Learning in the Age of AI:

The FCPS Approach to Safe & Ethical Use of AI

Session Focus: AI Literacy

- Share the guiding principles for future AI use across FCPS classrooms and schools
- Explore how FCPS is building systemwide capacity before scaling AI tools
- Discuss key questions that will shape future Policy and instructional practices

Essential Question: How Can FCPS Leverage AI to Increase Instructional Effectiveness and Efficiency?

Research points to two possible outcomes given the current trajectory of AI in education:



AI-Enriched Learning: The use of a pedagogically sound approach enabled by well-designed AI tools can:

- Support student learning
- Expand equitable access to learning for all students
- Increase instructional efficiency and effectiveness



AI-Diminished Learning: Overreliance or misuse can:

- Undermine students' learning capacity
- Impact social-emotional wellbeing
- Introduce privacy, safety, and equity risks

(Burns et al., 2026)

A Research-Based Framework for Fostering AI-Enriched Learning

PROSPER

Recommendations focus on transforming teaching and learning experiences so that students can thrive in an education system where AI is omnipresent.

- Use AI tools that teach, not tell
- Shift and transform teaching and learning experiences

PREPARE

Recommendations focus on building the knowledge, capacity for our schools to integrate AI safely and ethically so that students can thrive in an education system where AI is omnipresent.

- Provide a clear vision/policy for ethical use of AI
- Promote AI literacy for all
- Prepare teachers to use AI effectively

PROTECT

Recommendations include developing and implementing safeguards on AI for student privacy, safety, emotional well-being, and cognitive and social development.

- Procure technology that protects students' privacy, safety, and security
- Support families in managing children's AI use outside of school

(Burns et al., 2026)

FCPS AI Guiding Principles

- ***Keep Humans in Control of Decisions***
  - Educators remain responsible for learning and decision-making
  - Build digital literacy to use AI as a tool
  - Respond to staff and student questions

- ***Leverage Technology Ethically and Responsibly***
  - Improve learning outcomes and Portrait of a Graduate skills
  - Uphold academic integrity
  - Promote wellness, equity, transparency, and inclusion
  - Address bias and protect human rights
  - Safeguard privacy and data security

- ***Intentionally Enhance Use of Emerging Technology***
  - Select tools that support responsible use
  - Regularly evaluate emerging technologies
  - Monitor impact to maximize benefits and avoid harm

AI Literacy is about Judgment, Evaluation, and Intentional Use

AI literacy is the technical knowledge, durable skills, and future-ready dispositions required to thrive in a world influenced by AI. (OECD)

Example AI Literacies from Fairfax:



Educators understand that AI should only be used purposefully and selectively, when it strengthens a specific learning goal.



Educators can guide students in questioning, verifying, and comparing AI-generated content, supporting critical evaluation and responsible decision-making.



Students understand AI is not human.



Students can identify missing info, bias, or mistakes and compare it with reliable sources.



Students can design and refine prompts that lead to high-quality outputs and critique those results for accuracy, bias, and completeness.

FCPS Instructional Practices

Our division's instructional focus remains anchored by the teaching and learning practices articulated in the FCPS Learning Model.

We view AI as a supportive tool that, when used with intention, can strengthen the effectiveness of our Learning Model's practices and help us ensure that every student has the support needed to achieve exceptional academic outcomes.

"If we aren't clear about our purpose for teaching, we have no business putting AI-generated resources in front of students simply because we can" (Frontier, 2025).



AI Makes Portrait of a Graduate Skills More Important, Not Less

In an AI-infused world, Portrait of a Graduate skills matter more than ever.

We are not teaching students to rely on AI; we are teaching them to use AI in service of these human skills.


Collaborator

Effective collaborators leverage AI to **support group sense-making**, **test ideas**, and **surface perspectives** that **strengthen collaboration among people**.


Communicator

Effective communicators use AI intentionally and critically to **clarify thinking**, **strengthen messages**, and **communicate complex ideas with purpose**.


Ethical and Global Citizen

Effective creative and critical thinkers approach AI with intention, **using it to explore ideas**, **examine information**, and **support human deep thinking and inquiry**.


Creative and Critical Thinker

Effective ethical and global citizens use AI in **fair, responsible, and transparent** ways to **explore possibilities**, **connect across differences**, and **participate thoughtfully in a global society.**


Goal-directed and Resilient Individual

Effective goal-directed and resilient individuals use AI to **support learning**, **persist through challenges**, and **adapt strategies to meet their goals**.

The FCPS AI Literacy Roadmap:
Building Systemwide Capacity for AI Literacy

Focus: Develop educator knowledge and confidence of AI's role in teaching and learning so that we can intentionally support and guide students AI use to enhance learning outcomes


Explore


Engage


Evolve

The FCPS AI Literacy Roadmap:
Establishing Guidance and Foundational AI Literacy



Explore

2023–2024: Laying the Foundation: Initial AI Literacy with Early Adopters

- Established AI guidelines and guardrails
- Optional professional learning for staff
- Launched AI Innovator Cohort
- Review of criteria for adoption of tools with an AI component
- Ongoing feedback and monitoring



Engage

2024–2025: Deepening Foundational AI Literacy for Staff and Students

- Foundational AI Literacy training for all instructional staff
- Released AI guidance for staff and AI handbook for students
- Optional professional learning for staff
- Student advisory lessons (middle and high school)
- Expansion of AI Innovator Cohort
- Ongoing feedback and monitoring

The FCPS AI Literacy Roadmap

Moving From Early Adoption to Scalable Implementation



Engage

2025–2026: Expanding AI Literacy: Moving Toward a Systems Approach

- Foundational AI Literacy training for all instructional staff
- K–8 AI Literacy lesson field testing (no tools required)
- High school early adopter exploration of AI tools
- Seize the Moment Student AI Challenge launched
- Family Engagement in AI
- Ongoing feedback and monitoring



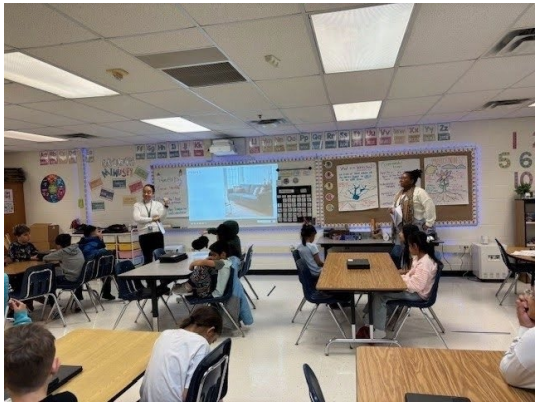
Evolve

2026–2027: Continue Moving Toward a Systems Approach

- Continue educator and student AI literacy development
- Identify uses cases and best practices for use of AI with staff and students
- Gather family perspectives on AI use and align home and school expectations
- Refinement of student AI literacy approaches
- Ongoing feedback and monitoring

What Purposeful AI Literacy Looks Like in Practice

Riverside: “Finding Smart Tools Around Us”



Librarian Jennifer Harris and STEAM teacher Mandy Johnson co-teach a lesson on FCPS AI Literacy.

Stratford Landing: “Community Connections & AI Consequences”



Alison Willison (SBTS) is leading a lesson with 5th graders on how AI tools can affect their community.

Westgate: Data Privacy & AI



In the library with Ms.Ciarcia, 4th graders are learning the importance of data privacy when using technology, including AI.

Key Questions That Will Guide Future Instructional and Governance Decisions

- **Prepare / Prosper:** How do we continue developing AI literacy for all in ways that strengthen thinking and judgment—not dependence on tools?
- **Prosper:** Which instructional use cases align most clearly with our Learning Model and Portrait of a Graduate—and which do not?
- **Protect / Prepare:** How can we partner with families to promote responsible, informed AI use beyond school?
- **Protect / Prepare:** What instructional, ethical, and operational conditions must be in place before broader AI tool adoption?
- **Prepare / Prosper / Protect:** What guidance from the Board's AI policy work should most directly shape instructional decisions about AI use and literacy?

References

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Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2025, May). *Empowering learners for the age of AI: An AI literacy framework for primary and secondary education (Review draft)*. OECD. https://ailiteracyframework.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/AILitFramework_ReviewDraft.pdf