THE SETHI LEDGER
AI + K-12 Brief | 2026-10-22

1. Riverhead adopts AI policy with privacy restrictions and human review

The Riverhead Board of Education approved an AI policy on Oct. 14, requiring teachers to set expectations for student use and employees to obtain supervisor approval. It bars entry of confidential district information into generative AI systems, requires staff to review outputs, and warns that AI-detection tools may be unreliable or biased against English learners.

Why it matters: The adopted policy pairs use rules with privacy safeguards and limits reliance on detection tools. District leaders can compare its provisions with local data-protection processes and ensure employees know how to obtain approval before using AI.

Limits: The article reports the policy's requirements but does not assess implementation or effects.

Published 2026-10-21. Source: https://riverheadlocal.com/2026/10/21/riverhead-schools-adopt-ai-policy-accept-clean-audit-at-oct-14-meeting/

2. Clover temporarily limits student access to most AI platforms

Clover School District began blocking publicly available AI platforms on district-issued devices on Oct. 21, while allowing SchoolAI under a temporary pause. The district said the move is intended to strengthen responsible-use expectations, protect student information and give schools time to develop consistent classroom guidance; it said the restrictions are not permanent.

Why it matters: The temporary measure is a district-level example of limiting access while governance work continues. Leaders considering a similar step should specify its duration, communicate the permitted tools and plan how access decisions will be revisited.

Limits: The district said its filters cannot guarantee that every AI resource will be blocked; the article does not give a policy end date.

Published 2026-10-21. Source: https://www.wsoctv.com/news/local/clover-school-district-pauses-student-use-most-ai-platforms/WPWD7D7PARHMTFTVMMYWR4JFMQ/

3. New York lawmaker proposes grade-based limits on school screens

New York Assemblywoman Sarahana Shrestha introduced the FOCUS Act, a proposal for grade-based limits on internet-enabled devices, screen-free alternatives where feasible and caregiver opt-in for one-to-one high-school devices. It would also restrict certain apps and require ed-tech companies to register and self-attest to privacy and other product criteria. The bill could first be discussed in the next legislative session beginning in January.

Why it matters: If advanced, the proposal could affect device procurement, classroom

practice and vendor eligibility across New York. District leaders should distinguish the bill's proposed requirements from current law and monitor its legislative progress before changing purchasing plans.

Limits: The legislation is proposed, not enacted; the article reports the sponsor's rationale and does not evaluate the bill's likely effects.

Published 2026-10-21. Source: https://www.post-journal.com/news/top-stories/2026/10/assemblywoman-proposes-tighter-limits-on-screens-in-schools/

4. Anne Arundel board begins review of required school AI-use policy

Published Oct. 21, 2026; the board held a first reading of a draft AI policy that evening. Maryland law requires local districts to adopt responsible-use policies, and Anne Arundel has scheduled a second reading for Dec. 2 and planned adoption for Dec. 16 while holding community meetings. Parents and teachers raised concerns about learning and critical thinking; some parents urged a moratorium.

Why it matters: This is a live example of translating state AI requirements into local rules amid disagreement over safeguards and instructional use. District leaders may want to make the policy process transparent and distinguish stakeholder concerns from established evidence about effects.

Limits: The policy remains under development; the article reports stakeholder concerns, not proof that AI use causes the harms they describe.

Published 2026-10-21. Source: https://www.cbsnews.com/baltimore/news/parents-teachers-raise-concerns-ai-use-anne-arundel-county-schools/

5. Bipartisan senators seek Google answers on AI tools used in schools

Updated Oct. 21, 2026; the senators' letter sets a Nov. 2 response deadline. Sens. Richard Blumenthal and Josh Hawley asked Google CEO Sundar Pichai about the company's understanding of potential effects of its AI products on children, school-device defaults and promotions. The article attributes the letter's concerns and cited investigation findings to The Wall Street Journal; Google's response, as quoted, points to educator involvement and product safeguards.

Why it matters: The inquiry raises questions for districts about vendor transparency, default settings and evidence supporting student-facing AI deployment. It is a request for information, not a finding that Google's products caused harm.

Limits: The article relies substantially on reporting and claims attributed to The Wall Street Journal and other sources; the senators' assertions are not independently established findings.

Published 2026-10-21. Source: https://qz.com/bipartisan-senators-google-ai-schools-letter-102126

6. Report finds state AI policy remains sparse, with Maryland the only state requiring tool vetting

Published Oct. 21, 2026; The 74 reports on CRPE's annual State of the American Student report. The report says only Maryland requires AI tools to be vetted for academic outcomes, while state guidance and policies vary. It also finds that only one in ten students attends a district back at pre-pandemic reading and math achievement levels, according to its analysis.

Why it matters: The AI finding points to a governance gap for districts developing procurement and instructional safeguards without consistent state requirements. It is a report-based assessment, not a complete inventory of local district policies or proof that a particular vetting approach improves outcomes.

Limits: The broader achievement and policy findings are CRPE's analysis as reported by The 74; the article does not detail the report's full methodology in the supplied text.

Published 2026-10-21. Source: https://www.the74million.org/article/only-1-in-10-students-attends-a-district-that-has-bounced-back-from-the-pandemic/