

A Two-Part Request on Generative AI on School-Issued Devices

A thoughtful pause while the evidence is reviewed, and an ongoing opt-out for our students.

To the leadership of Concord Public Schools and members of the Concord School Committee:

As Concord parents, caregivers, educators, and community members, we are writing with a request. We believe in effective, well-vetted tools that meaningfully support learning, and we want to be a supportive partner as the district navigates a fast-moving technology landscape. In that spirit, we respectfully bring forward two related requests regarding student-facing generative AI on school-issued devices. Our timing follows a concrete development: starting August 10, 2026, Google has begun expanding Gemini in Google Classroom to students of all ages by default, wherever Gemini access has already been granted, such as on devices like those issued to Concord Middle School students. Generative AI is moving into classrooms faster, not slower, which is exactly why we are asking the district to pause now.

For clarity: this request concerns **generative AI**, tools such as chatbots and content generators (for example, Google Gemini, ChatGPT, and Microsoft Copilot) that use large language models to produce new text, images, or other content in response to open-ended prompts. Specifically:

- **Includes:** student-facing generative AI tools and features on school-issued devices.
- **Does not include:** AI functions already embedded in established, well-vetted EdTech tools, such as adaptive spell-check, text-to-speech, or accessibility supports, which serve a defined, limited purpose within platforms already in use.
- **Does not include:** any use necessary to fulfill legally mandated accommodations, including use in accordance with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or a 504 education plan; use necessary under accommodations required by state or federal law, including but not limited to Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act; or use a healthcare provider has put in writing as necessary to treat a student's health condition.
- **Teacher- and staff-only tools:** not affected by this request, unless used to process student data such as grades, behavior records, or health information, where the same privacy concerns apply.

Our aim is to give the district time and a clear path to weigh the risks and benefits with care, and to honor the family-engagement principles the Commonwealth itself has articulated. The Massachusetts [Guidance for Artificial Intelligence in K-12 Education](#) states plainly that **families deserve to know when AI is involved in learning**, and that **schools should inform parents when AI tools are used in classrooms**. The two requests below put those principles into practice.

WHAT WE ARE ASKING

1. A temporary pause, and a Technology Advisory Committee to lead the review

We respectfully request that the district pause new contracts for student-facing generative AI products and curricula, and pause current student-facing generative AI use, while a Technology Advisory Committee is formed to weigh the existing research, develop clear and workable safeguards, and bring recommendations to the School Committee and school administrators within 9 to 12 months. This pause is intentionally bounded to the Committee's timeline, not open-ended. In our spring 2026 community survey of 71 Concord Public Schools and CCHS families, caregivers, and educators, 82% said such a committee would be "extremely valuable." As an immediate step, **we specifically request the removal of Google Gemini**, which is currently installed on all Concord Middle School-issued devices, while this review is underway. This is a request for **intentional sequencing**, not a rejection of technology, and it mirrors the cautious, evidence-first posture that a growing number of researchers, clinicians, and school systems now recommend.

2. An ongoing opt-out from generative AI on school-issued devices

As any student-facing AI use resumes after the committee's review, we ask that Concord Public Schools maintain a simple, well-publicized, and ongoing way for every family to opt their student out of generative AI tools on school-issued devices, with no penalty to the student and a comparable, AI-free path to complete their work. This honors the transparency and family-engagement commitments already named in the state guidance, and respects that families are in different places on these tools. It also supports our teachers: when generative AI can do the thinking for students, it can draw real learning out of the classroom, and **a clear opt-out helps protect the learning our educators are working hard to build**, with the support to honor it smoothly.

Why we are asking now

The research on generative AI in classrooms is young, and what exists gives us reason to move deliberately rather than quickly. A few of the findings that guide our thinking:

- After a yearlong global study it called a *premortem*, the [Brookings Institution](#) concluded that, at this point in the technology’s trajectory, the risks of using generative AI in children’s education overshadow its benefits. The authors stress this is not permanent, and that thoughtful choices now can bend the path toward learning rather than away from it.
- The [National Education Policy Center](#), in a brief titled *Time for a Pause*, urges school leaders to hold off on adopting AI applications until policymakers have had adequate time to develop oversight and policy.
- [Common Sense Media](#) rated Google Gemini’s products for children and teens as *high risk*, finding that filters added to an adult product still expose young users to inappropriate content and unreliable mental-health responses, and can miss signs of distress.
- In April 2026, a coalition of more than 250 experts and organizations, including medical professionals and led by the Boston-based nonprofit [Fairplay](#), called for a five-year pause on student-facing generative AI in pre-K through grade 12 schools, to allow time for independent audits, vetting, and safeguards that do not yet exist.
- The evidence for learning gains remains thin and contested. [RAND’s](#) work on AI in K-12 finds that whether these tools improve learning is not yet clear, and that any effect is likely modest and weakest for higher-order skills like critical thinking. Meanwhile, one of the most widely cited studies claiming a large positive effect on learning was [retracted](#) by its publisher in April 2026 over discrepancies in its analysis.
- Beyond learning, a growing body of research raises concerns that reliance on these tools may be associated with reduced effort in [cognition](#), [critical thinking](#), [memory](#), [motivation](#), [persistence](#), and [original work](#), and can make [academic dishonesty](#) easier. Real questions also remain about [student data privacy](#), [racial bias](#), [misogyny](#), [child sexual abuse](#), [environmental cost](#), and [copyright](#).

There is a growing scientific consensus that **AI use undermines the learning process, as well as the human relationship between teachers and students**. It promotes cheating, and can diminish students' cognition, critical thinking, memory, motivation, persistence, and creativity—perhaps irreversibly. Its use can cause [depression](#), [psychosis](#), and even lead to [suicide](#). This is a public health crisis. Nearly every day, a new study is published with dire warnings for the long-term effects of AI use on children's brains.

A fast-moving national picture

This is not only a local conversation. Student use of these tools has moved quickly, and so have questions about academic integrity:

54% of U.S. teens use AI chatbots to help with schoolwork	59% of teens say AI cheating is a regular occurrence at their school	64% of teens have used an AI chatbot
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Pew Research Center, [How Teens Use and View AI](#), February 2026. Nationally representative survey of 1,458 U.S. teens ages 13 to 17, conducted fall 2025.

In a March 2026 national [Fathom survey](#), ninety percent of Americans said it is important that AI products for children be verified as safe before they are used. An opt-out and a review period are reasonable, measured ways to meet that expectation here in Concord.

An opportunity to be proactive, not reactive

Massachusetts is already moving thoughtfully on children and technology. The Legislature has advanced bell-to-bell, phone-free school policies, with strong support from the Governor and the Attorney General,¹ and the state’s own [DESE guidance](#) asks districts to vet tools carefully, protect student data, mitigate bias, and keep families informed and engaged. Concord can put those same principles into practice here at home: a careful, evidence-first review now, and an ongoing family opt-out as student-facing AI resumes.

Concord would also be in good company. In June 2026, [Schools Beyond Screens](#), the parent and teacher group that led the effort to limit screen time in the Los Angeles Unified School District, launched a petition calling for a moratorium on student-facing AI in those schools. It follows the aforementioned open letter in which a [Fairplay](#)-led

coalition of more than 250 organizations and experts in child development, mental health, education, and data privacy called for a five-year pause on generative AI in pre-K through grade 12 schools. **What we are asking of Concord is a measured version of a request that families and experts across the country are already making.**

About the Technology Advisory Committee

We envision the Technology Advisory Committee as a supportive partner to the district, not a second layer of bureaucracy. Technology decisions in our schools grow more complex each year, while written policies, vetting procedures, and oversight have not always kept pace. A one-year committee would give that work a dedicated home: streamlining decisions, sharing expertise, helping protect the district from unintended gaps in oversight, and **keeping technology choices aligned with our educational values and the well-being of students**. Its work would not presume that technology should be rejected or expanded. It would begin from a simple principle: the technology we use should be intentional, evidence-based, and transparent, with student health, safety, privacy, and learning at the center.

Drawing on the district's forthcoming technology report, peer districts' practices, current research, and the voices of educators, students, and families, the committee would bring recommendations to the School Committee and school administrators in five areas:

- A district technology **resolution** establishing the district's guiding commitments on student screen time and the intentional use of technology.
- School-level EdTech and AI **policies**, written and grade-appropriate, governing how digital tools and AI are selected, used, and reviewed.
- Clear decision-making **procedures** for how, by whom, and when technology decisions are made at the district, school, and classroom levels.
- Ongoing **reporting** practices, including what is measured and documented going forward and how families are kept informed.
- The district's longer-term **oversight** needs, including whether a standing body, dedicated staffing, or ongoing budgeting should follow this committee.

Membership would represent a wide range of stakeholders: School Committee members, administrators, teachers, students, parents, and expert advisors in areas such as child development, data privacy, education research, mental health, and law. The committee would be advisory; final decisions would remain with school administrators and leaders.

We make these requests as partners, not adversaries. We share the same goal our schools do: students who can focus, think for themselves, and thrive. This is not about blame or haste. It is about getting the sequence right, together. The concrete next step we are asking for is straightforward: pause student-facing generative AI now, and support the formation and work of the Technology Advisory Committee to lead this review. We are profoundly grateful for the work our educators and administrators do every day, and we look forward to building this alongside you.

With respect and appreciation,

The Intentional Tech Coalition and the undersigned Concord Public Schools families

SOURCES

1. Massachusetts [Senate Bill S.2561](#) and the related [House bill](#) on phone-free schools and youth online safety.

Prepared by The Intentional Tech Coalition, a volunteer coalition of Concord families, caregivers, and educators. Figures cited are findings as reported by their sources, not causal claims. Contact: emily@intentionaltechcoalition.org