

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

INTRODUCTION

As a principle-based institution, we approach new developments in education with curiosity and a commitment to our core values. This document reflects that intentional process and is organized in two parts: Guiding Principles, which outline the theological and foundational beliefs that shape our approach to technology use, and Practices and Applications, which describes how SFC will thoughtfully explore, evaluate, and implement AI in ways that support our overall educational goals.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

At Santa Fe Christian Schools, we believe creativity is a gift from God that reflects His nature as the ultimate Creator. We also believe God has called humans to exercise dominion over the earth by bringing order, and when used responsibly, AI can serve that work. In this framework, AI refers not only to tools that generate content, but also to systems that assist, recommend, analyze, automate, or complete tasks.

One of the first mentions of God offering a human his Spirit involves cultivating creativity. In Exodus 31, God empowers Bezalel with “wisdom, with understanding, with knowledge and with all kinds of skills—to make artistic designs.” God calls us to use our creativity to extend God’s own beauty and order to the world, serve others, and glorify Him. From the earliest tools to today’s advanced technologies, human innovation has shaped how we live and connect, offering great potential for good while also requiring wisdom and discernment.

Theology of Technology

*God saw all that He had made, and it was very good.
Genesis 1:31.*

From the beginning, creation reflected God’s perfect design. When sin entered the world through Adam and Eve, that design was fractured, and every part of creation felt its effects (Genesis 3:6). Even so, God’s redemptive plan has continued to unfold through Jesus Christ, drawing us back into relationship with Him and pointing toward the full restoration described in Revelation 21. In this light, humanity’s movement from the Garden to the City is not a departure from God’s intent, but a development within it. This unfolding story also makes space for the growth of technology as part of God’s sovereign work.¹ Our goal is not the glorification of our own abilities, but to bring glory to God.

MISSION

To partner with Christian parents within a Bible-based community, in order to disciple students to embrace biblical truth, strive for academic excellence, and model Christ-like leadership to influence their homes, churches, and communities for Christ.

CONVICTIONS

*Statement of Faith and
Declaration of Ethical and
Moral Integrity*

VALUES

*“The Santa Fe Way Prayer
Journal”*

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Living Truth in Christ

APOLOGIAS

STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT

INSTRUCTION

APOLOGIAS

"Wielding technology is necessary, yet without a right relationship to God, one another, and the rest of creation, it can have unforeseen and disastrous results."² While human innovation can never match the beauty and perfection of God's creation, it can still serve a meaningful role when understood within the larger arc of redemption. Technology, when used faithfully, doesn't attempt to rewrite God's story; it sits within it. That may seem like a small distinction, but it changes how we use it and how much authority we give it. With this perspective, we are invited to engage technology faithfully, participating in God's work rather than attempting to define it ourselves.

Imago Dei

Any discussion concerning AI inevitably leads to the question, "What does it mean to be human?" Could machines ever become so effective and "real" that they rival human worth or surpass our value? This is only intensified as new technological innovations seek to extend human life and thought through integration with intelligent technologies.

The Bible is very clear here. Humans alone bear the image of God (Gen. 2:7), uniquely created as physical, emotional, and spiritual beings. We are bestowed with the ability to reason, love, and imagine. As image bearers, we are called to be co-creators and kingdom builders (Genesis 1:26–27), exercising stewardship and dominion over creation. And also, we are made with fundamental limitations. Rather than pursuing limitlessness, we seek to become faithfully dependent upon God. Just as Jesus said, "the Son can do nothing by himself, he can do only what he sees his Father doing" (John 5:19), we express technology most faithfully when we are clear that it should never be seen as a workaround for dependence on the Father. AI should never replace our dependence on God, which is marked by our sanctification through the Spirit in Christ. What we are meant to become, and the processes by which God helps us become our telos, must not be hacked or shortcut. So, where it serves our mission and call in Christ, we utilize tools like AI. Where it undercuts formation, we avoid using these tools in the name of slower processes like contemplation, fasting, prayer, service, love, or worship.

While Artificial Intelligence adds efficiency and rapid processing of information to the classroom, the human teacher models creative thinking, cognitive flexibility, and empathy for students. Seasoned teachers draw from experience to determine appropriate cognitive and academic growth for a given discipline and year. As Christ came and gave an incarnational witness to those whom He loved, human teachers (guided by the Holy Spirit) provide a physical representation of Christlike character and encouragement for students' spiritual formation.

AI "testifies to humanity's God-given ingenuity—an ingenuity to be used in his service."³ Yet, as redeemed people still living in a fallen world, our hearts are prone to wander. We must therefore examine our motivations and actions through the lens of Scripture, ensuring that our pursuit of innovation aligns with God's purpose. When we ground our understanding of humanity

in the truth of being Imago Dei, we can approach AI with neither fear nor idolatry, but with wisdom, humility, and hope.

Healthy Skepticism

Education is far more than transmitting information; it is about cultivating wisdom, character, and discernment. We desire to raise students who think deeply, solve problems creatively, and engage the world redemptively. Technology, including AI, undeniably plays an important role in shaping the way we interact with others, breaking down physical boundaries, and opening the world. However, understanding how technology supports or disrupts the type of information we share with one another is critical as we prepare our students for the future. As the educational landscape evolves and new tools continue to emerge, we won't blindly adopt new technology automatically. We slow down, ask questions, and measure it against Scripture before deciding how it should be used. This allows us to remain open to innovation without being swayed by every new trend. As Paul reminds us, "All things are permissible, but not all things are beneficial" (1 Corinthians 10:23). Guided by this truth, we help students adopt a balanced view of technology: one that values curiosity, critical thinking, and ultimate allegiance to the Creator, not the created. Fundamentally, we seek not "to be conformed to the pattern of this world, but transformed by the renewing of our minds." (Romans 12:2). The world will commend its own use of AI, but we will only endorse the type of AI use that serves transformation into the image of Christ rather than conformation to the world.

How does AI impact our teaching and learning?

At Santa Fe Christian Schools, our Student Learning Objectives guide how we engage emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence, ensuring that innovation supports our mission to form students in wisdom and purpose.

DISCERNING THINKERS, SEEKING GOD'S TRUTH IN ALL THINGS

Students evaluate AI outputs and recommendations with discernment, recognizing that truth is not determined by efficiency or output, but by alignment with God's Word. AI serves as a tool to inform thinking, not replace it.

RESILIENT RISK-TAKERS, DEEPENING DEPENDENCE ON GOD

Students approach AI with curiosity and courage, engaging in thoughtful experimentation while exercising wisdom and self-control. Rather than defaulting to convenience, they develop perseverance and responsibility in how they use these tools.

PURPOSEFUL CONTRIBUTORS, PURSUING WHAT IS TRUE, GOOD, AND BEAUTIFUL

Students use AI to enhance, not substitute, their thinking and creativity. With clear guidelines for appropriate use, they learn to engage technology in ways that reflect God's truth and contribute meaningful, original work that serves others.

INTENTIONAL LEADERS, SERVING WITH GENUINE CARE

Students model ethical AI use within their community, guiding peers toward responsible practices. They understand that technology should strengthen human relationships, not replace them.

GRACIOUS COMMUNICATORS, ARTICULATING WITH COMPASSION AND CLARITY

Students recognize that while AI can support expression, communication must remain authentically human. They are given age-appropriate opportunities to use school-vetted tools or features to refine their voice without surrendering authorship.

RESPONSIBLE CARETAKERS, STEWARDING WITH WISDOM AND INTEGRITY

Students practice faithful stewardship of technology by protecting privacy, citing or disclosing sources and AI assistance, and honoring intellectual property. They learn that trust, transparency, and accountability are essential in a digital world.

This framework ensures that our use of AI is not driven solely by the pursuit of efficiency, though necessary at times, but rather by a commitment to human agency, character formation, and the flourishing of our community. Ultimately, our goal is to ensure that technology serves our mission rather than defining it. AI is never an authority on truth. Scripture remains our ultimate authority, teachers remain responsible for instruction, and students remain responsible for learning. By prioritizing wisdom over convenience, we remain dedicated to forming students who are not merely masters of tools, but seekers of truth. As we look to the future, we invite our entire community to engage these advancements through the lens of faith, confident that by renewing our minds and relying on the Spirit, we can navigate this landscape with integrity, grace, and an unwavering focus on the beauty of Christ.

PRACTICES AND APPLICATIONS

Given the rapid pace of changes in AI technology, it is neither feasible nor developmentally appropriate to address every emerging tool within a K-12 educational setting. The natural progression of learning requires that students first develop concrete and symbolic understanding before they are prepared to engage in sustained critical analysis. Additionally, children need a bank of foundational knowledge before they can begin to discern

what is real/true. For this reason, AI integration is intentionally introduced beginning in middle school and only under specific teacher guidance. Individual classroom expectations, assignment requirements, and technology procedures may differ based upon grade level, subject matter, developmental appropriateness, and educational objectives. Faculty and administration retain discretion to determine appropriate AI use in a manner consistent with this framework.

Accordingly, we will maintain a timeline of AI tools, initiatives, and instructional applications that we plan to explore:

2025 – 2026

- The Faculty AI Task Force met throughout the year to develop our foundational principles and explored emerging tools
- Expanded the pilot of FlintAI, Gemini, and Google LM with additional teachers/grade levels
- Select faculty and administrators attended workshops on AI and Education
- Added a new quarter-long generative AI elective for 7th and 8th-grade students

2026 – 2027

- Introduce 6–12 Student AI Use Guidelines and SFC's AI Apologia
- FlintAI is available for 6-12 students to explore and use
- Select courses/teachers to explore AI with students, teaching them proper prompt engineering skills and how to recognize hallucinations
- Administration will continue to study and track AI development and its impact on K-12 education.

Safety

SFC is vigilant about using tools that are compliant with the following standards:

FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act): This federal law protects the privacy of student education records. While it is only optional for schools that do not receive public funding, SFC requires all hardware and software service providers to adhere to the standards.

SOPIPA (Student Online Personal Information Protection Act): This California-specific law is the main compliance cornerstone. It expressly prohibits EdTech and AI operators from using student data to build advertising profiles, sell information, or target students with ads.

AB 1584 (Vendor Data Ownership): While typically applied to public districts, many independent private schools, including SFC, adopt this standard for their AI contracts. It stipulates that the school owns the data, mandates third parties to implement

reasonable security measures, and forbids the AI vendor from using student data to train their own models.

SOC 2 (System and Organization Controls 2): SOC 2 is a cybersecurity auditing framework developed by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA). It is the premier standard used by EdTech and AI vendors to independently prove that they securely handle student and school data.

Glossary of AI Terminology

As the technology evolves, new terminologies will also follow. Below are some of the most common terminologies⁴ related to AI technology to date:

AI agent: A system that can take actions, complete multi-step tasks, and sometimes work with less direct human supervision.

AI copilot: An assistant-style AI that helps a person do work faster by suggesting, drafting, or automating parts of a task.

AI sycophancy: When an AI agent is trained to please you, agree with your opinions, or tell you exactly what you want to hear.

Chain of thought: Step-by-step reasoning used by some AI systems to arrive at an answer.

Context window: The amount of prior text an AI can “hold in mind” at once during a conversation.

Emergent behavior: Unexpected capabilities or patterns that appear as models become more complex.

Few-shot learning: Completing a task after seeing only a few examples.

Fine-tuning: Adjusting a pre-trained model for a specific subject, audience, or task.

Generative AI (GenAI): AI that creates new content such as text, images, audio, video, or code.

Hallucination: When an AI produces content that sounds plausible, but is wrong or made up.

Large language model (LLM): A text-focused AI model trained on massive amounts of language data to predict and generate text.

Prompt: The input you give an AI system to get a response.

Prompt engineering: Designing prompts carefully so the AI gives better, more reliable results.

Retrieval-augmented generation (RAG): A method that combines a language model with external information retrieval so answers can be more grounded in sources.

Sentiment analysis: Detecting tone or emotion in text, such as student feedback or discussion posts.

Singularity: A hypothetical technological tipping point when AI becomes capable of recursive improvement on its own, setting off an “intelligence explosion” that could transform society in ways humans can’t easily predict.

Supervised learning: Training with labeled examples.

Temperature: A setting that controls how creative or random an AI’s output is.

Token: A small unit of text an AI model processes, often a word piece or punctuation mark.

Training data: The data used to teach an AI model.

Unsupervised learning: Training on unlabeled data to find patterns.

Zero data retention: A privacy approach where systems do not keep certain user data after use.

Zero-shot learning: Completing a task without having been trained on that exact example before.

Disclaimer

This document establishes Santa Fe Christian Schools’ theological framework for evaluating Artificial Intelligence. It is not intended to replace the Student Handbook, Employee Handbook, Technology Acceptable Use Policy, Academic Integrity Policy, or other school policies. Those documents govern the specific rules applicable to students, employees, and volunteers.

REFERENCES

¹ ACSI, editor. Leading Insights. Colorado Springs, ACSI, 2024.

² Noreen Herzfeld, “Theology and Technology”

³ Kirby, Mike, and Matthew Emadi. “Christians Shouldn’t Fear AI.” The Gospel Coalition, 12 September 2023, www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/christians-fear-ai/. Accessed 29 October 2024.

⁴ The glossary was adapted using multiple publicly available AI resources and reviewed by SFC administration.