



PALOS HEIGHTS
SCHOOL DISTRICT 128

Artificial Intelligence Guidance

Preparing Students for Their Tomorrow

Leading with Purpose in an Ever-Changing World.



THE PALOS FRAMEWORK FOR AI USE



PURPOSEFUL

Intentional and meaningful use that supports learning and human connection.



ALIGNED

Connected to learning, priorities, policies, and our Portrait of a Learner.



LEARNER-CENTERED

Designed to empower every learner.



OPEN & TRANSPARENT

Communicate clearly about when, why, and how AI is used.



SAFE & SECURE

Protect privacy, ensure well-being, and uphold ethical use.

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Purpose and Scope

The District 128 Artificial Intelligence Guidance Framework aims to provide staff, students, and families with clear guidance on the responsible, ethical, and human-centered use of artificial intelligence in teaching, learning, communication, and operational practices.

Please note that this document serves as administrative guidance and does not replace existing Board policies, administrative procedures, student handbooks, employee handbooks, technology agreements, or applicable state and federal laws. Expectations for students regarding the responsible use of artificial intelligence are further outlined in the District 128 Student-Parent Handbook and applicable technology agreements. As artificial intelligence technologies evolve, District 128 may periodically update this guidance to incorporate new best practices, legal requirements, and educational opportunities.

Superintendent Message

Artificial intelligence is rapidly reshaping our world, influencing how we learn, communicate, create, and work. At Palos Heights School District 128, we believe our responsibility is not simply to react to these changes but to thoughtfully prepare our students for their tomorrow.

As educators, we know that technology alone does not define the future. Human connection, curiosity, creativity, empathy, and critical thinking remain essential. AI should never replace these qualities; it should help amplify them.

Throughout the 2025–2026 school year, a group of District 128 teachers and administrators participated in an AI Think Tank to explore how artificial intelligence can support teaching, learning, communication, and operational efficiency while remaining aligned with our district values and Portrait of a Learner competencies.

This guidance reflects our commitment to approaching AI with purpose, transparency, safety, and innovation. We believe AI can serve as a teammate that supports learning while ensuring people always remain at the center of decision-making.

Together, we will continue to prepare students to thrive in an ever-changing world while remaining grounded in the human relationships and experiences that make learning truly meaningful.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JS', with a stylized, cursive font.

Jason Smit, Ed.D.

Superintendent

Palos Heights School District 128

Preparing Students for Their Tomorrow

Artificial intelligence is rapidly reshaping how we learn, communicate, work, and solve problems. At Palos Heights School District 128, we believe our responsibility is to embrace these changes and thoughtfully prepare students and staff to navigate them with confidence, integrity, empathy, and purpose.

Our approach to AI is grounded in the values and competencies outlined in our Portrait of a Learner. This vision reflects our community's hopes and aspirations for all students who demonstrate Perseverance, Innovation, Communication, Wellness, and Citizenship in an ever-changing world.

We view AI as a teammate, a tool that can support creativity, efficiency, personalization, and learning, but it should never replace human thinking, relationships, empathy, or judgment. Students and educators remain at the center of the learning process. While AI may assist us, people will always ask meaningful questions, make important decisions, and determine what matters most.

In District 128, we believe the most meaningful learning experiences are rooted in human connection, collaboration, curiosity, creativity, and communication. While AI can enhance learning, it cannot replace the relationships among students, teachers, peers, and families that are essential for growth, belonging, and well-being.

Our approach reflects many of the same principles found in design thinking: listening deeply, understanding multiple perspectives, solving authentic problems, collaborating with others, and creating solutions that enhance people's experiences. AI should strengthen these human-centered experiences, not diminish them.

We also recognize the important difference between active and passive uses of technology. District 128 will prioritize AI experiences that are:

- interactive and creative,
- collaborative and discussion-based,
- focused on critical thinking and problem-solving,
- supportive of student voice and reflection,
- connected to authentic learning experiences.

District 128 does not consider all screen time equal. We prioritize technology experiences that foster creation, collaboration, communication, problem-solving, and human interaction over passive consumption and disengaged use. The quality, purpose, and impact of technology use matter more than the amount of time spent on a device.

District 128 evaluates artificial intelligence through the lens of learning rather than technology. The value of AI is not determined by its novelty but by its ability to support deeper thinking, creativity, communication, problem-solving, and student growth.

Rather than promoting passive consumption or more screen time, our goal is to use AI intentionally to deepen engagement, strengthen relationships, and support student wellness. AI should expand opportunities for meaningful human interaction, not diminish them. As a district, we believe in creation over consumption.

Preparing Students for Their Tomorrow

AI-Era Skill	Portrait of a Learner Connection
Asking thoughtful questions and refining prompts	Innovation
Evaluating accuracy and identifying errors	Perseverance
Seeking feedback and improving work	Communication
Using AI ethically and responsibly	Citizenship
Protecting privacy and digital well-being	Wellness
Making informed decisions about AI-generated information	Citizenship
Collaborating, discussing, and critiquing ideas	Communication
Creating original ideas and solutions with AI support	Innovation

Artificial intelligence is reshaping the skills students need for success in college, careers, and life. Although technology is constantly evolving, the competencies outlined in District 128's Portrait of a Learner remain vital. Students who think critically, communicate effectively, persevere through challenges, act responsibly, and maintain personal well-being will be best equipped to use AI as a tool for learning, creativity, and problem-solving.

Research Connection

Educational researchers John Hattie and Janet Clinton emphasize that artificial intelligence is most effective when it supports learning, rather than replacing human judgment, relationships, and critical thinking. District 128 agrees and sees AI as a partner that can enhance learning while keeping students and educators at the center of education.

The **PALOS** Framework for AI Use

As artificial intelligence continues to advance, District 128 recognizes the importance of a clear, intentional approach to its implementation. Our focus is on supporting student well-being and fostering human-centered learning.

To guide responsible decision-making, District 128 has developed the PALOS Framework for AI Use. This framework aligns with district values, our Strategic Plan, Portrait of a Learner competencies, and our commitment to preparing students for their tomorrow.

The **PALOS Framework** is designed to:

- support thoughtful and deliberate implementation,
- encourage ethical and responsible use,
- provide consistency across the district,
- and ensure AI enhances learning while preserving meaningful human connections.

The framework ensures that AI is used as a tool to enhance—never replace—the critical thinking, creativity, and human relationships essential for student growth.

P - PURPOSEFUL

Use AI intentionally and meaningfully to support learning and foster human connection.

- **Guidance:** We prioritize interactive, creative, and collaborative experiences over passive screen time. AI serves as a teammate in the learning process, but it must never replace human thinking, empathy, or judgment.

A - ALIGNED

Ensure all AI use is connected to learning goals, district priorities, policies, and our Portrait of a Learner.

- **Guidance:** AI implementations must integrate with district curriculum, Board policies, academic integrity standards, and the Portrait of a Learner competencies: Perseverance, Innovation, Communication, Wellness, and Citizenship.

L – LEARNER-CENTERED

Empower every learner through AI use.

- **Guidance:** AI tools should promote critical thinking, effective communication, and student ownership of ideas. Technology must support authentic student growth and the "productive struggle" essential to real learning. Artificial intelligence should strengthen student agency, reflection, and self-directed learning. Students should remain active participants in the learning process rather than passive recipients of information.

O – OPEN & TRANSPARENT

Clearly communicate when, why, and how AI is used.

- **Guidance:** Trust depends on transparency. Students, staff, and families should always know when AI is in use, its purpose, and how it supports instructional or educational goals.

S – SAFE & SECURE

Protect privacy, ensure student well-being, and uphold ethical standards.

- **Guidance:** We are committed to uncompromising student data privacy. All approved AI tools are thoroughly vetted to meet SOPPA, FERPA, and COPPA requirements.
 - **Data Privacy Boundary:** Never enter a student's Personally Identifiable Information (PII) or confidential educational records into exploratory or unapproved AI systems.

The **PALOS Framework** establishes clear guidelines for the responsible use of AI throughout District 128. As technology advances, these guidelines will help ensure that decisions prioritize student growth, strengthen human relationships, encourage ethical leadership, and enrich meaningful learning experiences.

The District 128 AI Stoplight Guidance Framework

To encourage thoughtful, age-appropriate, and responsible use of artificial intelligence, District 128 has created an AI Stoplight Guidance Framework. This framework helps educators make informed instructional decisions, use AI effectively in the classroom, and enrich student experiences.




The Stoplight Framework aims to:

- Provide clear guidance for staff and students.
- Support educators’ professional judgment.
- Encourage a balanced and human-centered approach to technology.
- Promote transparency in AI use.
- Ensure that AI applications align with district values, instructional goals, and student well-being.

District 128 recognizes that not all AI applications have the same instructional value, developmental suitability, or privacy implications. The Stoplight Framework guides educators in evaluating AI use in three categories:

- when it is encouraged,
- when it is appropriate with guidance,
- when it is not suitable for instructional use.

This framework is a practical tool to support thoughtful decision-making and is intended to complement professional judgment, not replace it. It acknowledges that learning experiences, student needs, and instructional contexts vary widely across the district.

Status	Guidance Level	Description
	GREEN LIGHT: AI ENHANCES LEARNING	Encouraged to amplify creativity, accessibility, and active design.
	YELLOW LIGHT: AI REQUIRES GUIDANCE & OVERSIGHT	Appropriate only under teacher direction with human review.
	RED LIGHT: AI Use Is Prohibited	Strictly prohibited. Bypasses thinking or violates student privacy.

GREEN LIGHT: AI Enhances Learning

Students are encouraged to use approved Canva AI features independently in their digital workspaces to express ideas, design graphics, and create engaging multimedia projects.

Core Expectation: Canva AI should serve as an assistive design partner, helping students visually communicate their original ideas. Its use must always be purposeful, safe, and aligned with each student's classroom goals.

Approved Student Canva AI Activities:

- **Visual Graphic Design & Elements:** Selecting and applying AI-recommended design layouts, color palettes, and fonts that best match the mood and purpose of their project.
- **Magic Eraser & Background Remover:** Using basic AI photo-editing tools to clean up, isolate, or adjust the background of images they have collected or photographed for a project.
- **Enhancing Accessibility:** Using AI-generated captions for video projects or applying text-to-speech features to make presentations more interactive and accessible.
- **Template Customization:** Allowing Canva AI to suggest slide arrangements or content layouts based on the raw text and research the student has already manually added to a presentation.

Student Accountability Rule: Although students are encouraged to use Canva AI independently, all Green Light activities must occur within the district-managed Canva for Education environment and under the general supervision of the classroom teacher.

YELLOW LIGHT: AI Requires Guidance & Human Oversight

Students may use certain Canva AI tools only when the teacher gives explicit directions, when clear project guidelines are provided, and with direct supervision.

Core Expectation: Canva AI can help spark creativity or refine work, but it should never replace genuine student effort. Students, not Canva, must handle the main tasks of organizing, writing, and finalizing their projects.

Approved Student Canva AI Activities:

- **Image Generation (Text to Image):** Generating unique visuals or illustrations via prompt engineering when an appropriate image is not available in the standard Canva media library.

- **Layout & Template Adjustments:** Using AI layout suggestions to reorganize a presentation slide that the student has already written and researched.
- **Text Summarization or Expansion:** Using Canva's text assistant to summarize a long passage of original student writing for a presentation bullet point, or to brainstorm alternative vocabulary.
- **Collaborative Brainstorming:** Prompting Canva to generate an initial list of creative angles, themes, or color palettes for a design-based project or multimedia story.

Student Accountability Rule: Students must be transparent. If Canva AI tools are used to generate graphics or slide layouts during a Yellow Light activity, students are required to disclose or cite their use as directed by the teacher.

● **RED LIGHT: AI Use Is Prohibited**

Students are not allowed to use Canva AI tools for the current activity or project. AI use is strictly prohibited in the following classroom scenarios or actions.

Core Expectation: Canva AI must never be used to bypass original student thinking, replace the development of essential skills, or jeopardize data privacy. During Red Light situations, students must rely solely on their own abilities.

Prohibited Student Canva AI Activities & Scenarios:

- **Teacher-Directed "No-AI" Assignments:** Any task, test, or writing assignment in which the teacher has explicitly stated that AI tools are not permitted. This applies when teachers need to accurately assess a student's baseline understanding, handwriting, or raw drafting skills.
- **Bypassing Original Writing (Ghostwriting):** Using Canva's text generation tools to write full paragraphs, stories, or essays and passing them off as original student work (academic dishonesty).
- **Entering Personal or Confidential Data:** Typing any Personally Identifiable Information (PII)—such as full student names, home addresses, phone numbers, or private student records—into an AI generation prompt.
- **Circumventing Content Filters:** Attempting to engineer prompts designed to bypass Canva Shield's safety filters to generate inappropriate, unsafe, or harmful imagery and text.

Student Accountability Rule: Using Canva AI tools in a Red Light scenario constitutes a violation of academic integrity and district technology guidelines and will be addressed in accordance with classroom and district policies.

Human-Centered Decision-Making

The District 128 AI Stoplight Framework is based on the belief that relationships matter, learning is fundamentally human, and technology should enhance—not replace—connection, creativity, and collaboration.

The Co-Pilot Principle: Artificial intelligence can be a powerful teammate that supports learning in unique ways, but human beings remain uniquely responsible for:

- **Instruction & Decision-Making:** Guiding the learning path and adapting to individual student needs.
- **Communication & Leadership:** Setting the tone for a safe, empathetic, and collaborative classroom environment.
- **Creativity & Empathy:** Providing the inspiration, validation, and emotional support that no algorithm can replicate.

Our Core Commitment: District 128 believes that the future of education is not a choice between technology and humanity. The goal is to ensure they work together to prepare students for the future while keeping a human connection at the heart of learning.

Approved AI Tools & Platforms

District 128 recognizes the importance of using artificial intelligence tools that are secure, developmentally appropriate, and aligned with educational goals. These tools should support teaching, learning, communication, creativity, and operational efficiency.

During the 2025–2026 school year, the District 128 AI Think Tank—made up of teachers, administrators, and instructional leaders—evaluated a variety of AI-supported educational and engagement tools. The Think Tank considered instructional applications, student engagement opportunities, workflow efficiencies, accessibility, privacy protections, and alignment with the district’s Portrait of a Learner and Strategic Plan.

As a result of this collaborative review, District 128 identified approved AI tools that support responsible use and maintain a strong commitment to student privacy, student wellness, and meaningful learning experiences.

Note: The list of district-approved AI tools may change as technology evolves, instructional needs shift, or legal requirements are updated.

Approved Staff AI Tools

Palos Heights School District 128 supports the careful use of approved, enterprise-grade AI tools to improve teaching, simplify administrative tasks, and foster creative design. The platforms listed below have been thoroughly reviewed for data privacy, security, and compliance with educational standards.

Google Gemini (Gemini Education)

- Use & Access: Managing school operations, professional communication drafting, and productivity workflows.
- Age Restrictions: In accordance with Google’s enterprise terms of service, these tools are available only to users 18 and older (faculty and staff) to maintain a secure environment.
- Google Workspace Protections: According to Google’s enterprise documentation, user data is not human reviewed, prompts and content are not used to train public AI models, and existing Google Workspace privacy and security protections apply natively to school-managed accounts.

Canva AI (Canva for Education)

- Use & Access: Visual design, communication, and highly engaging instructional material development.
 - Instructional Design: Supports lesson planning, brainstorming, and the design of creative content.
 - Classroom Resources: Presentation creation, differentiation templates, and instructional resource development.
 - Productivity: Workflow efficiency, data organization, and communication drafting.
 - Canva Shield & Protections: Content created by District 128 Canva Education teams is never used to train Canva's public AI models. Built-in safety measures (Canva Shield) automatically moderate prompts to block inappropriate content. Additionally, Canva is a signatory to the National Data Privacy Agreement (NDPA), which ensures strict limitations on student data tracking.
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Exploratory AI Tools for Professional Learning

District 128 recognizes that artificial intelligence technologies continue to evolve rapidly. Educators may explore additional AI tools to better understand emerging instructional possibilities and to support professional learning.

- **Guidelines for Exploration:** Staff may explore educational AI platforms, such as Diffit or Curipod, only after confirming their approval status with the technology department. These tools may be used only if they do not collect or store student Personally Identifiable Information (PII), fully meet district technology requirements, and are used responsibly for professional exploration, lesson planning, or instructional design.
 - **Critical Privacy Guardrail:** These exploratory tools are not currently designated as district-approved student platforms. They must never be used to enter confidential student information, protected educational records, or any personally identifiable data.
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Approved Student AI Tools

Students in Grades 3–8 may use approved Canva AI tools only within district-managed educational environments and during teacher-directed learning experiences.

- **Pedagogical Philosophy:** District 128 believes student AI experiences should be developmentally appropriate, foster creativity and communication, promote active learning, strengthen critical thinking, and directly support classroom learning goals.
 - **Expectations for Student Use:** Student AI interactions must always occur under direct staff supervision, on district-approved platforms, and in strict alignment with teacher expectations and instructional purposes. The district stoplight model will be enforced during student interactions with the Canva AI tools.
 - **Approved Student Activities:** Visual and presentation generation, brainstorming creative ideas, multimedia storytelling, design-based projects, collaborative learning activities, and communication-focused assignments.
 - **Core Student Principle:** District 128 believes AI should help students become active creators, communicators, and problem-solvers. Not passive consumers of technology.
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Philosophy, Professional Responsibility, & Human Oversight

District 128 believes AI tools should assist, never replace human thinking, relationships, communication, creativity, and professional judgment.

- **The Efficiency Dividend:** AI should help educators reduce time spent on repetitive tasks, freeing staff to focus more deeply on building meaningful relationships, supporting students, collaborating, fostering creativity, designing instruction intentionally, and creating impactful learning experiences.
- **Staff Accountability:** Artificial intelligence may assist with organization, drafting, brainstorming, or preparing communications, but it must never replace professional judgment, individualized decision-making, or teamwork among educators. Staff must use extra caution and oversight when using AI tools in matters involving IEPs, Section 504 plans, student evaluations, behavioral documentation, personally identifiable information (PII), or other protected student services. Staff must not enter confidential student information, PII, educational records, or protected data into unapproved AI systems. All recommendations, evaluations, accommodations, goals, and educational decisions must be reviewed and approved by qualified staff in accordance with applicable laws, Board policies, and district procedures.
- **Mandatory Review:** AI-generated content must always be thoughtfully reviewed before classroom use, instructional implementation, parent communication, student feedback, or public sharing.

Core District Principle: District 128 believes educators, not AI systems, remain solely responsible for all instructional decisions, communication, evaluation, relationship-building, and final outputs. AI may serve as a powerful teammate, but students and educators will always remain at the center of learning.

Future Review of AI Tools

As artificial intelligence technologies continue to evolve rapidly, District 128 recognizes that new tools and platforms may emerge to enhance learning, communication, accessibility, and operational efficiency.

Future AI tools will undergo a structured technical review process that considers the following criteria:

1. **Instructional Value:** Evaluating the developmental appropriateness of the tool and its impact in the classroom.
2. **Data Privacy and Security:** Ensuring full compliance with the Illinois Student Online Personal Protection Act (SOPPA), the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA).
3. **District Alignment:** Assessing how well the tool aligns with the district's core values and its direct effect on student wellness and engagement.

District 128 will continue to prioritize thoughtful implementation, human-centered learning, student safety, and meaningful educational experiences as new technologies are evaluated.

Student Data Privacy, Cybersecurity, & Legal Compliance

1. Compliance with State & Federal Student Privacy Laws

Palos Heights School District 128 is committed to ensuring that all digital tools and artificial intelligence platforms comply with all relevant federal and state student privacy laws. The district enforces strict standards of data tracking, monetization, and profile building.

All approved AI platforms must support compliance with:

- SOPPA (Illinois Student Online Personal Protection Act): This guarantees that student data is never sold, used for targeted advertising, or exploited for commercial purposes.
- FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act): This ensures that protected student educational records remain confidential and are securely managed within school-controlled account structures.
- COPPA (Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act): This law imposes strict limits on data collection and requires the district to implement safeguards for any digital platforms accessed by students under 13.

2. Protecting Personally Identifiable Information (PII)

Protecting student and staff data is a legal and professional obligation for every District 128 employee.

Personally Identifiable Information (PII) includes, but is not limited to:

- Full names, home addresses, phone numbers, and identification numbers.
- Classroom grades, official assessments, and academic progress reports.
- Disciplinary records, health or medical information, and protected educational files.

Strict Data Privacy Rule: District 128 staff and students must not enter, upload, or share confidential student data or PII in any non-approved AI systems, public chatbots, experimental tools, or platforms lacking a formal district vendor agreement.

3. Cybersecurity Safeguards & Technical Oversight

New technologies introduce complex cybersecurity risks. District 128 regularly monitors and updates its systems to protect against AI-related threats, including:

- Advanced Phishing & Social Engineering: The rising threat of sophisticated email and communication scams created by malicious AI systems.
- Manipulated Media & Deepfakes: The use of synthetic audio, video, or images intended to deceive users or spread misinformation.

- Content Generation Failures: Automated systems that produce unsafe, explicit, or inappropriate content that can evade traditional filtering methods.

The district promotes digital safety awareness, enforces strict firewall protocols, and provides ongoing cybersecurity training for students and staff to maintain secure network operations.

4. Human Verification & The Risk of AI Misinformation

AI systems can produce results that are inaccurate, incomplete, biased, or entirely fabricated. For this reason, automated information should never be accepted without verification.

Operational Expectations for Staff:

- **Verify Everything:** Cross-check and confirm the accuracy of all AI-generated facts, figures, and data before using them.
- **Screen for Bias:** Evaluate AI-generated content for possible cultural, demographic, or instructional biases.
- **Apply Professional Judgment:** Ensure all final materials align with district curriculum standards, teaching guidelines, and community expectations.

5. Transparency, Accountability, & Family Communication

District 128 builds community trust through transparency and collaboration with families. The district is committed to:

- Providing families with clear, accessible registries of all approved educational AI tools.
- Making publicly available copies of district AI guidelines and data privacy policies.
- Continuously updating district policies and instructional guidelines as educational practices evolve and regulatory guidance changes.

Families may contact the district with questions regarding approved AI tools, instructional practices, or student data privacy protections.

While technology should support learning and help people reach their full potential, in Palos Heights School District 128, we prioritize human relationships, digital safety, and community trust above all else.

Academic Integrity & Responsible AI Use

Palos Heights School District 128 believes that artificial intelligence should support learning, not replace key aspects of student growth, such as critical thinking, creativity, communication, perseverance, and problem-solving. AI can spark new ideas and help students organize their thoughts, but true growth comes from nurturing essential skills and independent habits, such as curiosity, resilience, and creative problem-solving, that will serve students for a lifetime.

1. Teacher Professional Judgment

Learning experiences differ across grade levels, classrooms, and subjects. Teachers have full professional discretion to decide when AI use is appropriate, when it should be limited, and when it is not allowed.

Educators have the authority to establish classroom parameters regarding:

- Approved assignment-specific AI tools.
- Disclosure and tool citation expectations.
- Boundaries for writing assignments, independent assessments, and collaborative group work.

2. Student Transparency Expectations

When utilizing AI tools during approved instructional activities, students are expected to remain active, transparent participants in the learning process.

Depending on the assignment, students may be required to:

- Disclose AI-supported assistance and explain how the tools were used.
- Reflect critically on their learning process and revise AI-assisted drafts.
- Demonstrate their core understanding independently without technology.

3. Academic Dishonesty & Misuse

Using AI tools to circumvent authentic learning expectations violates the district's academic integrity and technology policies.

Prohibited actions include, but are not limited to:

- Submitting completely AI-generated text or graphics as entirely original student work.
- Using AI to complete independent homework assignments dishonestly.
- Generating answers during unauthorized classroom assessments or quizzes.

Core Integrity Rule: The primary goal of using artificial intelligence in District 128 is to support and expand human understanding. AI should never be used as a shortcut to avoid the potential struggle that is essential for real academic growth.

The Value of "Productive Struggle": Meaningful learning takes mental effort and perseverance. When AI is misused to remove the challenges of drafting, calculating, problem-solving, or critical analysis, students miss the chance to build resilience and deep understanding.

The Boundary of Assistive Partnership: AI can be used to help students reflect on and improve their ideas (for example, through editing, brainstorming, or organizing). However, it must not replace a student's own voice, critical thinking, or original work.

Core Integrity Rule: AI-supported learning should deepen human understanding, not help students avoid the valuable challenges involved in learning. True academic success is measured by a student's personal growth, perseverance, and authentic mastery—not by the speed at which an algorithm can generate an output.

Students and staff should approach AI-generated content with curiosity and critical thinking. Because artificial intelligence can produce information that is inaccurate, incomplete, biased, or misleading, users must carefully evaluate, verify, and, when necessary, improve AI-generated content rather than accept it without review.

4. AI Detection Tools & Human Review

District 128 recognizes that software-based AI detection tools can be unreliable and frequently produce inaccurate or inconsistent "false positive" results.

- **Assessment Standard:** AI detection systems **should not** be the sole factor in decisions regarding discipline, academic penalties, or allegations of misconduct.
- Instead, evaluations of student academic integrity should primarily rely on professional judgment, communication between students and teachers, classroom observations, and genuine face-to-face demonstrations of learning.

AI Literacy, Digital Citizenship, & Wellness

Preparing students for their tomorrow requires building a strong foundation of digital literacy. District 128 is dedicated to helping students learn how to use technology and AI safely and responsibly.

1. Critical Digital Citizenship

AI literacy extends far beyond technical skills. Students must learn to interact with digital tools safely, ethically, and responsibly.

- **Evaluating Information:** Students will be taught to critically question automated information, recognize subtle bias, verify sources, and identify AI-driven misinformation.
- **Responsible Creator Habits:** Instructional activities will prioritize experiences that keep students active creators, communicators, and problem-solvers, rather than passive consumers of technology.

2. Wellness & Screen Balance

District 128 recognizes the vital importance of maintaining healthy technology habits and balanced learning experiences.

DIGITAL WELLNESS & BALANCED SCREEN TIME	
● ACTIVE USE (Encouraged)	● PASSIVE CONSUMPTION (Limited)
Direct creation Collaboration Problem-solving Active design	Passive scrolling Automated text generation Disengaged habits

The district remains deeply committed to promoting student well-being, a healthy balance of screen time, and meaningful, face-to-face human interaction across all school environments.

Equity, Accessibility, & Inclusion

District 128 is committed to ensuring that every student has access to meaningful, inclusive, and developmentally appropriate learning opportunities. Our AI implementations are designed to actively promote equity and eliminate educational barriers.

1. Accessibility & Student Support

Artificial intelligence provides powerful assistive features that can level the playing field for diverse learners.

The district leverages approved tools to:

- Provide flexible, responsive learning supports for students with diverse learning needs.
- Assist multilingual learners with vocabulary acquisition, contextual translation, and communication support.
- Enhance differentiated instruction by tailoring text complexity to individual reading levels.

2. Mitigating Algorithmic Bias

Because AI models are trained on historical data, they can reflect systemic biases, structural inaccuracies, or inequitable perspectives.

Staff Responsibility: Staff members are expected to exercise professional judgment and carefully review AI-generated curriculum resources to ensure that materials remain culturally responsive, accurate, inclusive, and appropriate for all students.

Professional Learning & Continuous Improvement

Because artificial intelligence, educational practices, and legal requirements are changing quickly, this guidance document is a flexible framework that will be reviewed annually and updated as needed.

1. Ongoing Staff Development

District 128 is committed to supporting our educators through targeted, continuous professional learning.

Future training tracks will focus on:

- Instructional applications and effective prompting strategies for staff using Google Gemini.
- Canva AI (Canva for Education) for Staff
 - **Use & Access:** Utilizing design automation, multilingual translation, and text-adaptation features to streamline lesson preparation and support instructional differentiation.
- Canva AI (Canva for Education) for Students (Grades 3–8)
 - **Use & Access:** Managing teacher-directed student design experiences, visual storytelling, and collaborative multimedia projects under direct staff supervision.
- Data privacy laws (SOPPA/FERPA/COPPA) and cybersecurity awareness.
- Digital citizenship frameworks and ethical classroom implementation.

2. The District Review Cycle

To ensure continuous improvement, the technology department, administrators, and instructional leaders will periodically review and refine district practices by:

1. Collecting direct feedback from staff, as well as input from students and families.
2. Auditing approved AI platforms to ensure they meet enterprise-grade security standards.
3. Updating district policy playbooks to align with changing state and federal legal requirements.

The Final District Commitment:

Palos Heights School District 128 is committed to preparing students for their tomorrow. We use technology to support, not replace, human potential. Human connection, empathy, and relationships will always remain central to our educational experiences.