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November 9, 2026

Sundar Pichai
Chief Executive Officer
Alphabet Inc. and Google
1600 Amphitheatre Parkway
Mountain View, CA 94043

Dear Mr. Pichai,

I am alarmed by Google's policy to block access to Google Search on K-12 student accounts at schools that want to opt out of Google's artificial intelligence (AI) services, including Gemini, Google's AI chatbot. This policy places schools in an impossible position: either give students access to potentially harmful technology or lose a critical educational research tool. Despite the increasing concern over AI chatbots' risks to minors, Google is using its dominant position in the education technology sector to push AI chatbots onto children and teenagers, whether or not their schools believe the technology is safe. This is unacceptable. I urge Google to reverse this policy.

On November 3, Google announced it will implement its "Guided Learning" AI tool in Google Search and Classroom for schools, and that beginning early next year, Google Search and several of its AI products will be off by default for K-12 student accounts unless school administrators turn them on.[1] Notably, Chris Phillips, Google's vice president for education, stated that students in schools that ban or choose to opt out of AI "will not have access to [S]earch."[2] Once the new policy takes effect, schools will be left with only two options for Google's Search tools on school-issued accounts: Search with "AI Overviews" and "AI Mode" chatbot features turned on or search with "Guided Learning," an education-focused AI chatbot tool. Either way, students will have access to an AI chatbot at school. Google has since insisted

[1] Chris Phillips, *Designing responsible AI for learn*ing, News from Google (Nov. 3, 2026), https://blog.google/products-and-platforms/products/education/ai-learning-era-updates-2026/.

[2] Dana Goldstein and Natasha Singer, *Google Will Turn Off Search for Schools That Reject A.I.*, N.Y. Times (Nov. 3, 2026), https://www.nytimes.com/2026/11/03/us/google-search-schools-restrict-ai.html.

that its approach gives schools "more choice, not less" over AI,[3] but its own description of the changes confirms that generative AI will be part of students' experiences using Google Search. That is not a choice. It is an ultimatum to effectively force schools to enable generative AI.

Schools have legitimate reasons to withhold access to AI chatbots, including Gemini. Chatbots are often designed to mimic human interaction and can cause kids to become emotionally attached and dependent on them. In January, Common Sense Media rated Google's classroom Gemini products for K-12 students "High Risk," finding that the AI chatbot can surface inappropriate content to minors, pose mental health risks, and lose its safeguards over long conversations.[4] In July, Common Sense Media rated Google Search's "AI Overviews" and "AI Mode" an "Unacceptable Risk" to children, demonstrating that it failed all scenarios in which it was tested for severe-harm.[5] Just this month, a girl and her family sued Google after Gemini allegedly "helped coach her through a plan to commit suicide."[6] The girl accessed Gemini through Google Search on a school-issued Chromebook, even though the school had blocked access to Gemini's standalone app and website. At a time when schools, parents, and policymakers are working hard to implement safeguards on AI chatbots for our children,[7] Google is recklessly forcing AI on schools and treating kids like collateral damage. Schools deserve the right to block student access to AI chatbots without also forfeiting access to an important educational tool.

Google's dominant position in education technology makes this ultimatum particularly concerning. Although Google has a right to create and offer new educational tools, it should not use its dominant market position to force schools to adopt them. Chromebooks — which come preloaded with Google's apps, including Gmail, Docs, and Classroom — are the most widely issued student devices in U.S. schools, and Google has long maintained dominance over the search market.[8] Google is now using that position to advance its AI ambitions. For example, in August, the company turned on AI features by default for K-12 students on Google Classroom, a move that upset school leaders who believed schools should decide how and when students use AI.[9] Although the November announcement reversed that policy, it did not change Google's requirement that schools must accept generative AI features within Search if they want their

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[3] News from Google (@NewsFromGoogle), X (Nov. 3, 2026, 3:25 PM), https://x.com/NewsFromGoogle/status/2117714815477059722.

[4] *Common Sense Media AI Risk Assessment: Gemini K–12,* Common Sense Media (Jan. 9, 2026), https://www.commonsensemedia.org/sites/default/files/ai-ratings/csm-ai-risk-assessment-gemini-k-12-01092026.pdf.

[5] *AI Risk Assessment Google Search: AI Overview & AI Mode,* Common Sense Media (July 14, 2026), https://institute.commonsensemedia.org/sites/default/files/risk-assessments/csm-ai-risk-assessment-google-search-07142026_0.pdf.

[6] Shweta Watwe, *Gemini on Student's Chromebook Targeted in Mental Health Lawsuit,* Bloomberg Law News (Nov. 5, 2026), https://www.bgov.com/news/TO1QDSKIP3IA.

[7] Press Release, Senator Edward J. Markey, Momentum Builds for Senator Markey's Legislation to Protect Kids from AI Chatbots (July 21, 2026), https://www.markey.senate.gov/news/press-releases/momentum-builds-for-senator-markeys-legislation-to-protect-kids-from-ai-chatbots.

[8] Dana Goldstein and Natasha Singer, *Google Will Turn Off Search for Schools That Reject A.I.*, N.Y. Times (Nov. 3, 2026), https://www.nytimes.com/2026/11/03/us/google-search-schools-restrict-ai.html.

[9] Natasha Singer, *Google Turns On Gemini A.I. for Students Using Its Classroom App*, N.Y. Times (Aug. 14, 2026), https://www.nytimes.com/2026/08/14/business/google-gemini-ai-schools.html.

students to retain access to it. In other words, Google is making AI the price of admission to Search.

Schools that have weighed the risks and concluded that their students should not have access to AI chatbots in school must be able to act on that decision without forfeiting access to the most widely used research tool in the world. For that reason, Google should immediately reverse course and allow schools to disable generative AI features and chatbots on K-12 student accounts without losing access to Google Search.

To help the public better understand Google's decision and its plans for K-12 students, please respond in writing to the following questions by November 30, 2026:

1. Will Google commit to allowing schools to disable generative AI features and chatbots on K-12 student accounts, including AI Overviews, Gemini, and Guided Learning, while retaining access to Google Search? If not, why not?

2. Is it technically feasible for Google to provide K-12 student accounts with Google Search results that exclude AI Overviews, Guided Learning, and other generative AI features or chatbots? If so, why has Google not offered that option to schools that opt out of AI? If not, please explain the specific technical barriers supporting that explanation.

3. Please provide any research, testing, or risk assessments that Google has conducted on the safety, mental health, and learning effects of AI Overviews, Gemini, and Guided Learning on K-12 students, including for children under age 13. If Google has not conducted such research, why not?

4. How many K-12 schools and districts that use Google's products currently restrict or prohibit students' access to generative AI features or AI chatbots outside Google Search?

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator