
REDESIGNED PUBLIC SCHOOLS TO RECAPTURE MARKET SHARE

A Scalable Model to Win
Back Market Share In a Highly
Competitive Marketplace

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Introduction

K-12 public education is facing historic disruption. Universal vouchers, rapidly expanding school-choice options, declining birth rates, and state and national school-choice policy changes are shrinking the pool of students attending traditional public schools. In a recent national review of 9,300 public school districts, it was found that approximately two-thirds of all school districts experienced declining enrollment between SY19-20 and SY23-24 (Dickason et al., 2025). This projected decline is anticipated to continue for at least the next 5-7 years. As a result, school districts are facing budget pressures as they desperately attempt to align resources with programs, services, and opportunities they offer students. At the same time, the era of rare school closures may be coming to an end.

However, by reducing the footprint of public schools, many in the neediest communities, there is the real potential to accelerate even further enrollment declines. With additional school options, one would anticipate that for every school closure there will potentially be a 10-15% drop in student enrollment due to parents and guardians and students not happy with the closure and reassignment. They will seek alternative options. This reduction can realistically be one million dollars or more (for every 100 students) and has the opposite impact of closing schools to save money. Today, families have multiple alternative education options. In fact, it is projected that over the next several years a significant increase in charters, vouchers, homeschool, microschoools, pods and private schools will occur, all competing for the same market share of student enrollment (Knight & DeMatthews, 2024; Soifer & Soifer, 2025).

Each lost full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment reduces state reimbursement and sets off a vicious cycle as illustrated in Figure 1: lower revenue → staff cuts and program reductions → fewer attractive offerings and larger class sizes → more enrollment loss.

These new educational options are fully equipped to compete for a significant portion of the market share; their existence is completely dependent on a skill set to attract parents and guardians and student enrollment. The question is, are traditional public schools equipped to compete in the same way? Traditionally, public schools have managed the resources provided by the state. That is, students attend, and districts decide how to spend and manage resources and services. All other alternative educational options, on the other hand, initiate and employ a set of skills to attract families and secure student enrollment. Without a systemic redesign, this spiral will accelerate, disproportionately harming communities of need (Brazil, n.d.) as school closures shrink the public-school footprint further limiting access and depressing property values, economic development opportunities, and the social cohesion of neighborhoods.



Figure 1. Vicious cycle.

To reverse this decline, public school systems must for the first time be redesigned to compete for families' enrollment decisions—retaining and reclaiming market share by transforming four key systems that will recapture market share and create community-centered value. The goal of this proposal is to provide an alternative to school closures, restore a stable FTE-based funding, and rebuild school-community trust.

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State of the Marketplace

School-Age Population and Enrollment Trends

Although this will vary by region, most of the nation is experiencing substantial long-term decline in school-age populations due to lower birth rates.

As Figure 2 from the United States Census Bureau (2025) shows, demographics project the school-age population decline to continue through 2035. This creates a declining marketplace condition meaning the only way to grow enrollments is for **public schools to be redesigned to aggressively compete to take market share from less-regulated competitors.**

National school enrollment trends illustrated in Figure 3 reveal a continuous decline in public school enrollments that accelerated during the pandemic to today. However, while public schools were losing enrollments, educational choice options such as charter, private, and homeschool increased with homeschooling showing the steepest increase.

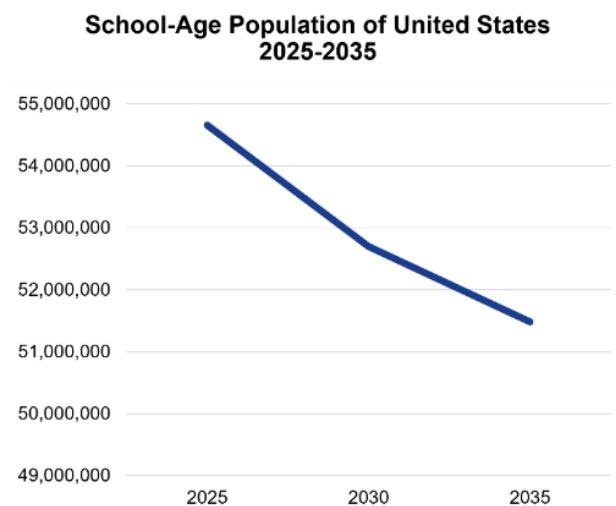


Figure 2. School-age population is projected to decline through 2035

Explosion of Choice Options

Recently, the number of choice options is dramatically increasing. Many new choice variants were spawned during COVID school closures and are now exploding across the nation including microschoools and pod schooling. According to a RAND study (Ohls et al., 2025), estimates of the number of students in these new options range from 750,000 to 2 million students in just a few short years. The National Microschooling Center estimates that 95,000 microschoools have opened in the same period (O'Connell-Domenech, 2024). These new choice options appear to be dramatically outpacing charter schools. Investor-funded operators are forming networks of microschoools or pods with well-organized marketing and recruiting operations.

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Microschooling and pod schooling are so recent and fluid that they remain somewhat under the radar in most school districts. During a recent meeting with businesspeople from around the country, we informally surveyed how many know of a teacher or family participating in pod schooling or microschools and every single participant raised their hand. **For public schools, the rise of these small agile competitors is causing a bleed of enrollments from hundreds of paper cuts.**

One aspect fueling this explosive growth is software applications like the Edefy app downloadable to your smartphone. Edefy is being referred to as the Uber of school choice with the same implications of disruption Uber did to taxi companies. The app reads your location and automatically matches you with local pod schooling options or to a teacher and interested families in your neighborhood if you want to form your own pod. As the company says, "Let's build the education revolution. Edefy makes small group education easy by connecting families directly with teachers at any host site to launch pod schools (Edefy.us, n.d.)."

National School Enrollment Trends

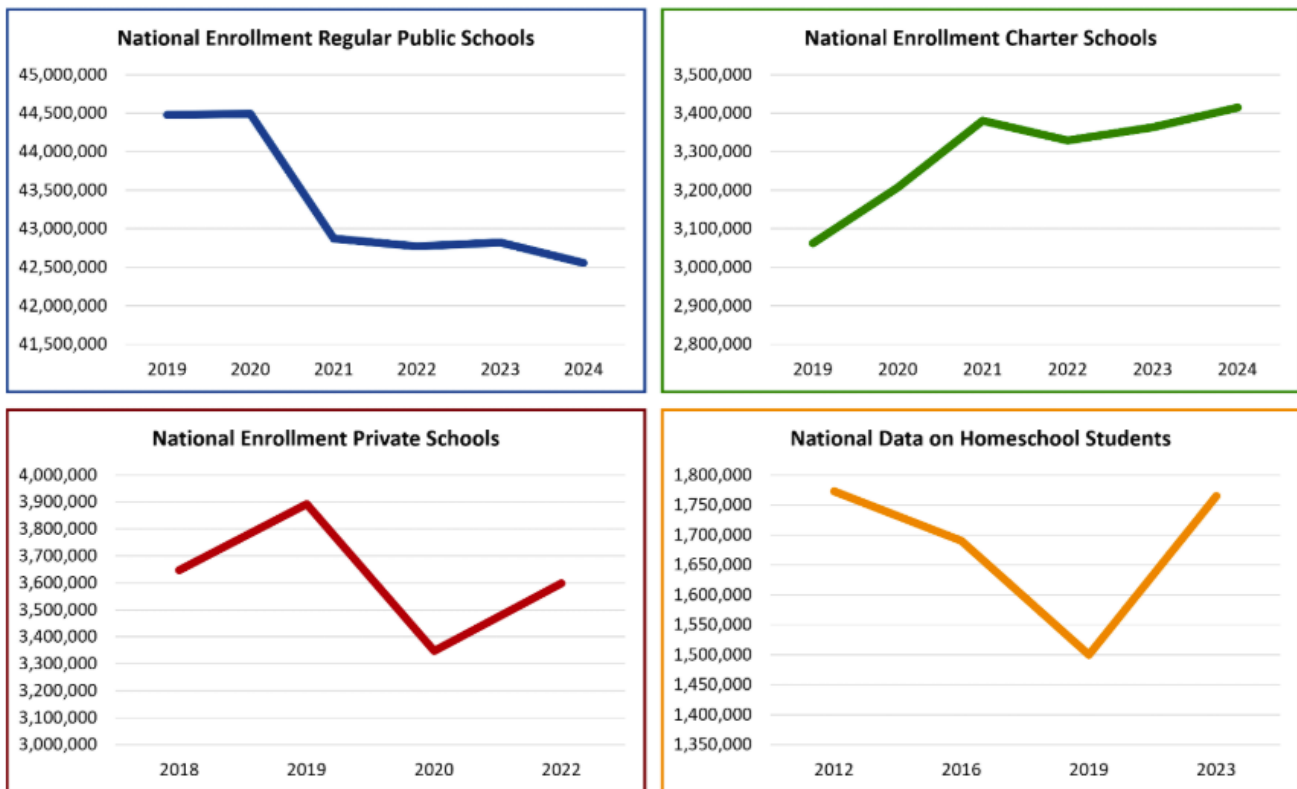


Figure 3. Data from the National Center for Education Statistics (2023, 2025a, n.d.).

Figure 4 from The Ivy (2025) is an example of microschool social media marketing. Notice how microschools are positioning themselves against public schools as a better choice.

Compare the public school and microschool columns in Figure 4. Which would be more attractive to parents and guardians? Objectively, from the traditional school column, do these characteristics reflect the experiences of those who left public schools? These messages resonate with parents and guardians considering exploring alternatives.

Public School Brand Trend

Gallup Polling reveals 73% of respondents are dissatisfied with the quality of public education in the nation. Whether we agree with it or not the general brand of public schools is not favorable in today's marketplace. In Figure 5 (Gallup, 2025), notice the categories of somewhat dissatisfied to very dissatisfied increased in 2020 with the pandemic and jumped again in 2025 along with the release of the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) showing nearly two-thirds of 4th, 8th, and 12th grade students are not proficient in reading and two-thirds of 4th, and nearly three-quarters of 8th and 12th grade students are not proficient in math (National Center for Education Statistics, 2025b,c,d,e,f,g). Couple this with the nimbleness and expert positioning of competitors against public schools and it creates a pointedly more difficult marketplace for traditional public schools to compete.

Traditional School	Micro-School
One-Size-Fits-All Pace to a Larger Class Size, often dictated by Testing Schedules	Personalized Learning in a Smaller Class Size to meet each child's individual needs, learning pace, & interests
Lecture-Based Learning with a Focus on Memorization	Play-Based, Hands-On, & Experiential Learning
Frequent Standardized Tests & Assessments	Less Stress & Pressure with more Hands-on Evaluation
Fixed Schedules with State-Mandated Requirements for Learning	Flexible Daily Structure & Curriculum Encouraging Creativity, Exploration, & Student-Led Projects

Figure 4. Social media Facebook post from The Ivy Microschool.

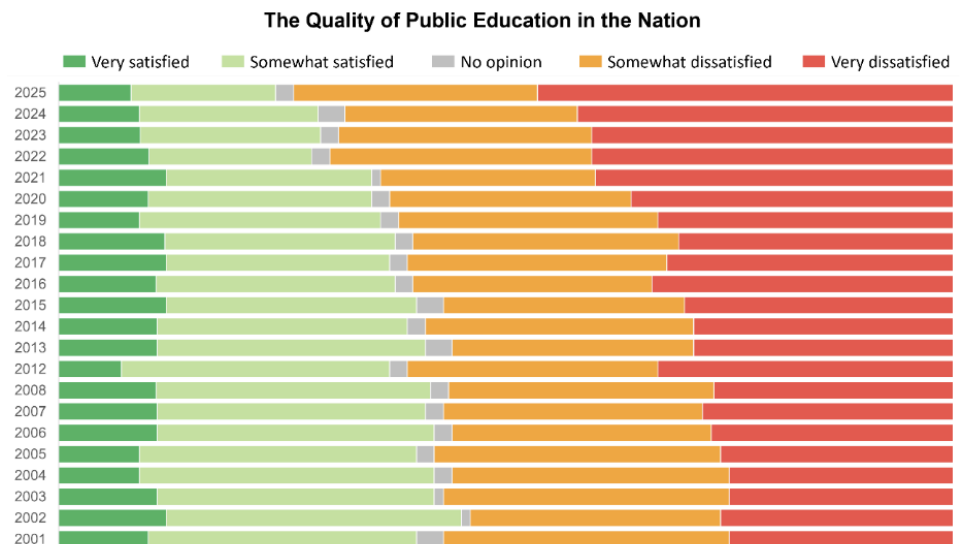


Figure 5. Data from Gallup Poll Social Series: Mood of the Nation.

The Need for Redesigned Public Schools

The Critical Role of Public Education

Public education is both a moral commitment and the bedrock of a functioning democracy. With widening income gaps and rapid economic shifts driven by artificial intelligence, it is urgent that public schools provide every student with the knowledge, critical thinking, and adaptability they will need to succeed. Ensuring broad access to high-quality public education is not optional—it is essential to economic mobility, civic health, and social stability. Alarming, for the first time in our history, that universal promise is at risk.

The vicious downward spiral facing public school systems is leading to the closure of neighborhood schools, effectively withdrawing public education as an accessible option for many communities. This mirrors the “nutrition desert” phenomenon in distressed neighborhoods—where grocery stores disappear and only fast-food outlets and convenience marts remain. If allowed to continue, that spiral will create **public education deserts** in our most vulnerable communities and deepen the country’s opportunity gap. Breaking the cycle will require bold, different solutions: redesigned schools that can compete with choice providers and win back enrollment.

Winning Back Market Share

Public schools were not designed for today’s intense marketplace. Historically, districts and schools were structured and regulated to serve local communities without regard for market dynamics—so district leaders were rarely trained in business, marketing, customer service and retention, or sales. Now public education must compete for students on an unprecedented scale, often against alternatives run by people with business backgrounds and market expertise. That reality demands new leadership competencies, strategic marketing, and operational agility if public school systems are to remain viable and accessible. This necessitates developing high-quality partnerships to augment these competencies into the current system as Instructional Empowerment is offering in this paper.

Taking back market share means winning back those parents and guardians who have chosen to leave public schools for other options. This is not simply a communications or marketing challenge as these families have experienced public school and chose to leave. The private sector has learned that marketing without changing the product or customer experience will not win back significant volumes of customers. To win back the substantial market share who have rejected the public-school experience already, we must embrace a full redesign of that experience. Simply tweaking the current design or overlaying new programs has not been enough to attract families back to public schools.

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Attendance Zone Marketplace

The school district as a whole represents the marketplace; however, winning back market share is a local school-by-school issue. Each school has a local community brand. Each school's attendance zone is a micro-marketplace of choice options bleeding enrollments away from that school. Winning back market share means winning attendance zone by attendance zone at the school level. Every school under competitive stress needs to be redesigned to be fully equipped to compete and win in its attendance zone marketplace against all choice options.

Program for Redesigned Public Schools

The Academy for Deeper Learning Certification

The Academy for Deeper Learning Certification is the first comprehensive, research-based, and scalable redesign program for public schools to compete and win back market share attendance zone by attendance zone. Unlike all other school certification programs, this national certification is designed to comprehensively transform public schools into highly desirable brands with recruitment engines to dominate their attendance zone marketplace.

Overview of Certification Program

The Academy for Deeper Learning certification program is a subscription service offering turnkey redesign and implementation of critical systems to transform public schools to compete and win against all competition. The annual subscription inclusively provides all the support and services to rapidly transform the school to be the first choice for families, including the redesign of the academic system for deeper learning, the customer service and experience system, and community engagement coupled with the addition of implementing extensive attendance zone marketing and recruiting systems within the school. The subscription includes on-site professional development, on-site expert coaching, online supports, metrics, staffed community-based recruitment, marketing, recruitment systems, social media outreach, and program evaluation research validation.

Unlike other certifications, the Academy for Deeper Learning certification program is designed to be able to scale within the district by utilizing the district's current curriculum, assessments, and systems.

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What is Deeper Learning?

[Deeper Learning](#) involves students acquiring robust academic knowledge along with the higher-order thinking skills, dispositions, and skills needed to apply that knowledge to new, complex, and real-world situations. It is a shift from rote memorization and worksheets to rich academic discourse and argumentation that develops critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, and collaboration skills, preparing students with the upward mobility skills to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

Return on Investment

The Academy for Deeper Learning certification program provides a clear pathway to financial return on investment (ROI). The district invests in the first-year cost of the certification program subscription (perhaps offset by foundation or philanthropic support) with the goal that the certification program will generate enough new enrollment growth in the second year to pay for itself. The focus is to aggressively recruit more students, creating a revenue generation engine for increasing FTE reimbursement for the district. The redesign of public schools is a cause private foundations and charitable organizations find attractive to support. After receiving positive feedback, we believe there is an opportunity that the philanthropic community will help districts offset the startup costs given the strong ROI model for the certification subscription to quickly be self-funded by new enrollment FTE reimbursement growth.

The Academy for Deeper Learning certification program provides a clear pathway to financial return on investment (ROI).

Redesigned Systems in the Certification Program

Tier 1 Instruction System Redesign

The redesign of classroom instruction, referred to as Tier 1 instruction, is the lynchpin system for any school-based marketing and recruitment systems to flourish. Tier 1 instruction redesign for deeper learning is the key to differentiating the school from all its competitors.

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The featured support to redesign Tier 1 instruction is Instructional Empowerment's highly research-validated Model of Instruction for Deeper Learning. Within 16 weeks, our step-by-step program begins visibly transforming every classroom from teacher-centered instruction to highly engaging student-led team learning with students engaged in content discourse. This process deepens over the next three years with on-site expert coaching as teachers develop mastery in deeper learning pedagogy heavily complemented by teacher teams designing rigorous interdependent tasks aligned with content area standards and the district's high-quality instructional materials.

Teachers, instructional coaches, and school leaders are well-supported throughout this process with on-site professional development, on-site expert coaching, communities of practice, real-time data, online resources, and aligned teacher teams (often called professional learning communities or PLCs).

As teachers implement the three levels of expertise in the Model of Instruction for Deeper Learning, they earn badges for achieving observable evidences of high-quality implementation with students in their classrooms. All the evidences are generated by their students through measurable deeper learning skills development that are necessary for grade level proficiency for all students. As teachers earn their evidence-based badges, they and their students are richly honored and celebrated, creating a positive momentum within the school and the community.

By January of the first year of implementation, the school's classrooms will have visibly transformed so much that the recruiting tours can begin to showcase the early classroom results. Parents, guardians, and community leaders will be treated to see students self-regulating while highly engaged in their student teams participating and taking turns in content area discourse. This is a stunning and rapid transformation that only gets better and more effective each year.

As the school's Tier 1 instruction (classroom instruction) becomes more engaging and rigorous, there is a significantly reduced need for academic and behavioral interventions which lowers the overall operating cost of the school over time.

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Over a Decade of Research Validation

Instructional Empowerment's Applied Research Center is led by a federally certified Ph.D. researcher (What Works Clearinghouse Certified Reviewer) applying the highest federal research standards to validate the impacts of the Model of Instruction for Deeper Learning. Over a decade of research, including research published in peer-reviewed journals, reveals rapid increases in student achievement and proficiency gains,

greatly accelerated closure of achievement gaps among students, significantly reduced student misbehavior, and significantly increased student engagement. Other findings include increased student attendance, decreased teacher attrition, and increased teacher satisfaction (Basileo & Lyons, 2024; Basileo et al., 2024).

Market Share Systems

3 Key Systems for Increasing Market Share

Market share systems refer to the equipping of the school with the systems to aggressively recruit and win back students, as well as retain current students, within its attendance zone and beyond. The market share systems include three supporting systems – the recruitment system, marketing and public relations system, and the customer service and experience system. Comprehensive support for all three systems is included in the certification program subscription.

The focus of the certification program is to win back the market share that has previously left or did not consider public school as an option for their children. The redesigned Tier 1 instruction system for deeper learning described above sets up the local marketing and recruitment systems to flourish. Marketing and recruitment without the redesigned Tier 1 instruction will not work to win back the attendance zone marketplace as shown in Figure 6. It requires both to be effective.



Figure 6. Four interlocking systems that will recapture market share enrollment growth and create community-centered value.

Recruitment System

The centerpiece of our market share offering is a comprehensive marketing and recruitment system included with the program subscription. It combines a state-of-the-art recruitment tracking, nurturing, and management platform with professionally designed collateral—full-color brochures, open-house and tour invitations, and other materials that guide families through every stage of the recruitment journey. Instructional Empowerment will run targeted marketing campaigns using district-approved assets to build a qualified pool of interested families within the attendance zone and beyond.

The certification program subscription includes Instructional Empowerment’s expert staff to run the recruitment system on behalf of the school. The goal is to create a robust model that over time, district staff and school leaders will develop the market share competencies to benefit all schools. Included in the annual subscription, Instructional Empowerment will provide staff recruitment specialists and local community-based recruiters to engage with the community and to solicit those participating in choice options as well as reaching out to families moving into the attendance zone. These activities will be closely coordinated with the school and district leaders.

The recruitment system is further amplified with on-site community-based recruitment efforts. Instructional Empowerment personnel also showcase the school at community gatherings with a table, signage, and brochures extolling the attributes and transformation of the school, collect contact information into the digital recruitment platform for nurturing campaigns, and invite families to visit the school to see the benefits for themselves. These outreaches are closely coordinated with the principal.

Marketing & Public Relations System

Highly integral to the recruitment system is a sustained and ongoing system of outreach to the community and beyond that reintroduces and rebrands the public school as a selected candidate for the prestigious national certification as an Academy for Deeper Learning. The three candidacy phases each provide ample opportunity to showcase and celebrate the dramatic improvements as the school develops into a highly desirable choice for families and a source of rising pride for the community.

Marketing System

The Instructional Empowerment expert team assigned to the public school will conduct a deeper market and competitive analysis with the school and district leadership. Our team will then develop copy that will promote the attributes of the district and school coupled with the powerful redesign attributes of the Academy for Deeper Learning national certification program. From these, Instructional Empowerment will create tailored full-color brochures, recruitment materials, and communications co-branded with the Academy for Deeper Learning and the public school and pre-approved by the district.

Without the transformed classrooms, the recruitment efforts will stall. It is essential these interlocking systems develop together.

Instructional Empowerment personnel will design and execute marketing and communications campaigns using the pre-approved copy and materials to generate a pool of parents and guardians for the recruitment process. The school's website will be upgraded to align with the certification program in partnership with the district. Central to this effort are invitations to the pool of interested parents and guardians to visit the school to see the transformed classrooms for themselves. The entire point of the marketing and recruiting efforts is to win over parents and guardians by drawing them in to experience the transformed classroom learning environments themselves. Without the transformed classrooms, the recruitment efforts will stall. It is essential these interlocking systems develop together.

Public Relations System

As the school transforms through the three candidacy phases along its pathway to national certification, teachers will be earning badges based on evidence of students exhibiting deeper learning skills in their classrooms. Within the first 16 weeks, these transformations are highly evident in the classrooms and students. This creates a wealth of

social media and public relations opportunities to showcase the amazing improvements to parents and guardians, influencers, and community leaders. Public relations outreach will include social media channels, traditional media, and engaging with community leaders.

Social Media Channels

Instructional Empowerment experts will supercharge the school's social media outreach partnered with the school for breakthrough content creation featuring teachers earning badges and the transformational changes in teachers' classrooms. The heartbeat of the social media campaigns are powerful success stories of students leading their own learning and engaging in rigorous tasks with high levels of content area discourse while self-regulating and peer regulating at levels before unseen at the school. This creates very significant gains in student achievement. In these schools, parents and guardians become vocal advocates testifying to the positive changes they have seen in their own children and the

classrooms in their school. This entire story of classroom and academic transformation will be continuously featured on social media rebranding the school and creating a growing buzz in the communities. The marketing and recruitment systems will echo and amplify these positive change messages to those considering sending their children to the school as well to parents and guardians of students already enrolled in the school to develop more advocates who then become community influencers carrying out the message of positive transformation at the school to their friends and neighbors.

Traditional Media

Instructional Empowerment's public relations outreach will include news releases featuring milestone progress of the school in the local media market closely coordinated with the district and school. Additionally, interviews with media

and podcasts that spotlight featured teachers and the principal will provide a cascade of rebranding evidence that positions the school as the top choice for families.

Community Engagement

We fully acknowledge the district's existing systems and commitment to community engagement, the execution of which may vary from school to school. The Academy for Deeper Learning brand requires consistent and high-quality community engagement. As the classrooms transform, inviting school board members, community leaders, faith-based leaders, business leaders, real estate

professionals, parent groups, local foundations, and charitable organizations to visit the school and see for themselves the academic transformation is critical to the rebranding and recruiting effort and to generate even greater numbers of local advocates for their communities' public school.

Customer Service & Experience System

Again, we fully acknowledge that the district has a customer service system in place. However, there is often great variation in parents' and guardians' customer service experiences from school to school. Essential to the Academy for Deeper Learning brand is a consistent and high level of customer service experience in participating schools. As such, the certification program includes Instructional Empowerment's expert coaching and auditing of the school's customer service system effectiveness to ensure teacher-to-parent and principal-to-parent touchpoints are highly valued by parents and guardians. This includes going beyond merely enhancing or refreshing the front office's customer interactions to ensure a

consistent, welcoming focus on parents and guardians. It also involves efficiently providing a two-way communication system and high-value touchpoints to improve the overall customer experience.

The Academy for Deeper Learning certification program focuses on redesigning and establishing the interlocking and mutually reinforcing systems that empower the school to rise to become the first choice among all choice options and to develop into a recruiting powerhouse capable of dominating its attendance zone and regional marketplace.

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The Academy for Deeper Learning Certification Program

Readiness Phase

Instructional Empowerment partners with the school district to facilitate a workout to determine candidate schools for the certification program. The process is straightforward with a few necessary criteria. The first is that the selected schools have excess capacity (30% or more) or available seats to be filled. The second is that the regional attendance zones for the schools have more school-age children than are currently attending the public schools. In other words, there must be a recruitable market of students available.

The third is meeting basic readiness criteria determined by a readiness visit comprised of a small team of district and Instructional Empowerment personnel that will visit each school. The readiness visit involves meeting the principal, a focus group of teachers, walking classrooms using Instructional Empowerment's RigorWalk tool to collect data on Tier 1 instruction, and an inspection of the facility and grounds. None of the criteria is onerous; however, the certification program is not a school "turnaround" program and schools with poor physical conditions will have to remediate those prior to being eligible for the certification program. Instructional Empowerment has extensive experience working with Title 1 schools and their communities and welcomes such schools into this process. The district and Instructional Empowerment visitation team must jointly conclude the conditions in the school are favorable to begin the certification program process.

Once the school satisfies the baseline criteria for acceptance, the principal must win a simple majority faculty vote to participate in the certification program. Instructional Empowerment will partner with the district to prepare the principals with information for a successful faculty vote.

Ideally, selected schools are in regional clusters with adjoining or nearby attendance zones creating greater synergy for the community marketing and recruitment efforts.

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Candidate School Phase 1

There are a limited number of openings for new schools to join the certification program each year. Schools meeting the above criteria are accepted into the Academy for Deeper Learning certification program once a year starting July 1 and begin to receive the breadth of services in the program and branding as a National Certification Candidate school (see Figure 7).

Starting in the summer, candidate schools are thoughtfully onboarded into the program with orientations, leadership training and planning sessions, whole staff orientation, and teacher professional development. During this period, our expert coaches are conducting systems audits with the principal. This prepares the school and principal for the school's opening as a National Certification Candidate.

In the first year, also referred to as Candidate School Phase 1, our urgency is to focus on the academic system with the Tier 1 redesign for deeper learning by engaging and supporting teachers to implement the Model of Instruction for Deeper Learning level 1. Within 16 weeks the transformation in the classrooms will be significant and is the key to our local marketing and recruitment efforts.

The principal and school's instructional coaches, along with Instructional Empowerment's on-site expert coaches, will be focused on implementing the Model of Instruction for Deeper Learning until every classroom is successful in its transformation.

During this first year, our focus is transforming classroom instruction to deeper learning and standing up the marketing and recruitment systems, so we can begin effective outreach and recruitment starting in January. This only provides a half year of recruitment strength, but recruitment cannot begin until the classrooms are ready for open houses and tours. Parents and guardians will not return to a school that is unchanged, they need to see the amazing difference that is happening for students. In parallel to the classroom transformations, these marketing and recruiting systems begin taking hold and gaining ground in the attendance zone. There are numerous public relations and marketing opportunities as teachers gain evidence-based badges for their classroom implementation, student achievement begins to rise rapidly as student misbehavior greatly diminishes, and parents and guardians increasingly become advocates of the improvements. The culture from classrooms to the entire school starts to dramatically improve as small wins cascade into bigger wins within the school and those are amplified through Instructional Empowerment's marketing and public relations system into the community.



Figure 7. National Certification Candidate banner.

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Candidate School Phase 2

Year 2 also Phase 2 is the first year of student enrollment growth further exciting the school community and increasing the momentum for change. The year 2 goal is that the enrollment growth generates enough increase in FTE reimbursement that the Academy for Deeper Learning certification program subscription is “paid” for with newly generated revenue.

The teachers receive level 2 of the Model of Instruction for Deeper Learning, gaining more critical knowledge and skills to enhance their now fully student-centered classroom instruction. Classrooms and the academic system for deeper learning are maturing, and students are dramatically increasing their level of achievement. Student behavior continues to improve as students gain more agency over their learning. The classrooms are even more impressive when toured, parents and guardians of students become greater advocates of the school as they experience the positive changes in their own children, and the momentum of the recruitment efforts – now with a full year of recruiting – are generating greater numbers of new enrollments for the school. The community engagement is in full swing. There is a palpable buzz throughout the attendance zone among parents, guardians, and community leaders that this is the school they need to visit.

Candidate School Phase 3

Year 3 also Phase 3, the teachers receive the final level of the Model of Instruction for Deeper Learning gaining even more knowledge and skills to enhance their now team-based learning classrooms. The students have grown in their agency and co-own their team and classroom culture with their teacher, misbehavior is rare, proficiency gains accelerate, achievement gaps have significantly closed or are entirely eliminated for most students, and the number of parent and guardian advocates has risen greatly.

School board members, community leaders, parents, guardians, prospective parents, faith-based leaders, business leaders, parent organizations, and the charitable community all testify to the amazing transformation of the school and the results for students they have witnessed. Recruitment continues to get easier as the academics and culture in the school improve, the school brand is now highly respected and sought after, and the school is now able to compete against even elite private schools in its attendance zone.

Nationally Certified School – Academy for Deeper Learning

In the fourth year, the school passes its inspection for all the above systems and is awarded National Certification (see Figure 8) and has earned the status of being an elite public school and the preferred first choice of all choice options in the attendance zone. The school and community have enormous pride in their accomplishments. The school has completed its redesign to win and dominate its attendance zone marketplace.

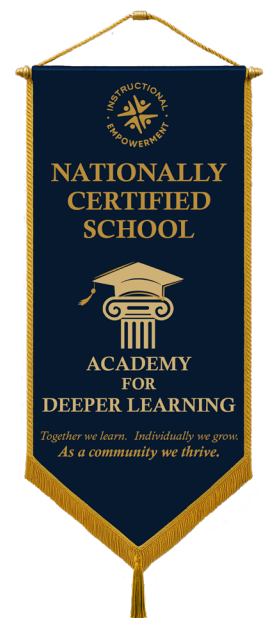


Figure 8. Nationally Certified School banner.

Sustainability and Recertification

The school will need to be recertified every three years, which ensures a tight focus on sustaining and optimizing its performance and culture. Once the school is at full capacity and is awarded National Certification, the subscription price reduces to the support necessary to maintain and continuously improve the key systems and to onboard and train any new staff or administrators to ensure the school does not slip backward and lose the brand position and market share it has gained.

Partnership Grounded in the District's Success

District Partnership with Instructional Empowerment

The success of candidate schools to transform Tier 1 instruction and win back market share in their attendance zones requires a deep collaborative partnership between the district and Instructional Empowerment. These collaborative partnerships with large projects are one of our core competencies.

The certification program for schools selected as candidates must be the top priority of the school and the focus of the principal supervisor over these schools who will need to work extraordinarily closely with Instructional Empowerment. Instructional Empowerment has vast experience for successfully implementing large partnership projects ranging from the nation's largest urban districts to smaller rural districts. We bring expert project management systems, data reporting, and all of our projects are research validated through rigorous research standards. Our results are transparently shared with the district and school board as leaders from both organizations collaborate to review progress data, work through impediments, and celebrate successes.

Scaling Successes Districtwide

As clusters of candidate schools participating in the Academy for Deeper Learning certification program generate accelerated enrollment growth, they will also generate higher amounts of FTE reimbursement funds for the district. The district, at its option, may choose to reinvest a portion of those generated funds into scaling the program to additional schools creating a self-funding mechanism to onboard new schools to the program. As new schools added to the program develop, they, in turn, will generate additional FTE reimbursement due to increased enrollments creating a virtuous cycle. In addition, Instructional Empowerment is committed to building the district's own capacity to scale best practices from the certification program to strengthen districtwide systems.

As clusters of candidate schools participating in the Academy for Deeper Learning certification program generate accelerated enrollment growth, they will also generate higher amounts of FTE reimbursement funds for the district.

Conclusion

When implemented through a strong, collaborative partnership, the Academy for Deeper Learning certification program embeds the core competencies schools need to compete and win in their attendance zones and beyond—while increasing district FTE reimbursement. This collaboration empowers redesigned public schools to increase enrollment and outperform all choice competitors.

About Instructional Empowerment

For more than 25 years, our team has specialized in complex, multi-year partnerships serving a wide range of contexts: from districts seeking transformation for their lowest performing schools to high-achieving districts aiming to reach the next level. Our team has been multi-year statewide providers for the Pennsylvania Department of Education and Florida Department of Education.

We are a social-mission driven organization that aims to end generational poverty and eliminate achievement gaps through redesigned, rigorous Tier 1 instruction that ensures deeper learning for ALL students.

Instructional Empowerment founded an Applied Research Center directed by a What Works Clearinghouse Certified Reviewer to rigorously test our methods and ensure replicable results across various populations of students. Every activity, strategy, and intervention we use has attained or is in the process of attaining criteria for evidence-based practices under the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The center's research is peer-reviewed and published in academic journals.

Our decades of data from thousands of classrooms proves that shifting from teacher-directed instruction to a research-validated deeper learning model is the key to reaching ALL students. Deeper learning means students develop into leaders of their own learning, collaborate in teams, engage in rich discourse, and tackle rigorous tasks that prepare them for both academic and real-world success.

We work with hundreds of schools and districts throughout the United States, ranging in size from Chicago Public Schools, one of the largest urban school districts, to Bullhead City School District #15, a small rural district in Arizona predominately serving Native American students. Our platforms serve over 440,000 users.

A few highlights of our team's outcomes include:

- The lowest-ranked public school in Florida rose to the top 6% during our three-year partnership in the midst of the COVID pandemic (see [Lakewood Elementary](#), 2021).
- Our partnership with fifth lowest-ranked public school in Florida led its district to improve until every single school exited state accountability status (see [The Turnaround Trap](#), 2025).
- Reading proficiency increased by 30.3 points (see [Muessel Elementary](#), 2025)
- Math proficiency increased by 40 points (see [Lakewood Elementary](#), 2021)

- Achievement gaps narrowed for Black and Hispanic 7th and 8th graders in reading and math (see [McLaughlin Middle](#), 2019)
- Discipline referrals decreased by 37% (see [Walnut Middle](#), 2018)
- Chronic absenteeism reduced at twice the national average (see [study of 76 schools](#), 2025)
- Teacher retention increased from 43% to 83% (see [Moseley Elementary](#), 2019)

Please visit our library to see research reports, validation studies, and case studies at www.InstructionalEmpowerment.com/Library.

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