%20Conference%20conclusions\\_EN.pdf?sv=2019-10-10&ss=b&srt=o&sp=rdx&se=2030-05-26T22:00:00Z&st=2020-05-26T14:11:47Z&spr=https,http&sig=fqIBElD9cO6/PzqL9OFD54Ufvvt33KDBvH/hM9wslvLA%3D](https://eiwebsite.blob.core.windows.net/uploads/20251205_141223_2025%20-%20AI%20Conference%20conclusions_EN.pdf?sv=2019-10-10&ss=b&srt=o&sp=rdx&se=2030-05-26T22:00:00Z&st=2020-05-26T14:11:47Z&spr=https,http&sig=fqIBElD9cO6/PzqL9OFD54Ufvvt33KDBvH/hM9wslvLA%3D)

## Organized labour strategies

BC labour unions are actively developing labour policies and coalition strategies to safeguard worker rights and protections related to job loss and transition, employer surveillance, and privacy and confidentiality. The BC Federation of Labour (BCFED) has established a Standing Committee on Artificial Intelligence, Work and Technology, in which BCTF representatives are actively engaged. The BCFED has also called for a provincial commission to examine the impact of artificial intelligence and automation on BC's workplaces.<sup>23</sup>

At the national level, the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) is developing collective agreement language within a "whole contract approach"<sup>24</sup> as well as advocating for enhanced legislation to address the challenges AI presents for its members (including those working in the public education sector). Meanwhile, Public Services International's *Digital Bargaining Hub* is collating collective agreement language from around the world related to technologies, including AI, in the workplace.<sup>25</sup>

## Guidance and support for members

In the absence of inclusive approaches for vetting and procuring AI tools and applications in BC K–12 public education settings, teacher unions can provide important advice.

The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO), for example, has published advice for its members including questions to assist teachers to reflect on their use of AI:<sup>26</sup>

- Am I using AI in a way that empowers educators and supports human rights, social justice, and student agency?

23 See BC Federation of Labour. (2024, March). Submission to the Labour Relations Code Review Panel [https://bcfed.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/1000-24sub-eo-labour%20code%20submission1-FINAL%20%281%29\\_0.pdf](https://bcfed.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/1000-24sub-eo-labour%20code%20submission1-FINAL%20%281%29_0.pdf)

24 See Canadian Union of Public Employees (2024, July 11). Understanding artificial intelligence: A guide for CUPE members <https://cupe.ca/understanding-artificial-intelligence-guide-cupe-members>

25 See Public Services International. (2023, April 26). Digital Bargaining Hub <https://publicservices.international/digital-bargaining-hub>

26 Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (2024, November 15). Artificial intelligence in education: Advice for members. [https://www.etfo.ca/about-us/member-advice/prs-matters-bulletins/artificial-intelligence-in-education-advice-for-members#:~:text=ETFO%20\(%20Elementary%20Teachers'%20Federation%20of%20Ontario,and%20digital%20tools%20to%20use%20with%20students](https://www.etfo.ca/about-us/member-advice/prs-matters-bulletins/artificial-intelligence-in-education-advice-for-members#:~:text=ETFO%20(%20Elementary%20Teachers'%20Federation%20of%20Ontario,and%20digital%20tools%20to%20use%20with%20students)

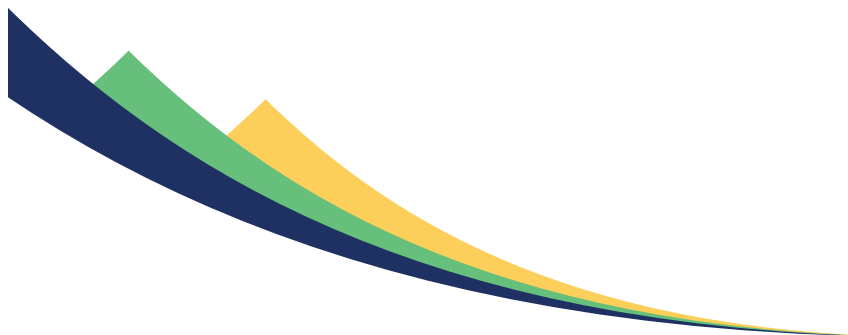
- What are the potential barriers to accessing and using an AI tool?
- Have there been any violations of the collective agreement?
- Is your professional judgement being respected in your decision to use or not use an AI tool?
- Do you find your school board's guidelines and policies on AI clear and accessible?
- What type of training, professional learning, and support are required to help you learn how to evaluate AI tools, including how to examine the tool for bias and inequities?
- How do you ensure AI tools reflect human voice in its use and do not diminish critical thinking skills?

## Conclusion

There is growing consensus that AI has the potential to significantly redefine and shift the nature of teacher work. However, what that transformation looks like depends in part on how much agency and influence teachers and teacher unions can exercise in shaping the transition.

A review of research and policy in this area shows that educators too often have very limited involvement in the design and development of AI systems adopted in schools. Without proper regulatory frameworks of governance, AI adoption can reinforce knowledge hierarchies and the displacement of teachers in shaping curriculum and structuring learning environments.

Any union response, therefore, must approach AI as not just a technical issue. The response must include careful consideration of both possibilities and concerns, grounded in democratic debates about the purpose of public education and a commitment to ensuring that educators retain meaningful authority over curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment.



## Appendix: BC School District AI Usage Policies

District	AI Guidelines	AI Policy	Other
SD05 Southeast Kootenay		<i>Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)</i> <i>Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)</i>	
SD06 Rocky Mountain		<i>Employee Acceptable Use of Technology</i> <i>Student Acceptable Use of Digital Technology</i>	<i>2025-2026 DRAFT Operational Plan</i>
SD08 – Kootenay Lake	<i>Values and Principles</i> <i>AI Decision Trees</i>		<i>AI Resources</i>
SD19 – Revelstoke		<i>Information Technology and MyEd BC Usage and Access</i>	
SD23 Central Okanagan	<i>Guidelines for Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence</i> <i>SD23 AI Guiding Principles</i> <i>SD23 AI Guidance Journey for Students, Staff and Parents</i>		<i>Digital Literacy</i>
SD28 – Quesnel	<i>AI Resources for Educators</i>		<i>Technology - Artificial Intelligence</i>
SD34 – Abbotsford	<i>AI in Abby Schools</i>		
SD35 – Langley			<i>Strategic Plan 2023-2026 Year 3 Update (p. 13)</i>
SD36 – Surrey			<i>AI in Surrey Schools</i>
SD37 – Delta	<i>Technology for Teaching &amp; Learning: AI</i>		
SD38 – Richmond			<i>2026-2030 Strategic Plan (p. 6)</i>
SD39 – Vancouver			<i>Digital Literacy and Use of AI in Education</i>
SD40 New Westminster	<i>Artificial Intelligence Resource Hub</i>		
SD45 West Vancouver	<i>AI Resources</i>	<i>AP 140 - District Technology</i>	
SD47 – qathet	<i>Artificial Intelligence (AI)</i>		<i>Board Meeting: Artificial Intelligence Integration Initiative Update</i>
SD54 – Bulkley Valley	<i>AI in Schools</i>		

District	AI Guidelines	AI Policy	Other
SD62 – Sooke	<i>Digital Literacy and AI</i>		
SD63 – Saanich	<i>Framework for Generative AI in Saanich Schools</i>		
SD67 Okanagan Skaha	<i>Teaching &amp; Learning in an Era of Generative AI</i>		
SD68 Nanaimo-Ladysmith			<i>602.1AP Code of Conduct</i>
SD71 – Comox Valley			<i>Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Education</i>
SD72 Campbell River	<i>Guidelines for Teacher use of AI</i>		
SD75 – Mission		<i>Employee Use of Technology Policy</i> <i>Use of Technology by Students Policy</i>	
SD79 Cowichan Valley			<i>AP 215 - District Use of Technology</i>
SD84 Vancouver Is. West			<i>Considerations for Using AI Tools in K-12 Schools</i>
SD91 Nechako Lakes			<i>Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Education</i>

Notes: “AI Guidance” refers to materials publicly available on district websites regarding AI usage by teachers and/or students. “AI Policy” refers to formalized district policies regarding AI usage by teachers and/or students. School districts which currently have neither publicly accessible guidance nor policies are not included in the chart (as of February 2026 update).

