

The Founder's Filter

5 Questions to Ask Before You Buy Educational Technology

In August 2026, the U.S. Department of Education issued guidance telling schools to judge technology by one test: does it improve measurable student outcomes, or doesn't it. The letter doesn't hand schools a checklist, but we think its own language builds one.

Run every tool you're evaluating through these five questions before you sign anything.

1

Can the vendor show real evidence the tool improves outcomes, not just adoption numbers?

2

Is student data handled transparently, with clear limits on who sees what?

3

Does it reduce your admin workload without replacing your own judgment as an educator?

4

Is it accessible to every student who needs it, not just the average one?

5

Would you be comfortable explaining this tool to a parent who asked exactly what it does with their child's information?

💡 If a tool fails two or more of these, it's probably solving a problem you don't have yet.

Building a school from scratch?

DreamClass is school management software built for schools starting from zero: bulk actions, reusable templates, ready-to-use attendance, progress, transcript, and financial reports, and transparent guardian access, all in one system. See how it holds up against this filter at dreamclass.io.

Based on Source: U.S. Department of Education, Dear Colleague Letter on Responsible Use of Education Technology in the Classroom, August 20, 2026. ed.gov