



A FREE WORKING CHECKLIST FOR DISTRICT LEADERS

The Arkansas School District AI Readiness Checklist

A plain-language check of what your board's AI policy, Arkansas law and federal student privacy rules ask of your staff, so your leadership team can see what is in place and what comes next.







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THE WHOLE THING IN ONE SENTENCE

In about an hour, your leadership team checks thirty-eight plain statements against your district and leaves with three next steps, each with an owner and a date.

SECTION ONE

How to use this checklist.

This checklist turns your board's AI policy, Arkansas law and federal student privacy rules into plain statements your leadership team can check off. In about an hour, you will see what is already in place across your district and which few steps come next.

Who should fill it in

It works best with four people at the table: the superintendent, the person who leads professional development, the technology director and one principal. Each person sees a different part of the district, and together they can answer every item.

How to mark each item

- **In place** means it is done, written down and something you could show your board.
- **Underway** means someone owns it and the work has started.
- **Next** means it is a step your district has not taken yet.
- **Not sure** means nobody at the table knows. That is a useful finding, and it usually becomes the first conversation.

What this checklist is and is not

It is a working tool for leaders. It is not a legal review, and checking every box does not certify compliance. Your district's attorney reviews policy language and decides legal questions, and we gladly work alongside them.

A GOOD FIRST HOUR

Mark every item quickly without debating it. Then go back to the items marked Not sure and decide who will find the answer and by when.

SECTION TWO

Your written AI policy.

Act 848 of 2025 asks every public entity in Arkansas, including school districts and charter schools, to have a written policy on the use of artificial intelligence and to make it available to the public on request. Many districts adopted the school boards association's model policies on AI for licensed staff, support staff and student use.

STATEMENT	IN PLACE	UNDERWAY	NEXT	NOT SURE
Our board has adopted a written policy on the use of AI.	☐	☐	☐	☐
The policy covers licensed staff, support staff and student use.	☐	☐	☐	☐
The policy names who approves an AI tool before staff use it.	☐	☐	☐	☐
The policy states what information may never be entered into an AI tool.	☐	☐	☐	☐
The policy states that a person makes the final decision on anything that affects a student or an employee.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Any member of the public who asks for the policy can get a copy.	☐	☐	☐	☐
One person owns the policy, and the date of its next review is on the calendar.	☐	☐	☐	☐

WHY IT MATTERS

A written policy lets your staff say yes to AI with confidence, because they know where the lines are before they start.

SECTION THREE

Training your staff.

Act 848 also asks public entities to train employees on the appropriate use of AI. Training works best when it is built around your own policy and around the daily work of each group on staff.

STATEMENT	IN PLACE	UNDERWAY	NEXT	NOT SURE
Every employee who uses AI is trained on appropriate use before using it.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Training for licensed staff is listed in the district's professional learning plan, so it can count toward their annual hours.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Paraprofessionals and office, cafeteria, transportation and custodial staff have training built around their own work.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Principals have been trained to lead AI use in their buildings and to answer parents' questions.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sign-in records and completion certificates are kept on file.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Staff hired later in the year have a way to be trained before they use AI.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Staff know whom to ask when they are unsure whether a use is allowed.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Arkansas requires thirty-six hours of professional development each year for licensed staff. Sessions count when the district lists them in its professional learning plan.

SECTION FOUR

Approved tools.

Your staff can move quickly when they know which tools are approved and where to find the list. A review process keeps that list current as new tools appear every month.

STATEMENT	IN PLACE	UNDERWAY	NEXT	NOT SURE
A committee or a named person reviews each tool for privacy, cost and fit before it is approved.	☐	☐	☐	☐
An approved tool list exists, and staff know where to find it.	☐	☐	☐	☐
For each approved tool, someone has read how it uses, stores and deletes the information entered into it.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Approved tools are used through district accounts rather than personal accounts.	☐	☐	☐	☐
The technology director holds the logins and settings for every approved tool.	☐	☐	☐	☐
A teacher or staff member has a simple way to request a review of a new tool.	☐	☐	☐	☐
The approved tool list is reviewed on a set schedule, at least once a year.	☐	☐	☐	☐

SECTION FIVE

Student privacy.

Federal and Arkansas law already protect student information, and those protections apply to AI tools the same way they apply to any other software. FERPA protects education records, COPPA protects children under thirteen online, and Arkansas's Student Online Personal Information Protection Act protects the student information online services hold.

STATEMENT	IN PLACE	UNDERWAY	NEXT	NOT SURE
Staff know that student names and education records stay out of any tool the district has not approved.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Tools used directly by students under thirteen meet COPPA requirements, and the district knows how consent is handled.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Vendors that hold student information have agreed in writing to the protections Arkansas law requires.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Staff know that the IEP team writes and decides every IEP and the 504 team decides every 504 plan.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Staff know that the teacher decides every grade, even when AI helps draft feedback.	☐	☐	☐	☐
There is a clear path to report a privacy concern involving an AI tool.	☐	☐	☐	☐

THE SIMPLEST RULE TO TEACH

If you would not post it on the hallway bulletin board, it does not go into a tool the district has not approved.

SECTION SIX

Students and parents.

Students learn best when the rules are clear, and parents support what they understand. A few written expectations go a long way with both.

STATEMENT	IN PLACE	UNDERWAY	NEXT	NOT SURE
Students have clear rules for when they may use AI and how to show that they did.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Academic integrity expectations that include AI are written down and shared with students.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Teachers apply the same student AI rules from classroom to classroom.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Parents can find a plain-language explanation of how AI is used in your classrooms.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Parents know whom to contact with a question about AI.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Principals have a short, consistent answer ready when a parent asks about AI.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Clear expectations let teachers spend their time on teaching, and they give students a fair and consistent set of rules wherever they go in the building.

SECTION SEVEN

Reporting and keeping current.

AI changes quickly, and so does the guidance around it. In April 2025, a presidential executive order made AI education, including teacher training, a national priority, and in July 2025 the U.S. Department of Education issued guidance on responsible AI use in schools. A district that reviews its work on a schedule stays current without scrambling.

STATEMENT	IN PLACE	UNDERWAY	NEXT	NOT SURE
The board receives a report on AI training and use at least once a year.	☐	☐	☐	☐
The report covers what staff learned, what they asked for and what comes next.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Someone tracks new federal and Arkansas guidance and shares it with district leaders.	☐	☐	☐	☐
The policy, the approved tool list and the training plan are reviewed together each year.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Staff have a regular place, such as office hours, to bring questions about new tools and features.	☐	☐	☐	☐

SECTION EIGHT

Reading your results.

Count your marks in each column. Most districts find a mix, and that is normal. The goal is a short, clear list of what comes next.

SECTION	IN PLACE	UNDERWAY	NEXT	NOT SURE
Your written AI policy				
Training your staff				
Approved tools				
Student privacy				
Students and parents				
Reporting and keeping current				
Totals				

Where to start

- 1. Answer every Not sure item first, because each answer turns a question into a plan.
- 2. Choose the three Next items that reach the most staff, which are usually the policy, training records and the approved tool list.
- 3. Give each of those three items one owner and one date, and write them on this page.

First item and owner	Date
Second item and owner	Date
Third item and owner	Date

SECTION NINE

When you want help.

Growth Right Solutions trains the teachers, administrators and support staff of Arkansas school districts to use AI safely and well, with every session built around your board's policy, Arkansas law and federal student privacy rules. Ed Becker leads the sessions himself, with our team behind him.

How the district program fits this checklist

CHECKLIST SECTION	WHERE THE PROGRAM HELPS
Your written AI policy	We help your team turn the policy into everyday practice, and your attorney reviews any policy language.
Training your staff	Hands-on sessions in every building, a session for support staff, sign-in records and completion certificates.
Approved tools	Two working sessions with your AI tool selection committee, which leave it with a review method and a first approved list.
Students and parents	A plain-language page for parents and a leadership session that prepares principals for their questions.
Reporting and keeping current	Monthly virtual office hours and a short two-way report to your board.

START WITH A CONVERSATION ABOUT YOUR GOALS

It is free, there is no sales and no obligation, and your goals decide what every session covers.

GrowthRight.Solutions/arkansas-schools

Sources

Arkansas Act 848 of 2025, on the use of artificial intelligence by public entities. Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. § 1232g. Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), 15 U.S.C. §§ 6501 to 6506. Arkansas Student Online Personal Information Protection Act. Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Executive Order 14277, Advancing Artificial Intelligence Education for American Youth, April 23, 2025. U.S. Department of Education Dear Colleague Letter on the use of AI in schools, July 22, 2025. Arkansas Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, professional development requirements for licensed staff.

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About the author

Ed Becker is the founder of Growth Right Solutions, LLC. He spent more than twenty years in education, including as a school principal, before leading technology programs and running a managed services company, and he now leads AI adoption for owner-led companies and Arkansas school districts.

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