THE SETHI LEDGER
AI + K-12 Brief | 2026-09-24

1. Illinois creates AI Cabinet to develop state policy proposals through 2027

Illinois Gov. JB Pritzker signed an executive order creating an AI Cabinet of experts and state-agency representatives. The unpaid group is to develop policy proposals through 2027, including consideration of AI risks to education and information systems, state procurement safeguards, and potential requirements tied to data-center incentives or approvals.

Why it matters: District leaders should watch for state recommendations affecting public-sector AI procurement and education systems, while distinguishing this advisory process from binding rules. The order signals policy development, not a completed K-12 mandate.

Limits: The article is secondary reporting on an executive order; the Cabinet's recommendations have not yet been produced.

Published 2026-09-23. Source: https://blockclubchicago.org/2026/09/23/pritzker-establishes-ai-cabinet-amid-calls-for-greater-regulation/

2. Mesa board approves grade-based limits on instructional technology use

Mesa Public Schools' governing board unanimously approved a policy setting expectations for instructional technology use, with a related procedure specifying grade-based average and maximum daily limits. The procedure sets a 20-minute average and 30-minute maximum for K-2, with higher limits for older grades; assessments, specified coursework and IEP or 504 accommodations are excluded.

Why it matters: This is a consequential local approach to balancing device use with hands-on instruction, but the limits sit in a procedure rather than the voted policy, leaving more room for revision. Leaders considering similar caps should define exemptions clearly and solicit teacher and student input.

Limits: The story is distributed reporting from the East Valley Tribune; the board approved the policy, while the related procedure was reviewed but not voted on. Board members raised concerns about teacher discretion.

Published 2026-09-23. Source: https://www.govtech.com/education/k-12/mesa-public-schools-set-30-minute-screen-time-limit-for-early-grades

3. Rock Island-Milan plans public input before drafting cellphone and technology rules

Rock Island-Milan school district staff presented a four-month process to develop a wireless-device policy before Illinois restrictions take effect in the 2027-28 school year. The district plans virtual and in-person town halls from October through January, followed by advisory committee review of a draft addressing communication, enforcement, equity and implementation.

Why it matters: The district is treating policy development as a stakeholder and implementation problem, not only an enforcement question. Its attention to disability access and family communication may help leaders anticipate issues that a cellphone-only rule can miss.

Limits: The policy is not yet drafted or adopted; the article reports a proposed engagement timeline and discussion, not implementation outcomes.

Published 2026-09-23. Source: https://www.wvik.org/wvik-top-stories/2026-09-23/rock-island-milan-school-district-sets-timeline-for-town-halls-regarding-its-cellphone-and-technology-policy