



EXECUTIVE BRIEFING: Reversing a 6-Year Revenue Decline

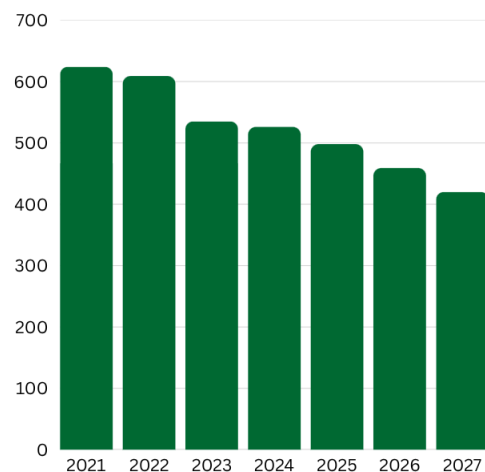
By: atlearning

THE CRISIS: THE COST OF INACTION

For School Board Chairs and Heads of School, enrollment is revenue. When the student body shrinks, the budget shrinks, compromising the fundamental mission of the institution.

This was the exact crisis facing a top-tier STEM charter school we recently partnered with. Despite an elite academic product, local public districts actively gatekept information, causing the charter to become an "unknown entity."

- **The Bleed:** Over six years, enrollment plummeted from 625 down to roughly 455 students.
- **The Contrast:** During this exact same timeframe, their local public school competitors experienced 25% to 35% growth.
- **The Marketing Failure:** The board spent years hiring traditional ad agencies to run generic awareness campaigns. The ROI was zero, resulting in a staggering loss of recurring state funding.



Enrollment loss from 624 in 2021 to 459 in 2026 with 2027 projections to 420

THE SHIFT: DEMANDING STRATEGIC TRUTH

The board realized they did not need another ad agency selling clicks; they needed authentic truth and a strategic partner. They hired atlearning to diagnose the root operational problems causing families to leave and to fix the retention and new enrollment declines.

We executed a comprehensive, data-backed audit:

- **Custom Stakeholder Surveys:** We deployed custom surveys directly to students, parents, and staff, analyzing the primary data against the five greatest factors known to impact enrollment and retention.
- **The Finding:** We uncovered a massive "Experience Gap." Families were initially attracted to the elite academics, but students were leaving due to a lack of traditional high-school quality-of-life activities, athletics, and social experiences.



THE EXECUTION: SIMULTANEOUS RETENTION & ACQUISITION

At atlearning, we do not believe in waiting to fix internal problems before seeking new students. We integrated directly with the Head of School to attack the crisis on both fronts simultaneously:

- **Internal Action (Immediate Retention):** We worked with leadership to execute immediate, highly visible cultural changes—upgrading the daily lunch program to eliminate friction and elevating extracurricular clubs to traditional "varsity" status. This instantly secured their current base of 455 students, stopping the financial bleed from the inside out and brought enthusiasm to the student body.
- **External Action (Precision Acquisition):** Simultaneously, we utilized our survey data to deploy hyper-targeted, community-specific outreach. We built messaging around the exact desires uncovered in our research, capturing brand-new families and routing them to the front office for immediate enrollment.

THE VERDICT: A \$1.8 MILLION REVENUE SWING

The combination of internal operational fixes and data-driven external outreach completely broke a 6-year downward trajectory in less than one semester. As atlearning does the heavy lifting, the admin are freed to focus on daily operations and the strategic improvements. By mid-spring, the results included:

- **Historic Pipeline Efficiency:** The percentage of applying families who officially secured their seat surged to nearly 80%, drastically lowering the cost of acquiring a new student.
- **Shattered Projections:** Based on their multi-year decline, the school was bracing for another massive drop, projecting a \$600,000 revenue loss for the upcoming year.
- **The Financial Reality:** Today, the school is mathematically pacing toward a \$1.2 million revenue gain over the previous year.

- ✓ **80%** (Conversion rate of applications to enrollments)
- ✓ **-\$600,000** (Projected loss for 26-27)
- ✓ **+\$1.8 Million** (26-27 net revenue increase)

The atlearning Mandate: Traditional marketing companies spend your budget trying to convince people to like your school. At atlearning, we partner with your leadership to fix internal retention, align your operations with stakeholder data, and simultaneously attract new families—executing the **\$1.8 million net growth swing** required to guarantee your school's future.

Travis Hostetter | Founder & Lead Strategist | travis.hostetter@atlearning.org | atlearning.org