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Policy Regarding the Effective Use of Instructional Technology in Kansas Schools

I. Purpose and Rationale

The Kansas State Board of Education recognizes the role instructional technology plays in modern education and acknowledges the benefits instructional technology may provide to students and educators, including expanded access to information and resources, opportunities for digitally interactive and personalized learning, and preparation for participation in an increasingly technology-driven society and workforce.

At the same time, the Kansas State Board of Education recognizes the importance of ensuring that technology is utilized in a manner that supports and does not harm the academic, social, emotional, and physical well-being of students. Research has demonstrated that prolonged or inappropriate use of digital devices can present challenges related to student engagement, attention, social interaction, and the overall health and well-being of children. Therefore, the board emphasizes the importance of the appropriate use of instructional technology within educational settings.

Schools should engage with families and caregivers in the development of their policy and plan regarding instructional technology and provide clear, complete, and beneficial information regarding their school's use of digital devices.

The Kansas State Board of Education believes technology should only be utilized to enhance teaching and in support of effective instructional practices and meaningful human interaction.

Instructional strategies, including those that incorporate instructional technology, that are adopted or utilized to support student learning should be aligned to the curriculum and state content standards, support the intended learning objective, and demonstrate effectiveness. For instructional technology, effectiveness should be demonstrated through ESSA Tier I or Tier II evidence (as defined in the Every Student Succeeds

Act), an outcomes-based contract, ongoing evaluation through an Institutional Review Board (IRB)-approved study, or other research-based evidence. For instructional technology with evidence-based implementation conditions (e.g., frequency, duration, or intensity of use), educators should implement the technology with fidelity to those conditions. Districts should have a known and efficient process to both select and communicate the types of instructional technology that have been approved for use at school.

All instructional technology should add value that a non-digital approach cannot, otherwise the board recommends the use of a non-digital method. Public school districts and accredited nonpublic schools are encouraged to maintain a human-centered educational experience that incorporates instructional technology when it can meaningfully support student learning. The board encourages public school districts and accredited nonpublic schools to enact learning opportunities rooted in hands-on learning, physical activity, creative problem solving, and interpersonal relationships.

This policy is intended to apply to schools' general use of instructional technology within educational settings and is not intended to limit the use of technology necessary to meet individual student needs or legal requirements. Students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP), Section 504 plan, or other individualized needs may require different or increased use of technology to access instruction, communicate, receive accommodations or services, or address sensory, behavioral, medical, or other needs. Instructional technology use may also differ from these expectations when necessary to support English learners, administer assessments, screeners, diagnostic or progress-monitoring tools, or meet other educational or medical needs. When an individual student's documented needs, accommodations, services, or other applicable legal requirements differ from these expectations, those needs and requirements shall take precedence. A public school or accredited nonpublic school's policy and plan should address exceptions for students to comply with state and federal law and for students' use of technology for medical or translational purposes, assessments, screeners, diagnostic, or progress-monitoring tools.

Within this framework, the Kansas State Board of Education is committed to supporting public school districts and accredited nonpublic schools in the development of policies and plans that promote the education, health, safety, and well-being of students when incorporating the use of instructional technology. A cautious and intentional approach to technology use for instruction, combined with meaningful engagement of parents, educators, students, and community stakeholders, can help ensure that the use of instructional technology enhances the educational experience and contributes to positive student outcomes while promoting the developmental, social, emotional, and physical well-being of students.

II. Definitions

As used in this policy,

(1) "AI chatbot, assistant, or companion" means a software-driven, interactive conversational tool that uses artificial intelligence to simulate human dialogue, answer questions, or provide personalized academic support.

(2) "Artificial intelligence" or "AI" means a machine-based system that can, for a given set of human-defined objectives, make predictions, recommendations, or decisions influencing real or virtual environments.

(3) "CIPA" means the *Children's Internet Protection Act*, 114 Stat. 2763A-335, a U.S. federal law passed in 2000 that requires schools and libraries to block harmful online content.

(4) "COPPA" means the *Children's Online Privacy Protection Act*, 47 U.S.C. 231, a U.S. federal law passed in 1998 that controls how online services and apps collect data from children under the age of 13.

(5) "Digital citizenship" means the ability to safely, responsibly, and ethically use communication technologies and digital information technology tools and platforms to access, evaluate, interpret, create, and share media content using principles of social and civic responsibility, including an understanding of legal and ethical issues; demonstrate appropriate online behavior and etiquette; maintain digital security, privacy, and internet safety; prevent and respond appropriately to cyberbullying; participate in the political, economic, social, and cultural aspects of life related to technology, communications, and the digital world; understand how technology use and design, including persuasive design and algorithms, affect attention, learning, emotional

well-being, and relationships; recognize manipulative or unsafe digital interactions; and know how and where to seek help when harm occurs.

(6) "FERPA" means the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, authorized by 20 U.S.C. 1232g and implemented by 34 CFR Part 99, a U.S. federal law passed in 1974 that protects the privacy of student education records.

(7) "Generative AI" means the use of advanced technologies such as predictive algorithms, machine learning, and large language models to process natural language and produce synthetic content in the form of text, images, or other types of media.

(8) "Grade band" means the grouping of multiple, consecutive grade levels.

(9) "Instructional technology" means technology that is used to support the implementation of academically rigorous curriculum.

(10) "Plan" means a document that translates the expectations established through policy into a coherent approach for practice and implementation of educational technology in the district.

(11) "Policy" means a formal written statement that establishes the expectations, commitments, responsibilities, and requirements regarding the use of educational technology in the district.

(12) "PPRA" means the *Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment*, 20 U.S.C. 1232h, a U.S. federal law passed in 1974 that gives parents and guardians certain rights regarding student surveys, physical exams, and the collection of personal data for marketing.

(13) "School Community Stakeholder" means anyone invested in the welfare and success of a school and its students, including administrators, teachers, staff members, students, parents, families, community members, local business leaders, and elected officials such as school board members, city councilors, and state representatives.

(14) "School-issued device" means any school-owned electronic device provided to students for instructional purposes that can access, process, store, or transmit data, including laptops, tablets, chromebooks, or any similar device that has internet capability.

III. Requirements

A. Instructional Technology Use Policy.

Each public school district and accredited nonpublic school within the state of Kansas shall adopt and implement a policy governing the safe and purposeful use of instructional technology in elementary and secondary education settings. The policy shall be developed in consultation with

families, caregivers, and other relevant school community stakeholders, approved by the local board of education, and reviewed annually.

B. **Instructional Technology Use Plan.**
Each public school district and accredited nonpublic school within the state of Kansas shall adopt and implement a plan for enacting their policy governing the safe and purposeful use of instructional technology in elementary and secondary education settings. The plan shall be developed in consultation with families, caregivers, and other relevant school community stakeholders, approved by the local board of education, and reviewed annually.

At a minimum, the instructional technology-use plan of every district or school shall address:

1. **Purpose and Rationale.** A statement describing the purpose and rationale supporting the intended uses of instructional technology by students and teachers to support learning in elementary and secondary education settings.

2. **Student technology access and use.** The technology-use plan shall establish clear expectations in plain language for student access to school-issued devices and the use of instructional technology by grade level or grade band. At a minimum, the plan shall identify:

    a. **Technology access and availability.** The types of instructional technology and school-issued devices made available to students within each grade level or grade band, including whether technology is implemented through full-class instruction, shared or rotating devices, individually assigned devices, or another model;

    b. **Expectations for student use.** The purposes and expectations for student use of school-issued devices within each grade level or grade band, including the types of activities for which instructional technology is intended to be used and any grade-level or developmental considerations governing its use; and

c. **Take-home access.** Whether school-issued devices may be taken home by students within each grade level or grade band and, if so, the conditions governing take-home use, including any applicable responsibilities of students and parents or guardians and the resources available for students and parents or guardians in need of technical support.

3. **Digital citizenship and student well-being.** Methods for developing students' digital citizenship skills by grade level or grade band while promoting online and personal safety and supporting the physical, mental, and social well-being of students with corresponding education and support for educators and families, such as providing access to digital citizenship education courses from unbiased resources, sharing peer reviewed research, hosting discussions on mental health issues related to excessive technology usage, or the development of a district website that educators and families can access for additional information.

4. **Artificial intelligence.** The manner in which artificial intelligence technologies, such as generative AI and AI chatbots, assistants, or companions, are accessed and appropriately incorporated into teaching and learning, including:

    a. **Expectations for educator use.** The prohibited, limited, or permitted use of artificial intelligence technologies by educators for instructional purposes, including lesson planning, differentiation, individualized student support, content creation, assessment, grading, feedback, or other instructional-based uses; and

    b. **Expectations for student use.** The prohibited, limited, or permitted use of student-facing artificial intelligence technologies, including generative AI and AI chatbots, assistants, or companions, by student grade level or grade band.

5. **Privacy and security.** Assurance that physical security and cybersecurity measures are in place and enforced to protect student data, privacy, and other personally identifiable information from unauthorized access, use, alteration, or disclosure, ensuring compliance with all applicable state and federal laws including, but not limited to, the Kansas Student Data Privacy Act, FERPA, PPRA, COPPA, and CIPA.

6. **Technology-use expectations and violations.** Procedures for communicating expectations for the appropriate use of technology and for submitting, reviewing, and responding to alleged violations of those expectations.

C. **Public accessibility and submission.** Each public school district and accredited nonpublic school shall make its adopted technology-use policy and plan readily accessible to the public on their district or school website and shall submit the adopted plan to the Kansas State Department of Education no later than July 1st, 2027.

D. **Parental Acknowledgment.** No later than the 2028 – 2029 school year, prior to a student receiving access to a school-issued device, the district shall provide the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) access to the district's technology-use plan and obtain acknowledgment from a parent or guardian. Each public school district and accredited nonpublic school shall establish procedures to engage parents who have concerns and for maintaining documentation of acknowledgment.

E. **Communication of revisions.** Any substantive revisions of the technology-use policy or plan must be communicated to parents or guardians, students, and staff, with the revised plan submitted to KSDE.

IV. Sunset Provision

This policy shall remain in effect until July 1, 2030. Effective July 1, 2030, this policy shall automatically expire and be deemed repealed unless reauthorized, amended, or extended by the Kansas State Board of Education prior to that date.