

SM Student Policy and Guidelines on AI Use (Aug 2026)

At Santa Margarita Catholic High School, we recognize the transformative potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in enhancing the educational use when used safely and responsibly. The integration of AI at SM is rooted in and supports our mission to embody the charism of *Caritas Christi*—the love of Christ—in our community of faith and learning. AI will be used with intentionality to **amplify what is most human**: the unique gifts of each student and the relationships at the heart of teaching and learning. These include student-to-student connection, teacher-to-teacher collaboration, and the vital bond between teacher and student. AI use will also reflect our shared commitment to **data privacy, security, and academic integrity**—cornerstones of a trusting and transformative learning environment. The following policies and guidelines are grounded in these values.

AI is a rapidly evolving field, and we are dedicated to continually refining our approach to ensure it aligns with our mission and values while safeguarding the user and communal experience. For the most current information, please visit our AI policy page at www.smhs.org/AIpolicy.

Definitions

Generative AI refers to technology that can create content, including text, images, audio, and video, based on input data. Examples include tools like ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, Copilot, DALL-E, Perplexity AI, Suno/Udio, DeepSeek.

Agentic AI refers to technology designed to take autonomous or semi-autonomous actions on behalf of users to accomplish specific goals with minimal human oversight. These systems go beyond generating content—they can make decisions, initiate tasks, and adapt based on feedback or environmental inputs. Examples include tools like ChatGPT Deep Research, Perplexity Research mode, Google Deep Research in Gemini, and Claude (agentic mode).

AI-enabled devices are physical hardware products that incorporate artificial intelligence to enhance their functionality, operating either as standalone devices or in response to user inputs and environmental triggers. These devices use AI for tasks like voice recognition, transcription, pattern detection, personalized recommendations, or smart automation. They range from reactive devices that respond to commands to more autonomous tools that actively capture and process information. Examples include:

- Phones (i.e., Apple Intelligence embedded in iPhones and iPads)
- AI-enhanced glasses (including AI-enhanced prescription glasses) and cameras (Ray-Ban Meta smart glasses)
- AI-powered earbuds/headphones/smart speakers and assistants (Amazon Echo, Google Home)
- Standalone AI note-takers (Plaud Note, Plaud NotePin) that automatically record, transcribe, and summarize conversations
- Other AI-powered wearables (rings, pins, fitness trackers, smartwatches, or other jewelry)
- Smart pens and notebooks (Livescribe, Neo smartpen)
- AI-first consumer devices (i.e., Human AI Pin)

AI Overlay and Assistance tools are software applications that integrate with existing platforms, browsers, or workflows to provide real-time AI assistance without replacing the underlying systems. These tools "overlay" AI capabilities onto whatever you're already using - whether it's writing assistance in documents, research help on web pages, or smart features in existing apps. Examples include Grammarly, Cluely, Google Docs "Help me write", QuillBot, Otter.ai.

Embedded AI in Consumer Platforms are artificial intelligence features integrated directly into widely used platforms, often without requiring separate accounts or tools. Examples include Google Search AI summaries, YouTube AI recommendations and captions, Instagram/Snapchat AI features, and Microsoft Edge AI sidebar.

Parental Consent

As artificial intelligence (AI) tools like Large Language Models (LLMs) are increasingly integrated into education, it is crucial for parents to understand the limitations, privacy, and ethical considerations of currently available LLMs. Many LLMs specify that students aged 13-18 may use LLMs under teacher supervision. This aligns with, but is not limited to, OpenAI's terms of service, which mandate users be at least 13 years old and those under 18 have parental permission. When a Santa Margarita faculty member requires students to use AI tools for an assignment or project, they will direct students to school-approved tools, such as, but not limited to, Microsoft Co-Pilot and SchoolAi, that comply with student privacy policies and regulations like FERPA, HIPAA, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), and the European Union (EU) Data Boundary. When Parent/guardian(s) register their students for enrollment at SMCHS they acknowledge and authorize their student's access to artificial intelligence (AI) tools like Large Language Models (LLMs) in accordance with the School's Artificial Intelligence policy and practice.

AI-Enabled Wearables

AI-powered personal devices offer new capabilities but also introduce significant educational, operational, legal, and ethical challenges in the classroom. To support the development of cognitive and practical skills, uphold respect for consent inside and outside the classroom, protect data privacy, and ensure an equitable learning environment for all students, AI-enabled wearable devices (including but not limited to smart glasses, rings, pins, and other body-worn technology) are not permitted on campus or in a student's possession during school hours, unless explicitly authorized by school administration for a documented educational or accessibility purpose. Phones may be in possession but secured inside backpacks bell-to-bell, in accordance with the School Phone Policy. Smartwatches and earbuds must be secured inside backpacks and not on the student during assessments.

Use of AI in Coursework

- **Instructor Guidance:** Instructors may prohibit, manage, or encourage the use of generative AI technologies depending on the course and assignment. However, **possession and use** of AI-enabled devices (with the exception of phones, which are governed by the School Phone Policy), agentic AI, or overlay/assistance tools are prohibited unless explicitly permitted by the instructor. Students should always follow their teacher's specific instructions and guidelines regarding AI usage in each class and assignment.
- **Clarification on AI Usage:** When in doubt, students should never assume the acceptability of AI use in any assignment or task. They should always seek direct guidance and clarification from

their instructor. This ensures that their use of AI aligns with the specific expectations and guidelines of each course.

- **AI Student Approach:** The primary goal of AI integration should be to deepen understanding and develop essential skills, rather than merely completing assignments. AI should complement, not replace, fundamental academic abilities such as reading, analysis, comprehension, and a student's own critical thinking.
- **Academic Integrity and AI:** Students should never represent work they did not produce as their own, including work generated or materially modified by AI. For instance, students may not submit work in which AI generated the substance of their argument, analysis, or expression, as opposed to work in which AI assisted with ideation research, grammar, formatting, or brainstorming. Using generative AI in a way that violates an instructor's policy or completing coursework in a way not expressly permitted will be considered a violation of the Academic Integrity policy.
- **Citation of AI-Generated Content:** Students must properly cite any AI-generated content used in their work, including text, images, videos, audio, or code. This applies whether the AI was used for final output, brainstorming, or research. Such content must be clearly indicated as AI-generated and cited according to the instructor's specified style. Citing AI Sources and Contributions:
 - Descriptive format (as per instructor guidelines): In a note or appendix, briefly explain how AI was used to support your work. For example: "ChatGPT was used to brainstorm initial ideas for this essay's structure."
 - [Citing ChatGPT in MLA format](#)
 - [Citing ChatGPT using APA style](#)
 - [Citing ChatGPT using Chicago style](#)
- **Examples of Unacceptable AI Use:**
 - **Unattributed Use:** Copying AI-generated content without proper citation.
 - **Undermining Learning Objectives:** The use of AI to bypass the intent of coursework, such as having AI complete coursework, bypass necessary steps like reading or analysis, or simply provide answers without the student actively engaging with or understanding the material, is strictly prohibited. These practices undermine the purpose of coursework and hinder the student's learning and development of critical thinking skills.
 - **Unauthorized Use:** Using AI when expressly forbidden by the teacher. Using agentic AI to complete assignments.

Responsibility and Accountability for AI Use

- **Content Responsibility:** Students are responsible for any inaccurate, biased, offensive, or unethical content they submit, regardless of its origin. AI models can include incorrect information, fake citations, and inaccurate outputs. Using AI does not absolve students of responsibility for the content they submit. Therefore, students are strongly encouraged to verify and check all sources used in their work, whether those sources come from AI-generated content or traditional research methods.

- **Suspected Improper Use:** If a teacher suspects a student submitted AI-generated content improperly, they will evaluate the case by considering factors such as the student's previous work, using AI detection tools, and checking the student's understanding. The teacher may involve a member of the Dean's Office staff for collaboration, evidence review, and decision-making, as well as enforcing consequences for improper AI use when necessary.
- **Prohibition of Unauthorized Depictions:** Students are strictly prohibited from using generative AI or other AI technologies to create and/or post images, videos, audio clips, or other content depicting any individual or their likeness without their explicit permission. This policy aligns with our Catholic teaching that every person is made in the image and likeness of God, deserving of dignity and respect. Additionally, apart from violating the student conduct code, creating and/or distributing deepfakes can result in severe legal consequences, including defamation, invasion of privacy, and potential criminal charges under state and federal laws.
- **Prohibition of Audio Cloning/Voice Replication:** Audio cloning (also known as voice cloning or synthetic voice generation) refers to the use of artificial intelligence to replicate or generate a person's voice using recorded audio samples. These tools can create realistic speech that mimics an individual's tone, cadence, and identity. Students are strictly prohibited from using AI tools to clone, replicate, or simulate the voice of any individual, student, staff member, administrator, or other person without explicit authorization from the school and the individual involved. Prohibited uses include, but are not limited to, impersonating a teacher, staff member, or student, creating misleading, deceptive, or fraudulent recordings, generating audio content intended to disrupt the learning environment, producing content that could harm another individual's reputation, privacy, or safety. Even with consent, the creation or use of cloned voices within the school setting is not permitted unless explicitly approved for a supervised educational purpose by school administration. Consent alone does not override school policy. Students may not upload or use recordings of others (including classroom recordings) in AI tools for the purpose of voice cloning. This includes recorded lectures, conversations, or any audio captured on campus.
- **Restricted Use of AI-Enabled Devices:** AI-powered personal devices (such as Rabbit R1, Plaud, and other wearable or standalone AI tools) fall under the same usage expectations as other generative AI technologies. These devices may not be used during instructional time or for academic work unless explicitly permitted by the teacher. The use of AI-enabled wearables, AI-enabled devices, agentic AI, or overlay/assistance tools for tests, exams and other assessments are strictly prohibited. Unauthorized use will be considered a misuse of AI and subject to the appropriate academic and disciplinary consequences.
- **Prohibited Use of Autonomous AI Agents:** Students may not program or use AI agents, bots, or scripts to complete academic work without clear teacher permission. As outlined in this policy, AI should not support core skills like reading, analysis, and critical thinking. Using AI to outsource work undermines learning and violates academic integrity as outlined above.
- **Restricted Use of AI Overlay and Assistance Tools:** Students may not use AI overlay software or real-time coaching tools during interviews, oral exams, teacher conferences, or other assessments or assignments meant to evaluate personal knowledge and authentic communication. This includes software providing live prompts, suggested answers, or automated responses. Unauthorized use will be treated as academic dishonesty and subject to disciplinary action.

AI and Media Literacy

AI and media literacy are essential for both faculty and students to make informed decisions about when and how to use AI appropriately in each course and assignment. Thoughtful discernment—whether to utilize AI to deepen one’s understanding or not—requires a foundational understanding of what AI is and how it works. This knowledge also shapes students' perception of AI as a tool to support, not replace, their learning.

To that end, SM students will attain a **baseline understanding of AI** through asynchronous and personalized modules in Alludo and build on that foundation through a variety of flexible, ongoing learning opportunities inside and outside the classroom. Building AI and media literacy will be an ongoing, iterative process—not a one-time event.

Data Safety and Privacy

AI vendors are actively marketing tools to educators and students, often using incentives aimed not just at user adoption but also at gaining access to user data. For example, free subscription offers to generative AI models do not provide users the options to opt out of data-sharing for model training. Some vendors often partner with other third parties who lack capacity or protocol to safeguard data. Sharing of **personal identifiable information (PII)**, yours or others, invites significant risk for all involved and may lead to consequences, including disciplinary actions. SMCHS strongly recommends use of pre-approved AI tools.