



# IRVINE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

5050 Barranca Parkway, Irvine, California 92604-4652 • 949/936-5000 • FAX 949/936-5259 • www.iusd.org

September 12, 2024

The Honorable Maria Hernandez  
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court  
700 Civic Center Drive West  
Santa Ana, CA 92701

Re: Irvine Unified School District's Response to the 2023-24 Orange County Grand Jury Report on *Use of Artificial Intelligence in Public Schools (K-12)*

To the Honorable Maria D. Hernandez:

The Irvine Unified School District (District) commends the Grand Jury for its time and attention devoted to studying this very important issue and publishing the Grand Jury Report dated June 12, 2024 entitled: *Use of Artificial Intelligence in Public Schools (K-12)* (Report).

The District has thoroughly reviewed and considered the Findings and Recommendations in the Report. In accordance with California Penal Code sections 933 and 933.05, the Grand Jury has requested that the District respond to Findings and Recommendations made in the Report. The District responds to the Grand Jury's Findings and Recommendations with the following:

## Findings:

**Finding 1: Orange County's K-12 public schools have implemented policies and/or guidelines around the use of different AI platforms in varying and inconsistent ways. Some prohibit AI's use; others allow it; and some don't have policies or guidelines governing AI at all.**

The District cannot comment on other districts' policies and/or guidelines around the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) platforms. As it pertains to the Irvine Unified School District (IUSD), the District has updated our Acceptable Use Policies (AUPs) for staff and students to address behavioral concerns related to AI explicitly. IUSD's existing AUPs address online safety, privacy, academic honesty, and other expectations related to the appropriate use of technology. District Leadership updated the policies in April 2024, to include prohibitions for creating false or misleading content, impersonating an individual or institution, or misrepresenting the authenticity or originality of submitted work. Please access the referenced Board Policies here:

(1) Student AUP: <https://iusd.org/about/board-education/board-policies/student-use-technology/acceptable-use-agreement-student>

(2) Employee AUP: <https://iusd.org/about/board-education/board-policies/employee-use-technology/acceptable-use-agreement-employee>

### BOARD OF EDUCATION

PAUL BOKOTA / LAUREN BROOKS / JEFF KIM / KATIE MCEWEN / CYRIL YU

TERRY L. WALKER, Superintendent of Schools

JOHN FOGARTY, Assistant Superintendent, Business Services / BRIANNE FORD, Assistant Superintendent, Information Technology  
EAMONN O'DONOVAN, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources / CASSIE PARHAM, Assistant Superintendent, Education Services

IUSD . . . providing the highest quality educational experience we can envision.

**Finding 2: Superintendents provide varying levels of support in implementing AI policies and/or guidelines in their respective school districts.**

The District partially disagrees in that it cannot comment on superintendent support in implementing AI policies and/or guidelines in other districts. Regarding Irvine Unified School District, the Superintendent is actively involved in implementing the ethical and appropriate use of AI in IUSD. The Superintendent participates in the California School Boards Association (CSBA) AI Task Force. He has convened an IUSD Steering Committee with a representative group of IUSD's Leadership Team members to provide ongoing guidance to staff and families. The Superintendent facilitates regular discussions related to AI policies and applications with key stakeholder groups. The Superintendent has been instrumental in leading and supporting AI professional learning opportunities for District staff, including a full-day event this summer for our Leadership Team, which includes psychologists and all site and District administrators.

**Finding 3: There are many resources to guide educators in using AI. Several are available at the local level through the Orange County Department of Education, Orange County Board of Education, CEO Leadership Alliance Orange County, and Orange Unified School District Technology Department, to name a few. However, utilization and even awareness of the availability of such resources is highly variable across school districts.**

The District does not have firsthand information regarding the utilization and awareness of the availability of AI resources across school districts. As it pertains to the Irvine Unified School District (IUSD), several resources have been created and shared to guide educators in the use of AI. IUSD's required annual online safety training for staff has been updated to address AI, including concerns about privacy, age-appropriate tools, and responsible classroom use. IUSD has led a series of in-person professional learning sessions to help educators safely and effectively navigate the use of AI. The District has also created and curated on-demand professional learning opportunities and training guides to build an understanding of AI and to provide tool-specific training for educators. IUSD maintains a "Vetting Digital Resources" guide to educate staff about requirements and considerations when selecting online software programs. This resource has been updated to include guidance specific to AI tools, including a list of approved AI platforms and required steps to obtain approval for a new program. Many of these resources were introduced in IUSD over the last year. While more time is needed to assess their overall effectiveness, the response from staff has been very positive.

**Recommendations:**

**Recommendation 1: By June 30, 2025 Orange County's K-12 schools should implement policies and guidelines regarding the appropriate use of AI. These may be provided at the district level or within individual schools through the adoption of an Acceptable Use Policy, Code of Ethics, or other written directives addressing the use of AI.**

The District has implemented this recommendation as follows: IUSD's AI Steering Committee will be meeting throughout the 2024-25 school year to refine policy, guidelines, and support for AI use. Their scope will include (1) deepening understanding of AI throughout IUSD, (2) implementing structures for safe AI use, (3) providing guidance for responsible and ethical use,

and (4) developing recommendations for how to use AI to enhance instruction and support learning. To supplement the committee's work, IUSD convened a group of teachers to focus on developing resources for the instructional use of AI during the summer of 2024. IUSD is also in the process of updating the Digital Citizenship public webpage for community access which will also outline AI-specific considerations and resources. Those resources, in combination with ongoing professional learning opportunities, will provide robust support for educators and students.

**Recommendation 2: Superintendents should ensure that their schools have policies that cover, at a minimum: the scope, guiding principles, and training regarding the responsible use of AI tools by students and teachers; any prohibited uses of special considerations regarding AI tools; and related security, privacy, and safety considerations.**

The recommendation has been implemented and will continue to be developed. The following actions outline the District's steps taken: (1) Revised Acceptable Use Policies now explicitly address AI-related conduct and online safety, privacy, academic integrity, and technology expectations; (2) An AI Steering Committee is tasked with furthering AI comprehension, establishing safe AI use considerations, offering ethical use guidance, and recommending instructional AI enhancements; (3) District-led professional development, including the annual Professional Learning Summit, will ensure equitable AI training access for staff, covering responsible AI use, prohibited applications, and security, privacy, and safety considerations.

**Recommendation 3: K-12 students should be trained on the appropriate use of AI.**

The District is in the process of implementing this recommendation. AI training for students will be embedded in existing courses and digital citizenship programs. Because of the variation in tools and usage, IUSD feels that educating students about AI should occur in context. Behavioral expectations related to the ethical use of AI will be incorporated into digital citizenship and information literacy education. Additionally, during the 2024-25 school year, a working group of teachers and administrators will convene to analyze and discuss the academic implications and ethical use of AI in the context of courses provided to students. Training related to leveraging AI tools to support educational outcomes will be provided by teachers. A balanced approach that addresses both the ethics and utility of AI is vital to encouraging learning and mitigating risks.

**Recommendation 4: K-12 teachers should be trained on the appropriate use of AI.**

The District has implemented this recommendation as follows: IUSD has taken a scaffolded approach to training teachers. The District's approach includes (1) foundational training for all staff, (2) District-led professional learning to explore AI in more depth, and (3) targeted resources to help educators leverage AI effectively in their context. IUSD teachers complete online internet safety training each year. The content of this training has been updated to incorporate an AI segment. The training aims to build an understanding of what AI is, potential applications for AI in education, and considerations for safe and responsible use. In addition to this foundational training, IUSD has several in-person and online professional learning opportunities available for teachers. The professional learning includes generalized AI sessions as well as tool-specific training (e.g., Canva, Adobe Firefly). In August, a group of IUSD teachers met to begin the

development of additional professional learning resources. The new resources will supplement current District offerings with professional learning and exemplar resources tailored to different grade levels and content areas.

**Recommendation 5: Schools and educators should be encouraged to collaborate with the various available AI consortiums and think tanks, such as OCDE and CLAOC, to effectively implement AI and establish basic tenets for its use.**

The District has implemented this recommendation as follows: IUSD will continue collaboration with AI consortiums to refine our implementation of AI. IUSD's Superintendent will remain actively involved in the CSBA AI Task Force - a group that discusses the statewide implications of AI and policy recommendations. IUSD will also participate in the Orange County AI Network, a workgroup including educational and technology leaders from throughout the County. Our team will continue participation in regional groups, conferences, and workgroups related to AI through agencies such as Association of California School Administrators (ACSA), California Information Technology in Education (CITE), and California School Business Officials Association (CASBO). Through all of these partnerships, IUSD expects to learn, share, and implement promising practices and resources related to AI.

Please accept the information provided herein as the District's response to the Orange County Grand Jury's Factual Findings and Recommendation in the Report. Once again, the District appreciates the time and attention that the Grand Jury devoted to this very important issue.

Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Terry L. Walker".

Terry L. Walker  
Superintendent of Schools  
Irvine Unified School District

Cc: Orange County Grand Jury  
700 Civic Center Drive West,  
Santa Ana, CA 92701