

Behind Success

By Aprilyn C. Torio

A position that holds a dream started when someone believed in you. A path that few were interested in trying, for it comes with many responsibilities.

Readers take note of the headlines, images, and names of the student writers when a school newspaper is published. They hardly ever notice the school paper adviser, who is seated quietly in the back of the classroom.

They are more than just grammar checkers, but they also sacrifice a lot to help each journalist develop occasionally unfeasible story ideas. They support and lead nervous writers during interviews. They remind everyone to take a deep breath when things go wrong before printing, and they calm editors during deadlines.

The adviser remains after classes are over. Students reread passages, seek clarification on facts, and tactfully explain the importance of fairness before they leave for home. Rather than stating this is "wrong," they inquire to prove their argument or opposing viewpoint. Students gradually learn duties in those brief exchanges.

It is really not easy to be an adviser. Despite all the duties like lesson plans, grading papers, and attending meetings, they manage to find time for a publication that is driven by youthful enthusiasm and last-minute anxiety. They quietly correct errors no one else sees, and they rejoice when a timid writer submits an article.

Although the students own the school paper, the adviser, who provides a steady voice behind each byline and helps young writers discover their own, frequently has the heart of the paper.

A Quiet Partner

By Aprilyn C. Torio

The school publication used to sound the same every deadline: quiet time, paper shuffling, someone anxious at a stubborn headline. A few years ago, the loudest things in the room were panic and silent cries.

Now, it's silent. Not because the writers have nothing to say. But because they are thinking and asking, something cannot breathe.

“Can you write an article for me?” A student presses Enter. In seconds, words appear.

At first, artificial intelligence entered journalism almost unnoticed. Nobody announced it. No one admits to using it. Instead, back to writing sessions, the way it used to be.

Writers didn't trust it immediately. They tested it, and it is helpful? But suspicious.

One campus journalist recalls staring at her phone for an hour, unable to begin a feature article about a school paper adviser who had worked at the school for 18 years. The interview was emotional because she's about to leave the school. She didn't want to ruin it with a weak opening. So she asked AI for suggestions. “It gave me ideas,” she said. “But they didn't feel like her. They felt polished but empty.”

She closed the suggestions and rewrote the paragraph herself this time, remembering the SPA's laughter and dedication to work. She kept only one line from the AI output: a simpler sentence structure. The story finally felt alive.

That has become the quiet rule inside many student newsrooms: AI can help you see, but it cannot help you feel.

It can reorganise messy thoughts. It can fix grammar at midnight when the brain refuses to cooperate. It can suggest angles you hadn't considered. But it cannot replace the moment a source pauses before answering a sensitive question. It cannot detect shaking hands or the relief after finally being heard.

Journalism has never been only about writing. It is about witnessing the truth.

Advisers now teach something different alongside inverted pyramids and take responsibility. Students are reminded that publishing means standing behind every word. A machine doesn't face the community after printing a mistake. A campus journalist does.

So they learned boundaries. Draft first. Think first. Observe first. Ask AI later. They use it like a mirror, not a mask.

On another deadline, a writer was tasked with an article about the "No Read, No Pass Policy"; having a hard time, she decided to consult AI for revisions. She deletes several suggested sentences. They were smoother, yes, but they sounded like everyone and no one. She keeps her own imperfect line instead.

Because the story is not only about accuracy. It is about presence. Someone was there. Someone listened. Someone cared enough to write it down.

The newsroom is still filled with tapping keyboards and tired eyes. The blinking cursor remains.

Only now, beside every journalist, sits a quiet partner -useful, fast, and tireless.

But the heart of the story still comes from the person who lived it long enough to understand it.