



Rockbridge County Public Schools

AI Guidelines, Framework, and Authorization Use Policy

Policy Date:

Policy Number:

Approval Date:

Effective Date:

Last Revision:

Approved by:

AI Guidelines, Framework, and Authorization Use Policy

Introduction

Technology involving artificial intelligence (AI) is growing rapidly and has the capacity to benefit, support, and elevate the learning process in our modern educational world. Ethically and responsibly using Generative AI tools in the classroom will assist our educators and students to learn, create, and produce information with competence and efficiency. Due to AI's ability to gather information from large datasets, the use of Generative AI for educational purposes has ethical concerns regarding academic integrity, transparency, and privacy. AI technology can be a valuable resource for enhancing learning and teaching experiences but it must be used responsibly, ethically, and with human oversight.

Rockbridge County Public Schools' responsibility is to provide educators and students with skills in the appropriate use of Generative AI that also safeguards their privacy and adheres to legal and regulatory standards, including Virginia SB 385, FERPA, COPPA, ADA, Titles VI and IX, and all applicable state laws/regulations and Rockbridge County School Board policies and regulations.

Document Overview

1. Rockbridge County Public Schools AI Guiding Principles
 - Responsibility
 - Transparency
 - Integrity
 - Accountability
2. Definitions
 - Artificial Intelligence
 - Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA)
 - Compliance
 - Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
 - Generative AI
 - Open AI
 - Personally Identifiable Information (PII)
3. Practical Applications of AI in Education:
 - Benefits and Practical Applications for Teachers and Students
 - Practical Applications in Administration

4. Challenges and Considerations:

- Access Equity
- Compliance and Consent
- Data Privacy
- Ethical Implications
- Risk Assessment
- User Responsibilities
- Vetting and Authorization of AI Tools

5. Conclusion:

- Summary of Key Points
- Call to Action for Stakeholders

Rockbridge County Public Schools AI Guiding Principles

The vision of Rockbridge County Public Schools is to challenge and empower students to think, learn, and meet their full potential to become lifelong learners, and be productive and responsible members of society. In the current landscape of skills needed in the 21st century, teaching and learning with the use of Generative AI is essential to authentic learning that supports meaningful academic and artistic performance, and inspires every student to achieve life, career, and post-secondary success. Rockbridge County Public Schools' guiding principles for Generative AI use in schools begins with responsibility, transparency, integrity, and accountability.

Responsibility

Rockbridge County Public Schools is committed to use AI technologies responsibly, ethically, and with human oversight. RCPS will leverage AI to make informed decisions, and prepare students for a future where AI is commonplace. To achieve this, the RCPS ITRT team will train Division staff to use AI that will enrich instruction, improve their practice, and educate students to evaluate AI content critically to optimize rather than replace their learning. Similarly, administrators will responsibly and judiciously use AI to improve, support, and streamline school operations, and oversee AI implementation with a focus on academic integrity and student well-being. Teachers and other instructional staff are expected to model responsible and ethical AI use in planning, communication, instruction, and collaboration.

Transparency

Rockbridge County Public Schools will operate with transparency and clarity in its use of AI technologies. Stakeholders will understand AI's role in school operations, administrative support, and educational practices such as grading or assessment. All assignments should state whether students are or are not permitted to use Gen AI.

AI technologies will not be used for high-stakes decisions such as student placement, disciplinary action, and graduation requirements that must be under the purview of human oversight.

In addition, to ensure transparency in student work and uphold academic integrity, RCPS will train teachers to use an AI Justification form. This form, emphasizing AI as a tool rather than a replacement for individual work, can be used by students to guide research and collaboration (e.g. [RCPS AI Use Justification Form](#)).

Integrity

Rockbridge County Public Schools will uphold integrity to the division goals with the implementation of new AI technologies. RCPS will provide professional development that fosters digital literacy grounded in integral and ethical practices for both staff and students. Users of AI shall not rely solely on AI: AI generated content must always be reviewed, curated, and/or verified by the user before relying on it for any purpose, including but not limited to forwarding/sending the content to another user. If a reliable source cannot be found to verify information generated by AI, the information should not be used. Any user of AI is responsible for ensuring their use does not violate any copyright protections or licensing requirements. Teachers allowing students to use Gen AI should instruct students about the potential for inaccuracy, bias, and/or copyright or licensing violations before students utilize Gen AI.

The [Rockbridge County Public Schools AI Policies for Original Student Work](#) defines original work as any class work, activity, project, or product that reflects a student's individual understanding, ideas, and efforts. This document will support educators in teaching students how to capitalize on AI technologies and yet ensure student work remains original and meets rigorous academic standards, thereby safeguarding the integrity of the educational process.

Accountability

Rockbridge County Public Schools will use AI technologies that are consistent with the policies outlined in the [RCPS Comprehensive Plan 2023-2027](#), and this *AI Policy, Guidelines, Frameworks, Authorization Use* document. RCPS will ensure that educators and students are accountable to adhere to these policies, implementing disciplinary action when appropriate, and providing the safest and most productive learning environment for all stakeholders.

Use of AI in any form that violates law or policies/regulations of the School Board will be disciplined under applicable policies/regulations. Blaming AI for content that is used, shared, or otherwise results in violation of laws or School Board policies or regulations is not a defense to individual consequences for the violation.

Definitions

Artificial Intelligence (AI): Technology or systems that are capable of performing human-like tasks of thinking, learning, problem solving, and decision making by programmed algorithms. AI may include text generation, data analysis, or personalization.

Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA): A federal law that mandates website creators protect the privacy of children under the age of 13 by requiring parental consent before collecting personal information.

Child Internet Protection Act (CIPA): A federal mandate requiring schools to place internet filters and blocks on content that is inappropriate, obscene, or otherwise harmful to minors.

Educational Compliance: the process of adhering to Federal Laws and regulations regarding students in education.

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA): A federal law that protects the privacy of a student’s educational record. FERPA grants parents the right to access their child’s educational records, to amend incorrect information, and to control the disclosure of personally identifiable information. Generally speaking, school divisions must receive written consent from parents before disclosing personally identifiable information for anything other than official school business used for educational purposes.

Generative AI: Artificial intelligence capable of creating new content or output based on user inputs.

Open AI: Artificial intelligence that allows public access to datasets or knowledge bases, potentially resharing information input by users.

Personally Identifiable Information (PII): Personal information used to identify an individual directly or indirectly in the context of data privacy and security.

Practical Applications of AI in Education

In all uses, AI is a support tool, not a decision-maker or substitute for human effort/work.

Benefits and Practical Application for Teachers and Students

The integration of Generative AI in learning environments offers opportunities to personalize and enrich the educational experience for both students and educators. By learning to generate effective question prompts, educators and students can activate the power of Generative AI to engage in tasks that foster creativity, collaborative learning, communication, and critical thinking. This process not only deepens understanding but also sparks further curiosity.

AI can assist in streamlining routine tasks such as drafting initial ideas, exploring research topics, creating engaging lesson plans, generating practice exercises for differentiated levels, and providing accessibility support. The intended use of AI in education is to complement, not replace, human interaction in the classroom, ensuring that teachers and students remain central to the educational process.

Proper use of AI technology can empower teachers and students to become discerning consumers of information and, importantly, cultivate them as leaders who drive positive academic decisions and change. All persons using AI should verify AI-generated content for accuracy, bias, and other potential pitfalls before use.

Practical Application in Administration

Beyond the classroom, AI can play a role in enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of RCPS systems. Integrating AI into administrative functions aims to help RCPS streamline school operations, improve communication with stakeholders, and make data-driven decisions. AI's ability to analyze large datasets in real-time, can help optimize resource allocation, manage scheduling, and provide personalized communication. All persons using AI should verify AI-generated content for accuracy, bias, and other potential pitfalls before use.

AI can also support the management of business and operations, reducing manual workloads and improving accuracy. AI-driven solutions can ensure that essential services are delivered more efficiently, allowing school leaders to focus on strategic initiatives that promote educational excellence. Adopting AI for system-level support, RCPS can foster a more connected, agile, and efficient learning community, laying a strong foundation for long-term success.

Furthermore, administrators must strictly adhere to all data privacy regulations, align with ethical guidelines established in this policy, and require human oversight and verification of AI-generated content in all decisions impacting individuals or resource allocation. Further challenges and considerations are addressed in the next section.

Challenges and Considerations

Access Equity

RCPS is committed to equitable access to AI technology for students and staff within the school environment. This commitment provides learners the opportunity to increase their digital literacy skills ensuring they become life-long learners able to successfully navigate 21st Century technology. To accomplish this, RCPS will:

- Provide equitable access to AI technology and the internet within every school building.
- Train staff on the appropriate use of AI technology to enhance learning including differentiation strategies that support varied learners.
- Develop and implement a policy for students to ensure AI is used responsibly and in accordance with the definition of *student original work*.

Compliance and Consent

RCPS maintains compliance with federal laws and regulations in the use of AI technology, and follows consent protocols when collecting information from students.

- FERPA Compliance: The FERPA *School Business Official Exception* rule supports the use of AI tools for legitimate internal educational purposes and interests. However, AI tools that may share information with an AI knowledge base may require parental consent. RCPS must inform parents and obtain consent if AI tools collect, store, or share data. RCPS will provide a clear explanation of data being collected, outline how the student data may be shared beyond the educational setting, and provide information on whether the AI tool is closed, open, or generative.
- CIPA Compliance: CIPA requires that schools have funding for the necessary internet filters to block access to content that may be obscene, pornographic, or otherwise questionable material that may be deemed harmful to minors. RCPS technology team updates the network interface and firewall protections to keep unwanted and harmful content materials from infiltrating the system. Any potential new concerns relating to questionable material should be reported immediately.
- COPPA Compliance: In addition to FERPA, COPPA aims to protect the privacy and personal information of children by requiring verifiable parental consent before collecting, using, or disclosing personal information from children. In an educational setting, if schools use websites or apps subject to COPPA, they must obtain parental consent before students under 13 can use these tools.
- Non-discrimination Compliance: The RCPS technology team along with the Title IX and the Section 504 Coordinators are responsible to evaluate AI platforms for compliance with Titles VI and IX, ADA and other applicable law, for potential biases based on race, gender, disability or socioeconomic status, and conducts regular audits and implements corrective actions when any bias is detected or is reported through established channels. Concerns about potentially biased or discriminatory content should be immediately reported.

Data Privacy

RCPS prioritizes data privacy and implements strong practices that protect student data and privacy. RCPS follows FERPA, COPPA, IDEA, and CIPA federal policy mandates and applicable state laws and regulations providing for data privacy protections, security measures, and ethical AI practices. AI tools should follow best practices for data encryption, storage, and sharing. In addition, the division conducts regular security audits and risk assessments of AI systems to ensure they are secure from breaches and unauthorized access. This includes protection against misuse of student data by third parties or external vendors.

Additionally, students and staff will be trained to not input any personally identifiable information (PII) or full student work into generative or open AI tools. AI tools that are not authorized for handling sensitive data should not process or store any PII.

Ethical Implications

Rockbridge County Public Schools is committed to the ethical implementation and use of Generative AI and other AI platforms with regards to key components of fairness, bias mitigation, non-discrimination, and academic integrity. The instructional technology team is responsible for professional development that defines the responsible, ethical, and transparent use of AI by both students and staff in educational activities. This includes upholding the standards of original work and academic integrity and implementing disciplinary action when necessary.

Risk Assessment

Rockbridge County Public Schools follows a structured process to evaluate potential AI harms in varied areas such as data encryption, storage, and sharing. The RCPS technology team is responsible for conducting regular security audits prohibiting breaches and unauthorized access as well as misuse of student data by third party or external vendors.

User Responsibility

Rockbridge County Public Schools reiterate that using AI tools must be used in accordance with the educational curriculum and instructional goals and research purposes of the division. Use of AI for private gain, illegal activity, or any other unethical

purpose is prohibited. Misuse of any AI system, including unauthorized data manipulation, will result in disciplinary action consistent with RCPS policies.

Vetting and Authorization of AI Tools

Rockbridge County Public Schools will vet and approve any AI tools used within the division in advance of their use. AI tools must demonstrate compliance with state and federal laws and regulations, especially those relating to data privacy, fairness, and educational integrity. Vetting tools may be used to evaluate and determine educational effectiveness and alignment of AI tools to the division's goals. No person shall use AI tools for Division business (administration, instruction, student work/activity) if the tool has not been pre-approved.

Conclusion

Rockbridge County Public Schools is dedicated to the thoughtful integration of AI technologies that will enhance our school system. The *RCPS AI Guiding Principles, Framework, and Authorization Use Policy*, coupled with *AI Policies for Student Original Work*, and the *AI Use Justification Form* demonstrate the commitment to create a learning environment where students are empowered to capitalize on tools for effective and authentic learning, become critical thinkers, and are prepared to meet the challenges of a world shaped by AI technologies.

Rockbridge County Public Schools' AI Guiding Principles of responsibility, transparency, integrity, and accountability will govern decisions that will prepare teachers to enhance their craft, design more personalized learning experiences for students, and streamline administrative processes. To successfully implement AI with fidelity, RCPS will engage in collaboration, continuous learning, and a shared commitment to students, educators, and administrators.

This document will serve as a living framework to be reviewed and edited regularly to reflect the fast-paced changing landscape of Generative AI and AI technologies. RCPS will evaluate the implementation strategies and goals, and adjust timelines and efforts as needed. RCPS is confident that the timely execution of AI implementation will further its vision of challenging and empowering students to become lifelong learners and productive, responsible citizens in a world filled with ever-growing challenges.