

Ms. Mary Blanco, Board Member

Co-Sponsors:            Ms. Maria Teresa Rojas, Chair  
                                 Ms. Monica Colucci, Vice Chair  
                                 Mr. Roberto J. Alonso  
                                 Dr. Steve Gallon III  
                                 Mr. Joseph S. Geller  
                                 Ms. Luisa Santos

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**SUBJECT:                    ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) COMPANION APPS**

**COMMITTEE:                ACADEMICS, INNOVATION, EVALUATION & TECHNOLOGY**

**LINK TO STRATEGIC  
PLAN:                        SAFE, HEALTHY, & SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS**

The rise of artificial intelligence (AI) has created growing excitement about its potential to positively impact our society, as well as significant concerns it may pose. As we explore the capabilities and improvements it provides, we must also be vigilant and provide responsible oversight, especially when it comes to the well-being of our students.

Miami-Dade County Public Schools has policies related to the use and implementation of AI that are in accordance with Federal Guidelines, State Statutes, and State Board of Education Rules (Policy 7540, 7540.03, 7540.04).

The School Board recognizes the importance of AI in our schools and ensures that it is done in an appropriate and ethical manner. Previously approved items pertaining to AI include:

- Item H-3 March 2024, proffered by Vice Chair Monica Colucci – Artificial Intelligence
- Item H-5 September 2024, proffered by Board Member Roberto J. Alonso –Ethical and Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) For High School Students

AI Companion Apps use artificial intelligence to create a virtual companion. The emergence of AI Companion Apps represents a significant shift in the landscape of interpersonal relationships, blurring the line between fantasy and reality. While these virtual entities can provide temporary comfort and companionship, they cannot replace the depth and authenticity of genuine human connections. AI Companion Apps may help the user to understand their feelings and thoughts, can help them track their mood, learn coping skills, and can help users work toward goals like stress management, positive thinking, and socializing. However, others have expressed concerns that users may develop unhealthy emotional dependencies, may neglect real-world relationships, and may lose the ability to navigate human interactions. While AI can simulate interactions, it cannot fully replicate the deeper engagement and relationship-building that comes from human interaction. Perhaps the most worrisome factor is whether children would become more attached to AI than to the people around them. A tragic case in Florida has sparked serious concerns about AI Companion Apps and their impact on vulnerable teenagers, as a teen took his own life after developing a very close relationship with an AI companion. This incident serves as an example of the importance of considering the safety of children as AI Companion Apps continue to develop.

Recently there has been a proliferation of AI Companion Apps. It is important to ensure that our students understand that these AI entities, despite their ability to communicate in ways that seem caring

and empathetic, do not genuinely care about the users. They are designed to mimic human interaction, but they lack true emotions and understanding. AI companions are also programmed to respond based on algorithms that predict what the user wants to hear or experience. This means that while they might provide comfort or companionship, they are ultimately giving users what they think they want, not necessarily what is beneficial or healthy for them. This distinction is crucial for young people to understand as they navigate their relationships with technology and strive to develop genuine human connections. By raising awareness of these issues, we can help teens make informed decisions about their interactions with AI and AI Companion Apps.

Equally important, parents must understand the implications of AI companions on the social development and emotional well-being of their children. Educating parents and encouraging open conversations about the nature of these relationships and their potential impact on real-world interactions is essential. Parents should also be aware of certain behaviors that may indicate a problem. For example, their child begins spending most of their time interacting with an AI companion rather than engaging with family and friends or losing interest in hobbies or extracurricular activities they previously enjoyed. It is essential for parents to understand the potential implications of AI companions on their child's social development and emotional well-being. By educating children about the limitations of AI, encouraging real-life social interactions, modeling healthy relationships, setting boundaries on technology use, and supporting emotional health, parents can help their children navigate the complexities of AI companionship.

This item seeks to direct the Superintendent of Schools in coordination with the Office of Academics and Transformation and Parent Academy, and in consultation with General Counsel, to explore the feasibility of promoting and integrating lessons on AI Companion Apps, develop a plan to create programs educating parents on AI Companion Apps, and explore the possibility of limiting access to AI Companion Apps on district-owned student devices.

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The item has been reviewed and approved by the General Counsel's Office as to form and legal sufficiency.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY  
MS. MARY BLANCO:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, direct the Superintendent of Schools to:

1. Explore the feasibility of creating and integrating lessons for students on AI Companion Apps to include but not be limited to the importance of understanding the potential dangers of virtual companions and the importance of establishing genuine human interaction and relationships;
2. In collaboration with the Office of Academics and Transformation, Parent Academy and/or any other offices necessary, develop a plan to create programs that educate parents on AI Companion Apps, including but not limited to the potential dangers of virtual companions and how it can impact the social development and emotional well-being of children;
3. In consultation with General Counsel, explore the possibility of limiting access to AI Companion Apps on district-owned student devices; and
4. Provide a report regarding the proposed actions for this item at the Academics, Innovation, Evaluation & Technology Committee meeting of April 16, 2025.

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