

Teaching in the Age of AI

An idealist's high level blueprint for helping every school, college, and workforce program in America rise to meet the most significant shift in learning since the printing press.

THE HONEST STARTING POINT

Something big has changed.

**Our schools must change.
Fast.**

AI can already do what we've been teaching.

Writing a five-paragraph essay. Solving a math problem. Reciting historical facts. These tasks have real value — but AI can handle them instantly. Education has to evolve beyond them.

This is not a crisis. It's an invitation.

Every time a new tool has automated what people used to do by hand, it freed humans to do more meaningful things. AI is no different — if we adapt well.

The window to get this right is open — but not forever.

The decisions schools and universities make in the next three to five years will shape the educational experience of an entire generation and the world. This framework is a hopeful starting point.

THE CORE IDEA

"AI is getting very good at answering questions. The job of education is to develop humans who know which questions to ask."

This framework doesn't ask teachers to compete with AI. It asks schools to double down on central human traits: among them - judgment, creativity, empathy, ethical reasoning - and use AI tools wisely for exactly that work.

THE STRUCTURE

Five Pillars

Five areas of action, each essential, each connected to the others. Idealistic?

PILLAR 01

Get Organized

Build the coordination infrastructure the US currently lacks: shared standards for AI in education, states working together, independent researchers keeping everyone honest, and community watchdogs protecting the students who need protection most.

PILLAR 02

Transform How We Teach

Change what happens in classrooms — at every level. Teach AI literacy after we teach reading. Deploy AI tools that help students think rather than think for them. Elevate human skills. Fix assessments that AI already renders obsolete.

PILLAR 03

Evolve Our Institutions

Ask hard, honest questions about whether the elements that universities, high schools, and community colleges are teaching are still worth what it costs. Redesign curricula. Retrain teachers. Set rules for how schools use AI — and who it serves.

PILLAR 04

Leave No One Behind

Make sure the benefits of AI-era education reach every ZIP code, income level, and career stage. Create fast, credible retraining for workers displaced by AI. Build the infrastructure for learning throughout a lifetime — not just

in your twenties.

PILLAR 05

Stay Nimble

Build in honest review. AI will keep evolving fast. The best education reforms are the ones designed to update themselves — not calcify into yesterday's solution to today's problems.

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE IN PRACTICE

19 Concrete Actions

High-level summaries of each programmatic element in the framework.

1

GET ORGANIZED

A Standards Body for AI in Education

An independent, non-governmental organization that defines what "good AI" looks like in a classroom — so schools can tell the real thing from a chatbot in disguise. Led by researchers and teachers, not vendors.

2

GET ORGANIZED

States Buying Together

When states pool their purchasing power, AI companies build better products for schools. A coalition of politically diverse states saying "we'll only buy tools that meet these standards" is more powerful than any federal mandate.

3

GET ORGANIZED

A Living Research Network

Universities tracking what's actually working — and sharing that evidence in plain language with teachers, administrators, and policymakers. Not ivory tower research. Practical, applied, constantly updated.

4

GET ORGANIZED

Equity Watchdogs in Every Region

Independent organizations with real authority to sound the alarm when AI in education widens gaps rather than closing them. Equity isn't an afterthought here — it's a built-in requirement from day one.

5

HOW WE TEACH

AI Literacy for Every Child — Starting Early

Taught at every grade level, but smartly adapted by age. Young kids learn unplugged: fairness games, pattern puzzles, storytelling

	about how rules affect outcomes. Older students engage with real AI tools — guided, critically, by teachers.
6	<p>HOW WE TEACH</p> <p>AI That Teaches Instead of Just Answers</p> <p>School AI should work like a great tutor — asking questions, nudging thinking, and celebrating "almost" as much as "correct." Not like a search engine that does your homework for you. This distinction is everything.</p>
7	<p>HOW WE TEACH</p> <p>The Irreplaceable Human Skills</p> <p>Empathy. Creative problem-solving. Ethical judgment. Social skills. The ability to disagree well. Appreciation for physical activity and the environment. These aren't "soft skills" — they're essential for people. Schools that treat them as the premium curriculum will produce graduates the world needs.</p>
8	<p>HOW WE TEACH</p> <p>Tests That AI Can't Pass For You</p> <p>Oral exams. Project portfolios. Live problem-solving. Defending your work in front of a real audience. If a student can get an A by copying an AI response, the test measured the wrong things.</p>
9	<p>HOW WE TEACH</p> <p>A Personal Tutor for Every Student</p> <p>Wealthy families have always been able to buy extra tutoring. AI-powered adaptive learning platforms — free or subsidized — can give every kid individualized support. But only if designed and deployed equitably.</p>
10	<p>OUR INSTITUTIONS</p> <p>Honest Curriculum Reviews</p> <p>Every university and school district should regularly ask: "Is what we're teaching still valuable when AI can do a version of it for free?" Not to cut things, but to keep updating so degrees remain worth earning.</p>
11	<p>OUR INSTITUTIONS</p> <p>AI Ethics for Everyone — Not Just Tech Majors</p> <p>Future nurses, lawyers, teachers, mechanics, plumbers, construction workers, and business owners will all manage and use AI systems. Understanding algorithmic bias, data privacy, and the ethics of automation shouldn't be optional. It's basic civic preparation for the world they're entering and living in.</p>
12	<p>OUR INSTITUTIONS</p> <p>Genuinely Retraining Teachers</p> <p>Not a one-day workshop. A sustained investment in helping educators become fluent with AI tools, confident in new pedagogical approaches, and clear on what they offer that no machine ever will: mentorship, presence, and human judgment, not trained praise to burn more tokens.</p>
13	<p>OUR INSTITUTIONS</p> <p>Rules for What "Educational AI" Actually Means</p> <p>Schools deserve clear, enforceable criteria for evaluating AI products — so that "AI-powered" or "Student Mode" on a product</p>

	screen actually means something educationally sound, not just a chatbot that can speak in school's font and colors.
14	OUR INSTITUTIONS Student Rights in the Age of AI Schools must be transparent about how they use AI in grading, admissions, and advising — and students must have rights over their own learning data. This isn't a technical issue. It's a civil rights issue.
15	LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND Fast Retraining When AI Displaces Workers When AI disrupts a specific job category, workers need quality retraining in months — not years. Community colleges, labor unions, non-profits training orgs, and employers working together can build the rapid-response infrastructure to make that happen.
16	LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND Education Isn't Just for Your Twenties Anymore Stackable credentials. Learning sabbaticals. Education benefits you can use at 45, not just 19. In a world where careers shift faster than ever, the idea that you get one shot at formal education is simply outdated.
17	LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND Bringing Diverse Voices into AI Development The people building AI systems shape what those systems value and who they serve. Opening research pipelines to students from HBCUs, community colleges, and underrepresented communities isn't just equity — it's quality insurance for the technology we'll all depend on.
18	STAY NIMBLE Built-In Expiration Dates Every standard and program in this framework should have a mechanism to prove it's still relevant every few years — or be updated. The worst outcome is a perfect response to 2025's AI landscape that gets frozen and applied unchanged to 2032's.
19, 20	STAY NIMBLE 19. A Story People Can Believe In – 20. Invent your Own Tactics – The Time Starts Now None of this works without public trust. Teachers, parents, students, and employers need a clear, honest, hopeful narrative about what AI changes — and what it doesn't — about what makes a great education. That story has to be built deliberately. And You can help build it.

S P O T L I G H T

**What about younger kids —
who shouldn't be on screens all**

day?

The answer is actually reassuring: the most important AI education for young children requires no devices at all.

The goal in K-6 isn't teaching children to use AI. It's building the human foundations – reading, writing, mathematics, athletics, social groups, curiosity, fairness, critical thinking, empathy — that can make them wiser later. Those are built through play, conversation, and stories. Not screens.

**GRADES
K-3**

Unplugged, Playful, Foundational

Sorting games that teach how AI learns from examples. Role-playing recommendation systems to understand what they get right and wrong. Stories about fairness, rules, and decisions. Physical activity. Reading, writing, maths. Time with people of all kinds, deadlines, responsibilities. Zero screens needed - parents can extend this at home with everyday joy.

**GRADES
4-6**

Connecting Concepts to Real Life

Students start connecting what they've learned to the AI they already encounter on streaming services and voice assistants. Some supervised, teacher-guided device time — always with the question: "Did it get that right? How do we know?"

**GRADES
7-12**

Hands-On, Critical, Confident

Real AI tool literacy, ethics coursework, and genuine exploration — built on a foundation of critical thinking already in place. Students who reach this stage prepared don't just use AI. They interrogate it.

LET'S BE CLEAR ABOUT WHAT THIS IS — AND ISN'T

**A framework does not ask you to fear AI,
embrace it blindly, or do either alone.**



**It puts teachers
at the center**

AI handles the
repetitive,
administrative,
and
explanatory



**It works without
federal
mandates**

With
Washington's
education



**It's designed for
equity, not just
excellence**

AI-era
education
reform has a



**It plans to be
wrong — and
update**

AI will keep
changing. Any
framework

work so teachers can do what only humans can: mentor, inspire, challenge, and know their students as people.

capacity currently uncertain, this framework is designed to be built from the bottom up — by researchers, states, foundations, and educators who are ready to move now.

history of benefiting the already-advantaged first. This framework builds equity oversight in from the start, not as an afterthought.

that doesn't plan for its own revision will become obsolete. Every element here is built to be reviewed, revised, and improved.

THE BOTTOM LINE

The goal was never to make better test-takers. It was always to make better humans.

AI is a powerful new reason to refocus on exactly that. This framework is a roadmap for getting there — practical, evidence-grounded, and built for the world as it actually is.

20

CONCRETE ACTIONS

5

STRATEGIC PILLARS

K-∞

EVERY STAGE OF LEARNING

1

URGENT DECADE TO ACT

Teaching in the Age of AI ·
Strategic Framework · 2026
-By Alan Yates-

Developed through AI
research synthesis.
MORE THOUGHTS TO COME.