

Friday, October 16, 2026

To Members of the Kansas State Board of Education and Commissioner of Education,

After closely monitoring the State Board of Education's discussions related to *Policy Regarding the Effective Use of Instructional Technology In Kansas Schools*, including its October 14, 2026, discussion of parental/guardian acknowledgment versus "opt-in" and "opt-out" requirements, our districts strongly advocate for the **Option A: Annual Parental/Guardian Acknowledgment** – to be completed annually in accordance with student registration/enrollment. Before adopting a blanket opt-in or opt-out requirement, the State Board must carefully consider and address the unintended consequences such an approach could create for students, families, and schools. An annual acknowledgment offers a practical, consistent, and solution-driven path forward.

School districts across the state provide students with district-issued devices to ensure students have equitable access to the learning standards, instructional resources, and assessments that make up a guaranteed and viable curriculum. A district's **guaranteed and viable curriculum** ensures that every student has access to the same essential learning standards and experiences regardless of teacher, school, or family circumstance; which can realistically be taught within available instructional time and educational resources. This framework gives families, educators, and policymakers a shared expectation of what every student will learn, and it supports accountability to the Kansas State Department of Education's academic standards.

In today's instructional environment, a guaranteed and viable curriculum **cannot be fully implemented without intentional, purposeful use of instructional technology**. Many resources and learning experiences that support district curricula are available only through digital platforms. Teachers also use information from these digital resources to monitor student learning and plan Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III instruction. Providing every student with the same district-issued device helps ensure that access to the curriculum does not depend on what technology a student owns or has available to them at home. **It is important to note that the device is not the curriculum but a tool that helps ensure every student has equitable access to the curriculum.**

We appreciate the State Board's willingness to examine the role of technology in education and acknowledge that technology should never be a full replacement for quality learning activities, but rather should be used to enhance the educational experience. School districts at the local level are already actively evaluating instructional technology practices and providing professional development to ensure staff use technology appropriately and purposefully to enhance student learning. We value local control and believe public school districts are well positioned to make thoughtful decisions as it relates to technology in the classroom.



Statewide guidance should provide appropriate guardrails while preserving flexibility for local school districts to determine how those expectations are best implemented based on the needs of our students and schools.

With that in mind, we feel strongly that the State Board should be informed of potential system impacts and current realities prior to action:

- **Elementary instruction:** Physical textbooks remain in elementary classrooms, but many supplemental resources and learning activities exist **only** in digital form.
- **Secondary instruction:** Many textbooks and course materials are delivered through district learning management systems at the secondary levels. Physical copies are not published or available for every course or resource.
- **Individual Plans of Study:** Kansas requires every student to develop and maintain an Individual Plan of Study. Students complete and update these plans through district-approved digital platforms on district-issued devices.
- **Individualized learning and real-time feedback:** Digital adaptive resources supplement core instruction, giving students additional practice and ways to demonstrate learning. In addition, these tools provided students immediate feedback on their learning, allowing them to identify mistakes, correct misunderstandings and reinforce concepts in real time. Rather than waiting for assignments or assessments to be manually graded and returned, students can receive timely, personalized feedback that helps them make adjustments while learning is taking place. These tools also give teachers timely information on student progress toward grade-level and course standards. Teachers use this information to plan high-quality instruction and provide students with appropriate levels of support. This immediate feedback loop is an important component of effective, responsive instruction.
- **Assessment:** The majority of district, state, and national assessments are administered digitally and require reliable access to an appropriate device.
- **Advanced Placement and college-credit coursework:** Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and dual and concurrent credit MMO courses offered with partner colleges and universities rely on digital platforms for required coursework and examinations.

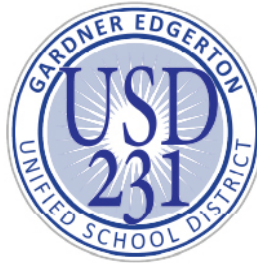
Families that elect to opt their child out of technology, or refuse to opt them in (which would also operate as 'opt-out' through inaction) would create two parallel systems of instruction within the same classroom, with real consequences for students and schools. This approach would introduce significant operational and instructional challenges, placing additional financial strain on school districts and increased burden on educators.



- **Unequal access:** Students who are opted-out would lose access to materials, practice, and feedback that their classmates receive, diminishing the guarantee that all students learn the same essential content.
- **Compliance uncertainty:** Individual Plans of Study and digitally administered state assessments are state requirements. Guidance for non-digital workarounds would need to be provided by the state, in addition to clarity specific to allowable exemptions. Districts would need time to design alternatives and receive assurances that new, non-digital workarounds would be approved by the state.
- **Decreased participation in advanced studies/college credit:** Students would likely be unable to enroll in Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, or college-credit coursework that relies upon digital learning platforms.
- **Increased cost to school districts:** Districts would face significant additional cost associated with purchasing, sourcing, printing and/or developing non-digital instructional materials and assessments. In many cases, equivalent non-digital resources do not currently exist and would need to be created. These expenses would place further strain on already limited district budgets, diverting resources away from other critical student needs.
- **Increased teacher workload and burden:** Teachers would be responsible for developing, maintaining and delivering two versions of lessons, instructional materials, assignments and assessments, while ensuring all students have equitable access to the same learning standards. This would significantly increase the time required for instructional planning, preparation, grading and individualized student support. It would also require them to simultaneously deliver digital and non-digital instruction within the same classroom. At a time when teachers are already navigating increasingly complex student needs, growing responsibilities and widespread concerns about educator burnout, adding another layer of instructional demands is neither practical nor sustainable. We respectfully request that the State Board carefully consider how these additional expectations could further contribute to challenges with educator burnout and negatively impact recruitment and retention.
- **Delayed student interventions and support:** Teachers will not have access to timely information on student progress, making it more difficult to identify students who need intervention or individualized support.

Prior to final approval of a *Policy Regarding the Effective Use of Instructional Technology In Kansas Schools*, school districts request direction that:

1. Preserves every student's access to the resources required to meet Kansas academic standards and state requirements;
2. Supports local control in setting clear expectations for how and when instructional technology is used;



3. Promotes transparency with Kansas families about the digital tools students use, why they are used, and how student data is secured and protected; and
4. Encourages professional learning so that technology use in classrooms is intentional, purposeful, age-appropriate, and tied to learning goals.

Dedicated educators and school officials welcome the opportunity to share best practices, and partner with elected officials to develop policy that best serves students, families, and schools, and ensures equitable outcomes for students.

Respectfully submitted by Blue Valley Unified School District 229; De Soto Unified School District 232; Gardner Edgerton Unified School District 231; Olathe Unified School District 233; Shawnee Mission School District 512