

DEFINING AI LITERACY

AI Literacy in Orange County Public Schools is defined as the knowledge, skills, and mindset required to understand how AI works, critically evaluate its outputs, and use AI tools responsibly, safely, and effectively. This broad competence is tailored to different groups, reflecting their varying levels of understanding and responsibility.

[Elementary Students \(K-5\)](#)

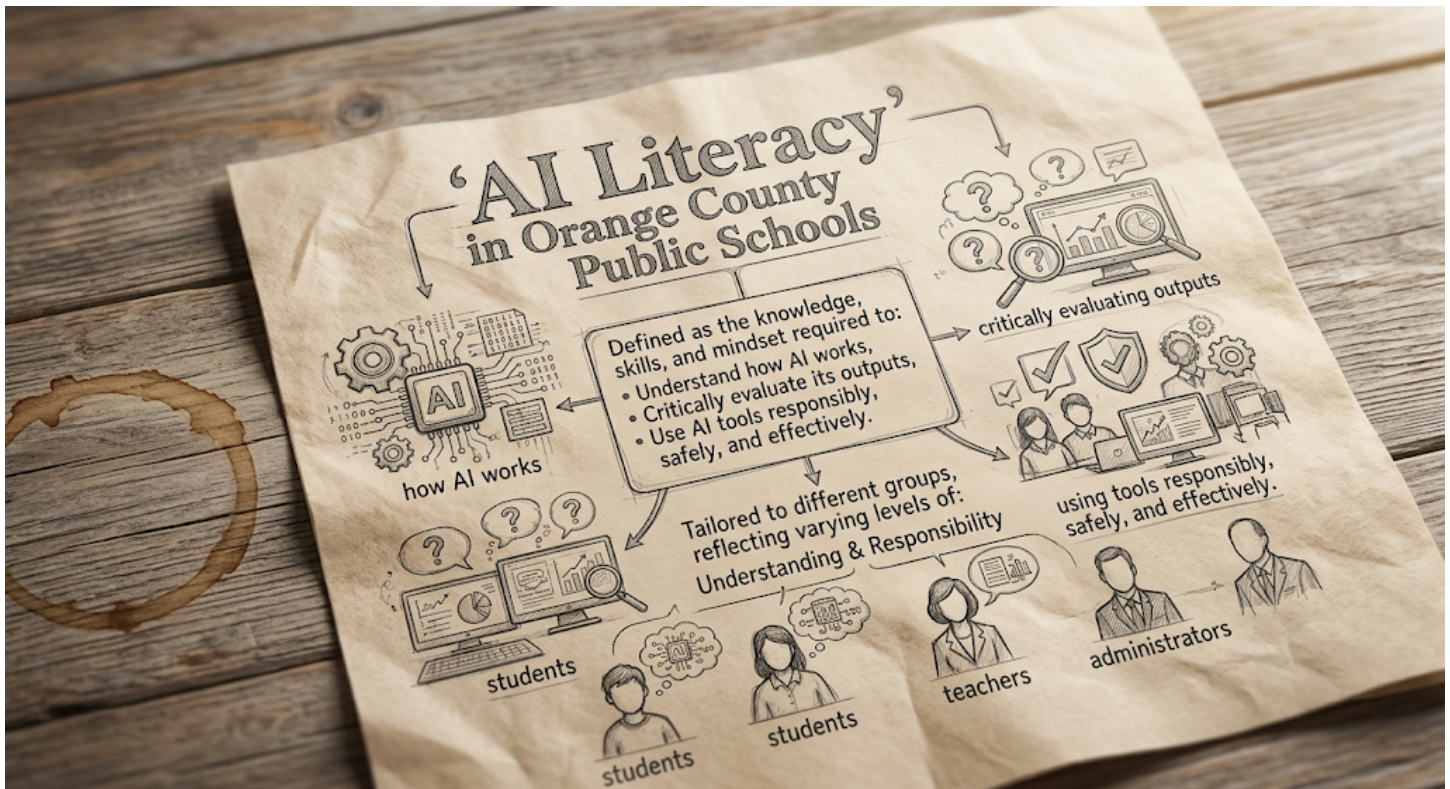
[Secondary Students \(6-12\)](#)

[Instructional Staff \(Teachers & Educators\)](#)

[Non-Instructional Staff \(Administrative & Support Staff\)](#)

[Leadership \(District & School Leaders\)](#)

[Summary](#)



Elementary Students (K-5)



Foundational Awareness & Safety: At the elementary level, AI literacy means a basic awareness that some technologies have “advanced” features and learning to engage with AI-driven tools in safe, guided ways. Young students recognize simple examples of AI in everyday tools and practice digital and emotional safety when using AI. Examples of digital safety include not sharing personal information and seeking guidance from adults when using AI. Examples of emotional/physical safety include recognizing, stopping, and informing an adult if the AI tool generates content that is harmful, inappropriate, or makes them think about harming themselves or someone else. The emphasis is on curiosity, understanding that AI is a tool created by humans, and instilling habits of responsible use even at this early age.

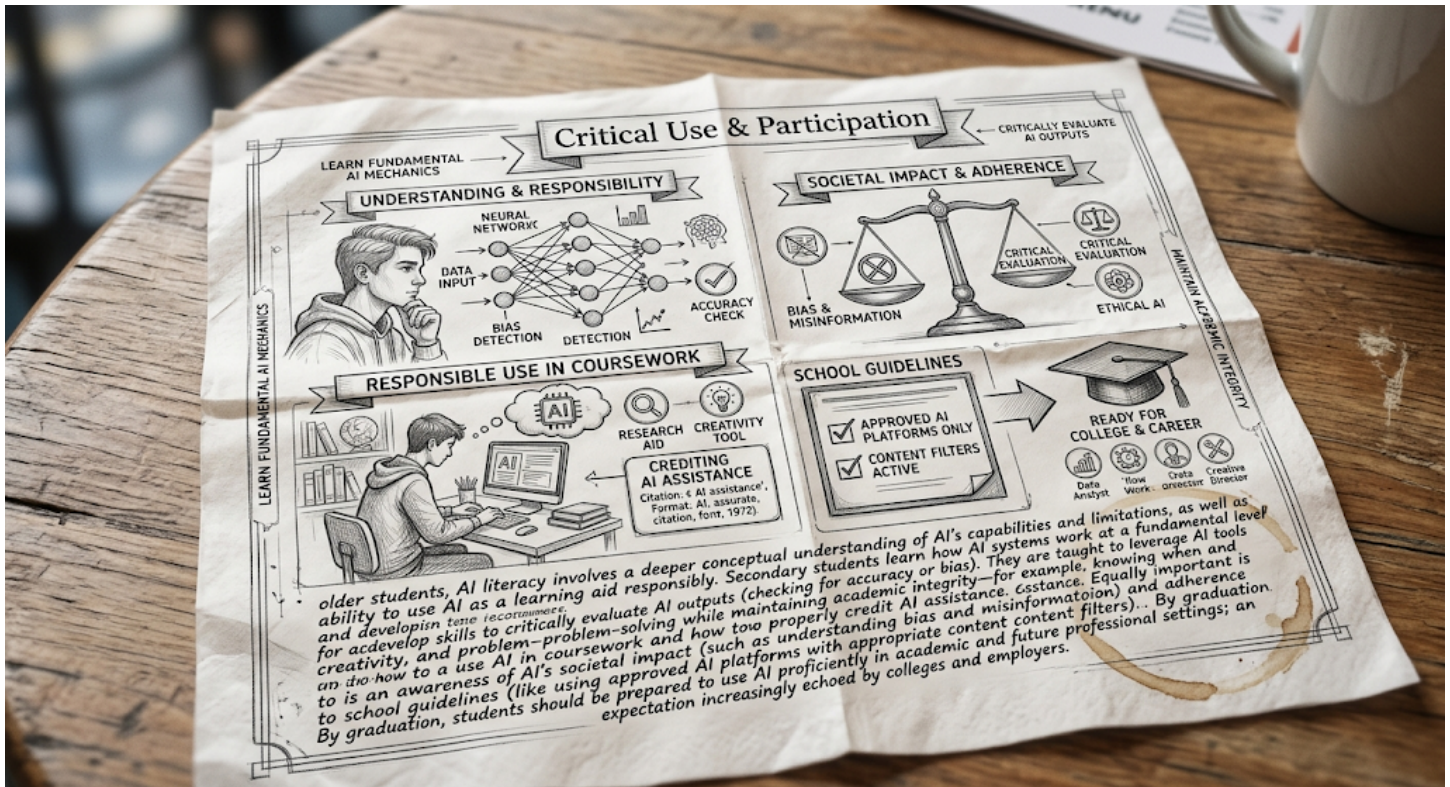
[Reading Guide](#)

[Video Guide](#)

KEY TAKEAWAY

Foundational Awareness & Safety: Focus on curiosity, recognizing AI in everyday tools, and practicing digital safety by not sharing personal info.

Secondary Students (6–12)

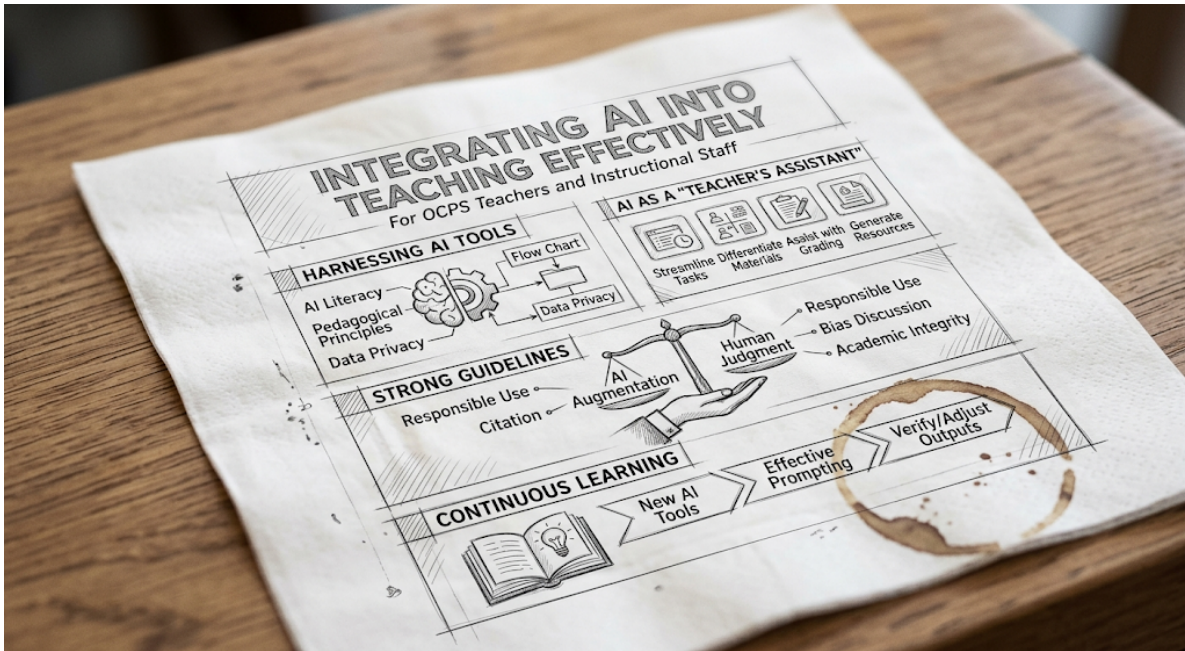


Critical Use & Participation: For older students, AI literacy involves a deeper conceptual understanding of AI's capabilities and limitations, as well as the ability to use AI as a learning aid responsibly. Secondary students learn how AI systems work at a fundamental level and develop skills to critically evaluate AI outputs (checking for accuracy or bias). They are taught to leverage AI tools for research, creativity, and problem-solving while maintaining academic integrity—for example, knowing *when and how* to use AI in coursework and how to properly credit AI assistance. Equally important is an awareness of AI's societal impact (such as understanding bias and misinformation) and adherence to school guidelines (like using approved AI platforms with appropriate content filters). By graduation, students should be prepared to use AI proficiently in academic and future professional settings; an expectation increasingly echoed by colleges and employers.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Critical Use & Integrity: Leveraging AI for research and problem-solving while maintaining academic integrity and evaluating for bias.

Instructional Staff

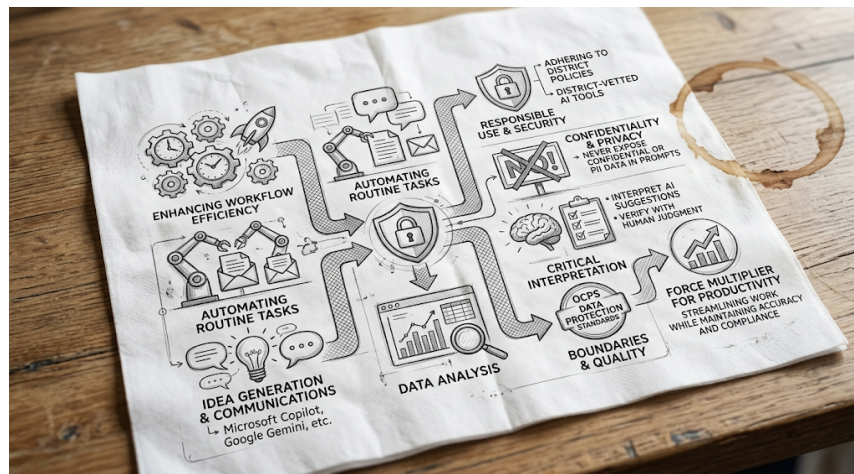


Integrating AI into Teaching Effectively: For OCPS teachers and instructional staff, AI literacy means the ability to harness AI tools to enhance teaching and learning while upholding pedagogical principles and data privacy. Educators should understand AI's instructional possibilities and limits, enabling them to use it as a "teacher's assistant" to streamline tasks, differentiate materials, assist with grading, and generate resources. This practical application must be coupled with strong guidelines: ensuring AI augments rather than replaces human judgment and the fundamental role of the teacher. This includes modeling responsible use for students (e.g., addressing academic integrity by requiring proper citation of AI-generated content and openly discussing AI bias or inaccuracies). Teachers' AI literacy also entails continuous learning—staying updated on new AI tools, mastering effective prompting techniques, and understanding how to verify and adjust AI outputs. Ultimately, an AI-literate educator can confidently integrate AI into the curriculum in aligned, innovative ways, improving efficiency and student engagement without compromising equity or authenticity.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Enhanced Pedagogy: Using AI as a "teacher's assistant" to differentiate materials and streamline tasks while modeling responsible use.

Non-Instructional Staff



Productivity & Policy-Compliant Use: For non-instructional staff, AI literacy focuses on utilizing AI to enhance workflow efficiency in accordance with district policies. Staff in administrative, IT, and support roles are expected to be proficient with approved AI platforms (e.g., Microsoft Copilot, Google Gemini, etc.) to automate routine tasks, generate ideas, analyze data, or assist with communications. Equally, they must demonstrate responsible use by adhering to all security and privacy guidelines, including the use of only district-vetted AI tools and never exposing confidential or personally identifiable information in prompts. AI literacy for this group entails understanding how to interpret AI suggestions (and when to verify them with human judgment), recognizing the boundaries of appropriate AI use in their job duties, and utilizing AI in a manner that maintains accuracy, compliance, and service quality. In essence, staff utilize AI as a force multiplier for productivity, streamlining work while adhering to the data protection *standards* set by OCPS.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Productivity & Security: Utilizing approved platforms to automate workflows while strictly adhering to data privacy standards.

Leadership



Strategic Oversight & Culture Setting: For OCPS leaders – from principals to district executives – AI literacy is the capacity to understand AI at a strategic level and lead its adoption responsibly. This involves grasping core AI concepts sufficiently to evaluate the opportunities and risks associated with AI initiatives, and ensuring that these initiatives align with the district's strategic goals (e.g., improving student outcomes, operational efficiency) and uphold values such as equity and inclusion. Leaders must be fluent in the data governance implications of AI (data privacy, algorithmic bias, transparency) and set clear governance standards and policies for AI use across their teams. Practically, an AI-literate leader champions responsible innovation – identifying where AI can drive improvements (from automating back-office processes to personalizing learning) and allocating resources/training accordingly – while also communicating boundaries (defining where

AI should *not* replace human decision-making or interaction). They play a key role in cultivating an informed culture: modeling appropriate AI use in their own workflow, providing guidance and professional development for staff, and engaging stakeholders (teachers, students, parents) in conversations about AI's role in education. In summary, AI literacy at the leadership level is about vision and stewardship – understanding the technology sufficiently to integrate it into the district's vision and to lead by example, ensuring that AI is used safely and effectively at all other levels.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Strategic Vision: Grasping AI concepts to align initiatives with district goals and setting clear governance standards for school teams.

Summary

These working definitions of AI Literacy, informed by the district's AI Working Group and stakeholder input, aim to build an understanding of how to leverage AI's benefits responsibly and thoughtfully in the context of teaching and learning. The focus is on empowering all learners and employees with the technical insight, data privacy awareness, and practical skills needed to navigate an AI-driven world safely and successfully.