



The High School View

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A.I. facilitates inquiry – and cheating

BY MATT DAY

It's 11:55 on a Thursday night, and you have an essay due the next morning. You're faced with two options: Ask for an extension, or feed your prompt into Open A.I.'s ChatGPT.

Many students have encountered this choice since the popularization of the A.I. chatbots last November.

ChatGPT and other resources based on A.I. have become more popular over the past year due to their ability to instantly write essays and answer questions based on user prompts. Many students have been using this new discovery to complete assignments while doing little to no genuine work of their own. Meanwhile, teachers have

been scrambling to adapt, and have found that working with the chatbots, as opposed to downright blocking them, seems to be a potential solution. Students agree.

Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS) senior Tate Fairchild-Coppoletti said, "I think if teachers can find a way to work with A.I. instead of just trying to ban it and turn people against it, then that will be the best way to move forward."

English department chair Christine Ferrone has been exploring the value of A.I. by integrating its use into her classes through various assignments. "I'm asking my students to write a draft of their monologue, and I'm going to put the ChatGPT

response up on the board. We'll critique it, and then analyze for what it does well and what it misses, and what would bring this piece to the next level," she said.

Information technology (IT) director Rick Mello

said of ChatGPT, "I think it's probably here to stay. It's on the humans to make sure it's used properly."

While many people agree, Mello and other teachers still believe that A.I. has a number of downsides. "I'm

primarily against it," he said. "It's a great tool in a working environment, but it's too easy to fall into the trap [at school] where it's kind of giving you the answers instead of helping you come up with them on your own."

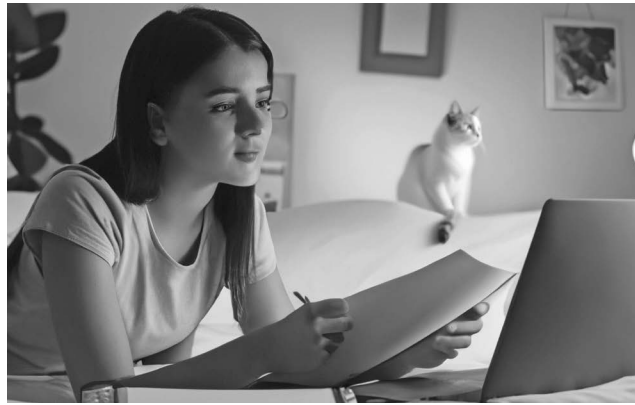
Social Studies department chair Ena Thulin said, "I'm still feeling nervous about the use of A.I. in a classroom. I certainly don't love students using it for any reason."

Ms. Thulin talked about experimenting with A.I., and finding it could make up content for students to use as sources for essays and other forms of writing. She also brought up the fact that students don't know enough about history to distinguish whether information and events used by A.I. as sources are real. She said, "You'll think that it actually happened, and that's the part that's dangerous."

Some students have found uses for A.I. other than writing, such as providing inspiration, clarification, or further explanation — in essence, it's functioning as a private tutor.

"It can be used for inspiration because it can generate super-helpful responses and inspire cool ideas that students can add their own personal and emotional twists to," said Tate. "It can also adhere to different students' learning styles, because I'm sure many people have been in classes where the teacher's style is just not applicable to them."

Ms. Ferrone acknowledged the positive side of A.I. use as well. "How do you evolve with it? So that, again, we are not victims or tools of technology, we are the agents. We are the ones using it to be better humans," she said. "Ultimately, I think that's what it can induce us to do: make us better humans." HSV



BRADY VOUGHT

Imagery generated with the assistance of Photoshop A.I. software of a student working on an essay.

Student council under new leadership

BY FINN ROBINSON

On Sept. 25th, Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS) held its annual elections for president and vice president of the student council. After candidates delivered their speeches in the Performing Arts Center, students were given two days to vote. Junior Jack Engler was elected student council president, and senior Connor Graves was elected vice president.

The student council president and vice president usually articulate their visions for the school during the elections, and this year was no exception. Connor shared his plans to increase the student body's access to the student council by creating an email address where students can directly send suggestions and concerns. Connor said, "I want to



Left, junior Jack Engler was elected student body president. Right, senior Connor Graves was elected student body vice president.

really push for some change that the students want to see, because at the end of the day, we're here to represent the student body." Connor plans to advertise a newly created email address, through which he is invit-

ing feedback and suggestions from students, on the MVRHS weekly news show "The Grapevine."

Student council president Jack Engler outlined two ideas he plans on pursuing during his term. First, Jack



PHOTOS: BRADY VOUGHT

said that he wanted to talk to the district superintendent, Richie Smith, about the feasibility of piloting a four-day school week. Jack said that the four-day school week "has had a lot of traction around the country."

Even if the four-day school week ultimately proves infeasible, Jack pointed out that the school has already been willing to make significant schedule changes — citing the "Modified Monday" schedule that was rolled out this year. "We won't know if we don't try," he said.

Jack also proposed the idea of allowing students two or three "mental health days," where a student could be absent from school with the endorsement of a parent or guardian. If his proposal were to go into effect, these days would not be counted as absences. Jack admitted that these ideas are ambitious, but he thinks they would really help students at MVRHS.

In the meantime, the student council has been spearheading other initiatives, including a recent "spirit week" in the lead-up to Homecoming on Oct. 21. The week included themed dress-up days such as "Wacky Wednesday"

and "Heritage Day," as well as a door-decorating contest for homerooms. It culminated in a schoolwide pep rally on the football field on Oct. 20.

The student council also coordinated a food drive, which was structured as a competition among grades. All donations will be given to the Island Food Pantry, and the drive was extended for a week in hopes of increasing participation.

Conner noted the importance of the food drive. "We are always trying to give back [to the Island community] because the community has done so much for us," he said.

After uncontested elections, senior Olivia MacPherson was named historian, senior Nick Carpenter was named secretary, and senior Brooke Ward was named communications director. Now that spirit week has concluded, the student council will continue meeting in order to pursue their longer-term initiatives for the year. HSV

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