

UNPREPARED BY DESIGN

How the Absence of AI Curriculum Is Creating a New Generation of Left Behind Students

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KEY FRAMEWORKS

Glass House Conditioning

A psychological framework examining how systems condition marginalized people to regulate their behavior and earn belonging in spaces not designed for them. Applied to AI education: when tools are absent from a student's school, the implicit message is that technology is not for them — conditioning self-exclusion before students ever try to enter these spaces.

Art as the Classroom: When Institutions Fail

A framework positioning art, culture, and informal learning as alternative pedagogy when formal institutions fail to include students. Applied to AI: students without school access are already learning through YouTube, TikTok, and peers. Their informal AI use is real, resourceful, and worth validating — not ignoring.

THE DATA

68%

of teachers received no AI training from their school or district in 2024 to 2025

Gallup & Walton Family Foundation, 2025

14%

of U.S. school districts had formal AI policies as of May 2024

Zhou et al., 2025

18%

of principals reported their school provided AI guidance. Only 13% in highest-poverty schools.

Kaufman et al., 2025 (RAND)

INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION

Write your responses below. You will keep this handout.

One thing I am now seeing differently about my students and technology.

One change I can make in my classroom or curriculum within the next 30 days.

One structural issue in my school or district I am willing to name out loud.

One student who comes to mind when I think about who is being left behind.

PRACTICAL STRATEGIES

- 01** Audit your curriculum for AI presence and absence. Name what is missing and for whom.
- 02** Introduce AI tools in class without requiring home access. Meet students where they are.
- 03** Use cultural entry points. Students who already use AI informally are not behind — they are resourceful.
- 04** Advocate at the institutional level. Curriculum gaps are not teacher failures. They are policy failures.
- 05** Frame AI literacy as a civil rights issue. Access to these tools shapes who gets to participate in the future.

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