



RUSD AI Student Use Framework

Purpose

This document covers the responsible-use principles that guide AI in our classrooms, the rubrics — the Elementary Traffic Light and the Middle School 0–4 Integrity Rubric — that translate those principles into daily classroom practice, and the review and feedback commitments that keep the framework current.

Why a Tool-Agnostic Framework

AI tools change quickly. Even where the district carefully vets and approves specific tools for school use, students will inevitably encounter others — at home, on personal devices, and through products that did not exist when these guidelines were written. A list of approved or prohibited tools would require constant revision and would still leave gaps.

A framework approach instead defines the kind of AI involvement permitted on a given assignment, regardless of which specific tool is used. The same expectation applies whether a student uses a district-vetted assistant or an unfamiliar chatbot encountered at home; the framework, the rubrics, and the AI Credits practice carry the same academic-integrity expectation across that boundary. This also keeps the district's tool-vetting effort focused where it has the most impact — on the tools used in school, with district accounts and student data — without requiring the district to monitor or police home environments.

Responsible Use & Academic Integrity

This portion of the framework defines the principles that govern AI use on classroom assignments and the practices that make those principles concrete.

Human-Originality Requirement

While AI can assist in the learning process, the core ideas and final voice remain the student's own. The framework treats technology as a way to spark thinking, not to replace it. The rubrics described below define where AI may assist on any given task; in every case, the student's reasoning and authorship are what is ultimately evaluated.

Communicating the Level

Educators define which AI uses are permitted for each task and explain the rationale, so students understand when the goal is to build a foundational skill versus when it is to practice using a digital co-pilot. K–5 classrooms use the Elementary Traffic Light; 6–8 classrooms use the 0–4 Integrity Rubric. Both share the same color bands so students, teachers, and families experience a coherent K–8 progression. The K–5 rubric follows the Traffic Light convention already adopted in these guidelines. The 6–8 rubric is adapted from the AI Assessment Scale (Perkins, Furze, Roe & MacVaugh, 2023; updated 2024) and aligns with the structure presented here.

Crosswalk — the same color band carries the same meaning at every grade; middle school students gain a finer-grained distinction within each band:

Color Band	Elementary (K–5) Traffic Light	Middle School (6–8) 0–4 Integrity Rubric
RED	No AI — Human only	Level 0 — Completely AI-Free (Human only)
YELLOW	AI as Scaffold (helper/tutor)	Level 1 — AI for brainstorming/outlining only



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Color Band	Elementary (K–5) Traffic Light	Middle School (6–8) 0–4 Integrity Rubric
		Level 2 — AI for editing and feedback
GREEN	AI as Co-Pilot (partner/co-author)	Level 3 — AI as a collaborative partner/co-author Level 4 — Fully AI-generated for the purpose of evaluation/critique

Elementary Rubric (K–5): Traffic Light

Used on assignment headers, classroom posters, and family communications for grades K–5. Teachers facilitate this practice by labeling each assignment with one of the three colors.

Color & Label	What It Means	When a Teacher Might Use It	What Students Do
RED <i>No AI — Human only</i>	I do this work myself, without help from AI.	• Tests and quizzes • In-class writing • Practicing a new skill (handwriting, phonics, math facts) • Showing what I already know	• Use my own brain, paper, and pencil • Ask my teacher or a classmate if I get stuck • Do not use AI tools (chatbots, image generators, etc.)
YELLOW <i>AI as Scaffold (helper/tutor)</i>	AI helps me in the way my teacher described, and I share how I used it as my AI Credit.	• Brainstorming a story idea • Getting feedback on a draft • Checking spelling or grammar after I write • Exploring a topic before research	• Use AI in the way my teacher described • Tell my teacher (or write a short note) about what AI helped with — that's my AI Credit • Make sure the final work is my thinking, not AI's
GREEN <i>AI as Co-Pilot (partner/co-author)</i>	AI is a partner for this work — we are practicing how to use it well.	• Exploring ideas with an AI partner • Generating practice problems • Comparing AI's answer with my own • Learning how to ask good questions (prompting)	• Pay attention to whether AI is right or wrong • Think for myself — don't just trust AI • Share what AI got right and what it got wrong as my AI Credit

Middle School Rubric (6–8): 0–4 Integrity Rubric

Used on assignment headers, syllabi, and progress reports for grades 6–8. Teachers facilitate this practice by labeling each assignment with one of the five levels. The color band shown for each level matches the elementary rubric, providing visual continuity from K–5.



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Lvl	Name (Color)	Description	Examples	AI Credits
0	Completely AI-Free (Human only) <i>RED</i>	AI is not used at any point. The work is entirely the student's own.	• In-class essays • Tests and quizzes • Math problem sets • Foundational skills practice	Not applicable. Use of AI on a Level 0 task falls under the academic integrity provisions of the AI Guidelines.
1	AI for Brainstorming / Outlining Only <i>YELLOW</i>	AI may be used at the start of the assignment to generate ideas, outlines, or initial research. The drafting and writing remain the student's own.	• Brainstorming essay topics • Outlining a research paper • Generating discussion questions • Initial topic exploration	AI Credit lists prompts used and notes which ideas were kept, modified, or set aside.
2	AI for Editing and Feedback <i>YELLOW</i>	AI may review and suggest improvements to student-written work. The original writing remains the student's own.	• Proofreading a draft • Feedback on a paragraph • Suggesting clearer phrasing • Catching grammar / spelling	AI Credit includes a 'before' and 'after' version, or notes which AI suggestions were accepted and why.
3	AI as a Collaborative Partner / Co-Author <i>GREEN</i>	AI is used throughout the assignment as a thinking partner. The student directs the work and is responsible for accuracy.	• Drafting sections of a project with AI • Researching and synthesizing • Building a presentation collaboratively • Generating examples or counterexamples	AI Credit documents how AI contributed and where the student's own thinking, judgment, or revision came in.
4	Fully AI-Generated for Evaluation / Critique <i>GREEN</i>	AI generates the work; the student's task is to evaluate, critique, fact-check, or improve it.	• Comparing two AI essays for accuracy • Fact-checking AI output • Identifying bias in AI-generated text • Rewriting AI work for a target audience	AI Credit includes the full transcript of AI prompts and responses, submitted with the student's evaluation/critique.

Classroom Practice with the Rubrics

These rubrics function as part of routine classroom practice:

- *Each assignment carries a labeled level.* Teachers indicate the color (K–5) or level (6–8) on the assignment itself, so students see consistent expectations across classrooms.



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- *Default is Red / Level 0.* When an assignment has not yet been labeled, students treat it as no-AI work until the teacher clarifies the level.
- *Levels are not a hierarchy.* Level 4 is not "better" than Level 0 — the appropriate level depends on what skill the assignment is meant to assess.
- *Visual continuity at home.* Family communications, classroom posters, and assignment headers use the same color band so families recognize expectations across grade levels.
- *5th-grade transition.* In the second half of 5th grade, the 0–4 numbered levels are previewed alongside the colors so students enter 6th grade familiar with both.

Sample assignment-header language teachers may use:

Elementary: "AI use on this assignment: YELLOW — AI as Scaffold. You may use AI to brainstorm story ideas. Tell me what you asked AI as your AI Credit."

Middle School: "AI use on this assignment: Level 2 (Yellow) — AI as Scaffold for editing and feedback. Submit a before-and-after version as your AI Credit."

Citing the Co-Pilot with AI Credits

Students learn to be transparent by labeling AI involvement and providing AI Credits that explain how the tool helped them research, plan, draft, or edit. The format is age-appropriate and grows with the student:

- *K–2:* verbal acknowledgment to the teacher (e.g., "I asked AI to help me think of a topic."). The teacher captures the credit in the moment.
- *3–5:* a one- or two-sentence written note attached to the work, identifying the tool used and how it helped.
- *6–8:* a short structured AI Credit including the tool used, the level the assignment was set at, what the student asked of AI, and what the student kept, changed, or set aside. For Level 4 work, full prompts and responses accompany the student's evaluation/critique.

AI Credits accompany any Yellow or Green / Level 1–4 work. Red / Level 0 work involves no AI, so no credit is needed.

Prohibiting Misuse

To keep our community safe, using AI to impersonate others, create deepfakes, or generate content to bully or harass is prohibited regardless of the assignment level. Such misuse falls outside the rubric framework above and is addressed through the broader student conduct policy alongside these guidelines, with significant consequences.

Focus on the Process

The framework prioritizes authentic evidence of learning — handwritten assessments, oral presentations, in-class check-ins — so that the student, not the technology, demonstrates that learning goals have been met. To prevent AI from providing easy answers, teachers design "durable questions" that require specific local knowledge, personal context, or reference to recent class discussions. These authentic-assessment approaches complement the rubrics at every level.

References

Perkins, M., Furze, L., Roe, J., & MacVaugh, J. (2023, revised 2024). The AI Assessment Scale (AIAS): A framework for ethical integration of generative AI in educational assessment. aiassessmentscale.com.

North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. (2024). Generative AI implementation recommendations and considerations for PK–13 public schools. Raleigh, NC: NCDPI Office of Digital Teaching and Learning.