

Good afternoon, high school families,

We want to keep you informed about how our high schools are approaching the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in teaching and learning. As you may know, AI has been part of everyday technology for years (e.g., Siri, grammar tools, personalized learning programs, etc.). As more advanced generative AI tools, like Google Gemini and ChatGPT, emerge, they are rapidly impacting both educational and workplace settings.

The U.S. and Virginia Departments of Education have shared guidance to support the safe and purposeful use of AI in K-12 schools. *The Guidelines for AI Integration Throughout Education in the Commonwealth of Virginia* were also developed to help K-12 schools prepare students for college and careers.

What is Generative AI?

Generative AI is a type of artificial intelligence that creates new content, such as text, images, audio, or video, based on patterns it has learned from other content. Examples include ChatGPT, Copilot, and Google Gemini. You've likely experienced traditional AI, which classifies or predicts content when using services such as YouTube or Netflix. Unlike traditional AI, *generative* AI can produce original information and content that closely resembles human-created work.

VBCPS High School AI Integration for 2025-2026

This school year, high school students may have opportunities to use Google Gemini during select lessons. If used, teachers will provide clear instructions on how to engage with the tool during class. All students will receive instruction during the first two weeks of school regarding AI's capabilities, limitations, and ethical implications. High school course expectations will remind students that teacher approval is required for the use of generative AI in learning experiences and assignments.

Staff members are being trained to use AI tools selectively and with purpose - not in every lesson, but only when it supports learning and aligns with academic goals. AI will not replace critical thinking or creativity. Teachers are also receiving training on how to design AI-resistant assignments.

Additional guardrails have been established for high school usage in 2025-2026. For example, access to Google Gemini on school-issued devices will be turned off after school hours, and teachers will have the ability to disable access during class as needed. When approved for use in the classroom, it will occur under the teacher

supervision to provide guided practice.

Online Safety

VBCPS takes students' online safety and data security very seriously. Any software or AI tool considered for classroom use undergoes a rigorous review and approval process before it is introduced to students.

As we move forward, our goal is to help students build the skills they need to think critically, act responsibly, and use technology safely and with purpose. By using these tools thoughtfully and with clear guardrails, we can support both student learning and safety in our classrooms. We appreciate your partnership as we navigate this evolving landscape together. If you have any immediate questions, please reach out to your school's administration or instructional technology specialist.