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## Artificial Help or Academic Harm?

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In the era where AI has become a significant part of our daily lives, we must ask an important question: Is it helping us, or is it holding us back? As technology continues to grow fast, so does the debate on whether artificial intelligence is benefiting or harming our education system and society as a whole. According to [aiprm.com](#), “Around half (51%) of teachers feel that the use of AI in education will have a positive impact, compared to just over a fifth (21%) who hold negative views.”( 2025)

To gain more insight into this topic, I reached out to faculty and staff at Wyoming Valley West Middle School. Dr. Oliveira, chair of the math department at Wyoming Valley West Middle School (WVWMS), shared her professional opinion on how AI is influencing student engagement and academic honesty, particularly in subjects like math where step-by-step problem-solving is essential. She believes that although there are tools that will assist students when they are struggling, these tools are just being used to get an answer or credit on an assignment. Educators can use AI as an aide and a resource to help create classroom

materials such as problems sets or activities. With proper education and training, teachers and students can benefit from using AI tools in education.

Ms. Prushinski, a 7th grade language arts teacher said, "I don't like that AI is an everyday use. I believe AI should be used in moderation, but not fully banned. Whether we like it or not, AI is always going to be part of the learning environment but it is our job to bring it in responsibly. People may say they dislike AI or really like it, everyone's answers will differ based on their opinion. Some people that say they dislike AI might be people who have trouble with it, teachers (because a lot of people use it to do their work), or people who think AI is becoming overused. Some people that might really like AI are people who use it and it helps them students, for example, because it helps them do their work."

Ms. Prushinski's statement highlights that the conversation around AI isn't simply black and white there's a significant gray area when it comes to how AI is used, misused, and managed. This is exactly what makes the discussion so important. A 2020 report by McKinsey & Company found that AI can help educators use their time more efficiently. We also explored how AI is impacting classrooms today. According to the [University of Iowa College of Education](#), there are several strategies teachers can use to limit the misuse of artificial intelligence in the classroom. They explain, "Teachers worry about students using AI technology to bypass learning, such as using it to complete assignments. One way to address this is by designing assignments that require personal engagement and critical thinking, which are harder for AI technologies to replicate." By implementing these kinds of strategies, educators can maintain academic integrity while still embracing the benefits AI has to offer.

To expand the conversation beyond faculty, we also gathered student perspectives. Two students, Aiden Maciejczyk and Kinsely Tomchao, offered their views on AI in the classroom, showing how the next generation is already forming opinions on this rapidly evolving tool. Aiden shared, *"I really like how AI helps me. It makes doing homework and projects so much easier. It gives me ideas and helps me understand things faster. It's a great resource when I need help, especially for subjects like math where I sometimes struggle with certain concepts."*

Furthermore, Kinsely Tomchao believes that using AI in education requires balance. She finds it helpful when managing multiple assignments, as it can clarify complex topics and support her learning. However, she makes a conscious effort not to let AI take over her educational experience. Instead, she recommends using AI as a tool to enhance understanding while still doing the thinking, writing, and reflecting independently to ensure meaningful learning.

To further understand how AI is shaping education at the student level, it's essential to consider the voices of middle and high school learners. According to a [national deliberative poll by the California School Boards Association \(2024\)](#), high school students recognize the value of AI for tasks such as writing assistance and coding but also stress the importance of critical thinking and caution against over usage. Similarly, a recent

[survey published on arXiv](#) found that nearly 70% of middle and high school students have used AI tools like ChatGPT to help with homework and learning across various subjects. While students used these tools for improving understanding and saving time, they also expressed concerns about problems and the need for better guidance. An article from the [Harvard Graduate School of Education](#) echoed these things, noting that many teens want adults to understand that they're not blindly depending on AI, but are trying to use it thoughtfully and responsibly. These findings suggest that while students are eager to embrace AI's benefits, they also value balance and integrity in their academic experiences.