IndependentWomen®

Artificial Intelligence and Education

In 60 Seconds

What's at Stake

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is here to stay, and schools will have to find a strategy to make the most of it as a tool, but also ensure students can think on their own, rather than depending on a machine to think for them. Moreover, given the importance of AI in the technological and scientific sectors in particular, the United States must improve its STEM education.

Putting our heads in the sand and ignoring AI in education is not an option: As teachers around the country have found out, cheating has become easier with generative AI, as students are able to outsource their thinking to the machine faster and easier than ever before—but, on a more positive note, making problem sets and giving students individualized assignments and support has also never been faster and easier. While carelessly allowing AI use will hamper students from learning, failing to incorporate it at all will put us behind both educationally and technologically, relative to the rest of the world.

A Better Path Forward

American schools must return to technology-free classrooms, except in subjects and cases where technology is explicitly required (e.g., technical instruments for labs, courses that require the use of spreadsheets, computer science, etc.).

- Math classes already generally rely on in-class assessments, often weighting them more heavily than homework.
- Humanities and science classrooms will have to do the same, and evaluate students based on timed, in-class, blue book essays and open-response questions in which cheating via AI is virtually impossible.

AI is a tool like any other, one that can be used well or used poorly. There are use cases for it in the classroom, especially as far as teachers are concerned. Teachers, for instance, can use AI to create worksheets based on state standards, tailored to their classrooms and their students' needs.

In the age of AI, the worst thing we could do is allow students to let machines do their thinking for them. That will make us, as a nation, dependent on machines rather than making us competent enough to use machines to the human and national interest.

Addressing Misperceptions

MISPERCEPTIONS	FACTS
The benefits of EdTech outweigh the harms of EdTech in schools.	EdTech companies are incentivized to overstate the merits of their products so as to meet their bottom lines. The most obvious solution is simply not to have laptops in the classroom in the first place.
We must teach students how to use technology in the classroom.	Keeping classrooms free of smartphones and tablets doesn't mean that technology, including AI, can never be used in them—it just means that technology, including AI, should be used judiciously rather than carelessly. Judicious use might involve teaching students how to do calculations via spreadsheets and advanced graphing calculator programs in higher-level math and science courses, for instance, or reserving monitored computer use for computer science courses, while teaching children in younger grades how to do basic mathematical operations without calculators.
Students are doing fine with the current status quo; we don't need to change our approach to AI and technology in classrooms.	Per the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) results released by the Nation's Report Card in 2025, 61% of fourth-grade students and 72% of eighth-grade students are not proficient in math. Moreover, a recent faculty report at the University of California, San Diego—one of the nation's top public universities—showed that the share of its first-year students who are not able to meet middle school math standards has grown thirtyfold in the past five years.

To learn more, read the Policy Focus: Artificial Intelligence and Education.