EMPOWERING TEACHERS IN THE DIGITAL AGE

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Artificial Intelligence (AI) is becoming a significant part of education in the Philippines as schools adopt new technologies to enhance learning and classroom practices. In early 2026, the Department of Education (DepEd) launched Project AGAP.AI (Accelerating Governance and Adaptive Pedagogy through Artificial Intelligence), a nationwide initiative designed to help schools, teachers, students, and parents understand and use AI responsibly in basic education. The program includes nationwide AI training, plans to introduce AI literacy into curricula, and the development of guidelines for ethical and safe deployment of AI in classrooms. Implementation will begin in phases throughout 2026, with goals to build AI skills for more than 1.5 million participants, including 300,000 teachers and 1.05 million learners.

tools are already being used in classrooms to support teaching and learning. Through partnerships like that between DepEd and Microsoft Philippines, AI-powered platforms such as Reading Progress have been adopted in several school divisions to automate reading assessment, give real-time feedback, and help teachers identify areas where students need additional help. In some cases, tasks that once took days to assess are now completed in hours.

As schools adopt these tools, teachers play a central role in guiding how AI is used. DepEd officials have emphasized that AI should serve as a partner to teachers, not a replacement, by reducing administrative workload and supporting personalized learning. While AI can adapt content to student performance and provide instant

feedback, teachers remain essential for interpreting learning needs, fostering creativity, and nurturing students' emotional and social development.

The rapid use of AI has also prompted DepEd to clarify policies. In a new set of guidelines, the department stressed that AI tools should function as supportive technologies with teachers and learners at the center of instruction. Students are encouraged to disclose when they use AI for homework or research to promote honesty and critical thinking, while high risk AI applications such as grading decisions or automated disciplinary actions require strict human oversight.

Teachers' attitudes toward AI are evolving as well. Research involving Filipino educators shows that many teachers have a positive view of integrating AI tools into classrooms and believe these technologies can complement traditional teaching methods when used responsibly. They recognize AI's potential to support diverse learners and personalize instruction while still valuing the human role in education.

Despite the opportunities, responsible use remains a key priority. DepEd's developing AI policies aim to protect learners' data privacy, promote ethical deployment, and ensure AI literacy will enable students to understand both the benefits and potential risks of AI as it becomes more embedded in school systems.

AI in Philippine education is not just about technology adoption but about strengthening teachers' capacity and enhancing learning outcomes. With clear policies, teacher training, and ethical guidelines, AI tools are being integrated in ways that support teachers' professional roles, help reduce routine tasks, and provide personalized learning experiences for students.

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