GUIDELINES FOR GENERATIVE AI

What is AI literacy?

AI literacy is the ability to understand how generative AI works, evaluate when and how to use it appropriately, and apply it effectively and ethically as a collaborative thinking partner. AI-literate individuals recognize AI's capabilities and limitations, critically assess its outputs for accuracy and bias, protect data privacy and security, and maintain human agency in decision-making. This literacy includes both the technical skills to interact with AI tools and the mindset to view AI as part of a learning and problem-solving process—not as a replacement for human judgment, creativity, or responsibility.

AI literacy at Fort Mill encompasses three interconnected components:

Safe Use — Understanding data privacy and security; recognizing risks, including inappropriate content, misinformation, and AI-generated deepfakes; ensuring a balance of human and AI interaction to maintain digital well-being.

Ethical Use — Ensuring transparency about AI use; respecting intellectual property; maintaining academic integrity; adopting a "do no harm" mindset; being intentional consumers of technology with awareness of other ethical considerations related to the development and deployment of AI technologies.

Effective Use — Using AI to enhance (not replace) human thinking and creativity; developing prompting skills; selecting the appropriate tool for different tasks; critically evaluating and verifying AI outputs; knowing when AI is and isn't the right tool for a task.

Vision & Purpose

Future Readiness — AI is a reality students will encounter throughout their lives. The district prepares students to use AI responsibly and ethically, aligning with the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate.

Augmentation, Not Replacement — AI should enhance human thinking, creativity, and critical problem-solving, not replace them. Students and teachers retain ownership of their ideas and work.

Ethical Decision-Making — AI literacy includes understanding when to use AI, when not to, and how to use it responsibly. This extends beyond school to preparing students as ethical digital citizens.

Teacher Effectiveness — GenAI implementation supports educators by reducing time spent on administrative tasks, amplifying their expertise, and supporting best practices such as differentiation and adjusting based on student needs and interests.

Data Privacy and Security

The use of AI tools is subject to the same confidentiality considerations and data security best practices as those referenced in school board policies, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA).

In using any AI tool, employees must not upload or share any confidential, proprietary, or protected data. This includes data related to students, parents, or other employees.

Examples of confidential student information include the student's name, date of birth, contact information, grades and test scores, course schedules, disabilities, accommodations, family information, health information, photos of students, and any other information that the student would consider private.

Examples of confidential employee information include contact information, date of birth, social security number, banking information, performance evaluation, student images, disciplinary records, and medical information.

Authorized Tools Only

Staff and students must use only AI tools approved by the district's IT Department, which will evaluate the utility, safety, and security of the tools prior to their use. Unapproved tools may pose security risks or not comply with data privacy regulations.

IT will provide staff with a list of pre-approved AI tools or applications. Staff may request that IT consider and evaluate new tools and applications, but may not use them until approved by IT. IT will determine whether a parental consent form is required and will provide such a form to the staff member.

Academic Integrity and Preservation of Learning

AI tools should be used to support learning, not undermine it. The core practices of teaching, mentoring, assessing, and inspiring learners should remain the teacher's responsibility in the classroom. Staff are expected to review and critically reflect on all AI-generated content before use. Staff should not use AI in ways that encourage students to avoid essential learning or engage in academic dishonesty.

Some AI tools purport to detect content developed by generative AI in student work. Like many AI tools, this technology is developing and may not be foolproof in identifying attempts to cheat or plagiarize. Staff should not rely solely on these systems to determine responsibility when plagiarism is suspected. To ensure a fair and accurate assessment, such tools must be used in conjunction with other factors, including, for example, the student's performance history, an analysis of the student's writing style, and the content itself, to determine whether the student has used AI for prohibited purposes.

Process for Investigating Potential AI Misuse

1. Gather multiple data points: AI detection software may be one indicator, but should never be the sole basis for determining misuse. Other indicators include the following: sudden changes in writing style or quality, inconsistency with demonstrated classroom abilities, inability to explain or discuss the work, and lack of process evidence.
2. Have a conversation: Speak with the student about their process. Ask them to explain key concepts, describe how they approached the task, or discuss specific sections of their work.
3. Consider context: What were the task requirements? Was AI use permitted? Did the student understand the expectations?
4. Follow existing board policy AR JICDA-R Code of Conduct: Use established processes for academic misconduct, treating AI misuse as one form of cheating on examinations or classroom assignments.

AI Assessment Scale

The district has adopted the AI Assessment Scale (AIAS) developed by Mike Perkins, Leon Furze, Jasper Roe, and Jason MacVaugh for teachers to use when communicating expectations with students on AI usage. This scale has been adopted by districts around the world to help teachers effectively implement AI into their classrooms. Teachers should also clearly communicate their expectations regarding process documentation: students may be asked to show drafts, explain their process, or discuss their work verbally. Teachers should also clarify the distinction between AI use in learning versus AI use in assessments. Assignments and assessments may need to be redesigned to focus on authentic learning, if desired, to reduce reliance on AI.



Perkins, Furze, Roe & MacVaugh (2024). The AI Assessment Scale

Understanding the Levels

1. No AI

The assessment is completed entirely without AI assistance in a controlled environment, ensuring that students rely solely on their existing knowledge, understanding, and skills.

You must not use AI at any point during the assessment. You must demonstrate your core skills and knowledge.

2. AI Planning

AI may be used for pre-task activities such as brainstorming, outlining, and initial research. This level focuses on the effective use of AI for planning, synthesis, and ideation, but assessments should emphasize the ability to develop and refine these ideas independently.

You may use AI for planning, idea development, and research. Your final submission should show how you have developed and refined these ideas.

3. AI Collaboration

AI may be used to help complete the task, including idea generation, drafting, feedback, and refinement. Students should critically evaluate and modify the AI-suggested outputs, demonstrating their understanding.

You may use AI to assist with specific tasks such as drafting text, refining, and evaluating your work. You must critically evaluate and modify any AI-generated content you use.

4. Full AI

AI may be used to complete any elements of the task, with students directing AI to achieve the assessment goals. Assessments at this level may also require engagement with AI to achieve goals and solve problems.

You may use AI extensively throughout your work either as you wish, or as specifically directed in your assessment. Focus on directing AI to achieve your goals while demonstrating your critical thinking.

5. AI Exploration

AI is used creatively to enhance problem-solving, generate novel insights, or develop innovative solutions to solve problems. Students and educators co-design assessments to explore unique AI applications within the field of study.

You should use AI creatively to solve the task, potentially co-designing new approaches with your instructor.


Perkins, Furze, Roe & MacVaugh (2024). The AI Assessment Scale

Appropriate Use

Teachers	Students
Whether students may use AI tools for class assignments will be at the discretion of individual classroom teachers.	Students will check with their teacher if they are unsure about what is acceptable.
Teachers will clarify if, when, and how AI tools should be used in their classrooms.	Students are expected to follow their teachers' instructions on when and how to use AI on an assignment.
Teachers will be deliberate about lesson design to match the appropriate assessment scale level.	Students are expected to review any information generated by an AI tool and check it for errors. Students are expected to employ these tools solely for educational purposes and to uphold the values of respect, inclusivity, and academic integrity at all times.

AI Use and Citation Guidelines

To support academic integrity and transparency, students and staff should acknowledge the use of artificial intelligence tools when they meaningfully contribute to academic or instructional work. When approved by the teacher, AI tools may be used as learning supports, such as for brainstorming ideas, organizing outlines, clarifying concepts, or revising language, but they may not replace original thinking, analysis, or demonstration of mastery. When AI is used, attribution should be brief, clear, and appropriate to the task, similar to acknowledging the use of other resources. Proper citation of AI use helps maintain trust in the learning process and reinforces responsible digital citizenship.

AI use that requires citation:

- Generating or refining ideas, outlines, or thesis statements
- Revising or editing writing for clarity, structure, or tone
- Summarizing texts or explaining concepts to support understanding
- Creating examples, practice questions, or study guides
- Assisting with lesson planning or instructional materials for teachers

AI use that does not require citation:

- Spell check, grammar check, or basic word processing features
- Built-in accessibility tools such as text-to-speech or speech-to-text
- Teacher-approved tools used solely for practice or feedback, not final work
- Staff-created materials used for instruction
- AI use explicitly directed and documented by the teacher as part of instruction

Student MLA Citation Examples

For students using MLA, attribution should follow MLA's core elements template for generative AI: describe what was generated, name the AI tool and version, provide the date, and include the tool's URL.

Works-Cited-List Entry

"Explain the concept of quantum entanglement" prompt. *Gemini*, 15 Jan. 2026 version, Google, 20 Jan. 2026, https://gemini.google.com/app.

Paraphrased in Student Writing:

Quantum entanglement can be understood as a phenomenon in which two particles remain connected so that the state of one particle directly affects the state of the other, even when they are separated by great distances ("Explain the concept of quantum entanglement").

For additional support with MLA formatting, citations, and Works Cited entries, students are encouraged to use trusted resources such as Purdue OWL to ensure accuracy and consistency.

Prohibited Use

Under no circumstances should AI be used for the following:

- Plagiarism and Cheating: Students should not submit AI-generated work as their original work. If a teacher allows students to use AI for any part of the assignment, the student should properly cite and/or acknowledge the use of AI.
- Disruption of School Systems: Using AI tools to disrupt school systems, including hacking into school networks or systems, or altering or manipulating school data (grades, attendance, etc.)
- Bullying/Harassment: The use of AI tools to create, manipulate, or share content that harasses, bullies, or targets individuals or groups is strictly prohibited. This includes using AI to generate:
    - Threats or intimidation
    - Embarrassing or humiliating content
    - Fake impersonations of others for malicious purposes
    - The spread of rumors or misinformation

If a student, educator, or parent suspects that AI tools are being misused for harassment, bullying, or other malicious purposes, they should report the incident immediately to a school administrator.

Student Safety and Digital Well-being

Teachers and students should focus on protecting student privacy and mental health and maintaining a safe digital environment.

Active Safety Monitoring: The District maintains a secure digital environment through dedicated oversight. During the school day, student online activity is monitored by Gaggle, and teachers can use Securly to monitor student Chromebook activity during their classes.

Data Boundary & Privacy: Students must protect their personal privacy by recognizing that AI prompts become part of a permanent data record. Sharing sensitive personal, family, or health information with AI tools is strictly prohibited.

Integrity of Representation: To maintain a safe and respectful school community, students may not create or share AI-generated content (such as "deepfakes") that falsely portrays real people, places, or events unless it is part of an academic assignment.

Human-Centered Learning: AI is a supplemental tool and not a substitute for human connection. We prioritize authentic interactions and social-emotional growth, emphasizing that AI cannot replace the value of student-to-teacher and peer-to-peer relationships.

Human Oversight and Critical Evaluation

GenAI should be used as a thought partner, not as a replacement for thinking. Unreviewed AI outputs should not be shared with students or parents.

AI Hallucinations

AI hallucination is when a generative AI, such as a large language model (LLM), produces confident-sounding but false, nonsensical, or fabricated information that appears factual. These outputs aren't bugs but arise from the AI predicting statistically likely word sequences based on training data, leading to inaccurate facts, non-existent sources, or made-up scenarios, posing risks in high-stakes fields like medicine or law.

Why it happens:

Pattern Prediction: LLMs predict the most probable next words, sometimes creating plausible but untrue connections.

Data Issues: Biases, errors, or insufficient data in training sets can lead the AI to generate flawed patterns.

Context Misinterpretation: The AI might misunderstand context or misapply learned associations (e.g., assuming "Paris" always means "France").

Examples of Hallucinations: Citing fake legal cases or studies, generating historically incorrect images or details, fabricating financial figures or news, and providing wrong dosages or medical advice.

Impact:

AI hallucinations erode trust in AI systems.

They can cause significant real-world harm in legal, medical, or financial contexts.

In essence, the AI isn't "delusional"; it's generating confident-sounding falsehoods by misinterpreting or overextending patterns from its vast training data, creating information that isn't grounded in reality.

AI-generated material should be checked for accuracy by cross-referencing multiple reliable sources, checking citations (AI often fabricates references), or consulting subject matter experts. AI-generated material should be checked for bias, reviewed for professional standards, and ensured to align with the curriculum.

Personal Accountability

Human-in-the-Loop Accountability: Students must maintain active oversight of all AI-supported work. AI is intended to assist the learning process, not replace it; therefore, students remain personally accountable for the accuracy, tone, and integrity of any content they submit.

Verification & Fact-Checking: Students are expected to treat AI outputs as "drafts" requiring human verification. This includes cross-referencing AI-generated facts with reliable primary sources to ensure accuracy.

Algorithmic Awareness: Students will learn to identify algorithmic bias and "filter bubbles." They are expected to critically evaluate AI responses for skewed perspectives or errors rather than accepting automated information as the absolute truth.

Critical Literacy: Instruction will focus on helping students recognize AI-generated misinformation. Students are expected to apply critical thinking to determine the intent and reliability of any AI-produced media they encounter.

Student Guidelines

Below are age-appropriate access tiers with recommended levels of AI integration.

Elementary (K-5): Teacher-led demonstrations only, no direct student use of generative AI tools. Focus on foundational AI literacy concepts. AI is created by humans; it can make mistakes, and humans remain in control.

Middle School (6-8): Supervised use within specific learning activities designed by teachers. Focus on building AI literacy foundations, awareness of academic integrity, and responsible use practices.

High School (9-12): Access to approved tools (Google Workspace with AI features, vetted platforms) with greater autonomy and responsibility. Clear assignment-specific guidelines apply.

Ensuring Authenticity and Originality

Where AI use is permitted, students must ensure their work remains authentically their own. "Supplementary aid" means AI supports the student's process but doesn't replace their thinking, creativity, and expertise.

AI as supplementary aid looks like:

- Using AI to help understand a concept before writing about it in your own words
- Generating a list of ideas, then selecting, developing, and expressing your chosen direction
- Getting feedback on a draft, then revising based on your own judgment
- Asking AI to explain why an answer might be wrong, then correcting it yourself
- Using AI to check grammar/spelling after you have written the content

AI replacing student work looks like:

- Generating an essay or response and submitting it with minimal changes
- Copying AI-generated paragraphs directly without acknowledgment
- Asking AI to "improve" or "rewrite" a draft to the point where it's no longer your original voice
- Using AI to do the thinking rather than supporting your own thinking process

AI Collaboration Disclosure

This guidance on generative artificial intelligence was developed through a collaborative process between AI for Education, the Fort Mill School District AI Committee, Claude.ai, ChatGPT, and Google Gemini.