

# From Forge to Function: AI-Powered Strategies that Transform Teacher Preparation

This handout provides a summary of the key points and tools discussed in the presentation "From Forge to Function: AI-Powered Strategies that Transform Teacher Preparation," delivered by Dr. Thomas Betsa of Walsh University at the 2025 OCTEO Conference in Dublin, Ohio.

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## Why AI Matters to Teacher Preparation

Seventy-five percent of educators currently report using AI. The goal is to prepare future educators to effectively and ethically use this technology. A common misconception is that AI will replace teachers; however, the presentation emphasizes that AI is a scaffold that supports creativity and efficiency. The focus is on enhancing, not replacing, the educator's role. AI can help in three main ways:

- **Equips Candidates:** It prepares future teachers for the current educational landscape.
  - **Boosts Efficiency:** It helps streamline routine tasks, allowing teachers to focus on more complex work.
  - **Fosters Innovation:** It encourages new approaches to teaching and learning.
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## Practical Applications and Tools

The presentation highlighted several practical applications and AI tools for teacher preparation:

- **Lesson Planning with AI:** Use tools like **ChatGPT** or **Gemini** to generate lesson outlines aligned with standards, create support for diverse learners, and save time on routine tasks.
    - **Sample Prompt:** "Create a 5E lesson on ecosystems for 7th grade, aligned to NGSS, including vocabulary scaffolds for English learners".
  - **Differentiation Strategies:** **Diffit.me** can create multiple versions of a single task and adapt reading passages to varied reading levels with simplified language and comprehension questions.
  - **Assessment & Feedback:** **MagicSchool.AI** can generate rubrics and formative assessments, provide timely feedback, and help candidates practice reviewing and adjusting AI outputs.
    - **Sample Prompt:** "Generate a rubric for a persuasive essay, aligned with Ohio ELA standards".
  - **Reflection & Growth:** **Educaide.AI** generates prompts to assist students with metacognitive development and help them connect new learning to other contexts.
    - **Sample Prompt:** "Generate three reflective journal prompts for a student teacher completing their first classroom management experience".
  - **Faculty Productivity Tools:** **Perplexity.ai** or **Microsoft Copilot** can draft syllabi, summarize data for accreditation reports, and automate repetitive communication tasks.
    - **Sample Prompt:** "Draft a professional but encouraging email to a student who missed class due to illness".
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## Important Considerations

Using AI responsibly requires critical thinking and an understanding of its limitations. The presentation highlights the importance of:

- **Plagiarism and Responsible Use:** Model discernment and honesty when using AI.
- **Bias and Equity:** Be aware of potential data biases and blind spots in AI tools and critically evaluate their outputs to ensure they are culturally responsive and inclusive