



FALL 2025

Shopping for an Effective Education

For centuries, schools often saw their “product” as the educated individual—the child who graduates ready for the next step in life. While this remains an essential outcome, the era of school choice demands a shift in perspective. In today’s educational marketplace, our students are not the product; they are the consumers. Families weigh their options, compare experiences, and make decisions based on the value they see. That means the real “product” schools provide is the education itself: the quality, relevance, and individualization of the learning experience.

This is where Action Driven Education’s [Barrier Moving Mindset](#)® comes in. By identifying barriers to learning and moving them through skill-building, strategic accommodations, and genuine learner partnership, schools ensure that every student experiences education as [accessible](#), [meaningful](#), and empowering. In other words, the Barrier Moving Mindset transforms the “product” of education into something families recognize as worth choosing: a personalized learning journey where their child is seen, supported, and successful.

Competition in education, while challenging, has the potential to strengthen schools. When families have choices, schools must look closely at how well they are meeting the needs of every learner. A disengaged student, one who stops completing assignments, participating in class, or showing interest, is signaling that they aren’t “buying” what the school is trying to “sell”. This challenges schools to rethink the value of their product—not just an educational experience delivered to students, but one created with and for them. The pressure of choice encourages innovation, demands greater responsiveness, and pushes schools to design learning that students and families actually want: instruction that feels meaningful, individualized, and relevant. When schools treat competition as a catalyst rather than a threat, they refine their product, re-engage learners, and strengthen trust with families. In the end, schools that succeed in “selling” education that students believe in don’t just retain enrollment—they elevate the quality of education for everyone.



Create a Learning Experience Students Will Buy

Tell me the story...

The Turning Point: From Engagement to School Shopping

Billy is an eighth grader with big dreams—he wants to become an electrician when he grows up. He's curious, hands-on, and can spend hours in the garage tinkering with his dad's tools. But inside the classroom, things feel very different.

Billy struggles in math. Fractions, decimals, and multi-step problems don't click as quickly for him as they do for his classmates. When the teacher races through practice problems on the board, Billy gets lost. By the time he gathers the courage to ask a question, the class has already moved on. His grades drop, his homework stays unfinished, and he starts believing the story that he just "isn't good at math."

This frustrates Billy deeply because he knows electricians use math every day. However, instead of showing him how the equations relate to wiring or circuits, his school continues to hand him worksheets that seem abstract and meaningless.

At lunch, Billy tells his friends that school feels pointless. At home, his parents see the light in his eyes fading. They know he's capable, but they watch him grow more discouraged each week. When they hear about a nearby charter with hands-on vocational pathways and a cyber program where students can move at their own pace, they begin exploring options.



What's the context?

Meet their needs or lose your consumer

When students' needs aren't met, families quickly recognize the disconnect and begin exploring other options. Academic struggles that go unaddressed can leave learners feeling unseen, frustrated, or convinced that school has little to offer them. This is often the tipping point that leads to disengagement and "school shopping." On the other hand, when schools respond by individualizing instruction, providing targeted supports, and connecting learning to students' real-life interests and future goals, the outcome is very different. Learners build confidence, motivation grows, and families see the value of staying committed. In a competitive education landscape, that responsiveness is what keeps schools strong and trusted.

Get to the point...

The cost of a poor fit

When schools fail to offer an educational product that meets a student's needs, families see the mismatch. If lessons feel irrelevant and support is missing, they start "school shopping"—not because the child lacks ambition, but because the product isn't meeting Billy's needs.

The story continues...

An engaged learner stays!

Billy's school recognizes that something isn't working. Instead of labeling him as "bad at math," his teachers take a Barrier Moving approach: they ask, "What's the barrier, and how can we move it?"

They start by individualizing instruction. His math teacher ties fractions and decimals directly to wiring diagrams and voltage loads, real applications that an electrician would need. Suddenly, the numbers on the page begin to connect with the world Billy cares about.

The team also provides accommodations that change how he learns:

- Allowing Billy to use graph paper to help organize multi-step problems.*
- Giving him access to a calculator for basic operations so he can focus on problem-solving, not just computation.*
- Providing a written, step-by-step process of how to solve math problems.*

In addition, his schedule is adjusted to include skill-building time. During a daily workshop block, Billy works with a math intervention teacher to rehearse strategies for breaking down word problems into smaller steps. This time is targeted, not busywork, focused on strengthening his problem-solving skills so he can approach more complex tasks with confidence.

Crucially, the school partners with Billy. Together, they set personal goals and track his progress. His teachers celebrate small wins, like successfully completing a real-world circuit problem, and show him how those skills apply to his dream of being an electrician.

Finally, they foster a climate of belonging. Billy is encouraged to share his hands-on wiring projects in science class, letting his peers see his strengths. Instead of being embarrassed, he's recognized as someone with valuable knowledge to contribute.

Now, when Billy talks about his future, it's not with frustration but with excitement: "I'm learning the math I'll need when I'm an electrician." His parents, seeing his motivation restored and his confidence growing, stop looking at other schools.

By combining accommodations, skill-building, and individualized connections to his career goal, Billy's school uses the Barrier Moving Mindset to transform his experience. Instead of losing him to "school shopping," they retain a motivated student and a loyal family—proof that barriers, once moved, become stepping stones.



*Build Barrier-Related Skills+
Support with Just-Right Accommodations
= A Barrier-Moving Mindset*

Click Me!



[Learn More](#)

[Member Login](#)

What Your "Customers" Want

Families today have more options than ever, and they act like consumers when choosing a school. The following are the key decision variables families consider, along with how a Barrier Moving Mindset positions your school to not only attract but also keep students.

What Families Want:

How the Barrier-Moving Mindset Helps:

Academic Quality and Rigor

Strong academics, skilled teachers, innovative curriculum, and evidence of student growth.

Instead of "watering down" the curriculum, Barrier Moving educators adapt how or what is taught so that every learner can access grade-level concepts. Families see their children challenged and supported at the same time—a balance that builds trust and keeps them invested in the school.

A Safe and a Healthy Learning Environment

A physically safe, emotionally supportive environment where every child feels they belong.

Safety goes beyond locked doors—it's about building a culture where every student feels seen, valued, and connected. By addressing social, emotional, and behavioral barriers, schools reduce the isolation that can fuel conflict and violence, so students experience belonging and supportive relationships while families recognize the school as a safe, caring community.

An Education That is Fit to the Individual Learner

Assurance that the school can meet their child's unique needs—whether academic, behavioral, or related to learning style.

Barrier Moving schools see difference as design, not deficit. They build skills alongside grade-level content, offer flexible pathways, and co-create goals with students. Families support the school because they know their child's needs are met without compromise.

Communication and Partnership

Transparent communication, clear progress updates, and a school that listens.

Working with the learner as a partner naturally extends to families. Educators share not just grades, but strategies, progress on barriers, and skill growth. Parents feel included in the journey, which fosters confidence in the school.

A Meaningful, Relevant Education

Learning that feels purposeful and connected to the real world.

When teachers focus on removing barriers to relevance by connecting lessons to student interests, future careers, and authentic projects, students experience learning as meaningful. Families see their child engaged and motivated, which strengthens their commitment to their child's school.

In a world of school choice, schools succeed by building a brand that highlights what makes them unique, not by copying others. Families want authenticity: a school that lives its values and delivers education that is accessible, meaningful, and personal. Just as a restaurant must be clean, every effective school must ensure students feel supported and connected. Schools that ground themselves in these non-negotiable values create a brand families believe in—and stay with.



[Learn More](#)

[Member Login](#)