

AI Guidance Quick Hits

Talking points from the Illinois State Board of Education's statewide *Artificial Intelligence Guidance* (July 2026), developed under Public Act 104-0399. This handout is a summary; the full guidance is at isbe.net/aiguance.

PART 1 The 4 Foundational Tenets

Every AI decision, policy, or tool purchase should be anchored in these four guiding principles:

1

Human Relationships at the Center

Teaching and learning are fundamentally driven by human connection. AI must support, never supplant, the indispensable student-teacher centerpiece.

2

Concurrency of Schooling's Purposes

Schools concurrently serve **academic, developmental, and civic** purposes. AI adoption must be evaluated by how it affects student identity, agency, and preparation for shared civic life, not just assignment completion.

3

AI as a Means, Not an End

Technology is strictly a provisional tool for planning, brainstorming, and scaffolding, never a replacement for educator professional judgment or student deep thinking.

4

Locally Determined "Informed Use"

Moves beyond generic "responsible use" compliance. Districts must deliberately evaluate whether an AI tool is **educationally warranted, developmentally appropriate, and right for their local community**.

1 Deploy a Three-Tiered Policy Structure

Avoid relying on a single catch-all policy; establish three coordinated policy instruments:

- **District-Wide Board Policy (Governance):** Establishes oversight, risk boundaries, procurement rules, and review cadences.
- **Acceptable Use Policy (AUP Addendum, Access):** Sets technical rules, approved platforms, and strict prohibitions on entering student Personally Identifiable Information (PII).
- **Informed Use Policy (IUP/RUP, Norms):** Outlines day-to-day behavioral expectations, honest disclosure of AI use, "trust-but-verify" habits, and preserving true student authorship.

2 Implement a 3-Step "Goodness-of-Fit" Vetting Process

Before purchasing or rolling out tools, run applications through three evaluation gates:

- **Classify Risk Tier (Tiers 0 to 3):** Scrutiny increases based on data sensitivity and impact, from Tier 0 (optional staff tool, no student data) to Tier 3 (high-stakes or safety-sensitive).
- **Minimum Evidence Checklist:** Require proof across five domains: educational value, privacy and contract readiness, safety, transparency, and equity/bias.
- **Documented Decision:** Formally **Adopt, Pilot, or Decline** with clear stop/scale triggers.

3 Legal & Data Privacy Alignment

- **SOPPA & Privacy Compliance:** Free and vendor tools must comply with Illinois SOPPA, FERPA, and ISSRA requirements, requiring executed Data Privacy Agreements (DPAs) before handling student data.
- **Strict No-PII Rule:** Staff and students should never input names, IDs, health/disability information, or sensitive personal stories into unapproved or public AI models.

4 Start Small via "Innovation Zones"

- **Bounded Pilots:** Test new tools in controlled "Innovation Zones" or small pilot cohorts with clear 4-to-6-week review cadences and explicit "exit ramps" before scaling district-wide.

Read the full ISBE Artificial Intelligence Guidance

These quick hits summarize a much larger document. For the complete framework, role-specific guidance, and ISBE's Quick Start FAQ, start at isbe.net/aiguideance.