ACPS Generative AI Instructional Best Practices

Generative AI tools (like ChatGPT, Gemini, etc.) create content by using data it has been trained to understand. As these tools evolve, they are quickly becoming a part of the educational landscape. This document is intended as a set of best practices for teachers who opt to incorporate AI in their instructional design, to analyze data, or even use it with their students. This document may evolve as the landscape of AI continues to change.

Designing Instructional Materials

AI can be used to generate materials for instructional design or student consumption. These best practices provide safeguards and highlight instructional principles that should be considered when using generative AI tools.

Best Practice ✅	Cautions ⚠️	...Because ❓
Ensure that ideas and materials generated with AI are accurately aligned with curriculum frameworks and standards and are culturally relevant. **You can do this by...**	DO NOT rely solely on AI-generated materials without review for accuracy and alignment to curriculum frameworks and standards.	Information may be biased, inaccurate, or not inclusive. AI can also "hallucinate" (generate false content) rather than leave a prompt unanswered.
...using AI to help develop ideas for essential questions, understandings, and big ideas for your content.	Always review for accuracy, sensitivity, and logical treatment of topics.	AI can distort topics by creating illogical questions, treating topics without sensitivity and awareness, or generate hallucinations (false content).
...generating learning materials and tasks which reflect a learning progression which gradually increases in depth and complexity.	Do not use AI to advance grade level material or lower rigor of grade level content.	It is better to explore a topic with depth and complexity than advancing to the next grade level. Additionally, changing content when the activity is reading reduces the rigor and exposure to grade-level vocabulary. Finally, collaborating with PLC partners and specialists is more beneficial when planning instructional moves than solely partnering with AI.
...using AI to assist with generation of diverse and inclusive instructional materials by intentionally prompting for anti-racist, anti-biased, materials.	Make sure the materials represent multiple perspectives, and check outputs for accuracy, tone, and cultural sensitivity of difficult topics.	AI's data sets and models naturally carry human bias, and are often incomplete, which may be reflected in outputs if not carefully reviewed.
Evaluate AI-generated materials to ensure that they are aligned with current best teaching practices.	Do not expect AI to use evidence-based practice; it does not replace licensed expertise.	AI is not an endorsed decision-making model for a classroom.
Ensure student use of generative AI in lesson delivery is intentional, clearly communicated and aligned to the learning goals.	Do not ask students to use Generative AI without clear expectations or use AI platforms that are not ACPS approved.	AI's output will vary widely, or may even be inappropriate, when prompts are unclear or unapproved tools are used.

Assessing Students & Analyzing Data

AI can be used as a feedback and analysis tool, but it is important to remember that AI can't replace human expertise. These best practices highlight the importance of educator oversight and decision-making about what is best for a student.

Best Practice ✅	Cautions ⚠️	...Because ❓
When appropriate, use AI to deepen and transform closed, fact-based, or lower-level questions into questions which reveal student thinking and learning breakdown.	Make sure the thinking required by the transformed question still matches the learning goal	Without review, assessment and instruction may misalign.
Leverage AI to create clear directions, scaffolds, or supports for a task or an assessment item.	AI modified content does not take the place of IEP or 504 modifications. Use ACPS approved accessibility tools (i.e. Read and Write).	The legal requirements for these documents supersede the tweaks AI offers. ACPS approved tools align with good instructional practices, and protect data.
Consider how AI tools can support more efficient analysis of student work and understanding, in order to tailor instructional materials for specific learning needs.	Only use ACPS approved AI tools when analyzing student assessment data, and be sure to remove any personally identifiable information from that data before uploading that data (ie. Student Name, number, etc.).	Not all AI tools necessarily keep student information confidential, and may use this information to train their models.
Use AI tools to provide timely feedback on student work, and be transparent with students when AI has been used in this way.	Be sure to review AI feedback, and balance it with human-provided feedback.	Over reliance on AI feedback may limit your understanding of a student's performance, or diminish the student's sense of an authentic relationship.
Consider ways students might use AI for self-assessment or feedback (i.e. generating practice problems, or analyzing work for mistakes and misconceptions) allowing them to reflect on where they are against a set of learning goals.	In order for students to self-assess, they need to know the learning goal/target, what successfully meeting that goal would look like (i.e., success criteria, rubric descriptors for levels of performance.), and how to effectively prompt AI to achieve this outcome.	Without understanding goals, success criteria, and quality prompting, AI is likely to give students irrelevant, incomplete, or incorrect feedback.

Academic Integrity

AI requires intentionality on the part of both the student and teacher because it pushes the boundaries of what we can create. These best practices support the ethical use of AI, clear expectations, and process over product.

Best Practice ✅	Cautions ⚠️	...Because ❓
Adhere to the ACPS AI Usage Scale and syllabus statement with each assignment to clarify the appropriate use of AI for students.	Without clarity of expectation of AI use in assignments or instructional tasks, students may be confused about what degree of AI use is appropriate.	Students need to learn to incorporate AI as a resource and use it ethically, citing usage to prevent accusations of cheating and plagiarism. Setting expectations ahead of time clarifies for students and families how AI may be used in your classroom.
If inappropriate AI use is suspected in academic work, teachers should consider: • Student's usual style of writing (i.e. vocabulary, tone, content a student would know, etc.)	Approach discussions about suspected AI use with care. Giving students a chance to describe and show their process for creation as a first step. Partnering with an administrator when AI use reaches a threshold of academic dishonesty is critical.	A combination of evidence should be present if an accusation of cheating is going to be made. Reviewing this evidence with an administrator is important.

• Evidence of drafting (i.e. use tools such as Brisk, Google document history, handwritten outlines, graphic organizers for planning, etc.) • Lightspeed Classroom Management history for writing done in class		

Student Data Privacy & Security

AI often uses information input by the user to further train its models, risking violation of student data privacy laws and ACPS policy.
These best practices support safe and age-appropriate use of student data in generative AI tools.

Best Practice ✅	Cautions ⚠️	...Because ❓
Use ACPS approved AI tools.	Note any restrictions for these tools such as age, parent permission, etc.	ACPS-approved AI tools have been vetted for compliance with federal student data laws.
When using AI tools to process student information, scrub any Personally Identifiable Information (i.e. Name, Phone Number, Student ID, etc.).	AI may store whatever you input, or even use it to train it's own models.	Federal laws (FERPA) protect student data from use by anybody without a "legitimate educational interest" in that student's data.
Use approved AI image generators and editors to generate content.	Do not upload images of students or other people to AI tools.	Some AI tools may train their models after a person's image.
Use AI to generate student materials used to implement IEPs or 504s (i.e. social story, a formulaic story that explains a social norm such as the steps to appropriately ride the bus).	Do not upload a protected student data set (i.e. IEP, 504, reading plan goals, etc.) to generate a social story, a goal statement, or other related items. Do not use generative AI to write any component of an IEP or 504.	State regulations require IEP or related documents to be based on students' individual needs; there is no way to ensure that AI is making these considerations in IEP development.

Communication

AI can be helpful with developing communications to students, families, and colleagues, but may not always account for the nuances in languages and expression. These best practices help with ensuring a high level of professionalism and cultural awareness when using AI to communicate.

Best Practice ✅	Cautions ⚠️	...Because ❓
Use AI to help brainstorm and be a thought partner when developing communications.	Send AI assisted or developed communications without reviewing for accuracy, bias, and tone consistent with the goal of the communication...	AI makes mistakes, and does not effectively replicate the human voice or intention.
Do not use AI to translate documents without review from a trained translator or otherwise in accordance with ACPS guidelines.	Translation without instruction in the target language is not an effective instructional tool, and, in accordance with best practices, translation should be student-driven, not teacher-driven. Additionally, AI translation is not yet a perfect replacement for human translators, especially in situations requiring nuanced understanding, cultural sensitivity, or accuracy in high-stakes contexts.	ACPS has policies and procedures regarding translation and instruction.