Ariel Defay proposes the following substitute bill:

Classroom Technology Amendments

2026 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Ariel Defay

Senate Sponsor: Chris H. Wilson

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This bill requires the State Board of Education to create model policies on the use of technology and artificial intelligence in a public school classroom.

Highlighted Provisions:

This bill:

- defines terms;
- requires the State Board of Education (state board) to include certain technology standards in core education standards;
- creates certain requirements for a local education agency (LEA) related to the use of technology in the classroom;
- requires the state board to create a model policy on:
  - the balanced use of technology in the classroom; and
  - the use of artificial intelligence in the classroom;
- creates certain requirements for specific grade levels when using technology in the classroom;
- exempts certain groups from the grade level requirements when using technology in the classroom;
- creates a reporting requirement;
- gives authority to the state board to create rules;
- requires LEAs to provide additional resources to certain students; and
- allows public high schools to create and offer a sandbox artificial intelligence course.

Money Appropriated in this Bill:

None

Other Special Clauses:

This bill provides a special effective date.

2nd Sub. H.B. 273

Utah Code Sections Affected:

AMENDS:

53E-4-202 (Effective 07/01/26) (Partially Repealed 01/01/28), as last amended by Laws of Utah 2024, Third Special Session, Chapter 5

ENACTS:

53G-7-228 (Effective 07/01/26), Utah Code Annotated 1953

53G-7-229 (Effective 07/01/26), Utah Code Annotated 1953

53G-7-1401 (Effective 07/01/26), Utah Code Annotated 1953

53G-7-1402 (Effective 07/01/26), Utah Code Annotated 1953

53G-7-1403 (Effective 07/01/26), Utah Code Annotated 1953

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:

Section 1. Section **53E-4-202** is amended to read:

53E-4-202 (Effective 07/01/26) (Partially Repealed 01/01/28). Core standards for Utah public schools -- Notice and hearing requirements.

(1)(a) In establishing minimum standards related to curriculum and instruction requirements under Section 53E-3-501, the state board shall, in consultation with local school boards, school superintendents, teachers, employers, and parents implement core standards for Utah public schools that will enable students to, among other objectives:

(i) communicate effectively, both verbally and through written communication;

(ii) apply mathematics; and

(iii) access, analyze, and apply information.

(b) Except as provided in this public education code, the state board may recommend but may not require a local school board or charter school governing board to use:

(i) a particular curriculum or instructional material; or

(ii) a model curriculum or instructional material.

(2) The state board shall, in establishing the core standards for Utah public schools:

(a) identify the basic knowledge, skills, and competencies each student is expected to acquire or master as the student advances through the public education system;

(b) include artificial intelligence standards in core computer science standards that educate a student on:

(i) artificial intelligence generally; and

(ii) the appropriate use of artificial intelligence as a tool;

(c) adopt computer science standards and objectives that address:

(i) digital skills concepts;

(ii) age-appropriate social media literacy and healthy usage strategies, including recognition of social media's impact on mental health and civic discourse;

(iii) artificial intelligence awareness and ethical interaction, including understanding artificial intelligence's role in information filtering and decision-making;

(iv) screen-time management and mental health considerations in digital environments;

(v) technology that relates to digital responsibility, privacy, and security; and

(vi) critical evaluation of digital information sources and media literacy skills necessary for informed digital responsibility; and

[~~(b)~~] (d) align with each other the core standards for Utah public schools and the assessments described in Section 53E-4-303.

(3) The basic knowledge, skills, and competencies identified [~~pursuant to~~] in accordance with Subsection (2)(a) shall increase in depth and complexity from year to year and focus on consistent and continual progress within and between grade levels and courses in the basic academic areas of:

(a) English, including explicit phonics, spelling, grammar, reading, writing, vocabulary, speech, and listening; and

(b) mathematics, including basic computational skills.

(4) Before adopting core standards for Utah public schools, the state board shall:

(a) publicize draft core standards for Utah public schools for the state, as a class A notice under Section 63G-30-102, for at least 90 days;

(b) invite public comment on the draft core standards for Utah public schools for a period of not less than 90 days; and

(c) conduct three public hearings that are held in different regions of the state on the draft core standards for Utah public schools.

(5) LEA governing boards shall design their school programs, that are supported by generally accepted scientific standards of evidence, to focus on the core standards for Utah public schools with the expectation that each program will enhance or help achieve mastery of the core standards for Utah public schools.

(6) Except as provided in Sections 53G-10-103 and 53G-10-402, each school may select instructional materials and methods of teaching, that are supported by generally accepted scientific standards of evidence, that the school considers most appropriate to meet the

core standards for Utah public schools.

(7) The state may exit any agreement, contract, memorandum of understanding, or consortium that cedes control of the core standards for Utah public schools to any other entity, including a federal agency or consortium, for any reason, including:

(a) the cost of developing or implementing the core standards for Utah public schools;

(b) the proposed core standards for Utah public schools are inconsistent with community values; or

(c) the agreement, contract, memorandum of understanding, or consortium:

(i) was entered into in violation of Chapter 3, Part 8, Implementing Federal or National Education Programs, or Title 63J, Chapter 5, Federal Funds Procedures Act;

(ii) conflicts with Utah law;

(iii) requires Utah student data to be included in a national or multi-state database;

(iv) requires records of teacher performance to be included in a national or multi-state database; or

(v) imposes curriculum, assessment, or data tracking requirements on home school or private school students.

(8) The state board shall:

(a) submit a report in accordance with Section 53E-1-203 on the development and implementation of the core standards for Utah public schools, including the time line established for the review of the core standards for Utah public schools; and

(b) ensure that the report described in Subsection (8)(a) includes the time line established for the review of the core standards for Utah public schools by a standards review committee and the recommendations of a standards review committee established under Section 53E-4-203.

Section 2. Section **53G-7-228** is enacted to read:

53G-7-228 (Effective 07/01/26). Classroom technology requirements -- Model policy on balanced technology.

(1)(a) As used in this section:

(i) "Instructional technology" means technology Ĥ→ **an LEA issues to** ←Ĥ a student Ĥ→ [~~uses~~] ←Ĥ in connection Ĥ→ [~~to~~] **with** ←Ĥ the student's public education, including:

(A) an electronic device;

(B) a digital tool; or

(C) a digital application.

(ii) "Public school" means a school under the control of:

(A) a school district;

(B) a charter school; or

(C) the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind.

(iii)(A) "Screen-time" means the time a student spends using an electronic device with a screen in a classroom setting when the use of the electronic device does not involve direct instruction, guidance, or interaction with:

(I) a teacher;

(II) an instructor; or

(III) other designated educational personnel.

(B) "Screen-time" does not include school work or instruction for an online student as that term is defined in Section 53G-6-703.

(2)(a) Before an LEA allows a public school to use an instructional technology in the classroom, the LEA shall ensure that instructional technology is:

(i) designed specifically for instructional use;

(ii) absent of design features that:

(A) interfere with learning;

(B) distract from instruction; or

(C) reduce academic focus;

(iii) supported by evidence, data, or demonstrated educational value appropriate to the grade level;

(iv) safe for a student's physical, cognitive, and emotional development;

(v) effective in supporting student learning outcomes;

(vi) not used as a substitute for direct instruction;

(vii) intentionally integrated into instruction to enhance student learning outcomes; and

(viii) compliant with state standards and law, including:

(A) Section 53G-10-103, Sensitive instructional materials; and

(B) Title 53E, Chapter 9, Student Privacy and Data Protection.

(b) An LEA shall select, deploy, and monitor instructional technology in accordance with the requirements of Subsection (2)(a).

(3) An LEA shall:

(a) minimize non-essential screen-time;

(b) prioritize purposeful engagement with instructional technology that directly supports instructional goals;

(c) adopt internal monitoring and accountability policies to ensure compliance with the requirements of this section;

(d) provide training to faculty and staff on the requirements of this section;

(e) provide to a student's parent access to a list of all digital tools and applications used in the student's classroom;

(f) upon request, provide to a student's parent access to the student's:

(i) school issued electronic device;

(ii) account credentials; and

(iii) browsing history;

(g) provide to a parent of a student enrolled at the LEA:

(i) the option to receive an alert when the student attempts to access material flagged as sensitive material as that term is defined in Section 53G-10-103; and

(ii) resources to help supervise the student's use of instructional technology in the home; and

(h) before July 1, 2027:

(i) adopt the model policy described in Subsection (5)(a); or

(ii) adopt an amended version of the model policy described in Subsection (5)(a), that includes:

(A) a balanced instructional technology use policy that is safe, lawful, effective, intentional, and compliant with Title 53E, Chapter 9, Student Privacy and Data Protection, and Section 53G-10-103;

(B) a resource plan for students who demonstrate a pattern of difficulty learning through technology-based instruction, in accordance with Section 53G-7-229;

(C) a requirement of transparency with parents regarding instructional technology use;

(D) an artificial intelligence use policy with a structure similar to the structure of the model artificial intelligence use policy described in Section 53G-7-1402; and

(E) a grade-level framework with a structure similar to the grade-level framework described in Subsection (5)(d);

(i) for the policy the LEA adopts in accordance with Subsection (3)(h), submit to the state board:

(i) the finalized policy; and

(ii) a statement confirming the LEA held a public meeting in accordance with Subsection (4).

(4) Before an LEA adopts a policy in accordance with Subsection (3)(h), an LEA governing board shall hold a public meeting to discuss the proposed policy that:

(a) allows for public comment; and

(b) complies with the requirements of Title 52, Chapter 4, Open and Public Meetings Act.

(5) The state board shall:

(a) create a model policy on balanced technology use in the classroom that:

(i) prioritizes developmental appropriateness and age-based limits on screen exposure;

(ii) requires transparency with parents regarding instructional technology use;

(iii) prohibits instructional technology practices that undermine student safety, privacy, or wellbeing;

(iv) requires regular review of instructional technology to ensure compliance with the requirements listed in Subsection (2)(a);

(v) promotes educator modeling of appropriate and responsible technology use; and

(vi) emphasizes the use of adaptive technologies to support competency-based instruction;

(b) include, as part of the model policy described in Subsection (5)(a), the model artificial intelligence use policy described in Section 53G-7-1402;

(c) post the model policy described in Subsection (5)(a) on the state board's website before December 1, 2026;

(d) include in the model policy described in Subsection (5)(a) the following grade-level frameworks:

(i) for grades kindergarten through 3:

(A) prohibiting a student from taking home school-owned instructional technology;

(B) prohibiting a required ratio of one electronic device to one student;

(C) prohibiting all screen-time in the classroom except for introduction of state kindergarten through grade 5 computer science standards and preparation for, and administration of, a standards assessment;

(D) emphasizing hands-on, print-based, and developmentally appropriate learning exercises; and

(E) prohibiting homework that requires access to the internet or instructional technology;

(ii) for grades 4 through 6 in an elementary school:

(A) prohibiting a student from taking home school-owned instructional technology;

(B) prohibiting a required ratio of one electronic device to one student;

(C) balancing the use of an instructional technology with instruction through teacher-led, print-based, and analog methods;

(D) limiting the use of instructional technology to only instances with direct teacher supervision for a defined academic purpose;

(E) prohibiting a public school from sending Ĥ→ [~~a school issued~~] ←Ĥ instructional technology home with a student;

(F) prohibiting homework requiring access to the internet or instructional technology; and

(G) limiting access to the internet through filters consistent with age-appropriate standards;

(iii) for middle or junior high school:

(A) allowing a student to take home a school issued device for school work or an academic program that the LEA approves, only when a parent opts-in through written consent;

(B) balancing the use of an instructional technology with instruction through teacher-led, print-based, and analog methods; and

(C) limiting access to the internet through filters consistent with age-appropriate standards; and

(iv) for high school:

(A) allowing a student to take an instructional technology home, provided a parent does not choose to opt the parent's student out;

(B) balancing the use of an instructional technology with instruction through teacher-led, print-based, and analog methods; and

(C) limiting access to the internet through filters consistent with age-appropriate standards;

(e) for an LEA that fails to adopt or create a policy in accordance with Subsection (3)(h), declare the model policy described in Subsection (5)(a) as the default policy for that LEA; and

(f) adopt a method for evaluating and measuring the effectiveness of the requirements listed in Subsection (2)(a).

(6) The frameworks described in Subsection (5)(d) do not apply to:

(a) a course where instructional technology is integral to the subject matter of the course or specialty class;

(b) instruction or equipment related to:

(i) online district and charter schools; and

(ii) the Statewide Online Education Program created in Section 53F-4-502;

(c) a course or instruction designed to meet core technology standards the state board creates under Section 53E-4-202;

(d) an AI sandbox course as that term is defined in Section 53G-7-1401;

(e) a public school located within the boundaries of a tribal nation where the LEA is the internet service provider; or

(f) instructional technology use consistent with a student's IEP or 504 plan.

(7) Ĥ→ [~~(a) Upon the adoption of the policy required under Subsection (3)(h)(i) or (3)(h)(ii),~~] ←Ĥ

Ĥ→ [~~an LEA shall submit a report to the state board, detailing:~~]

[~~(i) the specifics of the policy the LEA adopts;~~]

[~~(ii) the LEA's plan for:~~]

[~~(A) professional development of faculty and staff related to the adoption of the~~] ←Ĥ

Ĥ→ [~~policy; and~~]

[~~(B) monitoring compliance with the new policy;~~]

[~~(iii) use of instructional technology in the classroom;~~]

[~~(iv) monitoring and compliance of a public school within the LEA's jurisdiction; and~~]

[~~(v) implementation efforts and outcomes.~~]

(a) Upon the adoption of the policy required under Subsection (3)(h)(i) or (3)(h)(ii), an LEA shall submit a report to the state board detailing the specifics of the policy the LEA adopts. ←Ĥ

(b) An LEA that changes the policy after submitting the report described in Subsection (7)(a) shall submit the updated policy to the state board.

(8)(a) As a condition of receiving state funds allocated for digital literacy, computer science, or educational technology programs described in Section 53F-2-510, an LEA shall certify to the state board that the LEA has adopted and is implementing:

(i) a policy on balanced technology use in the classroom in accordance with this

section;

(ii) a resource program for students demonstrating a pattern of difficulty with technology-related learning in accordance with Section 53G-7-229; and

(iii) an artificial intelligence use policy consistent with the model artificial intelligence use policy described in Section 53G-7-1402.

(b) The state board may withhold or delay the distribution of funds described in Subsection (8)(a) to an LEA that fails to meet the requirements of this section until the LEA demonstrates compliance.

(9) In accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, the state board shall make rules to implement the provisions of this section.

Section 3. Section **53G-7-229** is enacted to read:

53G-7-229 (Effective 07/01/26). Resources for a student with a technology-related learning difficulty.

(1) As used in this section:

(a) "Instructional technology" means the same as that term is defined in Section 53G-7-228.

(b)(i) "Technology-related learning difficulty" means a condition where a student experiences a pattern of difficulty learning through the use of instructional technology.

(ii) "Technology-related learning difficulty" does not include a temporary or situational difficulty with technology use that is unrelated to a learning need that is:

(A) diagnosed; or

(B) identifiable.

(2) An LEA shall create a resource plan on how to accommodate a student that demonstrates a technology-related learning difficulty.

(3) An LEA may:

(a) provide additional resources and accommodations to a student that demonstrates a technology-related learning difficulty, including:

(i) access to printed materials;

(ii) alternative assignment formats;

(iii) access to a technology resource center;

(iv) access to an educational professional with expertise in technology and technology-related learning difficulties; and

(v) extra time for technology-based tasks; and

(b) provide a student with a technology-related learning difficulty access to alternative learning pathways, including:

(i) hands-on, project-based learning;

(ii) book-based curriculum; and

(iii) verbal instruction.

Section 4. Section **53G-7-1401** is enacted to read:

Part 14. Artificial Intelligence

53G-7-1401 (Effective 07/01/26). General provisions -- Definitions.

As used in this part:

(1) "Artificial intelligence" means the same as that term is defined in Section 13-72-101.

(2) "Artificial intelligence sandbox course" or "AI sandbox course" means a high school course offered to a student enrolled in an LEA focused on artificial intelligence technologies that:

(a) operates within a secure and controlled digital environment; and

(b) provides a student with supervised opportunities to apply artificial intelligence technologies through hands-on:

(i) learning;

(ii) experimentation; and

(iii) application of the instructional material.

(3) "Artificial intelligence tool" or "AI tool" means software or a system that generates outputs, predictions, or recommendations through:

(a) machine learning;

(b) natural language processing; or

(c) other artificial intelligence techniques.

(4) "Generative artificial intelligence" means the same as that term is defined in Section 13-77-101.

Section 5. Section **53G-7-1402** is enacted to read:

53G-7-1402 (Effective 07/01/26). Model artificial intelligence use policy.

(1) As used in this section "high-stakes determination" means a decision regarding a student's:

(a) placement;

(b) discipline;

(c) academic progression; or

(d) eligibility for a program or service.

(2) The state board shall publish and maintain a model artificial intelligence use policy that:

(a) encourages and supports educator instruction through the use of AI tools;

(b) complies with the requirements of the model policy on balanced technology use in the classroom described in Section 53G-7-228;

(c) encourages a reduction in student and educator workload through the use of AI tools;

(d) requires educators to only use Ĥ→ **student facing** ←Ĥ AI tools an LEA approves;

(e) requires educators to retain professional judgment and instructional responsibility when using AI tools in the educator's classroom;

(f) prohibits educators from using generative artificial intelligence to independently grade student work or issue high-stakes determinations;

(g) requires a student to produce work that reflects the student's:

(i) knowledge;

(ii) skill; and

(iii) understanding;

(h) prohibits a student from using generative artificial intelligence to complete academic work unless an educator authorizes the use for a specific instructional purpose;

(i) ensures that all AI tools available to a student meet developmental expectations and align with digital literacy standards for each grade level;

(j) when the school or an educator uses generative artificial intelligence for instruction, assessment, or activities in the classroom, requires the school or educator to:

(i) notify the student's parent in writing; and

(ii) in the notification described in Subsection (2)(j)(ii), provide a link to the LEA's metadata dictionary as described in Section 53E-9-303;

(k) identifies the purpose of each approved AI tool and describes to a student how to use the AI tool;

(l) ensures that AI tools do not expose a student to content that is:

(i) harmful;

(ii) manipulative; or

(iii) inappropriate;

(m) prohibits the use of AI tools for any practice that threatens student safety or wellbeing, including:

(i) biometric surveillance; or

(ii) psychological profiling;

(n) provides a student's parent with clear expectations regarding allowed and prohibited uses of AI tools in the classroom; and

(o) requires educators to communicate assignment-specific guidance on the expectations regarding the use of AI tools.

(3)(a) An LEA shall produce and adopt an artificial intelligence use policy based on the model policy described in Subsection (2).

(b) After adopting the policy described in Subsection (3)(a), an LEA shall:

(i) submit the adopted policy to the state board for review and approval;

(ii) provide training to educators and staff on the policy;

(iii) ensure compliance to the policy at each school within the LEA;

(iv) review the policy at least once every two years; and

(v) update the policy as needed.

(c) To inform the policy an LEA adopts under Subsection (3)(a), an LEA may create and distribute the following artificial intelligence resources:

(i) a vision or guidance document;

(ii) an artificial intelligence framework; or

(iii) artificial intelligence best practices.

(4) The state board shall:

(a) declare the model policy described in Subsection (2) as the default policy for an LEA:

(i) that fails to adopt a policy in accordance with Subsection (3)(a); or

(ii) whose policy the state board does not approve in accordance with Subsection (3)(b)(i); and

(b) make rules in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, to establish:

(i) standards for LEA compliance under this section;

(ii) timelines and procedures for LEA policy submission; and

(iii) guidance for LEA implementation and educator training.

Section 6. Section **53G-7-1403** is enacted to read:

53G-7-1403 (Effective 07/01/26). Artificial intelligence -- Sandbox course.

(1) An LEA may offer an AI sandbox course to a student in grades 9 through 12 to provide instructional opportunities aligned with workforce development needs in emerging fields, including:

(a) artificial intelligence;

(b) data science;

(c) digital design; and

(d) other related disciplines.

(2) An LEA shall:

(a) limit the delivery of an AI sandbox course to career and technical education courses or focused campuses;

(b) ensure that all activities related to the teaching of an AI sandbox course incorporate safeguards to protect students, including:

(i) compliance with federal data privacy laws;

(ii) compliance with Title 53E, Chapter 9, Student Privacy and Data Protection;

(iii) compliance with Section 53G-10-103; and

(iv) ethical use guidelines the state board establishes;

(c) notify the parent of a student enrolled in an AI sandbox course of the nature of the AI sandbox course; and

(d) obtain written consent from a student's parent before allowing a student to participate in an AI sandbox course.

(3) An LEA may not require a student to participate in an AI sandbox course.

(4) In accordance with Subsection (2)(b)(iv), the state board shall establish ethical use guidelines for an LEA to use during the AI sandbox course's:

(a) creation;

(b) implementation; and

(c) delivery.

Section 7. **Effective Date.**

This bill takes effect on July 1, 2026.