1. Education Department demands revisions to Illinois school mental-health screening guidance

Publication date: October 30, 2026. Event date: the Education Department says it issued its demand on October 30; Illinois must submit revised guidance by November 13. The department says the current guidance's opt-out approach and optional inclusion of screening results in official records could raise PPRA and FERPA concerns; the screenings are scheduled to begin in the 2027-28 school year.

Why it matters: Districts should track the state's revisions and review consent, notification and record-access procedures before screenings begin. The federal notice is a demand for revisions, not a finding that a particular district violated the laws.

Limits: The department states that the guidance could violate federal law; its demand does not establish that violations have occurred.

Published 2026-10-30. Source: https://www.ed.gov/about/news/press-release/us-department-of-education-demands-revisions-illinois-guidance-conducting-mental-health-screenings-without-parental-consent

2. North Carolina district approves state-funded AI platform for grades 6-12

Publication date: October 30, 2026. Event date: the board record identifies a September 14, 2026 meeting. Edgecombe County Public Schools approved MagicSchool for grades 6-12 for July 2026 through June 2027 at a stated cost of $24,577, fully paid by the state; the source says staff described teacher-managed student tools but does not describe separate student-use rules.

Why it matters: This is a concrete example of a district adopting a student-facing AI platform with state funding. Before deployment, leaders should verify the approved use conditions, privacy protections and oversight arrangements rather than infer them from the platform's tool count.

Limits: The article is based on an official meeting recording whose auto-captions may garble details; it says the recording does not describe separate AI-use rules for students.

Published 2026-10-30. Source: https://ourschoolboard.org/district/edgecombe-county-public-schools-nc/news/ecps-2026-09-magicschool-ai

3. Minnesota district details adopted AI policy with vendor review and age-based rules

Publication date: November 1, 2026. Event dates: the district says its board adopted Policy 625 in August and administrators explained it at an October 8 workshop. The policy permits but does not require AI use, calls for vendor approval and privacy review, bars entering personally identifiable information into AI tools, and sets different expectations by grade

band.

Why it matters: The district's approach links classroom rules with procurement review, staff guidance and family training, giving leaders several implementation levers to coordinate. The policy's value will depend on whether approvals, safeguards and age-based expectations are consistently applied.

Limits: This is local reporting on the district's presentation; it does not independently assess policy implementation or effectiveness.

Published 2026-11-01. Source: https://www.cottagegrovejournal.news/stories/district-outlines-policy-for-responsible-ai-use,211581

4. Survey finds nearly one-third of school and district leaders do not use AI for operations

Publication date: October 30, 2026. Survey field dates: August 26 through October 6, 2026. In a nationally representative survey of 852 educators, including 262 district and school leaders, nearly one-third of respondents said they did not use generative AI for school or district operations; reported uses among adopters included communications, translation, strategic planning, employee evaluation and scheduling.

Why it matters: The findings suggest operational AI adoption is uneven, so district leaders should evaluate specific use cases and workforce readiness rather than assume broad uptake. The survey describes reported use, not whether those applications improve efficiency or outcomes.

Limits: The results are self-reported survey findings and do not establish effectiveness or causation.

Published 2026-10-30. Source: https://www.edweek.org/technology/nearly-1-in-3-district-and-school-leaders-skip-ai-for-operations-heres-what-the-rest-do/2026/10