Valley View Local School District

Community AI Handbook

SECTION 1 — Who We Are and Why This Matters

A Portrait of Valley View Local Schools

Valley View is a community grounded in the "Spartan" character—a commitment to being lifelong learners who lead with empathy, responsibility, and resourcefulness. Our traditions are built on the strong bond between our schools, families, and the wider community. We take pride in cultivating an environment where every student is safe, seen, and supported throughout their educational journey.

What We Value

Community Wisdom: Our Shared Values In our 2026 community survey, parents identified Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving as the most essential skills for students to graduate with in the age of AI.

> *"Please blend the technology with conversation and problem-solving. Teach them how to use it while critically thinking." — Valley View Parent*

At the heart of our district is the **Portrait of a Graduate**, which defines the competencies we strive to instill in every student. These values guide our daily work and our approach to new opportunities:

- **Adaptability:** We embrace the idea that success may come from experiencing productive struggles, but we must pivot to keep moving forward with flexibility and creativity.
- **Empathy:** We strive to experience the feelings and thoughts of others to make a positive difference and demonstrate care for the larger community.
- **Critical Thinking:** We consistently improve the quality of our thinking by skillfully analyzing, assessing, and reconstructing ideas to propose solutions to complex situations.
- **Effective Communication:** We confidently articulate thoughts using various skills while actively listening to decipher meaning, values, and intentions.
- **Productive Collaboration:** We work together to create knowledge and achieve shared goals, seeking diverse perspectives and contributing with integrity.

Why AI Matters to Us Now

We recognize that Artificial Intelligence is rapidly changing the world our students will enter. Our community sees AI not as a replacement for human connection, but as a "spark" for deeper

critical thinking and a way to amplify our Spartan character. We are creating this playbook because:

- **We prioritize the whole child:** We want to leverage technology to ensure students are prepared for an ever-changing world while maintaining their well-being.
- **We value human connection:** We are committed to strengthening the vital bond between school and home through purposeful, transparent integration of these tools.
- **We believe in the power of innovation:** AI offers tools that can make learning more efficient and accessible, such as providing audio passages or tailored resources, empowering our teachers to be more effective in the classroom.
- **We focus on versatility:** By moving beyond test scores, we use AI to help students develop the adaptability and communication skills necessary for future leadership.

Consistent with Ohio guidance, this draft serves as a foundation for community expectations, ensuring that our move into an AI-enabled environment is rooted in our shared values and a collective commitment to our students' success.

SECTION 2 — Our Vision for AI in Our Community

A Vision Grounded in Humanity and Character

At Valley View Local Schools, we believe that Artificial Intelligence should never replace human connection, but instead serve as a spark for deeper critical thinking and the development of our "Spartan" character. By focusing on the whole child and lifelong learning, we use these tools to ensure our students lead with empathy while adapting to an ever-changing world.

Our Five Strategic Pillars for AI Integration

To guide this journey, we commit to these five strategic pillars that align our technology use with our district’s core mission:

1. **Empower "Spartan" Character:** We use AI to amplify inclusion, responsibility, and resourcefulness as lifelong habits.
2. **Cultivate Lifelong Competencies:** We prioritize adaptability, communication, and critical thinking over static test scores, using AI to help students navigate and solve complex problems.
3. **Foster Continuous Exploration:** We enhance PK-12 experiential learning to build agile leaders who are ready for an evolving, AI-augmented world.
4. **Support the Whole Child:** We leverage technology to ensure every student is safe, seen, and supported throughout their educational journey, using tools to increase accessibility and meet individual needs.
5. **Center Human Connection:** We strengthen the vital bond between schools, families, and the community through purposeful AI integration that enhances, rather than diminishes, our relationships.

The Role of AI in Our Learning Journey

Our vision is to move from viewing technology as a mere utility to seeing it as a partner in exploration. We aim to create a "toolbox" for our educators and students—a collection of resources that can provide passages on audio for accessibility, assist in making complex concepts more digestible, and free up time for what matters most: the human interaction between a teacher and a student.

This vision ensures that as we adopt new tools, we remain steadfast in our commitment to the **Portrait of a Graduate**, ensuring that Valley View students are not just users of technology, but ethical, creative, and critical leaders of the future.

SECTION 3 — Shared Language: Our AI Glossary

To ensure our community—students, families, and staff—can have clear and productive conversations about technology, we have established a shared language. These definitions help us understand not just what the technology is, but how it relates to our "Spartan" values of critical thinking and responsibility.

Artificial Intelligence (AI): A field of computer science that creates systems capable of performing tasks that typically require human intelligence, such as problem-solving, recognizing patterns, and understanding language. In Valley View, we view AI as a "spark" or a tool in our "toolbox" to enhance learning, not replace human thinking.

Generative AI: A specific type of AI that can create new content, such as text, images, audio, or code. Examples include tools like Gemini, or NotebookLM.

Algorithm: A set of step-by-step instructions or rules that a computer follows to complete a task or solve a problem.

Prompt: The specific instructions or questions a human gives to an AI tool to get a response. At Valley View, "prompt engineering" is seen as a way to practice effective communication and critical thinking.

Hallucination: A term used when an AI tool provides information that sounds confident and correct but is actually inaccurate or entirely fabricated. This highlights why "Critical Thinking" from our Portrait of a Graduate is essential when using AI.

Bias: In AI, this refers to unfair or prejudiced results produced by a tool, often because the data used to train the AI contained human prejudices.

Human-in-the-Loop: The practice of ensuring a person is always involved in reviewing, checking, and refining what an AI tool produces. At Valley View, we believe the human element and "Human Connection" are irreplaceable.

Disclosure: The act of clearly stating when and how an AI tool was used to complete a task or assignment.

AI Literacy: The ability to understand, use, monitor, and critically reflect on AI technologies.

Predictive AI: AI that uses patterns in historical data to make educated guesses about future outcomes, such as suggesting the next word in a text message or recommending a video.

Large Language Model (LLM): A type of AI trained on vast amounts of text to understand and generate human-like language.

SECTION 4 — Our Commitments

To ensure that AI is used in a way that aligns with our Spartan character and the Valley View mission, we have established the following commitments. These are the promises we make to one another to ensure technology supports learning, safety, and human connection.

Our Commitments as District Leadership

- **Prioritize Safety and Privacy:** We will ensure that all AI tools used in our district comply with state and federal privacy laws (such as FERPA and COPPA) and Board Policy 7540.09.
- **Support Our Staff:** We commit to providing teachers with a "toolbox" of vetted resources—such as a Padlet or game generators—that allow for quick, efficient, and shareable lesson enhancement.
- **Maintain Human Oversight:** We will ensure that AI never replaces the professional judgment of our educators or the vital bond between schools and families.
- **Foster Transparency:** We will be clear with our community about how and why AI is being integrated into our schools.

Our Commitments as Educators and Staff

- **Model Responsible Use:** We will lead by example, using AI tools to enhance instruction while always keeping a "human-in-the-loop" to verify accuracy and bias.
- **Focus on the Whole Child:** We will use AI as a spark to support individual student needs, such as providing audio passages or customized scaffolds, ensuring every student is "safe, seen, and supported."
- **Clarify Expectations:** We will not assume students "should know" how to use AI. We commit to providing clear guidance for every assignment, moving from "Red" to "Green" based on the learning goal.
- **Protect Authentic Thinking:** We will design experiences that value the *process* of learning, not just the final product, ensuring students develop the critical thinking skills defined in our Portrait of a Graduate.

Our Commitments as Students

- **Lead with Integrity:** I will follow the specific guidelines provided by my teachers for each assignment and will clearly disclose when I have used AI to support my work.
- **Be a Resourceful Learner:** I will use AI as a tool to help me understand complex ideas or spark creativity, but I will not use it to bypass the hard work of learning.
- **Think Critically:** I will remember that AI can make mistakes (hallucinations). I will check the information it gives me and use my own "Spartan" voice to express my ideas.
- **Respect Others:** I will use technology in a way that is empathetic and responsible, never using AI to harm, deceive, or exclude others.

Our Commitments as Families and Community

- **Partner in Exploration:** We will encourage our children to use technology responsibly at home and stay curious about how AI is being used in their classrooms.
- **Encourage Human Connection:** We will support the district's focus on the whole child by prioritizing character and human interaction alongside digital literacy.
- **Communicate Openly:** We will reach out to teachers or administrators when we have questions about AI use or expectations.

SECTION 5 — Guardrails for Responsible AI Use

This AI Playbook was developed in compliance with Valley View Board Policy 7540.09

While families hope AI will provide personalized tutoring and adaptability, there is a clear concern regarding dependence and the loss of basic skills.

From the Learning Community:*"I hope AI gives my child the ability to learn in the best way for himself—that AI is adaptable to him rather than him to AI." — Valley View Parent*

To help our students and staff navigate the "AI toolbox" with confidence, Valley View uses a "Red, Yellow, Green" framework. These guardrails translate our Spartan values into practical, everyday guidance for the classroom. These levels are not permanent; they may change based on the specific learning goal of an assignment.

The Level of Use: Red, Yellow, Green

🟢 **GREEN: AI-Empowered (Full Use)** In "Green" scenarios, AI is encouraged as a primary partner in the learning process. This level is about exploration and efficiency.

- **What it looks like:** Using AI to generate a wide variety of ideas for a project, using a "game generator" to study for a test, or using AI to provide audio versions of complex reading passages to increase accessibility.
- **Spartan Value: Adaptability & Resourcefulness.** We use these tools to pivot quickly and find creative solutions.

- **Disclosure:** Standard citation or a simple statement that AI was used to assist the process.

🟡 **YELLOW: AI-Assisted (Limited Use with Conditions)** In "Yellow" scenarios, AI is a "spark" but not the author. Use is permitted only for specific parts of an assignment as directed by the teacher.

- **Spartan Value: Critical Thinking.** Students must verify every "fact" the AI provides and ensure their own unique voice remains the heart of the work.
- **Disclosure:** Specific disclosure is required, explaining exactly which parts of the work were supported by AI.

🔴 **RED: Human-Only (No AI Use)** In "Red" scenarios, the goal is to measure a student's current independent knowledge or authentic thinking. The use of AI is prohibited.

- **What it looks like:** High-stakes assessments, handwritten in-class reflections, foundational skill-building assignments, or any task where the teacher explicitly states "No AI."
- **Spartan Value: Integrity & Responsibility.** We value the struggle of learning and the protection of a student's own authentic "Spartan" voice.
- **Disclosure:** None, as no AI use is permitted.

Guiding Principles for Use

1. **Never Assume:** We do not assume students "should know" the level of use. Teachers will clearly mark assignments with the appropriate color guardrail.
2. **Age Appropriateness:** Consistent with Board Policy 7540.09 and federal law (COPPA), students under 13 will only use AI tools that have been specifically vetted and approved for their age group.
3. **Human-in-the-Loop:** Whether a task is Green or Yellow, a human must always review the AI's output. We never accept AI information as "final" without checking it for accuracy and bias.

SECTION 6 — Academic Integrity, Transparency, and Disclosure

At Valley View, we believe that integrity is a core pillar of the Spartan character. In an AI-enabled world, academic integrity is not just about "not cheating"; it is about being honest about the work you do and ensuring that the final product reflects your actual learning and thinking.

Perspective on Integrity

From the Learning Community: "I want my child to see the value of AI as a learning enhancement, not a method of laziness. It should be used to brainstorm ideas so the student can then critically think about which idea is best and why." — Valley View Parent

Process vs. Product We value the *process* of learning—the messy middle where students struggle, pivot, and grow—just as much as the final *product*.

- **Authentic Voice:** AI can be used to "clean up" a draft, but the original ideas, structure, and voice must belong to the student. AI use must be disclosed.

Expectations for Disclosure

Transparency is key to maintaining trust. Students are expected to disclose their use of AI as follows:

- **Green Assignments:** A simple citation or mention of the tool used (e.g., "AI used for brainstorming").
- **Yellow Assignments:** A specific explanation of how the tool was used (e.g., "I used AI to help organize my outline, but the paragraphs are my own").
- **Red Assignments:** No AI use is permitted; therefore, no disclosure is necessary.
- **MLA Reference Example**: "Explain how to cite AI in academic writing." *Gemini*, version Gemini 3 Flash, 15 Jan. 2026, gemini.google.com.
    - The portion in quotes is the prompt

How We Approach AI Detectors Valley View recognizes that AI detection software is often unreliable and can produce "false positives."

- We will not use AI detectors as the sole evidence for disciplinary action.
- Instead, we prioritize **Human Connection**. If a teacher suspects a student used AI inappropriately, the first step will be a conversation. Teachers may ask students to explain their process, share draft history, or discuss the concepts in the assignment to verify understanding.

Guidance for Students and Staff

1. **Students:** When in doubt, ask. If you aren't sure if a specific use of AI is allowed, check with your teacher before you submit the work.
2. **Teachers:** Be explicit. Every assignment should clearly state the "Color Guardrail" and the specific disclosure requirements.
3. **Integrity as Responsibility:** Using AI to bypass learning is a violation of the Spartan commitment to being a "resourceful learner." Academic dishonesty involving AI will be handled in accordance with Board Policy 7540.03 and the Student Code of Conduct.

From the Teachers: *"Teachers need clarity before students begin the assignment, not after a problem occurs."* — Educator Perspective

SECTION 7 — Teaching, Learning, and Assessment in an AI-Enabled World

At Valley View, we recognize that AI is not just a new tool, but a shift in how information is accessed and processed. Our goal is to protect the "human connection" while ensuring our

students are "agile leaders" ready for an evolving world. This means rethinking not just *what* we learn, but *how* we assess that learning.

The Role of the Teacher: Human-in-the-Loop

We believe the bond between a teacher and a student is irreplaceable. In our classrooms, AI is a resource, but the teacher remains the instructional leader.

- **Professional Judgment:** Teachers use their expertise to decide when AI acts as a "spark" for creativity and when it must be set aside to protect foundational skill-building.
- **Verification:** Educators will model the "human-in-the-loop" approach, verifying AI-generated content for accuracy, bias, and alignment with Spartan values.

Protecting Authentic Thinking and Rigor

To ensure that AI enhances rather than replaces a student's work ethic, we focus on:

- **Protecting the Process:** Assessment will move beyond just the final "product." Teachers may grade brainstorms, rough drafts, and reflections on how a student arrived at their conclusion.
- **Rethinking Rigor:** Rigor in a Spartan classroom means the ability to "analyze, assess, and reconstruct" information. AI can provide a starting point, but the "Critical Thinking" required to evaluate that starting point is where the true learning happens.
- **Oral Defense and In-Class Work:** To ensure authentic thinking, teachers may incorporate more "Red" (Human-Only) activities, such as handwritten reflections, oral presentations, or socratic seminars where students must explain their logic in real-time.

Opportunities for Personalization

We leverage AI to support the "Whole Child" by making learning more accessible:

- **Scaffolding:** Using AI to provide audio passages, simplify complex text levels, or create personalized practice games (like the "game generators" discussed by our staff).
- **Efficiency:** AI can help provide faster feedback on technical skills, allowing teachers more time for one-on-one mentorship and deeper human interaction.

Navigating Tensions

We acknowledge that this transition brings challenges, particularly regarding:

- **High-Stakes Testing:** We must balance the use of AI in daily learning with the reality of state tests that do not currently allow these tools.
- **Student Independence:** While AI can assist, we are committed to ensuring students do not become over-reliant on technology for basic communication or problem-solving.

From the Learning Community: *"We prioritize adaptability and critical thinking over static test scores... focusing on the desire to learn, unlearn, and relearn."* — District Vision Theme

SECTION 8 — Role-Based Guidance for Students, Families, Educators, and Leaders

To move from vision to practice, every member of the Valley View community has a role to play. This guidance helps clarify expectations so that we can all lead with the "Spartan" character of responsibility and resourcefulness.

Parental Request for Guidance Over 80% of surveyed parents requested clear, simple rules for 'citing' AI help and information on protecting child data privacy.

From the Learning Community: "We need a list of school-approved tools so we can support responsible use at home." — Valley View Parent

For Students: Being an Ethical Spartan

- **Be the Author:** AI can be a "spark" for your ideas, but you are the creator of your work. Always ensure the final product reflects your own thinking and voice.
- **Practice Transparency:** Use the "Red, Yellow, Green" guardrails provided by your teacher. If you use AI, disclose it clearly.
- **Verify Everything:** Treat AI like a search engine that can sometimes be wrong. Check facts and citations using trusted sources.
- **Protect Privacy:** Never put your personal information (address, phone number, or full name) into an AI prompt.

For Families: Partnering in Exploration

- **Stay Curious:** Ask your child how they are using AI in school. Focus on the *process* of how they are learning with the tool rather than just the grade.
- **Reinforce Ethics:** Help your child understand that using AI to bypass a learning struggle is like skipping a workout—it might seem easier, but it doesn't build the "muscle" of critical thinking.
- **Check Age Ratings:** Many AI tools have age requirements (often 13+). Support the district in ensuring children only use approved, age-appropriate platforms.

For Educators: Instructional Leadership

- **Be Explicit:** Clearly label every assignment with a Color Guardrail (Red, Yellow, or Green). Don't assume students know the "hidden rules" of AI use.
- **Curate the Toolbox:** Use vetted resources like a Padlet and/or game generators to show students how AI can be used for efficiency and creativity.

- **Prioritize the Human-in-the-Loop:** Use AI to reduce your administrative load (like drafting emails or generating lesson ideas) so you can spend more time on high-impact human connection with students.

For Leaders: Stewardship and Support

- **Ensure Safety First:** Continuously review AI tools for alignment with Board Policy 7540.09 and student data privacy laws (FERPA/COPPA).
- **Provide Professional Learning:** Support staff with the time and resources needed to "unlearn and relearn" as AI technology evolves.
- **Maintain Community Trust:** Keep families informed about how AI is being used and ensure that district-wide expectations are consistent and fair.

Valley View Endorsed AI Tools: Google Suite (Gemini, Notebook LM, Canva, etc.) and other tools vetted and approved by Valley View.

From the Community: *"Parents want transparency about how AI is used with their children... Teachers need clarity before students begin the assignment, not after a problem occurs." —* Shared Perspective

SECTION 9 — Response Protocol When AI Expectations Are Unclear or Violated

In Valley View, we believe that mistakes are often part of the learning process—a core tenet of our **Adaptability** competency. Our response protocol focuses on restoration, clarity, and education rather than immediate punishment, ensuring that every student feels "safe, seen, and supported" even when they navigate the "gray areas" of new technology.

Step 1: The Teacher-Student Conversation

Because AI is a new and evolving tool, the first step in any situation where misuse is suspected is a direct, human-to-human conversation.

- **The Goal:** To understand the student's process and intent.
- **The Action:** Teachers may ask the student to demonstrate their understanding of the material, show previous drafts or browser history, or explain how they used AI as a "spark" for their work.

Step 2: Determining the Nature of the Concern

We distinguish between three types of situations:

1. **A "Learning Moment":** The student was confused about the guardrails (e.g., they used AI for a Yellow task when it was a Red task). The response is to clarify the expectation and allow the student to redo the work.

2. **Inadequate Disclosure:** The student used AI but failed to cite it according to the district's transparency standards. The student will be asked to properly disclose and resubmit.
3. **Intentional Academic Dishonesty:** The student knowingly used AI to bypass the learning process or represent AI-generated work as their own. This is treated as a violation of the Student Code of Conduct and Board Policy 7540.03.

Step 3: Protocol for Resolution

- **Consistency:** If a violation is confirmed, consequences will be consistent with existing policies for academic integrity (such as not receiving credit for the assignment or a required revision).
- **Leadership Support:** If a teacher and student cannot reach an understanding, or if the situation is in a significant "gray area," the building principal will facilitate a review based on the district's AI vision and values.
- **Parent Communication:** Families will be notified if a "Learning Moment" turns into a repeated issue or if intentional dishonesty is confirmed. We view parents as partners in teaching students the ethical use of technology.

Protecting the Spartan Voice

We will not use AI detection software as a "gotcha" tool or the sole reason for a disciplinary consequence. Because these tools can be inaccurate, our focus remains on the **Human-in-the-Loop**—the teacher's professional judgment and the student's ability to explain their own thinking.

From the Community: *"We will not assume students 'should know.' If expectations are unclear, we lead with a conversation."* — District Guidance Theme

SECTION 10 — Questions We Are Still Working Through

At Valley View, we recognize that the landscape of Artificial Intelligence is shifting almost daily. Being a "Spartan" means having the **Adaptability** to "learn, unlearn, and relearn." This playbook is a living draft because there are several complex tensions and questions we are still exploring as a community.

Navigating the "Gray Areas"

As we move forward, we are actively discussing the following themes:

- **The Future of Homework:** As AI becomes more capable of generating high-quality responses to traditional take-home assignments, we are exploring how to shift our focus toward in-class "Red" (Human-Only) assessments and experiential learning that cannot be replicated by a machine.

- **Equitable Access:** How do we ensure that all students have equal access to powerful AI tools while also protecting those who may not have high-speed access or the latest devices at home?
- **Standardized Testing Realities:** We face a tension between teaching students to be "agile leaders" using modern tools and preparing them for state-mandated tests that remain strictly "No AI."
- **The "Human Connection" Balance:** While we value AI as a "spark" for efficiency, we are constantly monitoring how its use impacts the development of soft skills—like empathy and nonverbal communication—that are central to our Portrait of a Graduate.

A Commitment to Dialogue

We do not view these unresolved questions as a failure of policy, but as a strength of our process. By naming these tensions, we invite our educators, students, and families to help us find the best path forward. We are committed to "open dialogue" and "diverse perspectives" as we refine our approach.

SECTION 11 — How We Will Learn, Review, and Grow

The integration of Artificial Intelligence at Valley View is not a one-time event, but an ongoing journey of **Continuous Exploration**. Because technology evolves rapidly, this playbook is a "living document" that will be revisited and refined as we gain more experience and as the landscape of AI changes.

Our Commitment to Stewardship

We are committed to a process that is transparent, inclusive, and rooted in our community's feedback. To ensure this playbook remains a helpful and accurate guide for our students and families, we will:

- **Annual Review:** The District leadership team, in consultation with the Technology Governance Committee (as per AG 7540C), will conduct an annual review of these guidelines to ensure they still meet the needs of our students and align with the latest state and federal guidance.
- **Ongoing Professional Learning:** We will continue to support our educators with the time and resources needed to explore the "AI Toolbox." We believe that when teachers are empowered to learn and "unlearn," our students benefit from a more agile and modern classroom experience.
- **Student and Family Input:** We will continue to use surveys and listening sessions to gather "Community Wisdom." Your feedback on how AI is impacting your child's learning and your family's experience is essential to our growth.
- **Transparency of Change:** Any significant updates to our guardrails, disclosure expectations, or response protocols will be communicated clearly to all stakeholders before they are implemented.

Growing Together as Spartans

Our goal is to ensure that every Valley View graduate is an "agile leader" who can navigate the complexities of the digital world with integrity and empathy. By working together—schools, families, and community—we ensure that technology serves its true purpose: amplifying the human connection and the Spartan character that makes our district unique.

From the Community: *“We prioritize the desire to learn, unlearn, and relearn through open dialogue... focusing on the vital bond between schools, families, and community.”* — Valley View Vision Statement