GALLUP | WALTON FAMILY FOUNDATION

TEACHING FOR TOMORROW

Unlocking Six Weeks a Year With AI

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Executive Summary and Key Findings

As Americans determine how AI tools can benefit their work and lives, teachers are also establishing how the new technology will fit into K-12 education and whether it has the potential to address some of the challenges they face. Prior research from the Walton Family Foundation and Gallup[1] underscores what is at stake for today's teachers:

> **High workload:** On average, teachers say they are working 50 hours per week, and just 45% are satisfied with the amount they are paid.

> **Lagging student achievement**: Nearly four in 10 teachers don't agree that their students are on track to succeed in school. One in three say their students are not excited about what they're learning in classes.

> **Plans to return**: One in five teachers are either unsure about returning to the classroom or do not plan to in the next school year.

The Walton Family Foundation partnered with Gallup to find out how teachers are using AI tools in the classroom and whether AI might have the potential to save them time, alleviate burnout, or address key issues related to student achievement and engagement.

Over 2,000 teachers responded to a web-based survey in April 2025, sharing how AI is already impacting their students and teaching and how they believe AI will change both their profession and student success in the future. Findings also reveal a meaningful "AI dividend": When teachers invest time to learn about and use AI tools, they save valuable time that can then be used to provide more meaningful student feedback, create more individualized and engaging lesson plans, communicate with parents or even gain back time with their family.

1 Walton Family Foundation and Gallup. (n.d.). Walton Family Foundation Educator Research. https://www.gallup.com/analytics/659819/k-12-teacher-research.aspx

Key findings from the *Teaching for Tomorrow: Unlocking Six Weeks a Year With AI* study include:

01.

Six in 10 teachers have used an AI tool for their work this school year, with heavier use among high school (66%) and early-career teachers (69%).

02.

Teachers who use AI weekly save 5.9 hours per week — the equivalent of six weeks per school year. Currently, about three in 10 teachers are using AI at least weekly, with more frequent users experiencing greater time savings.

03.

Most teachers who use AI tools say the tools improve the quality of their work: 64% see higher quality in the modifications they make to student materials, 61% say they generate higher-quality insights about student learning or achievement data, and 57% say AI improves the quality of their grading and student feedback.

04.

Teachers who use AI are more likely to be optimistic about the impacts of AI on student outcomes: 48% of weekly AI users think AI will increase student engagement, compared with 25% of non-users.

05.

Nineteen percent of high school teachers say their college-bound students are not prepared for college, and 35% say their students who plan to enter the workforce are not prepared to do so.

06.

Teachers at schools with an AI policy are more likely to say they've used AI tools, and their schools received a 26% greater "AI dividend," or more hours saved per teacher.

Detailed Findings

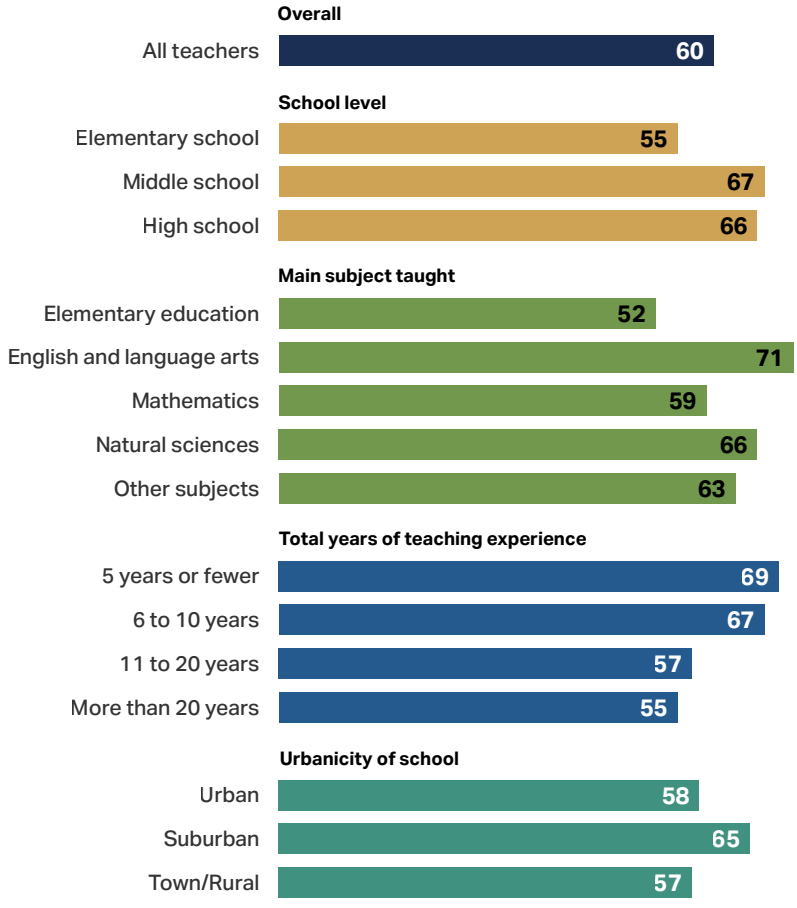
Six in 10 teachers have used an AI tool for their work this school year.

AI use is already widespread among K-12 teachers: 60% have used an AI tool for their work during the 2024-25 school year, and high school and early-career teachers are even more likely to be using the tools (66% and 69%, respectively). AI tool use is also higher among teachers in suburban schools (65%) compared with urban (58%) and town/rural schools (57%).

CHART 1

AI use by teacher and school characteristics

During the 2024-25 school year, have you used any AI tools, like chatbots, adaptive learning systems, or other interactive AI platforms for your work or teaching? (e.g., preparing to teach, making student learning materials or assessments, grading or providing feedback)



Teachers apply AI tools to their workload in a variety of ways, mostly around lesson planning and preparation.

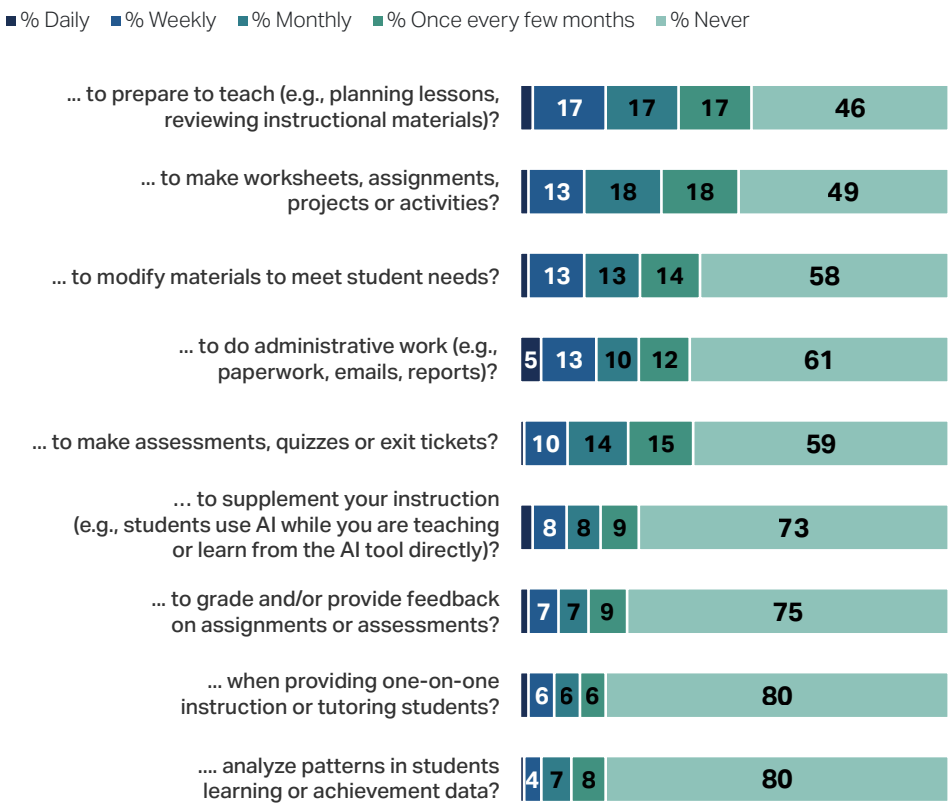
Thirty-seven percent of teachers say they use AI tools when preparing to teach at least once a month, making it the most common application of AI.

Other common applications of AI tools include making worksheets (33%), modifying student materials to meet students' needs (28%), doing administrative work (28%) and making assessments (25%). The least frequent applications are using AI tools to grade (16%), to provide one-on-one instruction (14%) and to analyze student data (12%).

CHART 2

Frequency of using AI tools for various teaching tasks

How often do you use AI tools ... ?

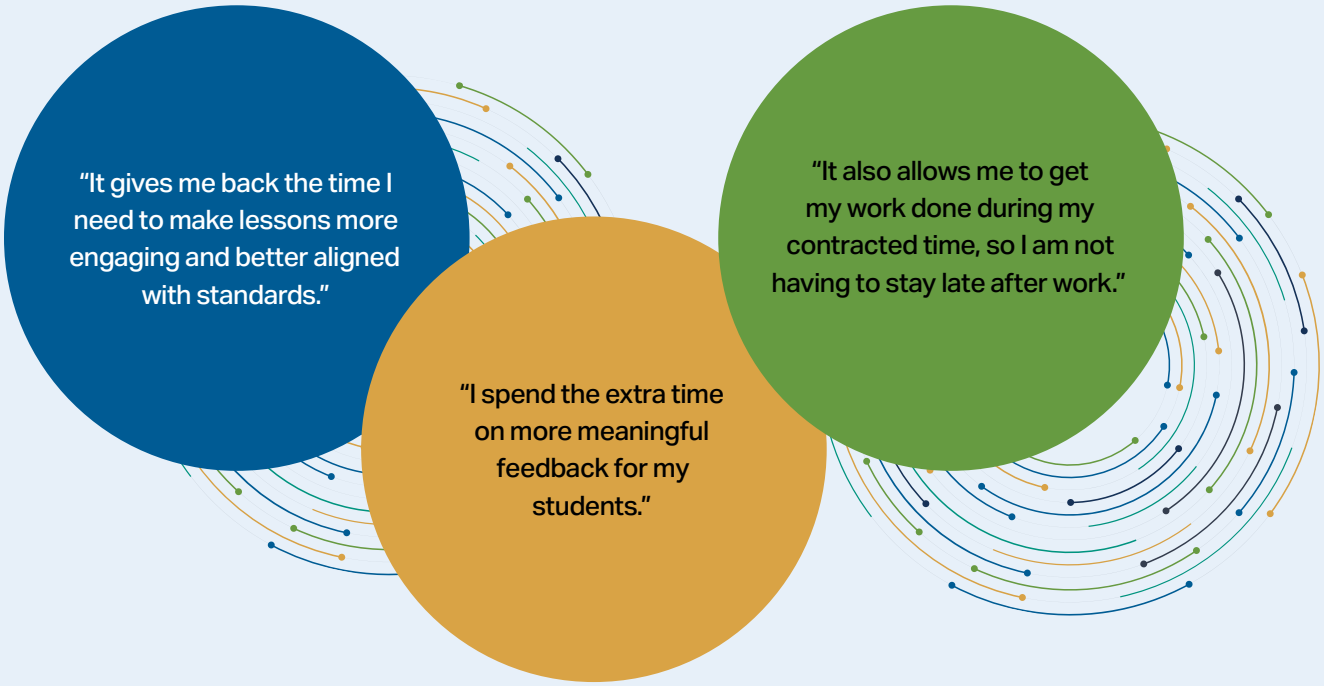


Note: Data labels less than 4% are not displayed.

Teachers at schools that have an AI policy are more likely to have used AI in their teaching in the past year than those at schools that do not (70% vs. 60%). Yet only about one in five teachers (19%) are employed at schools with an AI policy.

The AI dividend: Teachers who use AI tools gain six weeks per school year to reinvest in their classroom.

In the 2024-25 school year, AI tools are already having a meaningful impact on time savings and giving an "AI dividend" back to teachers who invest the time into learning to use them. Teachers who use AI tools at least weekly estimate saving 5.9 hours per week on average.[2] Over the course of a school year, these time savings add up to an additional six weeks, which teachers can then reinvest in other areas. Qualitative data from the survey show that teachers use the time they save with AI on things like providing more nuanced student feedback, creating individualized lessons, writing emails to parents and getting home to their families at a more reasonable time.



The AI dividend pays — but only for those who invest. Just as an individual must make an investment to earn a dividend, educators must invest in learning about AI tools to earn the AI dividend. Despite the benefits of the AI dividend for teachers who use AI, 40% of teachers still aren't using it at all. Another 28% are using it, but infrequently, and 32% are using it at least weekly, leaving a big gap between the AI adopters and those who are still observing.

Teachers who invest more time in learning and using AI also derive greater benefits from this technology: Weekly AI users save an average of 5.9 hours each week, whereas monthly users estimate saving the equivalent of 2.9 hours per week.

2 This number was generated by asking each teacher who uses AI at least weekly to estimate how many hours AI saves or adds to their workload each week. More information about calculating the AI dividend is available in the methodology.

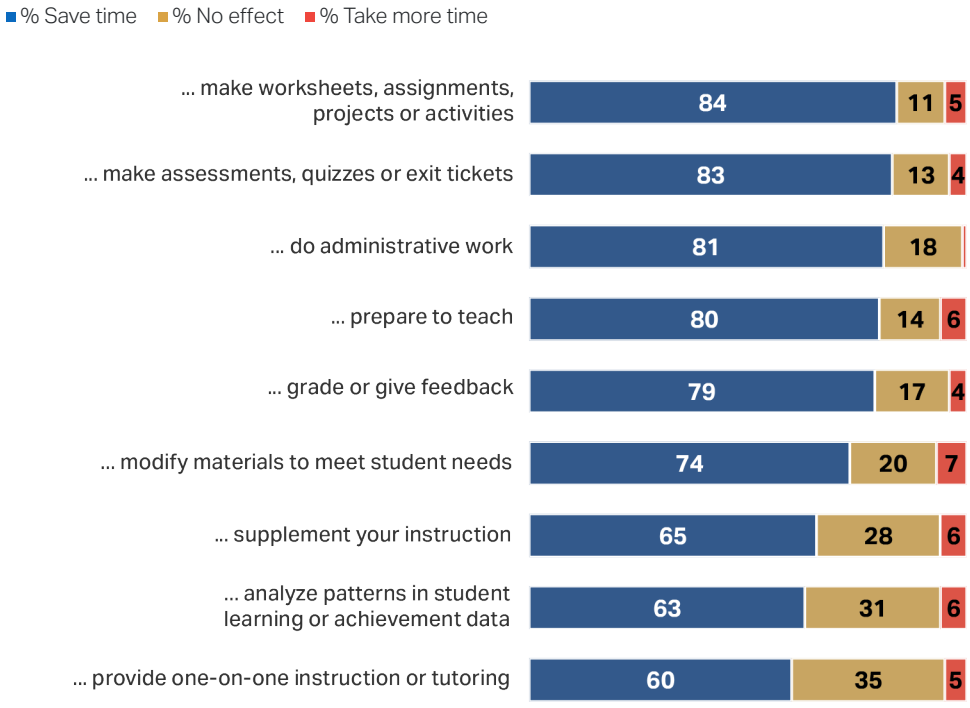
Teachers who use AI tools overwhelmingly say those tools save them time across a range of tasks.

Out of a list of nine tasks, teachers are most likely to report that AI saves them time when making worksheets or assessments, doing administrative work or preparing to teach.

CHART 3

The percentage of teachers who say AI saves them time on various work tasks

When you use AI tools to … does it save time, take more time or have no effect on the amount of time?



Note: Results for each task are reported among teachers who report using AI for that task at least monthly. Data labels less than 4% are not displayed.

Most teachers who use AI tools say the tools improve the quality of their classroom work.

Applying AI tools to their classroom work not only saves teachers time but in many cases also improves quality. A majority of teachers who use AI say it improves the quality of their everyday work tasks — and very few (16% or less) say the quality is lessened.

Among teachers who use AI tools for the following tasks:

64% see better quality in the materials they modify to meet student needs.

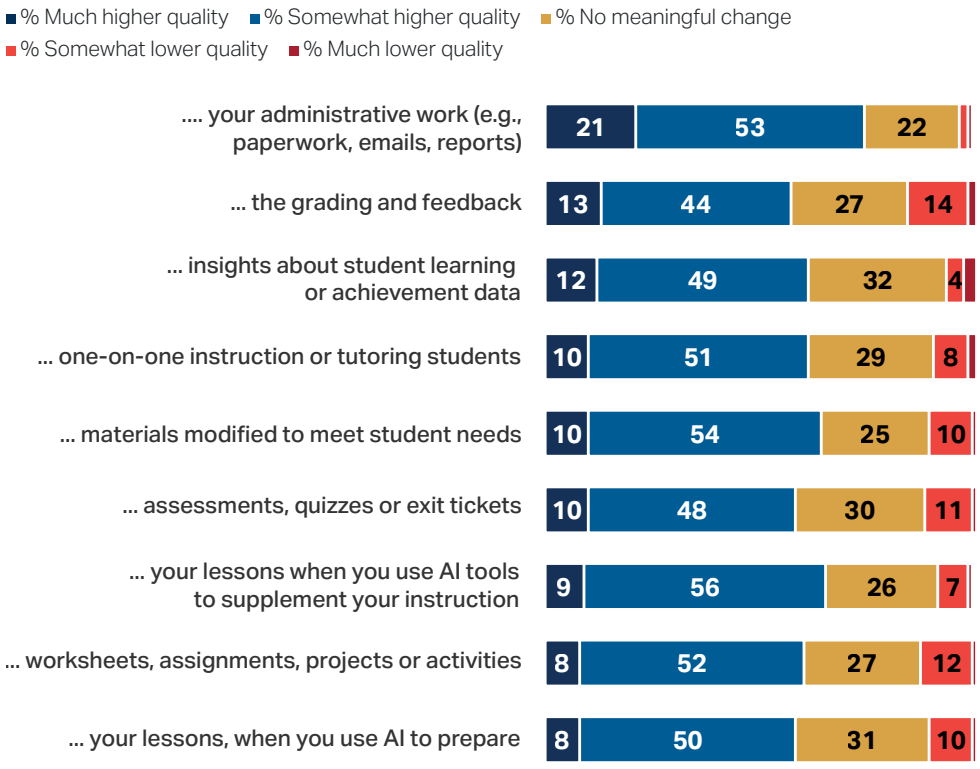
61% generate higher-quality insights about student learning or achievement data.

57% improve the quality of their student feedback and grading.

CHART 4

Impact of AI tools on quality of teachers' everyday work tasks

How would you describe the quality of … when you use AI tools?



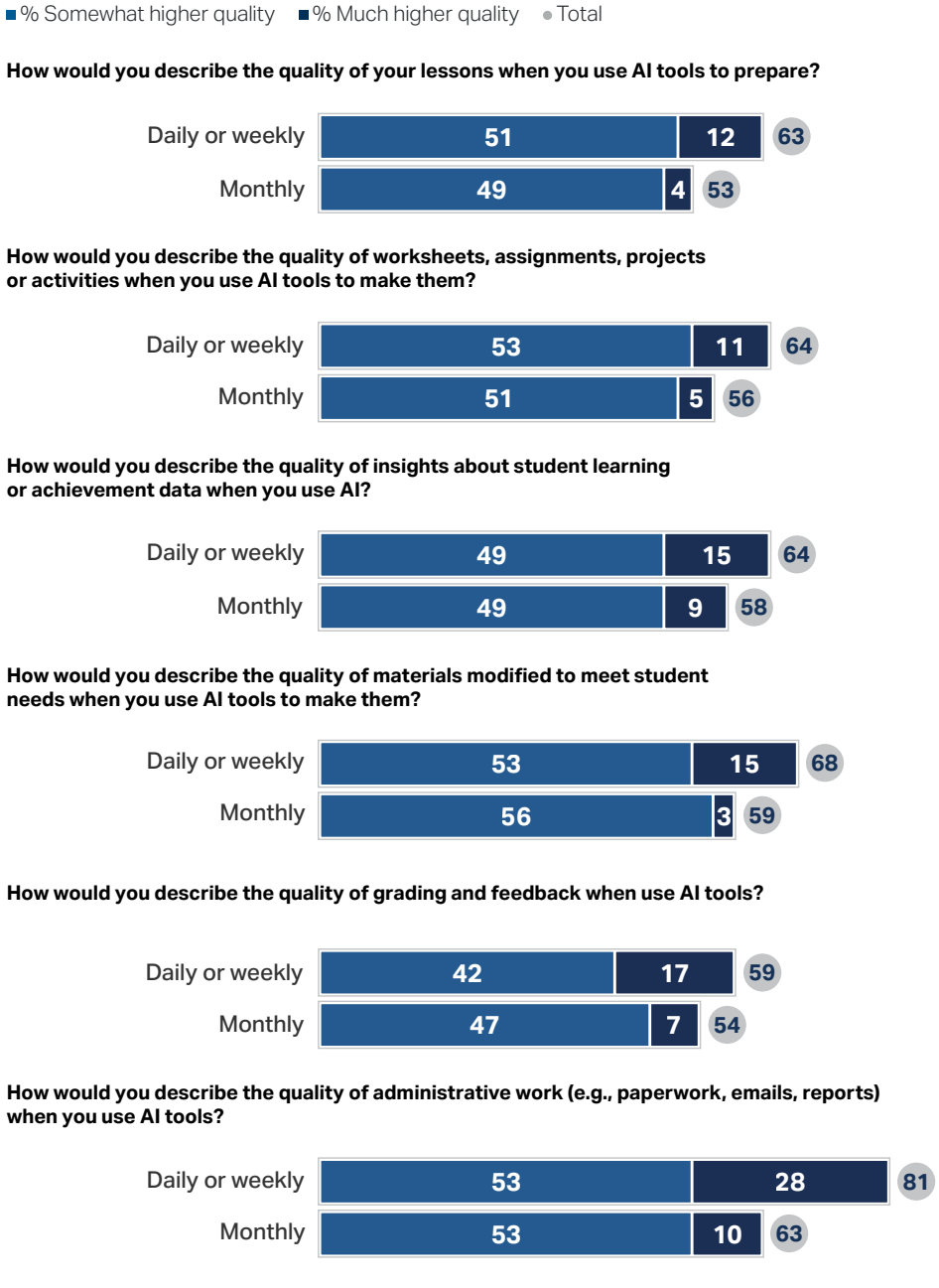
Note: Data labels less than 4% are not displayed.

Teachers who use AI more frequently are even more likely to see higher quality in their work tasks when using AI. In many cases, teachers who use AI at least weekly are twice as likely as less-frequent users to say that AI results in "much higher-quality" work.

CHART 5

Impact of AI tools on quality of teachers' work tasks, by frequency of teacher's AI use

How would you describe the quality of … when you use AI tools?



More frequent AI users see more potential for AI tools in education.

Teachers are slightly more likely to support than oppose the use of AI tools in K-12 schools.

Teachers are still gaining experience with AI tools in the K-12 setting, and no clear consensus exists on whether AI tools should be used in K-12 schools.

Overall, 40% of teachers strongly or somewhat favor the use of AI tools in K-12 schools, and 28% strongly or somewhat oppose.

Teachers in the natural sciences (42%) and subjects other than elementary, English language arts or math (47%) are the most likely to favor AI use. Male (44%) and Hispanic teachers (44%) are also more likely to favor the use of AI.

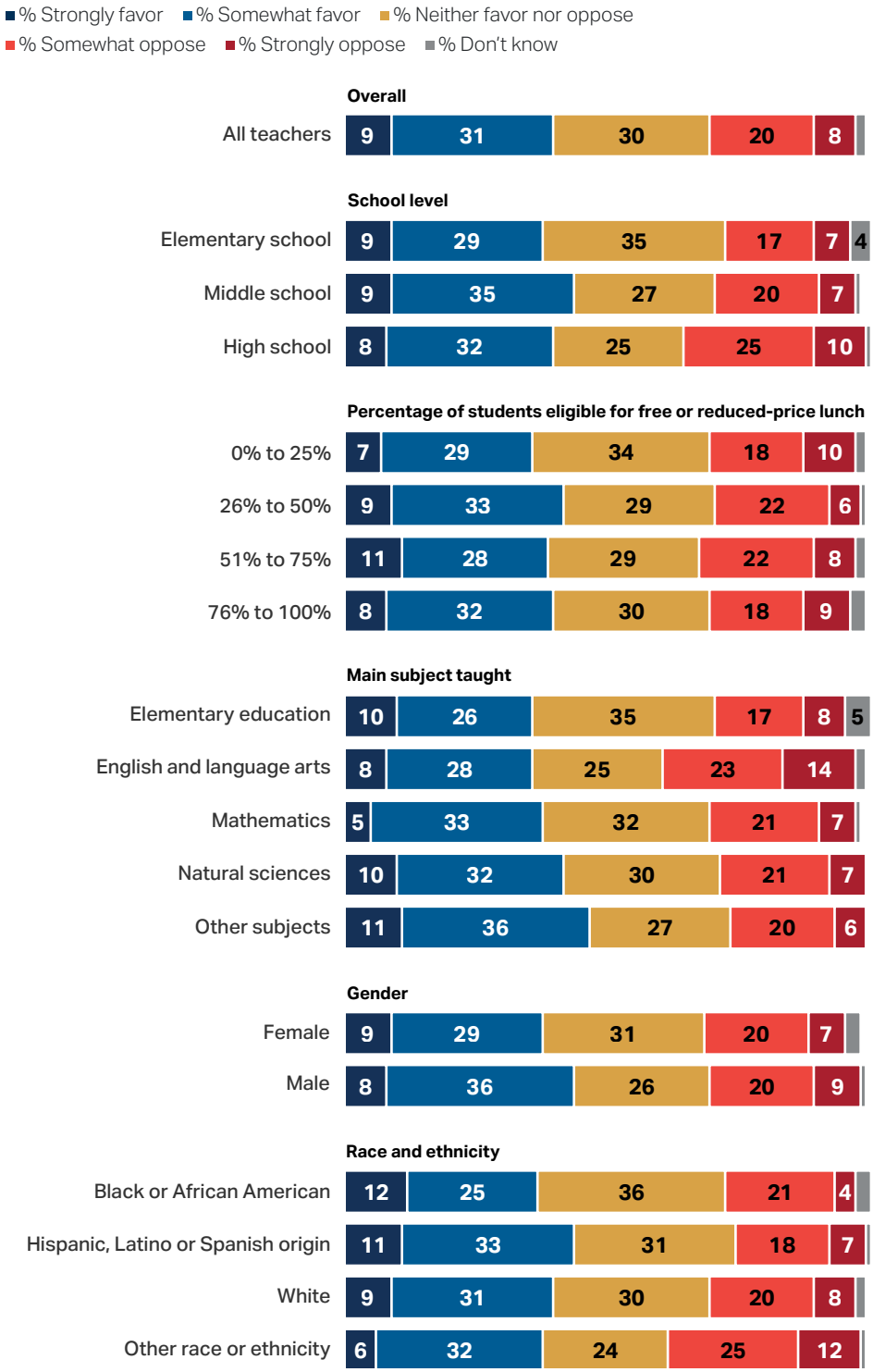
While high school teachers are among the heaviest users of AI, they are also among those most likely to oppose the use of AI. These teachers work with students who are the most likely to use AI (53% use it weekly compared with 41% of middle school students) — and to use it when they should not. Findings from the *Voices of Gen Z: How American Youth View and Use Artificial Intelligence*[3] study show that 35% of high school students say most or all of their classmates use AI when they are not supposed to, compared with 24% of middle school students.

3 Walton Family Foundation and Gallup. (2025). Voices of Gen Z: How American Youth View and Use Artificial Intelligence. https://www.gallup.com/file/analytics/658901/Gallup-Walton-Family-Foundation_Voices-of-Gen-Z_How-American-Youth-View-AI-Report.pdf

CHART 6

Support or opposition to the use of AI tools in K-12 schools, by teacher's grade level and subject taught

In general, to what extent do you favor or oppose the use of AI tools in K-12 schools?



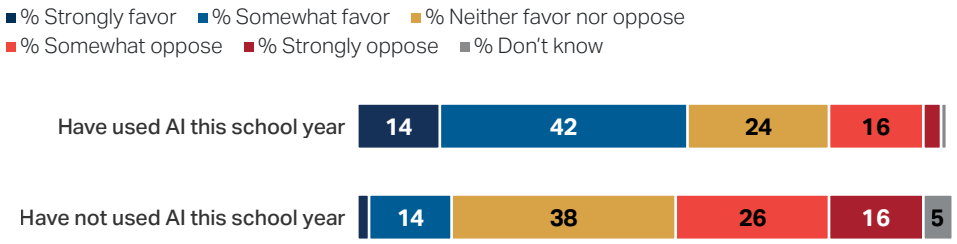
Note: Data labels less than 4% are not displayed.

Teachers who have used AI at least once in the past school year are more than twice as likely to favor use of AI tools in K-12 schools compared with those who have not used AI (56% vs. 16%).

CHART 7

Support or opposition to AI tools in K-12 schools among AI users vs. non-users

In general, to what extent do you favor or oppose the use of AI tools in K-12 schools?



Note: Data labels less than 4% are not displayed.

Findings from the *Voices of Gen Z: How American Youth View and Use Artificial Intelligence*[4] study also show that a plurality of students think their teachers should be able to use AI. Fifty-one percent of Gen Z K-12 students think teachers should be allowed to use AI tools for things like planning lessons (20% disagree). Thirty-nine percent of Gen Z K-12 students think teachers should be allowed to use AI tools for things like grading (31% disagree).

When it comes to their own use of AI tools, K-12 students also show some hesitancy, similar to their teachers: 47% of students agree they should be allowed to use AI tools for classwork and homework, while 31% neither agree nor disagree.

4 Walton Family Foundation and Gallup. (2025). Voices of Gen Z: How American Youth View and Use Artificial Intelligence. https://www.gallup.com/file/analytics/658901/Gallup-Walton-Family-Foundation_Voices-of-Gen-Z_How-American-Youth-View-AI-Report.pdf

Teachers see the most potential for AI tools to improve the accessibility of student materials, teacher workload and student engagement.

To better understand the possibilities that teachers envision when they think of AI in schools, Gallup asked respondents to consider a list of AI tools' potential benefits.

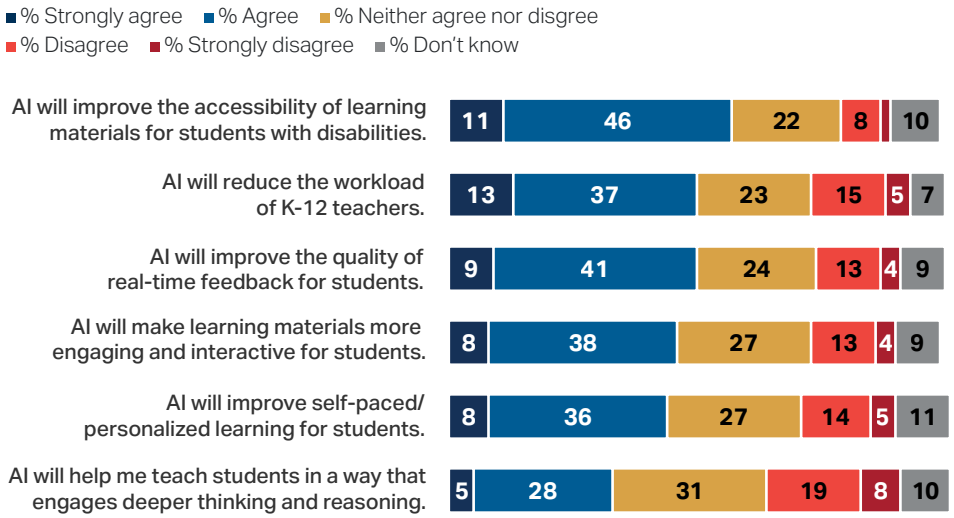
Accessibility emerged at the top of that list, as 57% of teachers agree (46%) or strongly agree (11%) that AI will improve the accessibility of learning materials for students with disabilities. Special education teachers are even more likely to agree AI will yield this benefit (65%).

Roughly half of teachers agree that AI will reduce the workload of teachers (50%), improve the quality of real-time feedback for students (50%) and make learning materials more engaging (46%).

CHART 8

Teachers' evaluation of the potential benefits of using AI tools

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements.



Note: Data labels less than 4% are not displayed.

Teachers who use AI tools are more likely to see the benefit of those tools for their work tasks, with more than six in 10 agreeing they could help improve accessibility, reduce teacher workloads and improve the quality of real-time feedback.

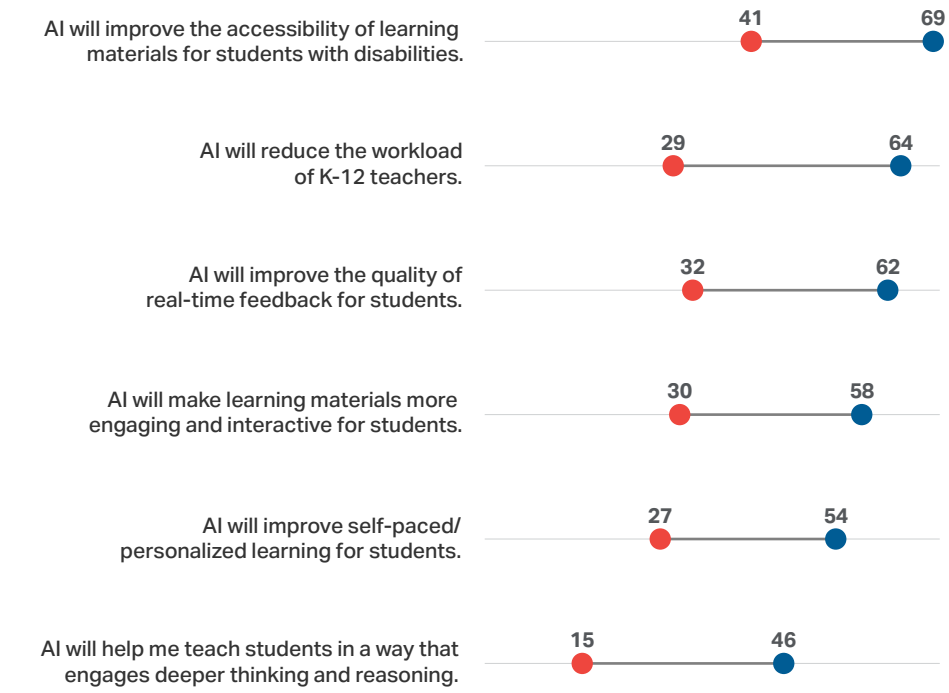
The cause of more positive expectations among AI users is likely multi-faceted. As more educators adopt AI tools for teaching, the benefits and drawbacks of using AI tools will become more defined.

CHART 9

Potential benefits of AI tools, by teachers who have and have not used AI tools

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements.

% Strongly agree + agree



Teachers who use AI have a more confident outlook on AI tools' ability to improve student outcomes.

When it comes to the impact of AI tools on student outcomes, teachers still lack consensus. At least four in 10 are neutral or don't know what effect AI will have on student engagement, motivation, grades, and college and workforce preparation. Roughly three in 10 teachers expect AI will increase positive outcomes in these areas, with similar proportions expecting AI to decrease positive outcomes, except for grades. With respect to grades, 32% predict AI will increase student grades and 10% think it will decrease them.

CHART 10

Top five greatest opportunities perceived by teachers

If your students used AI tools at least weekly, do you think it would increase, decrease or have no effect on ...

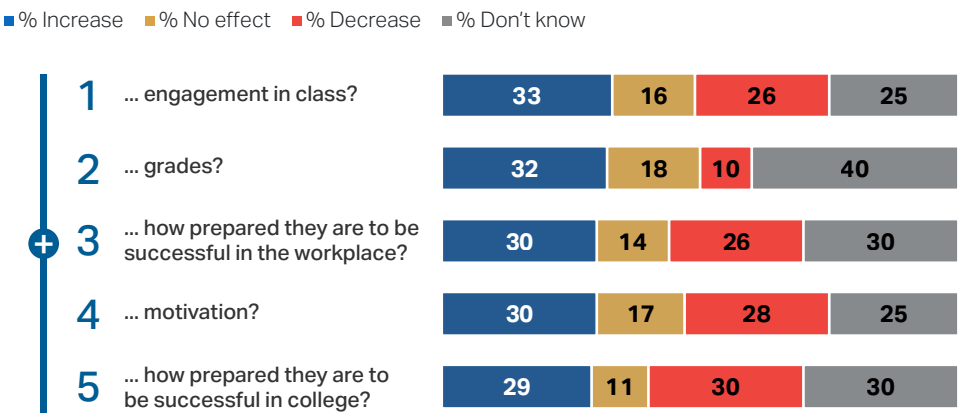
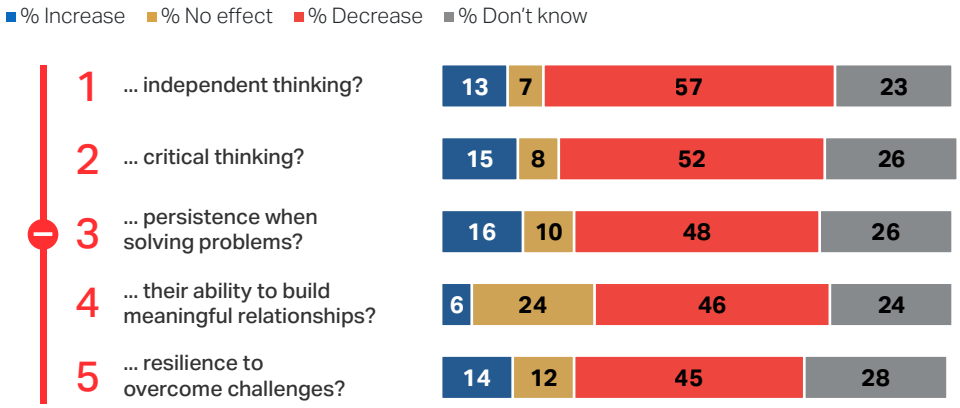


CHART 11

Top five greatest risk areas perceived by teachers

If your students used AI tools at least weekly, do you think it would increase, decrease or have no effect on ...



Teachers and Gen Z students are mostly aligned on the concerns they have for students' independence and critical thinking, as well as persistence when solving problems. Prior research from the Walton Family Foundation and Gallup in the *Voices of Gen Z: How American Youth View and Use Artificial Intelligence*[5] study shows that 49% of Gen Zers think AI will hurt their ability to think about information carefully. Similarly, independent and critical thinking are the top two areas that teachers predict will see negative effects from AI tool usage when it comes to student outcomes.

5 Walton Family Foundation and Gallup. (2025). Voices of Gen Z: How American Youth View and Use Artificial Intelligence. https://www.gallup.com/file/analytics/658901/Gallup-Walton-Family-Foundation_Voices-of-Gen-Z_How-American-Youth-View-AI-Report.pdf

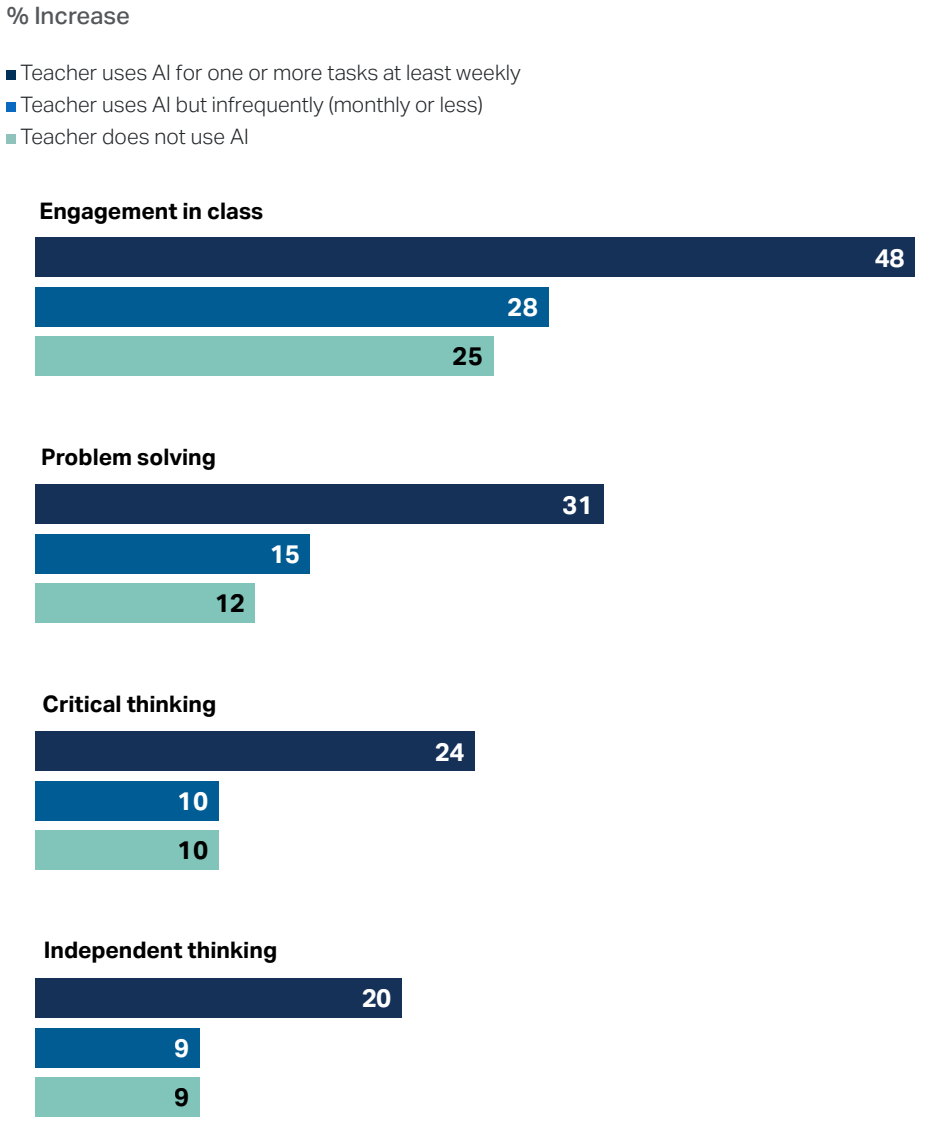
However, more frequent users of AI are more likely to be optimistic about its impact on students.

For example, 48% of teachers who use AI weekly think AI will increase student engagement, compared with 28% of teachers who use AI infrequently and 25% of teachers who have never used it this school year.

CHART 12

Perceived impact on student outcomes by frequency of AI use

If your students used AI tools at least weekly, do you think it would increase, decrease or have no effect on … ?



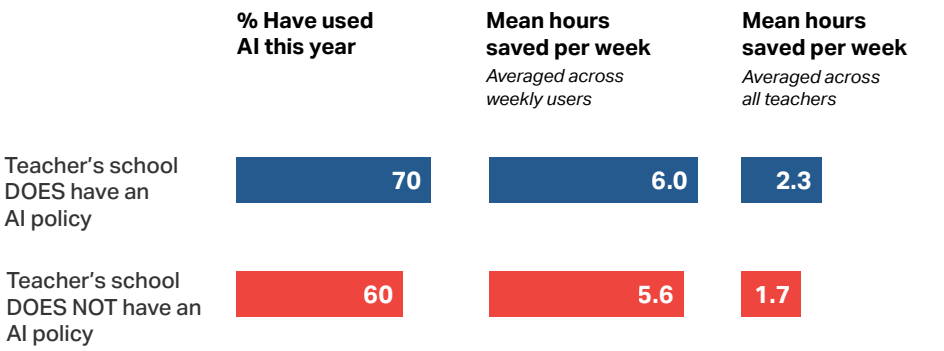
Some schools and teachers are poised to benefit more than others from the use of AI tools.

Schools with an AI policy see more returns from the AI dividend.

Teachers at schools with AI policies are more likely to have used AI in the past year (70% vs. 60%), and this translates to a better AI dividend for those schools. With more teachers using AI tools, schools with an AI policy are earning an AI dividend that is 26% greater than schools without an AI policy (2.3 vs. 1.7 hours saved per week per teacher).

CHART 13

School AI policies' impact on AI use and time savings



Findings from the *Voices of Gen Z: How American Youth View and Use Artificial Intelligence*[6] study highlight the impact that school AI policies have on students' confidence to use AI in their postgraduation life. Results show that in schools that allow AI use in at least some circumstances, 57% of students agree they will know how to use artificial intelligence in their daily life after they graduate. For students at schools that do not allow AI use, just 32% feel they will know how to use AI after graduation.

6 Walton Family Foundation and Gallup. (2025). Voices of Gen Z: How American Youth View and Use Artificial Intelligence. https://www.gallup.com/file/analytics/658901/Gallup-Walton-Family-Foundation_Voices-of-Gen-Z_How-American-Youth-View-AI-Report.pdf

Schools that are unable to support their teachers with training and schoolwide policies on AI may risk widening the gaps that already exist between teachers with and without AI skills. In the 2024-25 school year, most teachers (68%) have not engaged in any training provided by their school or district on how to use AI or AI tools. In fact, teachers are more likely to teach themselves how to use AI than to receive training from their school or district (52% vs. 31%). And with just 19% of teachers saying their school has a policy on how to use AI, most schools stand to benefit from adopting policies on AI.

With so much of the "AI dividend" still on the table, there are myriad possibilities for how teachers might leverage AI tools to overcome challenges in teaching and improve student outcomes.

Methodology

Results are based on a web survey conducted March 18 to April 11, 2025, with a sample of 2,232 U.S. teachers working in public K-12 schools. Teachers were recruited from the RAND American Teacher Panel,[7] a nationally representative, probability-based panel of U.S. public school teachers. More information about the RAND American Teacher Panel is available here.

The final sample was weighted to match the school- and teacher-level demographics of K-12 public school teachers in the United States, including school level, student poverty, student race and Hispanic ethnicity, school size, school urbanicity, teacher gender, teacher race and Hispanic ethnicity, and teacher years of experience. Targets for these characteristics were retrieved from the National Center for Education Statistics. Teacher-level characteristics were based on the 2020-2021 National Teacher and Principal Survey, while school-level characteristics were based on the 2022-2023 Common Core of Data.

For the total sample of 2,232 U.S. teachers, the margin of sampling error is ±2.5 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. Margins of error for subgroups are higher. All reported margins of sampling error include computed design effects for weighting. In addition to sampling error, question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of public opinion polls.

7 RAND. (n.d.). RAND American Educator Panels. https://www.rand.org/education-and-labor/survey-panels/aep.html

Calculating the AI Dividend

The AI dividend is the average of the total net time that each teacher estimates saving per week by using AI tools (among teachers who use AI at least monthly). The total net time is based on teachers' estimate of hours saved or spent when using AI for a list of six tasks: making worksheets, making assessments, modifying student materials, grading and/or providing feedback, analyzing patterns in student learning and doing administrative work.

Any teacher who said they have used AI for work or teaching during the 2024-25 school year was also asked how frequently, if ever, they use AI tools on a list of nine tasks. If the teacher indicated they use AI for that task at least monthly, the teacher was then asked whether using AI for that task saves them time, has no effect on time or takes them more time. Teachers who indicated that AI impacts the amount of time spent on a task were then asked to estimate the number of hours, to the nearest half hour, that AI saves them per week (or the number of additional hours they spend, if they indicated that using AI takes them more time).

After the data were collected, a net time estimate for each task was created: Hours saved were added to the total, and if a teacher said that using AI for a task takes them more time, those hours were subtracted from the total. If a teacher indicated that using AI has no impact on the amount of time it takes them to complete a task, a "0" was entered. The net time estimate for each task was then trimmed at the 2.5th and 97.5th percentiles to remove outliers and/or respondents who entered unrealistic amounts of time (e.g., more than 100% of their working hours).

The total net time a teacher saves using AI per week (or must take more time to do when using AI) was summed across the six tasks. Only these six tasks were used to create the sum, to avoid overlapping tasks. Across all teachers in the sample who use AI at least weekly, the average time saved per week per teacher was 5.9 hours. When 5.9 is multiplied by the number of contracted weeks per year (37.4, on average), that sums to 220.66 hours per year. At 37.5 contracted hours per week, the total "AI dividend" of 5.9 hours per week is equivalent to 5.9, or about six, weeks per year.

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