

# ABCs to ATMs

The Case for  
Paying Students to Learn

Ron McDaniel

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# Grassroots Education Reform

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## PREAMBLE

# A TRANSFORMATIVE SUMMER EXPERIMENT

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In the summer of 2023, I found myself walking into a school in Cleveland, Ohio not as a distant observer of educational systems but as an active participant in a daring experiment. Eight inner-city youth, all taking summer classes, agreed to embark on this journey with me. The setup was simple: two sessions per week for three weeks, no rigid rules, just an open environment where respect and safety were the only boundaries. Cell phones were welcome; games were allowed. But there was a catch, a golden opportunity hidden in the guise of a challenge: learn some lessons, pass short micro-assessments, and get paid. A maximum of \$100 per student was up for grabs over the three-week period.

The first week was chaotic, to put it mildly. Students were loud, having fun, arguing with each other and one even resorted to acting like a baby. Despite the disorder, I reiterated that they were free to do as they pleased, as long as it was safe and respectful. Responses varied. One student declared she doesn't read, watch long videos, or study. Another wanted a shortcut, asking for the practice test to ace the actual assessment. I had to clarify that the practice "test" was, in

fact, the study material itself, designed to be straightforward and non-deceptive.

Then, something remarkable happened in the second week. One student, obviously bright but likely under-challenged in her regular classes, passed two assessments. As I counted out \$30 for her, a competitive spark ignited between her and a friend, also a high-achiever, or likely to be one with the right motivation. The race to \$100 was on. Surprisingly, they both exceeded the threshold, driven by their friendly competition. The additional assessments passed were not even eligible for pay.

By the third week, the entire dynamic had shifted. They understood it was no joke, but also the work had to be done to earn the money. It was not a free handout. Students were early, computers at the ready, impatiently asking for approval to take their assessments. Every single student completed multiple assessments, earning between \$50 and \$100. Even the student who had initially claimed not to read or study passed three assessments with ease on the final day.

The impact extended beyond academics. The post-program survey revealed that the earned money was primarily spent on food. One student bought a coveted shirt; another generously split the earnings between a younger brother and sister. Those engaged in the initial competition added their earnings to their savings accounts. The school principal later confided in me that the sense of accomplishment and self-reliance these students exhibited was nothing short of incredible.

This experiment was a microcosm, a small-scale demonstration of what could be possible on a larger scale. It showcased not just the power of financial incentives, but the latent potential in each student, waiting to be unlocked. It underscored the notion that when we change the rules of the game, we can fundamentally alter the outcomes.

No doubt this did not permanently change their study habits. To do that, the program would have to be implemented year-round and open to everyone. But in a very short period of time, never yelling, never punishing students, and never pushing them to get results, their attitude and behavior changed to a much more academic mindset. Last I checked, this is the goal and challenge for every school.

The question now is not whether this model works. The question is, how can we make this an everyday reality for every student? As we explore this question and many others throughout this book, keep in mind the transformative power of a single summer experiment. If such drastic changes can happen in just three weeks, imagine the possibilities of implementing this model full-time.

What did the director of the school say after the experience?

*"The experience was highly motivating. The students were reluctant at first because they did not believe that they would actually get compensated. Once they were paid, they worked even harder. They were so proud to have accomplished something where they could actually see the value. The thing that stuck out the most is that all of them used the money for food, not candy,*

*but real meals. So a need was fulfilled that we had not even contemplated"*

April Hart, Executive Director,  
The Green Inspiration Academy



## | STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

We surveyed students and included replies throughout the book to give readers a look inside students' lives.

Makayla, 10th Grade, Towpath Trails High School in Akron, Ohio

Do you think students should be paid to learn?

**Yes. School is like work.**

If you make more than \$3,000 a year to learn, how would it change your school experience?

**I would be more motivated to learn.**

How would your family be impacted if you and each of your brothers and sisters were making money going to school?

**We would be able to pay all our bills and eat.**

If you graduated from high school and had access to a savings account that had \$10,000 in it, what do you think you would do with the money?

**I would get a car and save the rest in an account until I had enough money to move.**

Tell a true story about a time in your life when having \$500 would have helped you a lot.

**Now. I need \$554 to be able to keep living in a home.**

## INTRODUCTION

# SETTING THE STAGE

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### THE CURRENT STATE OF EDUCATION AND WHY IT NEEDS A PARADIGM SHIFT

In an era marked by unprecedented technological advancement and a growing emphasis on innovation, our educational system stands as a glaring paradox. While the world outside the classroom redefines itself almost daily, the world inside it remains largely unchanged, a relic of a bygone era. Teachers deliver content from the front of the room, students listen—or pretend to listen—and standardized tests gauge learning with debatable efficacy. It's a cycle we've been locked into for generations, and for many, it's simply the way things are done. But is "the way things have always been done" the way they should continue to be?

This question led me to a thought experiment that would eventually consume several years of my life. I asked myself, "What would people think 50 years from now when they look back at what we are doing today?" The answer was unsettling: They would be horrified. They'd wonder how we could force young people into a system where they work tirelessly, learning a curriculum filled with material that

technology has often rendered archaic, all without financial compensation. What's more, the system is so rigid that failure to participate doesn't just result in academic penalties; it can also lead to legal consequences for the student and their family. In essence, we have institutionalized a form of forced academic labor.

These reflections were not an indictment of education's inherent value. Far from it. The goal of education—to cultivate a well-rounded, knowledgeable, and capable individual—remains as critical as ever. But the methods, the delivery, and the incentives are due for an overhaul. The idea that we haven't yet figured out how to effectively motivate students, despite centuries of educational practice, is not just perplexing; it's a call to action. Thus began my journey to construct a new paradigm, one that honors the educational goals we hold dear while revolutionizing the mechanisms that drive them.

So, why do we need this paradigm shift? Because the stakes have never been higher. We are preparing students for a world that is increasingly interconnected, where jobs require a mix of technical skills and creative problem-solving, and where the consequences of failing to adapt are swift and unforgiving. The current system, with its one-size-fits-all approach and lack of real-world incentives, is not just inadequate; it's a disservice to the next generation.

The following chapters will lay out a comprehensive argument for a new educational model that pays students to learn, verified through projects and assessed by independent centers. This is not a utopian vision but a meticulously planned, financially viable strategy that acknowledges both the immediate realities and long-term aspirations of students.

It's time to move beyond questioning whether we should reform education, to asking how we can do so in a way that is both effective at moving the needle and achievable.

## **PAYING STUDENTS TO LEARN THROUGH VERIFIED PROJECTS AND INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT CENTERS**

As we venture further into this discourse, it's essential to outline the transformative proposition at the heart of this book: a comprehensive system that pays students to learn, verified through meticulously planned projects and assessed by independent centers. This is not merely an ideological proposition but a well-calculated, pragmatically designed model with far-reaching benefits.

### **Cost Efficiency for Schools**

One of the most compelling aspects of this model is its ability to significantly reduce costs for schools. Current models of education are burdened by the enormous overhead of standardized testing—creating, administering, grading, and then interpreting these tests absorbs financial resources that could be better spent elsewhere. By transitioning to independent assessment centers that focus on micro-assessments tied to specific learning goals, or "gigs," we eliminate the need for large-scale, cumbersome standardized tests. This streamlined approach not only makes the assessment process more relevant but also reallocates financial resources toward more pressing educational needs.

### **Flexibility and Personalization**

In our proposed model, students are allowed the freedom to work at their own pace. This is not a luxury; it's a necessity in a world that no longer adheres to a one-size-fits-all approach. By liberating students from the constraints of a standardized timeline, we empower them to take ownership of their learning journey. This is personalized education in its truest form, acknowledging that learning is a complex, nonlinear process that varies from one individual to another.

### **Enhanced Motivation and Achievement**

Financial incentives bring a revolutionary shift in how students perceive their educational journey. No longer is education merely a long-term investment with a distant payoff; it becomes an immediate source of financial stability. This tangibility serves as a potent motivator, encouraging students to engage more deeply with their studies and to strive for excellence with a newfound sense of purpose.

### **Financial Security for Lower-Income Students**

For students from lower-income backgrounds, the financial incentives offer more than just motivation; they offer a lifeline. The additional income provides a layer of security and stability that many of these students lack, thereby reducing one of the most significant barriers to academic success.

### **Improved Behavior and Classroom Dynamics**

Introduce financial incentives into the classroom, and the dynamics change almost instantly. With real-world rewards tied to academic

achievement, disruptive behavior declines while focus and cooperation soar. Teachers spend less time on disciplinary issues and more time on what they do best: teaching.

### **Real-World Skill Development**

By shifting the focus to project-based learning, this model enables students to acquire skills that are directly transferable to the real world. Whether it's teamwork, problem-solving, or critical thinking, project-based learning integrates these competencies into the academic curriculum in a seamless and relevant manner.

### **Enhanced Parental Engagement**

When education starts yielding immediate financial returns, parental involvement naturally intensifies. Parents, seeing the tangible benefits of academic achievement, become more engaged in their children's education. This fosters a home environment where learning is not just encouraged but actively supported.

### **Economic Impact on Low-Income Communities**

Finally, the benefits of this model extend beyond the individual and the classroom to uplift entire communities. As students earn, they also spend, contributing to local economies and creating a virtuous cycle of growth and development. This is particularly impactful in low-income communities, where even modest increases in spending can have a transformative effect.

In essence, the model proposed in this book is not just an educational reform; it's a socio-economic catalyst. It addresses the multifaceted challenges of modern education with a nuanced, comprehensive solution that benefits students, educators, parents, and communities alike. This is not just about changing how we teach; it's about changing how we view the entire spectrum of education and its role in societal development.

As we delve into the chapters that follow, each of these aspects will be explored in meticulous detail, supported by research, case studies, and practical roadmaps for implementation. We're not just theorizing a better educational future; we're laying the groundwork to build it.

## | STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

Christine, 10th Grade, Towpath Trails High School in Akron, Ohio

Do you think students should be paid to learn?

**I think it could be a good idea, especially for college. College is expensive and puts a lot of people in debt. So I think that for kids who plan to go to college, paying them would be a good idea because then they can save that money for college and ... improve the college experience. Also, for children who have a harder home life and cannot afford things like food, the children getting paid could drastically change home life.**

If you make more than \$3,000 a year to learn, how would it change your school experience?

**I would enjoy going to school a lot more and having that reward and knowing I'm going to get something (other than education) after dealing with the stress of school would get me through it.**

If you graduated from high school and had access to a savings account that had \$10,000 in it, what do you think you would do with the money?

**College and/or moving out.**



## CHAPTER 1

# CLASSROOMS TODAY

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### | CURRENT MODELS OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

**D**espite the seismic shifts in technology and social dynamics over the years, the core structure of the classroom has remained stubbornly consistent. Teachers still wield the chalk or the stylus; students still sit in rows or around tables. The agenda is to complete a curriculum, usually one that's been decided by people far removed from the actual classroom environment. Granted, not all classrooms are lecture-centric. Many educators are genuinely striving to implement mastery-based or project-based learning, trying to shift away from the "sage on the stage" to the "guide on the side."

However, good intentions and innovative methods only go so far when the attitudes and efforts of students aren't fully engaged. Despite increased educational spending in recent years, the grim reality is that performance metrics and student engagement are either stagnant or, worse, declining. Why is this happening?

## SHORTCOMINGS IN STUDENT MOTIVATION AND ENGAGEMENT

**1. Irrelevant Curriculum:** Students are acutely aware that much of what they're mandated to learn will have little to no application in their future lives. This disconnect between the curriculum and real-world applicability undermines the intrinsic motivation to learn.

**2. Guaranteed Education:** There's an unspoken understanding that students are entitled to an education regardless of their behavior. While this is fundamentally true and important, it has also led to a lack of accountability, as students realize there are minimal immediate consequences for disengagement.

**3. Grade Inflation:** The prevailing educational culture often emphasizes the importance of passing grades over genuine understanding. Students know they can often get extra credit or submit late work to inflate their grades, creating a system where the focus is on the grade, not the learning.

**4. Information at Fingertips:** We live in the age of Google, where information is always just a click away. While educational specialists emphasize making the material more compelling, students know they can easily look things up when they need to. The argument for making content compelling loses its weight when students know that immediate, on-demand knowledge is accessible anytime.

**5. Questionable Role Models:** If students look at their parents or immediate community and see that academic success has not necessarily translated into life success, they may question the utility of their own educational journey. The idea that education is the road

to success does not hold water if you come from a disadvantaged background despite people you know having a diploma.

## | THE WAY FORWARD: A RADICAL RETHINK

Traditional schools and their architectural designs are becoming increasingly obsolete, but that doesn't mean there's no way forward. The future of education may lie in separating the functions of assessment and classroom instruction. By doing so, classrooms become centers for academic work, group projects, and peer support, rather than pressure cookers of standardized testing.

The game-changer, however, is the concept of financially rewarding students for academic milestones achieved and verified through independent assessment centers. By linking financial incentives to academic success, we address the shortcomings mentioned above:

- The curriculum becomes immediately relevant because it's tied to financial gains.
- The sense of entitlement to an education is balanced by a financial accountability system.
- The focus shifts from grades to mastery, as financial rewards are tied to genuine understanding.
- The argument for compelling content becomes moot when the real compelling factor becomes financial stability and independence.
- Parents and communities become more engaged as they see the tangible benefits manifesting in real-time.

In essence, this model aims to elevate the classroom from a space of obligatory attendance to a hub of engaged, self-directed learning and

collaboration. It proposes not just a change in educational techniques, but a transformation in educational objectives and student motivation.

## CHAPTER 2

# A BRIEF HISTORY OF EDUCATION AND INCENTIVES

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### | HISTORICAL METHODS OF MOTIVATING STUDENTS

**F**or as long as formal education has existed, so too have methods for motivating students. In ancient civilizations like Greece and China, the motivation was primarily intrinsic, driven by a cultural emphasis on the virtues of wisdom and intellectualism. Fast-forward to the more recent past, and we find the Industrial Revolution-era classrooms, where the stick—sometimes literally—was as commonly used as the carrot. Fear of punishment, social stigma, and the promise of future employment were the primary motivators.

In the early 20th century, the focus shifted to more extrinsic motivations, such as grades and academic recognition. Educational psychologists like Edward Thorndike began to apply scientific principles to education, leading to the first rudimentary standardized

tests and grading systems. These extrinsic motivators evolved over time to include honor rolls, scholarships, and other merit-based incentives.

## **THE EVOLUTION OF GRADING, STANDARDIZED TESTS, AND OTHER CONVENTIONAL INCENTIVES**

The 20th century saw the proliferation of standardized testing, beginning with the Army Alpha and Beta tests in World War I, which were designed to assess large numbers of recruits. This concept was later applied to education, culminating in tests like the SAT in the U.S., GCSEs in the U.K., and similar examinations worldwide. Despite their initial intent to create a level playing field, these tests have often been criticized for perpetuating inequality, as they tend to favor students from more privileged backgrounds who can afford extensive test preparation.

Grading systems, too, have evolved but remain a subject of debate. While they initially served as a straightforward method for evaluation, grades have increasingly come under scrutiny for promoting a fixed mindset, where students see their abilities as innate and unchangeable, rather than something they can develop through effort and persistence.

## **PROGRESS AND LEAPS IN EDUCATIONAL INCENTIVES**

Despite these shortcomings, there have been instances where changes in educational approaches led to significant progress:

**1. Desegregation:** The landmark U.S. Supreme Court case *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954 was a turning point that had implications beyond just racial equality. It changed the dynamics in classrooms and contributed to the broader civil rights movement, creating an environment where, theoretically, every child had an equal shot at quality education.

**2. Computers and Technology:** The integration of computers into classrooms in the late 20th century opened up new avenues for interactive learning. Software like educational games and computer-based assessments offered a different kind of engagement that could be both entertaining and educational.

**3. Online Schools and MOOCs:** The 21st century saw the rise of online education platforms, which have democratized access to high-quality instruction. Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) from platforms like Coursera and edX allow anyone, anywhere, to learn almost anything, often for free or at a low cost.

**4. Project-Based and Mastery Learning:** Innovative schools like the Khan Lab School and the Montessori system have shifted focus from grades to mastery, showing promising results in student engagement and understanding.

## | WHERE WE STAND NOW

While these advancements have made significant contributions to educational progress, they have not fundamentally resolved the issue of student motivation. Whether it's the debate over the efficacy of standardized tests or the limitations of grading systems, we find that traditional methods of motivation—both intrinsic and extrinsic—are

not universally effective. As we forge ahead into an increasingly complex future, it's clear that we need a new paradigm, one that captures the best elements of these historical methods while addressing their shortcomings.

The proposal to financially incentivize learning, as elaborated in this book, seeks to be that paradigm shift. It aims to build on the progress made over decades and centuries, integrating the lessons learned into a cohesive, effective model for the future.



## CHAPTER 3

# THE PSYCHOLOGY OF MOTIVATION

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### | INTRINSIC VS. EXTRINSIC MOTIVATION

**T**he psychology of motivation generally categorizes the driving forces behind actions into two main types: intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation springs from within the individual; it's the internal desire to engage in an activity for its own sake. Extrinsic motivation, conversely, stems from external factors, such as rewards or punishments.

While education purists would argue for the superiority of intrinsic motivation—a love for learning, a thirst for knowledge—the reality is that this form of motivation isn't universally applicable. Not all subjects are intrinsically interesting to all students, and not all learning activities are self-rewarding. This is where extrinsic motivators like grades, scholarships, and financial incentives come into play.

## **THE LIMITATIONS OF CURRENT MOTIVATIONAL METHODS**

Despite the blending of intrinsic and extrinsic motivators in contemporary educational settings, the balance is far from perfect. Grading systems, for example, have a mixed track record. Grades can sometimes boost motivation but often lead to a performance-over-mastery mindset. Students aim for higher grades rather than deeper understanding, choosing the path of least resistance.

Merit scholarships, another form of extrinsic motivation, have shown some success in getting students into colleges but have been less effective in improving long-term academic performance. While they may serve as a short-term motivator, they don't necessarily foster sustained engagement or mastery of subjects.

## **THE MODERN STUDENT IN A GIG ECONOMY: INTRODUCING LEARNING GIGS™**

Students today are growing up in a world significantly different from previous generations. Many are part of what's known as the "gig economy," where traditional full-time jobs are often replaced by short-term contracts or freelance work—known as "gigs." This shift in the employment landscape is more than just an economic trend; it's a cultural shift that influences how young people perceive work, value, and motivation.

That's where the concept of "learning gigs" comes into play. Borrowing from the language and structure of the gig economy, learning gigs offer students the opportunity to earn money by

completing specific academic tasks or achieving particular learning outcomes. These gigs are designed to be modular, allowing students to tackle them at their own pace and on their own schedule. This flexibility reduces the intimidation factor often associated with large, looming standardized tests.

The beauty of learning gigs is that they are attuned to the modern world that students understand and navigate daily. They offer immediate, tangible rewards for specific tasks, aligning closely with the extrinsic motivational factors that the gig economy already capitalizes on. This makes the educational experience less abstract and more immediate, bridging the gap between the academic world and the "real world."

## | COMPARISON WITH ADULT WORK INCENTIVES

In the adult world, work provides more than just a paycheck. It offers a sense of purpose, opportunities for skill-building, avenues for social interaction, and the prospect of career advancement. Work is valued not merely for its economic benefits but also for its contributions to personal and societal well-being.

Why, then, is education often viewed differently—as a gift to be gratefully received rather than a valuable endeavor to be fairly compensated? Just like work, education serves multiple purposes: skill development, future employability, and societal contribution. The time has come to recognize these multi-dimensional benefits and to compensate them accordingly.

## | SHIFTING PERCEPTIONS: EDUCATION AS VALUED WORK

Learning gigs offer a way to align the worlds of education and work more closely. By providing financial incentives tied to specific academic tasks, we acknowledge the value of educational labor. Students are no longer just passive recipients of knowledge; they become active contributors to their learning journey and, by extension, to society at large.

This shifts the narrative from viewing education merely as a gift to be appreciated to seeing it as a form of work that has intrinsic value and deserves compensation. In doing so, we not only tap into extrinsic motivators that are effective in the short term but also lay the foundation for a more profound, intrinsic connection to the learning process.

*“Today, High schools in general are competing with McDonald’s and Burger King. Students prefer to make money for their immediate wants and needs instead of coming to school.”*

Larry Burt, Executive Director, DOR,  
Oakmont Education

## | STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

Dayahanna, 10th Grade, Towpath Trails High School in Akron, Ohio

Do you think students should be paid to learn?

**Yes, kids have to get up every week for a whole year from the time they are born to do work and if they don't their parents can go to jail.**

If you make more than \$3,000 a year to learn, how would it change your school experience?

**I honestly think kids would come to school more.**

## CHAPTER 4

# INDEPENDENT CENTERS FOR ASSESSMENT

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### THE CONCEPT AND RATIONALE BEHIND INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT

**T**he standard educational model often merges teaching and assessment, burdening teachers with both roles. This approach has several limitations, including amplified stress on educators and loopholes for students to "game the system." A more effective alternative is the introduction of Independent Centers for Assessment—neutral entities separate from schools, dedicated solely to evaluating student mastery in particular domains. Outstanda Academy exemplifies such an independent center, where assessments are intricately tied to the completion of "learning gigs."

In this framework, schools and teachers nominate students for assessments based on the completion of required group and individual projects and practice materials. This structure allows schools and teachers to maintain control over who is eligible to earn

financial rewards, thereby ensuring that only diligent and well-behaved students can benefit monetarily.

## HOW INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT TAKES THE PRESSURE OFF TEACHERS

- 1. Clear Segregation of Roles:** The separation of teaching from assessment allows educators to focus on their primary responsibility—teaching. This transition transforms teachers into guides, mentors, and coaches, enriching the student-teacher relationship and fostering more constructive classroom interactions.
- 2. Flexible Grading Options:** Schools have the choice to either eliminate traditional grading or map grades to the completion of learning gigs. In the latter scenario, all grades are based on verified and proctored results, which minimizes the potential for cheating and guessing. This ensures that grades, if used, are an accurate reflection of a student's abilities.
- 3. Unbiased Assessments:** Learning gigs and their corresponding assessments are meticulously designed to be impartial and require a high level of mastery, thereby maintaining high educational standards for all students. Students will not be able to accuse school staff of racism, targeting, or favoritism.
- 4. Psychological Shift:** The separation of assessment from teaching fosters a significant shift in how students perceive academic achievement, likening it to important life milestones such as job interviews or professional certifications.

**5. Financial Accountability:** The financial incentives associated with these assessments add another layer of motivation, compelling students to behave more responsibly and focus on their academic tasks.

**6. Teacher Empowerment:** Teachers retain the authority to nominate students for assessments, providing them with a renewed sense of professional agency and satisfaction. Teachers are responsible for the review and approval of all group and individual projects, which unlock the opportunity to do an assessment and potentially be paid.

## THE TRANSFORMATIVE POTENTIAL OF INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT CENTERS

Independent Centers for Assessment address numerous systemic challenges in education:

- **Financial Efficiency:** Schools are likely to experience cost reductions due to decreased disciplinary and academic issues.
- **Payment Management:** Schools do not pay students. Instead, they pay for assessments and if a student demonstrates mastery, the student receives a scholarship payment from Outstanda.
- **Elevated Behavioral Standards:** Financial rewards tied to successful assessments encourage more mature behavior among students.
- **Enhanced Learning Environment:** Freed from the task of assessments, teachers can focus on creating engaging, project-based learning experiences.



- **Social Equity:** High, unbiased standards eliminate the issue of lowered expectations, especially for disadvantaged youth where teachers may be trying to help them by making courses easier, but in the long run hurting the students' attitude and abilities.
- **Community Impact:** The financial benefits extend beyond individual students to their households and local communities.

Ultimately, independent centers for assessment offer a comprehensive solution to the challenges of the current educational system. They liberate teachers to focus on teaching, introduce a level of financial and behavioral accountability that is transformative, and enable a more genuine, equitable, and efficient learning environment for all.

## STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

Aaliyoh, 10th Grade, Towpath Trails High School in Akron, Ohio

Do you think students should be paid to learn?

**Yes, because it is like a job. You are doing work.**

If you make more than \$3,000 a year to learn, how would it change your school experience?

**It would motivate me even more to want to go to school.**

How would your family be impacted if you and each of your brothers and sisters were making money going to school?

**It would bring more money into the house to help pay bills.**

If you graduated from high school and had access to a savings account that had \$10,000 in it, what do you think you would do with the money?

**I would give half to my mom for taking care of me and save the rest.**

Tell a true story about a time in your life when having \$500 would have helped you a lot.

**A few years back my mom didn't have the money for the rent so if I had \$500 I would have given it to her.**

## CHAPTER 5

# FINANCIAL VIABILITY

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### | THE ECONOMICS OF PAYING STUDENTS

**T**he concept of paying students for their academic achievements represents a paradigm shift in education, but it's more than just a theoretical proposal—it's financially viable. Here's how it works: Students complete "learning gigs" and are compensated for their effort and mastery. The earnings are deposited into a digital account, accessible via phone or a debit card. Schools can designate a portion of these earnings to be saved until the student turns 18, giving them a nest egg for future endeavors.

Schools have firm control over which learning gigs are eligible from their school, and how many students are given access. This allows a school to spend as little or as much as they desire on the assessment process. Of course, schools that have more assessments available are going to attract the best students.

### **Peer Pressure and Behavioral Changes**

One of the immediate impacts of this financial system is a change in classroom dynamics. Students who excel academically will have more spending power, creating a form of positive peer pressure. This is particularly impactful for those who disrupt class or misbehave, as their actions will now have financial consequences not just for them but also for their peers. The repercussions of causing disruptions will be felt more keenly when they affect the collective pocketbook, making classroom discipline less of an issue for teachers and more of a community concern among students.

### **Financial Resources as a Safety Net for Future Challenges**

One of the most transformative aspects of this financial system is that it equips students with resources they can draw upon in future life challenges. By allocating a portion of their earnings to be saved until they turn 18, students are not just receiving immediate financial rewards; they are also building a financial safety net. This nest egg can become particularly crucial for funding higher education, jump-starting a small business, or even aiding in the purchase of a first home.

### **Access in Emergencies: A Safeguard Against Life's Uncertainties**

Life is unpredictable, and unfortunate circumstances like homelessness, abuse, or neglect can occur. In such dire situations, the accumulated savings can be accessed earlier, provided that a verified professional—such as a social worker or counselor, approves the withdrawal. This gives the student an added layer of financial security

and independence during times when they may have little else to rely on.

These early-access provisions not only offer immediate relief but also instill a sense of empowerment and control. Knowing that they have a financial resource to fall back on can be psychologically reassuring for young individuals navigating through challenges. This aspect of the system underscores its dual role as both an educational incentive and a social safety net, making it a truly holistic solution.

By providing both immediate and future financial benefits, this system goes beyond mere academic incentives. It becomes a tool for social mobility, a buffer against life's uncertainties, and a practical lesson in financial planning. The blend of immediate gratification with long-term financial security serves to motivate students in the present while equipping them for the future, making the proposition not just educationally sound but also socially responsible.

The addition of this safety net adds yet another layer to the financial viability and social impact of paying students for academic achievements. It enhances the system's role as a comprehensive solution that addresses not just educational gaps but also societal challenges, further justifying its implementation.

## **| FINANCIAL IMPACT ON STUDENTS**

The idea of paying students for academic achievements has ripple effects that go beyond the classroom. The financial incentives offer

students a tangible reward for their hard work, reinforcing the value of education. Over time, this system can create a culture of academic excellence and financial responsibility, setting the stage for long-term success.

## | IMPACT ON DIFFERENT SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS

**1. Disadvantaged Students:** One of the most profound impacts will be on underprivileged students. This system offers them a pathway out of poverty by providing them with additional resources. These financial gains, coupled with an improved educational experience, significantly increase the likelihood of these students going on to higher education or better employment.

**2. Lower Middle-Class Students:** For families that are somewhat better off but still struggling, the additional income can be a game-changer. It could go towards transportation costs, home upgrades, or even a family vacation—luxuries that were previously out of reach. Moreover, the financial cushion could make the prospect of continuing education more attainable.

**3. Middle-Class Students:** These students will benefit from having additional resources to pursue higher education, possibly at better institutions, and with less burden of student loans. The money saved and earned through this system can be an important factor in choosing higher education paths that may have seemed financially risky or impractical before.

**4. Wealthy Students:** It's essential to include students from affluent backgrounds in this system to maintain fairness; after all, they are also putting in the work. However, these students have the option to

redirect their earnings toward philanthropic endeavors if they so choose. Whether it's donating to less privileged schools or contributing to conservation efforts, the system encourages a sense of social responsibility. After all, what 8-year-old wouldn't want to save baby elephants?

The financial viability of paying students for academic achievements is not only sustainable but also equitable. It offers a multi-faceted solution that addresses the diverse needs of various socio-economic groups, making education more inclusive and effective. This system transforms classrooms into micro-economies of knowledge, where the currency is academic excellence, and everyone has the opportunity to prosper.

## **PUBLIC SCHOOL PROFILES AND ACADEMIC COMPETITION: A NEW MEASURE OF EFFECTIVENESS**

In a world where schools are often judged by standardized test scores or complex ranking systems, the introduction of publicly visible school earnings presents a radical departure. Schools can now have public profiles that display total earnings, earnings per student, and donated earnings. This financial metric offers a direct, uncomplicated measure of a school's effectiveness. It shifts the focus from abstract academic benchmarks to concrete, monetary outcomes that reflect both academic excellence and social responsibility.

### **The Competitive Landscape: Not Just for Affluent Schools**

One might assume that this system would inherently favor schools in affluent districts, where students can access more resources.

However, it's crucial to consider the motivational dynamics at play. Students who stand to gain the most from this financial system—those in less privileged circumstances—are likely to be the most motivated to excel academically. As these students start performing better, the pressure will mount on schools in more affluent areas to keep pace.

### **A Level Playing Field: The Rise of Academic Achievement**

The beauty of this approach lies in its inherent fairness and the competitive academic environment it fosters. Schools from less affluent districts have the opportunity to rise in the rankings based on the sheer motivation and effort of their students. Meanwhile, schools in wealthier districts face a new kind of pressure to maintain their standing, encouraging them to redouble their academic efforts.

This landscape creates a positive feedback loop of competition and achievement. The highest-earning school becomes a coveted title, spurring other schools to strive for excellence. Similarly, the most philanthropic school—measured by donated earnings—can become a point of pride and social responsibility, enriching the school community's ethos.

### **Unprecedented Mass Achievement**

What we're looking at is a potential revolution in educational achievement. By tying school effectiveness to financial earnings, we're setting the stage for a level of mass academic achievement that has never been seen before. Schools will not just be teaching hubs but also centers of financial empowerment and social mobility. The public profiles act as both a scoreboard and a motivator, pushing schools to



strive not just for academic excellence but also for financial and social impact.

## HOW TO FUND PAYING STUDENTS: A SUSTAINABLE AND COST-EFFECTIVE MODEL

The question of funding is often the first hurdle any innovative educational proposal must clear. The idea of paying students for their academic achievements might initially seem like an added burden on already stretched school budgets. However, a closer examination reveals that this model is not only sustainable but, over time, can actually make education more affordable.

After all, the school is only paying for inexpensive assessments.

### The Economics of Assessment

Let's begin by breaking down the costs. Schools would pay a nominal fee—for example, \$10—per assessment per student. Students can retake the assessment multiple times for that initial outlay, and upon achieving mastery (a score of 80% or above), they would receive 90% of the assessment cost, i.e., \$9.

While the notion of students potentially earning over \$100 a week seems daunting, several factors make this a financially sound investment.

### Long-Term Cost Savings

**1. Blended Learning Model:** The new system allows for a blended model of education, where students can engage in lectures and readings at home or independently. Physical attendance at school

becomes necessary only for group projects, presentations, and specialized tutoring. This reduces overhead costs associated with maintaining a full-time, in-person educational environment.

**2. Teacher Efficiency:** With assessments handled externally, teachers will spend less time grading and more time on meaningful educational interactions, such as project-based learning. This not only improves the quality of education but also increases teacher job satisfaction.

**3. Minimal Preparation:** Teachers act more as mentors in this model, guiding students who are working at their own pace. This minimizes the need for extensive lesson planning, freeing up teachers' time and mental resources.

**4. Special Education:** Currently one of the most resource-intensive aspects of education, special education could undergo a radical transformation. While some students will always require a high level of individualized attention, many others could graduate to less intensive forms of support, thanks to increased motivation and the opportunity to earn.

**5. Curriculum Cost:** Outstanda Academy provides a free curriculum for all assessments, eliminating the need for schools to purchase expensive textbooks and materials. Schools would only need to invest in enrichment materials tailored to their student populations.

**6. Reduced Security and Discipline Costs:** With the potential for a blended model that allows students to work from home, costs related to security, enforcement, and disciplinary actions like detention or suspension could significantly decrease.

**7. Faster Graduation, Smaller Population:** With a more engaging and motivating educational environment, the number of students being held back could decrease, and more students could graduate early, reducing the overall student population and associated costs.

### **Dynamic School Structure**

As schools transition to this new model, they could operate in two shifts, focusing on mastery, athletics, competition, and academic excellence. Over time, a more dynamic structure would require fewer staff members. While it's unrealistic to expect immediate staff reductions, natural attrition could gradually bring down staffing levels as the system is fine-tuned.

The combination of 2 shifts, fewer teachers, and students graduating more quickly will result in significant cost savings for any school district.

### **Ask Yourself This**

What we're presenting here is more than just an innovative educational model; it's a financially sustainable roadmap for the future of education. The initial investment in student assessments is more than offset by the manifold long-term savings and efficiencies gained. Schools will not merely be centers of learning; they'll become hubs of financial empowerment and social mobility, operating at a fraction of today's costs.

So, the question isn't really whether we can afford to pay students for academic achievements. The real question is, can we afford not to?

Even with these cost savings and benefits, there could still be a gap in funding, especially with a highly motivated student population. The good news is that this problem is the perfect pairing with another issue: How AI and Automation will displace jobs and how we deal with it.

## **TAX ON AUTOMATION AND AI: BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN TECHNOLOGY AND HUMAN LEARNING**

In the dawn of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, where automation and AI are increasingly taking over tasks once done by humans, there is a growing need to address the societal implications of this seismic shift. One of the most effective ways to do this is through a targeted tax on automation and artificial intelligence, designed to benefit human learning directly.

### **The Automation Tax Structure**

For each job replaced by automation or AI, a tax of 17.5% of what a human would have been paid for that job would be levied on the employing organization. This isn't merely a tax; it's an investment in future human capital. The revenue generated from this tax would be earmarked exclusively for funding learning gigs, ensuring that as technology advances, so does the general populace.

### **Funding Learning Gigs**

The revenue from the automation tax would go into a dedicated fund, 100% of which would be used to pay students for completing learning gigs. This creates a self-sustaining ecosystem: as more jobs are automated, more funds become available for human education, thereby preparing the next generation for the higher-order jobs that machines can't do.

### **Economic and Social Benefits**

- 1. Resource Redistribution:** This tax ensures that the benefits of automation aren't concentrated at the top but are instead used to uplift the entire community.
- 2. Incentivizing Education:** Knowing that there's a direct financial incentive can boost student engagement and academic performance, making society more resilient to job market changes.
- 3. Skill Alignment:** With more resources for education, curricula can be designed to align with future job market needs, making it easier for students to transition to the workforce.
- 4. Reducing Income Inequality:** By channeling funds from automation into education, we can help bridge the economic divide, providing equal opportunities for students from all backgrounds.
- 5. Global Competitiveness:** A well-educated workforce is more attractive to global businesses, potentially drawing more investment into the community.

### **Ethical and Moral Implications**

Implementing a tax on automation and AI is not just an economic decision but also an ethical one. It signifies a commitment to valuing

human potential and intelligence as much as we value technological advancement. In an era where the fear of machines replacing human labor is palpable, this tax serves as a societal safety net, reassuring citizens that progress will not come at the cost of human well-being. But instead of simply paying people who may be displaced, we will be paying them to continue learning and enhancing their skills.

To help lawmakers along, I asked AI to write a draft of the law. Keep in mind this is only a tax on reductions in labor and jobs.

# THE AUTOMATION AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE JOB REPLACEMENT TAX ACT OF [YEAR]

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## SECTION 1: TITLE AND PURPOSE

**1.1** This Act may be cited as the "Automation and Artificial Intelligence Job Replacement Tax Act of [Year]."

**1.2** The purpose of this Act is to impose a tax on businesses that eliminate jobs through automation or artificial intelligence, thereby generating revenue to support educational initiatives.

## SECTION 2: DEFINITIONS

**2.1** "Automation" refers to technology that performs tasks without human intervention.

**2.2** "Artificial Intelligence" refers to machine systems capable of performing tasks that would ordinarily require human intelligence.

**2.3** "Business Entity" refers to any organization engaged in commercial, industrial, or professional activities.

**2.4** "Job Replacement" refers to the elimination of a position due to automation or artificial intelligence.

2.5 "Revenue" refers to the total income generated by a business entity in one fiscal year before any expenditures.

## SECTION 3: TAX RATE

3.1 A tax rate of 17.5% will be imposed on businesses with annual revenue exceeding \$2,000,000 that engage in job replacement via automation or artificial intelligence.

3.2 The tax will be calculated based on 17.5% of the annual salary that would have been paid to a human employee.

3.3 The calculation of the automation and AI impact fee will be determined based on standardized employment estimations corresponding to the business classification. This benchmark will be established using the employment levels deemed necessary for similar businesses in the year 2000. If the business has not undergone significant operational changes that would warrant a workforce adjustment, the payroll levels will be updated annually to account for inflation or other economic factors.

## SECTION 4: USE OF TAX REVENUE

4.1 All tax revenue generated by this Act will be earmarked for educational programs, specifically to fund "learning gigs" for students.

4.2 An independent body will be established to manage and allocate these funds in a transparent and accountable manner.



## | SECTION 5: REPORTING AND COMPLIANCE

**5.1** Business entities subject to this tax must submit an annual report detailing job replacements, estimated salaries saved, and taxes paid.

**5.2** Failure to comply with this Act will result in penalties as established by the Internal Revenue Service or equivalent body.

## | SECTION 6: AMENDMENTS

**6.1** Amendments to this Act can be made with a 2/3 majority vote in both Houses of Congress or equivalent legislative body.

## | SECTION 7: EFFECTIVE DATE

**7.1** This Act will take effect 90 days after being signed into law.

This Act is hereby passed by the [Legislative Body] and signed into law by [Highest Executive Official].

*Note: The above is a model legislative text and should be reviewed by legal experts for compliance with the laws and regulations of the jurisdiction in which it is to be implemented.*

In sum, an automation tax devoted to human learning is not just a policy proposal; it's a philosophical stance on the kind of future we want to build. It acknowledges that while machines can outperform humans in many tasks, they can never replace human creativity, emotional intelligence, and the ability to learn and grow.

## | STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

Autsin, 10th Grade, Towpath Trails High School in Akron, Ohio

Do you think students should be paid to learn?

**Yes, I think students should get paid in some way because it takes a lot to graduate. I do not think they should get paid until they graduate though.**

If you make more than \$3,000 a year to learn, how would it change your school experience?

**It would be easier to come (to school) knowing I get an award.**

If you graduated from high school and had access to a savings account that had \$10,000 in it, what do you think you would do with the money?

**Either a car or a house.**

## CHAPTER 6

# MASTERY AND MICRO-ASSESSMENTS

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### | FROM STANDARDIZATION TO INDIVIDUAL MASTERY

In the conventional educational landscape, large standardized tests have long been the gatekeepers of academic success. They come with their own set of challenges: test anxiety, memorization over understanding, and a one-size-fits-all approach that often leaves diverse learners in the dust. Enter the era of mastery and micro-assessments, a shift that aligns neatly with the concept of paying students for learning. This chapter will delve into how replacing large standardized tests with micro-assessments not only improves the educational experience but also provides a more authentic measure of mastery.

### | THE IMPERATIVE FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

With the introduction of financial incentives for educational accomplishment, the stakes are higher, not just for students but for the educational system at large. Financial fraud is a tangible risk when students are being paid for their academic achievements. To counteract this, stringent verification processes are in place. Identities are confirmed before assessments, which are conducted in proctored settings that minimize the possibility of cheating. Teachers are still there to guide and prepare students for these assessments, but they can no longer pass a student who hasn't truly earned it. This framework establishes a high level of accountability that keeps the integrity of the educational transaction intact.

When you hear a story about people in high school but at a 3rd-grade reading level, this is exactly what has happened. An emphasis on grade levels tied loosely to age means students are “kindly” passed along without skills or accountability.

## | THE BEAUTY OF MICRO-ASSESSMENTS

Micro-assessments break down what would be a large, monolithic exam into smaller, more focused evaluations. Each assessment is tied to a specific "learning gig," providing a clear pathway for both study and mastery. The materials for these micro-assessments are transparently available, and the questions are direct, culled from the educational resources themselves. In contrast to the sometimes tricky questions often found in standardized tests, these queries are straightforward, designed to assess true understanding rather than the ability to navigate a confusing question.

The system is also built to identify which questions throw off otherwise good students so that the questions can be reviewed and

clarified if need be. The goal is never a hierarchy of grades - but a simple pass/fail of sufficient mastery of the topic. And failure only means to go back, study, and try again.

## | MASTERY LEARNING: A NEW PARADIGM

Mastery is not about recalling facts from two years ago; it's about understanding a concept so thoroughly that you can apply it in real-world situations. Traditional educational models focus on a broad curriculum, much of which is forgotten soon after the final exam. The mastery model, however, focuses on specific, useful, and concise information that a student must understand deeply.

## | THE RETENTION EQUATION

Let's confront an educational reality: much of what we learn in school is forgotten. Yet, the concept of mastery coupled with micro-assessments challenges this norm. By focusing on more specific and applicable knowledge—and by actually applying it in various projects—students are more likely to retain what they've learned. And because they don't have to cram a multitude of topics for a single, high-stakes test, they're also less likely to forget material after the assessment. Continuous, lifelong learning is a habit that is built from an early age and carried into adulthood.

## | A HARMONIOUS SYMBIOSIS

Mastery learning and micro-assessments offer a harmonious solution to many of the problems plaguing traditional educational assessment methods. With the added layer of financial incentives, these focused,

accountable assessments pave the way for a more equitable, effective, and enriching educational experience. As we move toward this new model, we're not just paying students to learn; we're investing in a future where education is both a personal achievement and a societal good.

## | STUDENT PERSPECTIVE: ATTENDANCE

How students see attendance as reported by multiple surveys.

We conducted surveys in multiple schools that have a population where attendance is an issue. As of this writing, **100% of students have reported that being paid to go to school would improve their attendance.**

Attendance in school is crucial for academic success for several reasons. Consistent attendance allows students to engage with the curriculum in a structured way, participate in interactive learning experiences, and benefit from the social and emotional development that comes with being part of a school community. Missing school not only results in gaps in knowledge but also breaks the continuity of learning, making it difficult for students to catch up, especially in subjects that build on previous lessons like math and science.

According to a study by the U.S. Department of Education, chronic absenteeism, defined as missing at least 15 days of school in a single academic year, is strongly associated with lower academic performance. The study found that only 64% of fourth-graders who were chronically absent in kindergarten and first grade were proficient in reading, compared to 82% of those with better attendance. The gap widened for mathematics, where 60% of chronically absent students scored proficient, compared to 89% of those who attended school regularly ("Chronic Absenteeism in the Nation's Schools: An Unprecedented Look at a Hidden Educational Crisis," U.S. Department of Education, 2016). This data underscores the vital role that attendance plays in academic achievement.

## CHAPTER 7

# PROJECT-BASED VERIFICATION

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### | INTRODUCTION: THE CHANGING ROLE OF TEACHERS

**T**he traditional image of a teacher standing at the front of a classroom, lecturing to students who are expected to passively absorb information, is rapidly becoming a relic of the past. In the landscape we are envisioning, teachers become empowered facilitators, guiding students through hands-on projects that prepare them for micro-assessments. But their role goes beyond that; they become the gatekeepers who verify a student's readiness to take these assessments, thereby directly influencing the student's financial incentives.

In this chapter, we'll explore how this new role for teachers enhances the educational experience and aligns with the broader goals of our revamped educational system.



## FINANCIAL POWER IN TEACHERS' HANDS

In this new system, teachers wield an unprecedented level of influence—they literally hold the keys to a student's financial rewards. But this is not power for its own sake; it is power vested in the teacher to ensure that learning is authentic, meaningful, and verified through real-world projects. Before a student can take an assessment and potentially earn money, the teacher must confirm that the student has successfully completed the required projects. This financial dynamic underscores the teacher's role as a mentor and guide, providing both motivation and accountability in the learning process.

## THE ADVANTAGES OF A PROJECT-BASED LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Project-based learning is not a new pedagogical approach, but in the context of this new educational model, it takes on even greater significance. Projects are not just assignments to be completed; they are the proving ground where students demonstrate mastery.

- 1. Collaborative Skills:** Students learn to work together, often in teams, to complete projects. This fosters a sense of community and teamwork that is often lacking in traditional educational settings.
- 2. Real-world Application:** Projects often involve solving real-world problems or creating tangible products, making the learning experience more relevant and engaging.

**3. Deep Understanding:** The project-based approach allows for a deeper exploration of subjects, moving beyond rote memorization to a more nuanced understanding of the material.

## EXAMPLES OF PROJECTS

### English Literature

- **Group:** Conduct a roundtable discussion on symbolism in a chosen novel. Each student is responsible for presenting one symbol and its relevance.
- **Individual:** Create a character diary entry, exploring the thoughts and feelings of a character from a novel studied in class.

### U.S. History

- **Group:** Collaborate on a timeline of significant events during the Civil Rights Movement. Each student contributes by researching and presenting one event.
- **Individual:** Write a letter from the perspective of a soldier in the Civil War, discussing the hardships and ideology of the time.

### Chemistry

- **Group:** Conduct a simple chemical reaction experiment and document the results. Share findings with the class.
- **Individual:** Create a poster that explains a specific element, including its atomic structure, uses, and properties.

### Algebra II

- **Group:** Work in pairs or trios to solve a sheet of complex algebraic equations. Discuss your strategies and solutions.
- **Individual:** Create a how-to guide for solving a specific type of algebraic equation.

### Physics

- **Group:** Design and conduct a simple experiment to demonstrate Newton's Third Law. Share results with the class.
- **Individual:** Develop a mini-presentation explaining a physics concept like inertia, using everyday examples.

### Spanish

- **Group:** Create a 10-slide PowerPoint presentation about a Spanish-speaking country, focusing on its culture, geography, and language. Present to the class.
- **Individual:** Record a 2-minute video introducing yourself and discussing your hobbies, entirely in Spanish.

### Art

- **Group:** Collaborate on a mural that represents a social issue. Each student contributes a section to the final piece.
- **Individual:** Choose an art movement (e.g., Impressionism) and create a piece inspired by that style.

### Computer Science

- **Group:** Develop a simple website using HTML and CSS. Each student is responsible for one page.

- **Individual:** Write a Python script that solves a simple problem, like sorting a list of numbers.

### Physical Education

- **Group:** Design a 15-minute workout routine and lead the class through it.
- **Individual:** Create a personal fitness plan for one month and present it.

### Music Theory

- **Group:** Compose a short piece of music as a team and perform it for the class.
- **Individual:** Analyze a song's chord progression and present your findings.

These kinds of projects immerse students into the topic and help them have a deeper understanding of what is being taught. They will also give them the social and emotional experiences of working with peers.

## | SCHOOLS AS NURTURING GROUNDS FOR SUCCESS

In this revitalized educational landscape, the metric for a "good school" shifts dramatically. No longer solely judged on the basis of standardized test scores, schools are evaluated on their ability to nurture students in a more holistic manner. A successful school becomes one where students are engaged, where they approach their studies and projects with a mature, focused attitude, and where the student body collaborates effectively.

## | LIFELONG FRIENDSHIPS AND PROFESSIONAL NETWORKS

One often overlooked advantage of this approach is the type of relationships it fosters among students. When students collaborate on projects, they're not just learning academic content; they're also learning how to work together, how to communicate, and how to solve problems as a team. These are skills that will serve them well in any future career, and the friendships they form during these formative projects often become lifelong bonds, rooted in mutual respect and shared achievement.

## | AN EDUCATIONAL RENAISSANCE

By shifting the focus from standardized testing to project-based learning and verification, we are not merely tweaking the educational system; we are redefining it.

Mastery is not a new approach. But by combining it with micro-assessments, payments, and outside verification, it completely transforms the experience and outcomes in education. Classrooms more closely align with innovative work environments. Many great solutions and transformative leaders will be developed in this environment.

Teachers become more than educators; they become mentors, guides, and the catalysts for real-world success. Students become more than test-takers; they become collaborators, problem-solvers, and, most importantly, lifelong learners.

## CHAPTER 8

# BLENDED LEARNING AND BEHAVIORAL CHANGE

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**W**ork lives are blended for many people. It can mean more work or less work. It can mean the flexibility of where you work. It can include unlimited time off as long as the job gets done. Gigs play an important role as well in this blended work ecosystem. Need some extra cash? Pick up a few gigs driving people around or dog sitting.

Why are these principles not being applied the exact same way to school? They can be.

### | THE INTERSECTION OF LEARNING MODELS

Blended learning combines traditional classroom instruction with online education, allowing students to partially control the time, pace, and place of their learning. This approach has gained traction in many educational settings, offering a balanced mix of social interaction and focused, individual study time. In this chapter, we'll explore how blended learning fits into our new educational model,

particularly with respect to its impact on student behavior and the overall learning environment.

## | DEFINING BLENDED LEARNING

Blended learning is an educational approach that integrates face-to-face classroom methods with computer-mediated activities. This provides students with more control over their learning experience, allowing for a more personalized and flexible education. The blend of traditional, project-based, and digital learning offers a rich tapestry of opportunities for students to engage with the material and with each other.

## | BEHAVIORAL TRANSFORMATION: A CENTRAL PILLAR

One of the unique features of blended learning in this new model is the focus on behavior as a qualifying factor for participation in group projects. Gone are the days of suspensions and detentions as primary disciplinary measures. Instead, students who misbehave may find themselves relegated to the digital side of blended learning, participating remotely until they demonstrate the maturity and responsibility needed for in-person collaboration. Students who are digital only would be removed from collaborating with friends, and have a harder time demonstrating that they are ready for assessments. Taking away access to peers and to a source of income while still providing full access to the learning materials is a game changer.

## | INCENTIVIZING GOOD BEHAVIOR

The prospect of earning financial rewards through learning gigs provides an additional layer of behavioral incentive. Students quickly realize that mature, responsible behavior is not just socially right but also financially rewarding. This dual incentive system has the potential to revolutionize classroom dynamics, promoting a more respectful and focused learning environment.

## | SUPPORTING PARENTS IN THE BLENDED MODEL

A common concern regarding blended learning is the issue of childcare. Parents who work may find it challenging to accommodate a model where students might be learning from home part of the time. To address this, our model includes comprehensive parent training modules aimed at helping families support their children's educational journey. For those students who struggle with behavioral norms, alternative educational settings can be provided, although these would not offer access to financially incentivized learning gigs.

Our recommended morning and evening shifts for school, which cut administrative costs also give families the opportunity to know their child is safe even if they are working evenings. This improves the experience for families if the students can work well with others and come to school ready to learn.

## | A SEA CHANGE IN EDUCATION AND BEHAVIOR

It would be lovely if everyone got a great, engaging education and loved to do it for the love and appreciation of learning. But let's be



honest. Times up. That does not work for a majority of people, and especially not for people who are underprivileged. Families are frustrated. Students are frustrated. Teachers are frustrated. There needs to be a change.

Blended learning is not just a logistical adjustment; it's a cultural shift. By integrating financial incentives and making behavior a cornerstone of educational progress, this new model offers a transformative approach to teaching and learning. It promises not just academic growth, but also the development of social skills and personal responsibility, equipping students for the complexities of the real world.

## CHAPTER 9

# PACING AND PERSONALIZATION

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### | EMBRACING DIVERSITY IN LEARNING STYLES

In a rapidly evolving educational landscape, there's a growing understanding that students differ in how they learn, the pace at which they're comfortable, and the subjects that captivate them. This chapter focuses on how Outstanda's system champions these differences, providing a personalized, pace-agnostic approach to education while still aligning with traditional educational standards.

### | THE FREEDOM OF AUTONOMY

Outstanda might suggest age and grade-appropriate materials, but the ultimate decision rests with the students, schools, and teachers. Students can follow divergent paths in learning as long as they meet local standards. This autonomy empowers them to engage with subjects that truly interest them and to do so at their own pace. The assessment system is non-punitive; students either pass or try again, reducing the anxiety often associated with traditional grading.

## | THE ROLE OF TEACHER VERIFICATION

To prevent the system from being gamed—students endlessly retaking assessments until they pass—teachers play a critical role. They verify that a student has genuinely engaged with the subject matter and is prepared to reattempt an assessment. This adds an additional layer of rigor and ensures that the learning is authentic.

## | SCHOOL-BASED FLEXIBILITY

Outstanda is designed to augment, not replace, existing educational systems. Schools can select which learning gigs to offer, set grade-level requirements, decide the criteria for graduation, and even dictate the rigor needed to unlock an assessment.

## | THE LIFELONG VALUE OF CERTIFICATES

For every learning gig completed, Outstanda issues a certificate co-signed by the school. These certificates form a permanent part of a student's academic history. How they factor into traditional grading or graduation requirements is up to the individual schools and educational governing bodies.

These digital certificates are signed by Outstanda as the assessment administrator, the teacher as the project verifier, and an administrator or board member as a senior representative of the school. The certificate comes with a log of the student's progress through lessons, and the opportunity to score consistently high and pass the learning gig with honors.

## **ACCELERATED LEARNING: THE COLLEGE COURSE ADVANTAGE**

One of the most exciting features of Outstanda is its inclusion of college-level courses. These courses offer higher financial rewards and the opportunity for academic acceleration. Like Advanced Placement (AP) courses, these college-level courses are proctored and verified, and a growing number of universities are beginning to recognize them for credit. This provides highly motivated students the chance to begin their higher education journey earlier, potentially reducing the time and cost of college down the road.

## **THE DISCONNECT WITH TRADITIONAL GRADE LEVELS**

Within Outstanda's system, the traditional concept of grade levels is pointless. Instead, students are encouraged to focus on their areas of interest and work at their own pace. For some, this will be accelerated, and for some, it will be at a slower pace.

Schools retain the authority to set academic standards, providing a balanced ecosystem where personalization and standardization coexist. Ultimately, the school is the issuer of diplomas, and their standards must be met.

## **PIONEERING A NEW EDUCATIONAL PARADIGM**

Outstanda represents more than just a shift in educational technology; it embodies a philosophical change in how we view education. By blending personal autonomy with structured verification, it creates a system that is both liberating and rigorous.

Students have more accountability for behavior and learning, as well as having the reward for work well done in the form of payments.

## CHAPTER 10

# WIDER IMPLICATIONS

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### | TRANSFORMING THE TAPESTRY OF SOCIETY

**A**s we enter this final section of the book, it's crucial to expand our lens beyond the immediate educational benefits of the Outstanda system. The implications are not restricted to classrooms or even school buildings; they ripple through families, communities, and eventually, the entire socio-economic fabric of society.

#### **Schools: The New Epicenters of Innovation**

Schools will no longer be mere venues for information dissemination; they will become dynamic hubs of creativity and innovation. The Outstanda system, with its focus on mastery, autonomy, and financial incentives, will dramatically alter the educational landscape. Teachers will evolve from information providers to mentors and facilitators, empowering students to take ownership of their learning journey.

### **Communities: A Ripple Effect**

As schools transform, so will the communities that surround them. Increased financial stability for families will directly translate into more vibrant local economies. The democratization of education will level the playing field, allowing talent to rise regardless of socio-economic background. Communities will become more cohesive, as education turns into a shared value and a collective pursuit.

### **Families: The Smallest Unit of Change**

At the family level, the Outstanda system will bring about a profound shift in dynamics. Parents will become more engaged in their children's education, not just as passive observers but as active participants. The financial incentives will alleviate household stress, allowing for a more nurturing home environment. Moreover, the system will provide parents with resources to better support their children's academic journey.

### **The Long-Term View: A Society Transformed**

Imagine a generation of adults who have been nurtured through this system—a generation that is not just more educated but also more engaged, more skilled, and more financially stable. The long-term societal benefits are staggering. Government dependency rates for programs addressing unemployment, homelessness, and underemployment are likely to plummet. A workforce that is both skilled and adaptable will attract businesses, further boosting economic growth.

In the upcoming section, we will delve deeper into each of these transformational shifts. We'll explore how a simple yet revolutionary

idea—paying students to learn—could serve as the catalyst for societal change on a scale we've yet to fully comprehend. The Outstanda model doesn't just promise a better way to educate; it promises a better way to live.



## | STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

Dorian, 11th Grade, Towpath Trails High School in Akron, Ohio

Do you think students should be paid to learn?

**Yes, because we are expected to be at a building by a certain time every weekday for 3.5 hours, and for other schools 8. Everything put in front of us has a due date and is expected to be done. Then if we do not do it we lose points. The only other place like this is a JOB!**

If you make more than \$3,000 a year to learn, how would it change your school experience?

**I would actually be excited to learn something.**

How would your family be impacted if you and each of your brothers and sisters were making money going to school?

**Majorly.**

If you graduated from high school and had access to a savings account that had \$10,000 in it, what do you think you would do with the money?

**Invest.**

Tell a true story about a time in your life when having \$500 would have helped you a lot.

**One day I woke up and tried to get in the shower for school but the water was turned off.**

## CHAPTER 11

# COST BENEFITS TO SCHOOLS

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### A PARADIGM SHIFT IN EDUCATIONAL ECONOMICS

**V**enturing into the financial landscape of the Outstanda model, it's crucial to recognize that the focus is not merely on an expenditure but an investment—an investment that promises rich academic and economic dividends in the long run. While the upfront costs may initially be higher, the long-term gains significantly outweigh them. This chapter aims to dissect these financial intricacies.

### THE PERENNIAL STRUGGLE OF UNDERPERFORMING SCHOOLS

It's important to address the unique plight of underperforming schools that find themselves in a seemingly endless cycle of trying new programs each year. These schools face extreme pressure to improve student performance and, as a result, end up investing in the

latest educational trends, only to find little change in student motivation. This recurring cycle is not only frustrating but also a financial drain. Outstanda offers a sustainable solution to this challenge by directly incentivizing student performance, thereby achieving quicker and more lasting improvements.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE AND TESTING COSTS: THE DOWNWARD CURVE**

Shifting to independent assessment centers relieves schools from the logistical and financial burdens associated with large-scale standardized testing. This allows teachers to focus more on teaching and less on administrative tasks, resulting in substantial cost savings over time.

In fact, a simple web search shows that billions of dollars each year are spent on various testing products, with a vast majority going to a few large corporations as profits. Seeing 90% of this money put into a local community instead addresses a lot of important issues.

## **TEACHER ATTRITION: THE NATURAL ROAD TO STREAMLINING**

The model facilitates natural staff reductions through attrition rather than abrupt layoffs. As the system optimizes itself, schools can reallocate these funds to offer more learning gigs, thereby increasing both the educational and earning opportunities for students.

In no case would a school be able to start laying off teachers. Our proposed solution depends on high-quality engaging teachers.

However, the many benefits of the model will mean teachers will be able to serve more students with less stress, and over time, as teachers leave or retire, a natural reduction in staffing will occur.

## | **RUNNING TWO SHIFTS: DOUBLING EFFICIENCY**

Utilizing school buildings for two shifts can essentially double student capacity without the need for additional infrastructure. This innovative approach significantly reduces per-student costs by maximizing the use of existing facilities.

This is not new. Schools already do this and those schools typically have a surplus of cash because of the enhanced efficiency.

## | **REALLOCATING RESOURCES: THE VIRTUOUS CYCLE**

Savings on administrative, testing, and facility costs can be funneled back into other educational needs, whether it's cutting-edge technology, specialized teaching staff, or enriched extracurricular programs. This creates a virtuous cycle of investment and improvement that makes schools more appealing to prospective students, thereby boosting enrollment and reducing per-student costs further.

## | **UNFORESEEN BENEFITS: BEYOND THE BUDGET SHEET**

**1. Community Partnerships:** Improved financial stability among families opens doors for partnerships with local businesses, providing another

layer of real-world educational experience. Youth internships and collaboration are more likely when students are seen as serious, mature members of the community.

**2. Reduced Security Costs:** Safety is always a top concern. However, improved student behavior cuts down the need for extensive security measures, further reducing operational costs.

**3. Parental Engagement:** Increased parental involvement in the Outstanda model could lead to greater support for school levies and fundraisers, indirectly bolstering school finances.

**4. Environmental Savings:** The blended model reduces utility usage, contributing to both ecological sustainability and financial savings.

**5. Flexibility:** With online access to learning in the blended model, snow days mean more studying at home. Going on a trip? Study on the road. Want to get ahead during a break? No one is stopping you.

## A PHASED APPROACH: THE PATH TO FULL IMPLEMENTATION

A gradual, phased approach to implementing Outstanda allows schools to test the waters, fine-tune the system, and expand it organically. This mitigates risks and ensures a smoother transition for all stakeholders.

## A SUSTAINABLE MODEL FOR THE FUTURE

The Outstanda model is a financially sustainable approach to education that significantly improves educational outcomes while

also generating a cascade of savings and benefits across various aspects of school operations. Far from being just an innovative teaching method, it's a comprehensive strategy for educational and financial sustainability.

By directly addressing the root causes of student disengagement and underperformance, Outstanda not only offers a way out of the annual cycle of educational fads but also provides a long-term, financially viable solution for schools of all kinds.

## CHAPTER 12

# THE RIPPLE EFFECT: HOMES AND COMMUNITIES

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### | THE ECONOMICS OF TRANSFORMATION

**T**he introduction of the Outstanda model doesn't just stop at the school's doorstep—it echoes through homes and reverberates across communities. This chapter delves into the transformative economic and social impact of this educational paradigm on families and neighborhoods.

### | CHANGING HOUSEHOLD DYNAMICS: A NEW PERSPECTIVE ON EDUCATION

When students bring home not just grades but actual income, the entire household dynamic shifts. Parents become more engaged in their children's education, understanding that academic success now has immediate, tangible benefits. This heightened interest at home fosters a nurturing environment conducive to academic excellence.

## ECONOMIC IMPACT: REVITALIZING LOCAL ECONOMIES

Suppose each student earns an average of \$3,000 per year through learning gigs. In a community of 1,000 students, that translates to \$3 million potentially pumped into the local economy.

- 1. Retail and Services:** A percentage of these earnings will flow into local businesses, from grocery stores to clothing shops, leading to increased revenue and the potential for job creation.
- 2. Real Estate:** Increased income levels and improved community engagement can lead to higher property values, thus boosting property tax revenues for further community development.

## BREAKING THE CYCLE: IMPACT ON SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND HOMELESSNESS

The financial stability offered by the Outstanda model can serve as a protective factor against the vulnerabilities that often lead to drug and alcohol abuse. Furthermore, the sense of self-worth and achievement gained through academic success can serve as a strong deterrent against such destructive behaviors.

Self-esteem is important to staying employed and not falling into substance abuse. Outstanda is designed to improve self-esteem with frequent micro-assessments that can be passed by anyone who studies. Frequent positive reinforcement coupled with valuing someone's work with pay I believe will lead to a significant reduction in serious social problems.



## **A CATALYST FOR JOB CREATION**

More money circulating in local businesses means more job opportunities for adults. This has a positive feedback loop: when parents have stable employment, it further stabilizes the home environment, reinforcing the value of education and hard work.

## **ADDRESSING HOMELESSNESS AND CRIME: A NEW PREVENTATIVE MEASURE**

When families have more disposable income and access to job opportunities, the risk of homelessness and criminal behavior dramatically decreases. By tackling the issue at its roots, the Outstanda model acts as a preventive measure against these social ailments.

One important aspect is that Outstanda is open to all ages. If someone is homeless and an organization is willing to sponsor their learning, such as a homeless shelter or a religious organization, those people can study and earn by passing assessments. Prisoners can also study while incarcerated and have the money available when they are released, decreasing the chance of recidivism.

People can earn more if they stay clean, keep focused, and work. This leads to increased work ethic, sobriety, education, and financial resources.

While nothing is a cure-all, this can have a lasting and significant impact on many people who would otherwise not have a clear way out of their dilemma.

## | BEYOND THE CLASSROOM WALLS

The Outstanda model is not just an educational reform; it's a social reform. It enriches not only the students but also their families and communities. By transforming how we approach education, we're building a stronger, more resilient society—one that not only educates its youth but also empowers them to uplift their communities.

## | STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

Kyra, Senior, Public School in Pittsburgh, PA

Do you think students should be paid to learn? Explain why.

**I think that if students were paid to learn they would be more likely to go to school and do schoolwork. From somebody who worked 5 nights a week, I would be able to work less and focus more on school.**

If you made more than \$3,000 per year learning, how would it change your school experience?

**I would have worked less, and possibly been more into after school activities and clubs.**

How would your family be impacted if you and each brother and sister were making money going to school?

**I think my family would be more happy to have kids making this money, because they might see their kids more, because they would work less.**

If you graduated from high school and had access to a savings account that had \$10,000 in it, what do you think you would do with the money?

**I think I would keep it in a savings account and work on putting more money into it.**

Tell a true story about a time in your life when having \$500 would have helped you a lot.

**Having \$500 would have helped me a lot when I was working five nights a week all school year from 3pm-10:30pm.**

## CHAPTER 13

# FINANCIAL PLANNING AND LONG-TERM BENEFITS

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### | MONEY MANAGEMENT AS A LIFE SKILL

**F**inancial literacy is rarely taught in traditional educational settings, yet it's a skill that holds lifelong importance. The Outstanda model not only incentivizes academic success but also introduces students to the principles of financial planning and long-term savings, setting the stage for future financial stability.

### | EARNINGS AND SAVINGS: A BALANCED APPROACH

To mitigate concerns about parents taking control of their children's earnings, the Outstanda system includes a safeguard. Schools can designate a portion of the earnings to be automatically held in a savings account accessible only when the student turns 18. This ensures that the money is invested in the student's future, whether it's for starting a business, buying a car, or furthering their education.

## | THE TRANSFORMATIONAL POWER OF SAVINGS

Let's delve into stories of four individuals who might benefit immensely from their locked savings:

### **Story 1: Maria's Food Truck**

Maria grew up in a low-income neighborhood. She was a brilliant student and took advantage of Outstanda's learning gigs to earn money. By the time she turned 18, she had \$12,000 in her locked savings account. Instead of spending it frivolously, Maria used that capital to start her own food truck business. Today, Maria's Tacos is a local hit, and she has employed two more people from her community.

### **Story 2: Sam's College Journey**

Sam's parents were never able to save enough for his college tuition. However, his locked savings from the Outstanda model amounted to \$10,000 by the time he graduated high school. This money allowed him to attend a community college and later transfer to a four-year university. Without the burden of student loans, Sam focused on his studies, eventually earning a scholarship for graduate school.

### **Story 3: Aisha's Investment in Mobility**

Aisha knew the value of mobility. She lived in a rural area where job opportunities were sparse. Upon turning 18, she had \$8,000 in her Outstanda savings. She used that money to buy a used car, which expanded her job opportunities tenfold. Aisha secured a job in a neighboring city, and the rest is history.

#### Story 4: George's Epic Graduation Party

George had always been the life of the party, a social butterfly whose charm was as compelling as his academic record. Eager to celebrate his graduation and the unlocking of his \$9,000 Outstanda savings, George decided to throw the most epic graduation party his town had ever seen. He rented a lavish venue, hired a top-notch DJ, and provided gourmet catering. The works.

The event was a resounding success, and the local economy saw a sudden boost. The venue owner, DJ, and caterers, mostly local small businesses, found themselves significantly better off. George's party became the talk of the town, a legendary event that people would speak about for years to come.

However, the next day, George woke up to an empty bank account and a newfound understanding of the fleeting nature of money. Though he had thrown a legendary party, he had also used up resources that could have been invested for long-term gains. The lesson was hard but invaluable: George had a firsthand experience of the responsibilities—and the pitfalls—of financial freedom. Welcome to adulthood, George.

### IMPACTS BEYOND INDIVIDUAL GAIN

- 1. Entrepreneurial Ventures:** As seen in Maria's story, this savings plan could lead to more businesses being started, spurring local economic growth.
- 2. Educational Advancement:** Like Sam, many could use this money for furthering their education, thus increasing their earning potential and contributing to a more educated workforce.

**3. Increased Mobility:** Aisha's story highlights how this savings plan could solve the issue of geographic job limitations, allowing people to seek opportunities beyond their immediate locales.

**4. Life Lessons:** While George's choice might not represent the most prudent financial decision, it offers a valuable lesson on the importance of money management, especially as young adults navigate the complexities of financial independence. It also exemplifies the diverse ways in which an influx of financial resources can impact individuals and communities alike.

## | SETTING THE STAGE FOR A SECURE FUTURE

By intertwining financial planning with educational achievement, the Outstanda model not only revolutionizes how we teach but also how we prepare our youth for a stable, prosperous future. This isn't just about immediate gratification; it's about long-term planning and the ripple effects that can transform lives for generations to come.

## CHAPTER 14

# ACADEMIC HEAD STARTS

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The opportunity for students to take and get paid for college courses is a major part of Outstanda. We believe in a seamless transition in education from early childhood to lifelong learners of advanced topics. This prepares students for higher academic success in a complex world

### **EARLY YEARS: A FOUNDATION FOR LIFELONG LEARNING**

We adhere to the philosophy that early childhood is a critical period for cognitive, emotional, and social development. For this reason, we advocate delaying formal assessments until a child reaches the age of 7, unless there's a clear indication that the child is exceptionally gifted and would thrive with earlier academic challenges.

Prior to embarking on their academic journey with learning gigs, students must complete a series of readiness assessments. These assessments, typically taken around the 1st or 2nd grade, cover fundamental skills such as basic reading comprehension, elementary math, and rudimentary logic and reasoning. The aim is to set students up for success from the beginning, thereby avoiding the negative



impact that early failure can have on self-esteem and future academic endeavors.

## | SUMMER LEARNING GIGS

Early success lays the groundwork for a lifetime of achievements. With our model, students can utilize their summers for academic enrichment, making gains of up to 25% in learning—a stark contrast to the 'summer slide' phenomenon seen in traditional educational systems.

## | COLLEGE-LEVEL COURSES: NOT JUST FOR FUTURE COLLEGE STUDENTS

By the age of 16 or even younger, many students are ready to take on college-level courses. These courses come with higher financial incentives, given their complexity and specialization. However, it's important to note that embarking on these advanced courses doesn't pigeonhole a student into a four-year college track.

We recognize that college isn't the end goal for every student. Yet, taking a few college courses provides more than just academic enrichment; it's about preparing students for a complex and rapidly evolving world. Even students who opt for a different path—like entering a trade or going straight into the workforce—will find that the additional knowledge and skills acquired give them an edge.

## | ACADEMIC FLEXIBILITY AND FUTURE CHOICES

Our model's flexibility allows students to make informed choices about their academic future. They can decide to continue their education, enter a trade, or join the workforce. But regardless of the path they choose, they will be better prepared to face a world that demands more from its citizens in terms of skills, adaptability, and knowledge.

There is also an easier path to continue learning lightly. By this, we mean a student can study and take one or two classes more easily at their own pace while working.

## **A STEPPING STONE TO HIGHER EDUCATION OR SKILLED WORK**

The availability of college courses within the system serves as a gateway to various pathways—be it higher education or skilled work. Those who do opt for higher education will find that they can complete their degrees faster and at a lower cost, thanks to the college credits they've already earned.

Ultimately, our academic model prepares students for a world that increasingly values both specialized skills and adaptability. Whether they choose to go to college or opt for a different path, they are better equipped to navigate the complexities and opportunities of the 21st century.

Kyndl Oliver saw the impact firsthand.

*“It is human nature for us to be motivated by incentives in order to encourage hard work and dedication to a cause. That statement holds true for students as well. Money is a great incentive to provide to children to help them to stay focused, determined, and interested in continued learning and personal growth.”*

Kyndl Oliver, Assistant Director  
The Green Inspiration Academy

# LOOKING AHEAD

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**A**s we stand on the precipice of a new era in education, it's crucial to look ahead and envision the transformative impact that our proposed model could have—not just on individual students, but on schools, families, and entire communities.

In this final section, we explore the potential long-term effects and innovations that could arise from implementing a system that pays students for verified learning achievements. What could our society look like when education is not only universally accessible but also universally incentivized? How might our communities change when every child sees education as not just a requirement but also an opportunity—a financially rewarded pathway to a better life? How does school change for teachers and students when the school day becomes more flexible like the job market, allowing for customized gig studying instead of 6+ hours of sitting there because you have to.

From the classrooms of tomorrow to the future landscapes of work and society, this section aims to shed light on the far-reaching implications of an educational system that genuinely adapts to the needs and potentials of its students. As we look ahead, we'll also tackle some of the criticisms and challenges that such a paradigm

shift might face, and how we can prepare for them today for a more equitable and prosperous tomorrow.

## CHAPTER 15

# LEVERAGE FOR HIGHER STANDARDS

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In today's rapidly evolving digital landscape, students are far more savvy and aware of the world around them than previous generations. They know that much of what is taught in schools won't directly apply to their future lives, and in a world where any fact or skill can be looked up online, the traditional model of education often falls short in motivating them. This is particularly true when you consider that students are expected to commit to 13 years of learning without direct financial compensation, a tall order when set against the backdrop of growing economic and social-emotional challenges in their communities.

Our model, which introduces financial incentives into the educational equation, offers a transformative solution to these challenges. When learning becomes a paid activity, students are more likely to focus and perform, much as they would in any professional setting. The system fundamentally alters the dynamics of motivation, making it easier for schools to insist on higher standards of academic excellence and behavior. This is especially crucial in an era where students, as

savvy as they are, are often skeptical of the real-world applicability of what they are learning. By aligning educational goals with financial incentives, we create a win-win situation: students are more motivated to learn, and schools can more easily meet their educational objectives.

The learning gig model is important because students cannot be put on a payroll. Students also cannot be rewarded just for showing up and sitting in a seat. Doing learning gigs independently outside of schools with no guarantee of compensation means schools do not have risk (they are only paying for assessments) and students are not entitled to employment benefits. It is a voluntary program that pays students micro-scholarship funds to offset the costs of education.

While schools mitigate the risk through this model, they still see enormous benefits right away.

### **10 Major Impacts/Improvements in the First Year:**

- 1. Increased Student Engagement:** The financial incentives would drive a noticeable increase in student participation in class, group projects, and overall curricular activities.
- 2. Enhanced Academic Performance:** With monetary rewards tied to academic success, students would be more motivated to excel in their studies, leading to improved grades and test scores.
- 3. Reduced Behavioral Issues:** The prospect of losing financial incentives would serve as a powerful deterrent against disruptive behavior, truancy, and other disciplinary problems.

**4. Improved Attendance:** Students who know they can earn money by attending school and performing well are less likely to skip classes, reducing absenteeism rates.

**5. Heightened Teacher Morale:** With students more invested in their education, teachers would find their roles to be more effective and rewarding, leading to increased job satisfaction.

**6. Resource Allocation:** The reduction in behavioral issues and administrative burdens would allow schools to reallocate resources to more productive educational needs, such as specialized training for teachers or new learning materials.

**7. Parental Involvement:** Knowing their children are earning money that benefits the household would encourage more parents to take an active role in their child's education.

**8. Community Perception:** Schools that successfully implement this system would likely receive positive attention, increasing the value and reputation of education within the community.

**9. Equality of Opportunity:** This system would especially benefit students from low-income families, reducing the educational inequality gap by providing everyone an equal incentive to learn.

**10. Preparation for Real-World Financial Management:** Managing their earnings would give students practical experience in handling money, providing them with valuable financial literacy skills for the future.

By integrating financial incentives into the educational process, schools gain a powerful tool to insist on higher standards. This model doesn't just make education more engaging for students; it transforms schools into environments where academic excellence



and good behavior are not just encouraged but tangibly rewarded. This leads to a virtuous cycle where everyone—students, teachers, parents, and the broader community—stands to gain.

## CHAPTER 16

# CHALLENGES AND CRITICISMS

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**Y**es, we have heard quite a few concerns as we talk about this with people. It is a big shift and not one that will happen overnight.

### **Anticipated Criticisms and Counterarguments**

This is a totally new frontier in education, and as with any groundbreaking shift, unexpected benefits and problems are bound to arise. From parents potentially misappropriating their children's earnings to issues like student extortion and gambling, this system isn't a panacea for all of society's ills. However, its core aim is to significantly benefit the vast majority of students. As these students mature into future leaders, entrepreneurs, and community members, the ripple effects of this educational transformation have the potential to reshape not just individual lives, but entire communities and nations.

**1) Schools Are Not Allowed to Pay Students:**

While it's true that schools themselves cannot directly pay students, this model addresses that issue by having schools pay independent assessment centers for assessments. Students are then compensated based on the assessment center's policy and their performance. Students are not guaranteed payment. They must perform.

**2) This Will Hurt Private and Parochial Schools:**

Contrary to this belief, the Outstanda system benefits all types of educational institutions. By promoting an environment where students actively engage in project-based learning, schools can leverage lower operating costs and better student engagement, making them more appealing to prospective students and their families.

**3) Students Should Do It for the Love of Learning:**

While some students are intrinsically motivated, the reality is that many are not—especially as they become more tech-savvy and question the applicability of what they're learning. The "love of learning" argument has been around for decades; if it were sufficient, we'd already see widespread student engagement.

**4) Students Will Waste the Money or Use It for Bad Things:**

While it's possible some students might misuse funds, our early observations indicate a major shift in student behavior and attitudes toward learning in just a matter of weeks. The money serves as a tangible reward for their educational improvements, making them less likely to make poor decisions because they want to continue to perform well and be paid.

**5) This is a Way to Give Money to the Poor:**

The system is designed to be equitable; all students are paid the same rate for their achievements, regardless of their economic background. While it does infuse money into poorer neighborhoods, the students earn this money through verified, proctored programs for the work they are doing. This is not charity for the students. It is paying people for results.

**6) Students Will Waste Money:**

The savings plan is designed to balance immediate gratification with long-term financial planning, thereby teaching students money management skills from a young age. It also assures that parents will not access all the money a student earns since a portion is saved until they turn 18.

**7) This Will Encourage People Not to Work:**

One goal is indeed to encourage younger students to focus on their studies rather than take low-wage jobs. This, in turn, could pressure businesses to offer higher wages to adult workers. Over time, the amount a student can earn is significant, but not enough to offset the need to work as they get older.

**8) Reducing Teachers and Administrators Will Result in Job Loss:**

While we do anticipate a reduction in staffing over time, this will likely be met through natural attrition. Moreover, the current shortage of qualified teachers suggests that remaining educators could command higher salaries and experience less stress on the job, reducing health costs and sick days.

**9) Students Will Skip School More Because They Have Money to Spend:**

Our surveys indicate the opposite: 100% of respondents stated their attendance and effort would significantly improve if they were financially incentivized. The experiment we ran in the summer of 2023 gave students the option to come or not come. One student skipped one class in order to play basketball with his friends. He later lamented to the school assistant director how much he regretted the decision because it impacted how much he made.

**10) Schools Cannot Afford It:**

The transition to this model will be gradual, starting with a few learning gigs per student and ramping up over time. This ensures that the program can grow in alignment with the school's budget and resource availability.

**11) Adding a Financial Component Puts More Pressure on Students:**

Yes, the system does add a layer of financial pressure. However, the true pressure lies in the preparation and effort leading up to the assessments, not the assessments themselves. Students can retake the assessments until they pass. However, a teacher must renominate them for the next attempt each time, which is a hassle, and just coming in and being prepared the first time is far easier.

**12) Parental Involvement Will Decrease:**

This model could actually increase parental involvement, as families would be more invested in their children's academic success due to the financial incentives. The learning gig model also gives parents something tangible to see and celebrate more frequently.

**13) It Reinforces Materialistic Values:**

While there's a financial component, the primary focus remains on education and personal development. The financial incentives are a means to an end, not the end itself. Besides this, the model reinforces the model they will be expected to follow when they enter the workforce. Do quality work and expect to be paid for it.

**14) It Could Create an Unhealthy Competitive Environment:**

Competition already exists in schools through grades and sports. This model aims to make that competition more constructive by tying it to educational milestones. And because students do not win at the expense of other students losing, it creates more collaboration with the group projects.

**15) This Model Could Lead to a Narrow Focus on Testable Subjects:**

Outstanda's system is designed to be comprehensive, covering a broad range of subjects and skills, including those that are not traditionally "testable," thereby mitigating this concern. In cases such as art, the school's validation of the projects being done carries more weight than the actual testing in the assessment center. The role of schools will be more important than ever, because the project work will be critical to student development.

**16) It Ignores Emotional and Social Development:**

Actually, the model promotes emotional and social development through its focus on project-based learning, which requires teamwork, problem-solving, and effective communication. Teachers become more support and collaboration specialists and less behavior

police. Students' emotional and social development will benefit from this environment.

## CHAPTER 17

# FUTURE PROSPECTS

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**T**he educational landscape stands at the cusp of a radical transformation, one that could redefine not just how students learn but also how communities grow, economies flourish, and nations prosper. Based on our pilot program in the summer of 2023, the initial signs are overwhelmingly positive. Despite the challenges—technical glitches, the short duration, and initial resistance—the transformation in student behavior and effort was striking, even within the brief span of three weeks.

### | ACADEMIC AND SOCIETAL IMPACTS

Our early trials suggest that the model could lead to unparalleled academic growth in the first year alone. Such an achievement would have a rippling impact on local economies, families, and, most importantly, on students—many of whom have felt lost and without direction due to the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

### | GETTING INVOLVED



## Assessment Centers

To set up an assessment center, schools must commit to using the system for a minimum of three years. This ensures that the center will be viable and can be effectively staffed. Based on the size of the student population, schools pre-purchase assessments.

## | PARTNERSHIPS

Outstanda cannot transform education in isolation. We need partnerships across various domains:

- **Identity Verification:** To ensure the assessments are credible.
- **Financial Management:** To handle the payouts to students and track their savings.
- **Technology:** To maintain the digital infrastructure, especially as we scale.
- **Real Estate:** To provide the physical locations for the assessment centers.
- **Translation:** Native speakers who can test assessments in different languages.

## | GOVERNMENT INVOLVEMENT

Governments at all levels need to be involved. Large businesses are attracted to regions where the workforce is highly skilled. State and local government support can give certain areas a competitive advantage in attracting high-paying jobs in the short term and fostering greater entrepreneurship in the longer term.

Governments also need to explore how a highly proctored learning gig environment can better demonstrate learning and mastery of important topics. Short, proctored assessments with a high degree of accountability better mimic the adult world of needing to show up and make progress in a job each day.

## WHY PARTNER WITH US?

- **Financial Organizations:** The firm that collaborates with us to provide debit cards to students will gain millions of new customers, who are likely to continue using their services throughout life.
- **Technology Partners:** Assessment centers will need extensive hardware, support, and financing to build state of the art centers of learning.
- **Governments:** An educated, skilled populace is the cornerstone of a thriving economy and a stable society.
- **Educational Institutions:** Schools and colleges will benefit from a more motivated, well-prepared student body, reducing dropout rates and improving overall academic performance.
- **Universities:** By accepting coursework done in learning gigs, the universities will attract more students and reverse the current trend of fewer college-bound students.

The early adopters of this system will have a significant advantage. The scope for innovation is immense, and the societal impact could be revolutionary. As we look to the future, the next steps involve meticulous planning, strategic partnerships, and carefully designed

pilot programs. With collective effort, the potential for transformative change is not just possible—it's inevitable.

# START MAKING SMALL IMPACTS

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**T**his is a big proposed change. One that could redefine learning, empower students, and transform communities in profound ways. The Outstanda model, built on the principle of paying students for their academic achievements, offers an innovative approach to solving long-standing issues in education - disengagement, inequity, and inefficiency. The good thing is very slow adoption is possible, beginning with a course or two and growing from there.

By aligning financial incentives with academic milestones over time, we not only enhance motivation but also pave the way for more personalized, mastery-based learning experiences. The financial viability of this model has been demonstrated through data-backed analyses, and its potential socio-economic impacts on communities are not just beneficial but transformative.

## | CALL TO ACTION

### **For Educators:**

Reimagine your role. You are not just teachers but mentors, coaches, and gatekeepers to new financial opportunities for your students. Your role becomes even more impactful under this system. Transition from a threat of bad grades to a gatekeeper of financial incentives. Contact us to find out about certification in our program. (And yes, of course, you get paid to learn in our program.)

### **For Policymakers:**

Recognize the potential for systemic change. Here is a model that could fundamentally alter the trajectory of our educational system for the better. It deserves your attention, scrutiny, and ultimately, your support.

### **For Stakeholders and Potential Partners:**

Whether you're in the technology sector, financial services, or local government - there's a role for you to play in this educational transformation. Early adopters will not just be investing in a business opportunity but in the future of our society.

### **For Parents and Students:**

Paying someone for the work they do is an important way to show respect and acknowledge someone's value. Teachers, administrators, and students all deserve a respectful environment and a common positive purpose. Contact your school and ask to have Outstanda included as part of the program.

### **For Everyone:**

This is not charity or handouts. Students are only paid for the work they complete. The benefits of a more educated, motivated, and financially secure youth will pay dividends in every sector and stratum of society. This is our collective future, and it's in our hands to shape it.

## | LET'S CONNECT

The path to widespread educational reform is complex and laden with challenges. But it is a journey worth taking. To learn more about how you can be a part of this transformation, please reach out.

### **Contact Information:**

Ron McDaniel,  
Founder of Outstanda, an Ohio Nonprofit

Email: [ron@outstanda.org](mailto:ron@outstanda.org)

We are at a pivotal moment in history where we have the tools, the data, and the vision to make sweeping changes in the way we educate our youth. The only question remaining is, will you be a part of it?

## ADDITIONAL INSIGHTS

# ESSAYS TO EXPAND THE TOPIC

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**A**s you finish reading this book, you might feel that you've gained a comprehensive understanding of the Outstanda model. However, the landscape of education is intricate, with many facets that interact in complex ways. To provide a more rounded viewpoint, we've included additional essays that delve into various topics that intersect with the Outstanda ecosystem. These essays aim to provoke thought, stimulate discussion, and offer fresh perspectives on issues ranging from school competition to global considerations.

Each essay serves as a standalone discussion, yet they all tie back to the central theme of the book—how the Outstanda model can bring education up to date and extend its impact beyond the classroom. Whether you're an educator, a policymaker, or a stakeholder in the educational ecosystem, these essays offer valuable insights that will deepen your understanding and perhaps even inspire action.

## **THE NEW ARENA OF EXCELLENCE: HOW OUTSTANDA FUELS ACADEMIC RIVALRY AND CULTIVATES ELITE PERFORMERS**

The nature of competition, whether it's on the athletic field or in the classroom, has always been a hot topic in the educational landscape. Traditionally, schools have vied for athletic championships, but what if the same fervor could be channeled into academic excellence? Outstanda, the groundbreaking educational model that incentivizes learning with financial rewards, offers a paradigm shift that could turn schools into competitive arenas of academic brilliance.

## **THE ATHLETIC PARADIGM: LESSONS FROM THE FIELD**

The value of athletic competition in educational settings has long been recognized. School sports are not just about winning games but about instilling a sense of discipline, teamwork, and ambition in students. In fact, elite athletes are often chosen for jobs over their non-athletic counterparts precisely because they exhibit a strong work ethic and a competitive spirit—traits that are highly sought after in the professional world.

## **BRIDGING THE GAP: FROM ATHLETIC TO ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE**

Now, what if we could apply these lessons from athletics to academics? Imagine a world where schools could cultivate academic athletes - students who approach learning with the same level of dedication, drive, and competitive spirit that elite athletes bring to



their sports. Outstanda's platform provides the ideal setup to make this vision a reality, turning academic achievement into a competitive, yet constructive, endeavor.

## MEANINGFUL METRICS: THE SCOREBOARD FOR SCHOOLS

Just as athletic competition relies on clear, objective metrics like points scored or races won, Outstanda offers a set of tangible measures to gauge academic competition. Schools can now compare their performance using several impactful metrics:

- 1. Total Earnings:** A reflection of the collective academic efforts of the student body.
- 2. Earnings Per Student:** A more nuanced measure that accommodates schools of various sizes.
- 3. Donations:** A testament to a school's commitment to social causes.

## THE REAL WORLD IMPACT: CRAFTING ELITE ACADEMIC ATHLETES

Much like how sports competitions have scouts and recruiters, the Outstanda platform could serve as a scouting ground for companies, colleges, and even governments to identify top academic talent. Students who excel in this competitive academic environment will likely display the same traits—such as resilience, strategic thinking, and a strong work ethic—that make athletes appealing to recruiters.

## **| DATA-DRIVEN EXCELLENCE: THE NUMBERS DON'T LIE**

Research supports the benefits of academic competition. Studies published in reputable journals like the "Journal of Educational Psychology" and the "American Educational Research Journal" have shown that competitive academic environments can lead to higher test scores, improved student engagement, and a healthier school culture.

## **| A LEVEL PLAYING FIELD WITH HIGH STAKES**

Outstanda's system ensures a fair and level playing field where schools can compete based on authentic measures of student engagement and learning. This isn't just about school-wide achievement; it's about fostering an environment where individual 'academic athletes' can thrive and be recognized, much like their counterparts on the sports field.

## **| THE FUTURE OF SCHOOL COMPETITION**

The Outstanda model has the potential to redefine the landscape of educational competition. As schools adopt this model, we can expect a shift in focus from merely athletic to both athletic and academic excellence. This isn't just a game-changer; it's a life-changer, setting the stage for the next generation of well-rounded, highly competitive individuals ready to take on the world's challenges.

## THE WORLD AS A CLASSROOM

# HOW LEARNING GIGS UNLOCK THE POTENTIAL OF TRAVEL STUDY PROGRAMS

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In the evolving landscape of education, Learning Gigs - structured educational tasks rewarded with financial incentives - present a groundbreaking shift toward a more versatile, student-centric model. One of the most exciting implications of this transformation is the way Learning Gigs can revolutionize travel study programs. By seamlessly integrating the online and offline aspects of education, Learning Gigs offer the consistency and flexibility that traditional study abroad programs lack. In this essay, we will delve into the untapped potential, intrinsic value, and life-altering perspectives that Learning Gigs can bring to the concept of travel study.

First, consider how student earning impacts Travel Study. Students can now save to cover the costs of travel that would be required to participate. Now the programs are not limited to more affluent students, but potentially all students. And having a program like this gives a student an achievable dream. Also, consider that students can

have a more profound experience if they have a decent savings to spend on the trip.

### **Mobility and Consistency**

One of the major challenges of travel study has always been the difficulty of maintaining educational continuity. Transferring credits, aligning curricula, and adapting to different teaching styles can turn what should be an enriching experience into a logistical nightmare. Learning Gigs solve this problem by standardizing the educational experience across various locations.

Since Learning Gigs are designed to be online and universally accessible, they give students the mobility to travel without worrying about missing out on essential coursework. A student from New York studying Renaissance art in Florence can continue to engage with their home curriculum while also benefiting from the immersive cultural experience that Italy offers. The continuity in their education ensures that the travel enriches their learning, rather than disrupts it.

Schools can arrange for exchanges of students, and the visiting students would be added to the group projects being conducted in the new school. This experience makes students more adaptable and can give them experience working with different people and maybe even on international teams to solve problems.

### **School-Sponsored Travel Opportunities**

Schools have a golden opportunity to develop specialized travel study programs around Learning Gigs. For example, a history class could

offer a Learning Gig focused on the Civil Rights Movement in the United States. This could be paired with a travel study program visiting key locations like Selma, Montgomery, and Washington D.C. The online Learning Gig would provide the academic foundation and assessment, while the travel experience would offer the irreplaceable context and emotional impact that only being physically present can provide.

These programs could also expand to international exchanges. Schools in different countries could collaborate to create cross-cultural Learning Gig exchanges. Imagine a program where American students learn about European history on location while European students explore American history in the United States. The Learning Gigs would ensure that both sets of students meet the same academic standards, making the experience educationally equitable.

### **Broadening Perspectives**

The value of travel study is not just academic; it's profoundly transformative on a personal level. When students step out of their familiar environments and engage with new cultures, languages, and social norms, their perspectives broaden in ways that a classroom setting could never achieve. Learning Gigs, by facilitating more travel study opportunities, exponentially increase the chances for students to have these transformative experiences.

The act of learning about the French Revolution takes on new depth when it occurs within the halls of the Palace of Versailles. Understanding the complexities of marine biology becomes visceral when studying coral reefs in Australia. These rich, contextual

experiences make the academic content more meaningful and are likely to instill a lifelong passion for learning and global awareness in students.

Learning Gigs offer a perfect blend of academic rigor, flexibility, and universal accessibility, breaking down the barriers that have traditionally hindered the expansion of travel study programs. They serve as the academic backbone, providing a standardized, high-quality educational experience regardless of a student's geographic location. This allows schools to focus on creating enriching, context-specific travel opportunities that can deepen a student's understanding of the subjects they are studying.

The potential here is not just to create better-educated individuals but to foster a generation of global citizens. In a world that is increasingly interconnected yet deeply divided, the ability to understand and appreciate different cultures and perspectives is more crucial than ever. Learning Gigs, by making travel study more feasible and enriching, contribute to this broader educational mission.

Through Learning Gigs, students are not merely learners; they become explorers—both of academic subjects and the world at large. The combination of earning while learning serves as an added incentive, further democratizing the availability of such transformative experiences. As the education landscape continues to evolve, Learning Gigs stand out as a remarkable innovation with the potential to redefine not just how we learn, but how we interact with the world around us.

# BRIDGING HUMAN POTENTIAL AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

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**A**rtificial Intelligence (AI) is no longer the stuff of science fiction—it's a palpable force reshaping industries, from healthcare to finance, and education is not immune to its transformative touch. The fusion of AI with Outstanda's groundbreaking educational model offers an unparalleled opportunity to redefine how students learn, compete, and prepare for a complex world. In this symbiotic relationship, AI amplifies human potential, while Outstanda ensures that the "human" in learning is not lost.

## THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS: AI AND HUMAN KNOWLEDGE

At the core of the Outstanda model is a focus on human knowledge and skills. Assessment centers strictly prohibit the use of AI to solve assessment questions, ensuring that what is being assessed is a student's fundamental grasp of a subject matter. On the flip side, AI becomes an invaluable tool in the learning phase, helping students prepare for these assessments. This dual approach ensures that

students get the best of both worlds—high-tech preparation and human-centered evaluation.

## UNVEILING THE FUTURE: AI-DRIVEN CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

AI algorithms can analyze vast amounts of educational content to pinpoint what methods are most effective for student learning. This data-driven approach can be used to continually update and improve the curriculum, adapting it to the needs and trends of the time. Moreover, AI can translate this curriculum into multiple languages, ensuring that students around the globe have equal access to quality education.

## 10 MORE BENEFITS OF MERGING AI WITH OUTSTANDING

- 1. Personalized Learning Paths:** AI can analyze individual student performance and recommend custom-tailored learning resources and strategies.
- 2. Global Standardization:** AI can ensure that assessments maintain the same level of difficulty and integrity, irrespective of the language in which they are taken.
- 3. Assessment Grading:** Over time we will develop assessments with AI interfaces to create an assessment that is conversational and comprehensive.
- 4. Early Intervention:** AI can identify at-risk students much earlier by analyzing patterns in their performance and engagement levels.



- 5. Peer Matching:** AI algorithms can identify the best peers for group projects based on skills, learning styles, and even personality traits.
- 6. Resource Allocation:** Schools can use AI to analyze which resources yield the best educational outcomes, thereby optimizing budget allocation.
- 7. Teacher Assistance:** AI can help teachers prepare lesson plans, suggest additional materials, and even help with administrative tasks.
- 8. Career Guidance:** By analyzing a student's performance and interests over time, AI can offer highly personalized career guidance.
- 9. Enhanced Engagement:** AI-driven educational games and simulations can make complex subjects like mathematics and science more engaging.
- 10. Global Classrooms:** AI can break down language barriers, allowing for a more diverse and inclusive educational environment.

## | A NEW DAWN IN EDUCATION

The integration of AI into the Outstanda model opens up worlds of possibilities that were hitherto unthinkable. From personalizing education to breaking down linguistic and geographical barriers, the potential benefits are staggering. Outstanda, paired with the computational power of AI, has the potential to usher in a new era of educational excellence, one where human ingenuity is complemented, not replaced, by artificial intelligence. The future of education is not just bright; it's dazzling.

# FROM THE CLASSROOM TO THE FIELD

# OUTSTANDA'S ATHLETIC ADVANTAGE

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**O**utstanda's vision for education doesn't stop at the classroom door; it extends to the athletic fields, gyms, and courts where students learn lessons just as valuable as those found in textbooks. By integrating athletic pursuits into the learning model, Outstanda transforms not just minds but bodies, instilling in students the holistic skills needed to succeed in every facet of life.

## | THE ATHLETIC CURRICULUM: BEYOND BOOK LEARNING

The Outstanda model incorporates project-based learning that extends to physical activity. For instance, students might study nutrition and then apply their knowledge through participation in a school sports team. For students with physical limitations, the activities can be adjusted to suit their abilities, ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to participate and learn.

## | THE TEACHER'S ROLE: NURTURING THE RIGHT VALUES

The teacher overseeing the learning gig unlocks the earning potential based on the quality of participation, not wins and losses. This approach ensures that students learn the true value of sportsmanship, teamwork, and dedication - skills that will serve them well in all areas of life.

## 10 BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATING IN COMPETITIVE SPORTS

- 1. Teamwork and Collaboration:** Sports teach students how to work together to achieve a common goal, a skill that's invaluable in both academic and professional settings.
- 2. Discipline and Time Management:** Balancing schoolwork and sports requires discipline and effective time management, skills that are crucial for future success.
- 3. Physical Health:** Regular physical activity promotes overall well-being and health, from cardiovascular fitness to mental health.
- 4. Stress Relief:** Physical activity is a natural stress reliever, helping students manage the pressures of academics and life.
- 5. Self-Esteem:** Success on the field can translate to increased confidence and self-esteem, which benefit students in the classroom as well.
- 6. Leadership Skills:** Team sports provide numerous opportunities for students to develop leadership skills, from being a team captain to leading by example.

**7. Resilience and Grit:** The competitive nature of sports teaches students how to handle setbacks and failures, building resilience and grit.

**8. Global Awareness:** Many sports are global, and understanding the rules, history, and culture surrounding them can broaden students' global awareness.

**9. Community and Belonging:** Being part of a team creates a sense of community and belonging, which can be especially important for students who may feel isolated or marginalized.

**10. Career Opportunities:** Athletic scholarships and professional sporting opportunities can open doors to careers and educational paths that might otherwise be closed. Also, many potential employers see success in athletics as a positive sign a person has a good work ethic.

## | ATHLETIC EXCELLENCE MEETS ACADEMIC RIGOR

Outstanda's holistic approach to education recognizes that excellence isn't confined to the classroom. By fostering a healthy, competitive athletic environment built on the right values, Outstanda prepares students for a lifetime of success, both physically and intellectually. Through this integrated model, Outstanda isn't just redefining education; it's redefining what it means to be a well-rounded individual.

# TRANSFORMING THE WORLD ONE LESSON GIG AT A TIME **THE GLOBAL IMPACT OF OUTSTANDA**

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In a world that grows increasingly interconnected, education remains a universal key to unlocking human potential. But what happens when this key is universally standardized, accessible, and, most importantly, financially rewarding? Enter Outstanda—a revolutionary platform that doesn't just promise to disrupt education; it pledges to uplift economies, foster peace, and promote global prosperity.

## **THE FAR-REACHING BENEFITS OF GLOBAL IMPLEMENTATION**

### **Empowering Girls and Transforming Families**

In countries where a girl's education is undervalued, Outstanda offers a compelling financial incentive for families to invest in their daughters. With education translating directly to income, the risks

associated with early marriage and child brides are mitigated, while the social and economic status of women is elevated.

### **Micro-Progress, Macro-Impact**

In economically distressed regions, even small sums can make a substantial difference. Outstanda's model enables people to earn money through learning rather than taking out microloans, creating a more sustainable path to economic development and local entrepreneurship.

### **Building Bridges, Not Walls**

Outstanda's global curriculum fosters an understanding of diverse communities and cultures. This cultural literacy can help reduce local and regional tensions, making diplomacy and peace more attainable goals. Also, participation in Outstanda requires a commitment to stability and acceptance of other people. Regional violence cuts off significant income to the community.

### **Literacy: The Cornerstone of Social Stability**

By providing accessible education and financial incentives, Outstanda helps individuals develop essential skills that can alleviate frustration, violence, and poverty. Increases in literacy and knowledge of how to access services can substantially improve quality of life.

### **Refugees: From Surviving to Thriving**

Refugee camps equipped with Outstanda's learning gigs can better prepare inhabitants for future success. Not only do they gain valuable knowledge, but they also earn money, making them more attractive candidates for immigration and reducing their reliance on aid.

### **A Universal Credential**

Outstanda's system of verified, proctored assessments creates a globally recognized credential of mastery. This standardization helps tackle the issue of "brain waste," where skilled professionals from one country end up in low-paying jobs when they migrate.

### **Environmental Stewardship**

Outstanda's educational model can include lessons on environmental sustainability. A globally educated populace can contribute to better ecological practices, combating climate change on a global scale.

### **Countering Extremism**

By providing an alternative to radical ideologies through education and financial stability, Outstanda can play a role in counter-terrorism efforts worldwide. It is well documented that schools were formed in poor areas that were sponsored by radical ideologies. Replacing these schools with schools promoting tolerance and progress, and paying students to learn, reduces the risk of adopting violent ideologies.

### **Health and Well-Being**

Courses on hygiene, nutrition, and basic medical knowledge can lead to a global improvement in public health, reducing the burden on healthcare systems and increasing life expectancy. It can also combat

false information that is spread, making it harder to administer life-saving services.

### **Innovation and Progress**

By fostering a global culture of learning and competition, Outstanda can accelerate the pace of innovation and technological progress, benefiting not just individual communities but humanity as a whole.

## **| THE GLOBAL CLASSROOM**

Outstanda isn't just an educational platform; it's a blueprint for a more equitable, peaceful, and prosperous world. By leveling the educational playing field and tying learning to financial incentives, Outstanda makes the promise of global prosperity not just a dream for the distant future, but a tangible goal for today.



# UNITING THE WORLD THROUGH WORDS

# THE ROLE OF LANGUAGE CONGRUENCY

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In a globalized world, the role of language in education can't be understated. Outstanda's unique system of proctored assessments not only ensures that students across the globe can access high-quality education but also guarantees that the assessments hold the same meaning and standards, regardless of the language. This language congruency creates a ripple effect that can simplify international educational and professional pursuits and foster global unity.

## The Benefits of Language Congruency in Assessments

### **Universal Standards for Universal Knowledge**

The beauty of Outstanda's language congruent assessments is that they guarantee a universal standard of knowledge. Whether a student takes the test in English, Spanish, or Mandarin, they are assessed on the same criteria, ensuring that the certification has the same value globally.

## **A Boon for Non-English Speaking Students in the U.S.**

Language congruency in assessments can be especially beneficial in diverse countries like the United States, where many students come from non-English speaking backgrounds. By offering assessments in multiple languages, these students can showcase their skills and knowledge without the barrier of language hindering their progress. This gives a student the chance to continue to improve their education while developing their adopted country's language.

## **Simplifying International Applications**

For students applying to foreign universities or professionals seeking jobs in other countries, language-congruent assessments can streamline the application process. Educational qualifications will be universally recognized, reducing the need for cumbersome translations and validations.

## **Fostering International Collaboration**

Language congruent assessments can facilitate easier collaboration between professionals from different linguistic backgrounds. When a certification means the same thing in any language, it's easier to trust the skills and qualifications of an international colleague.

## **Leveling the Playing Field**

By standardizing assessments across languages, Outstanda can help level the educational playing field, providing an equitable opportunity for all, regardless of their linguistic background.

## **Facilitating Global Mobility**

The language congruency in Outstanda assessments can make it easier for people to move for work or study, breaking down one more barrier to global mobility.

### **Encouraging Multilingualism**

Knowing that qualifications can be universally recognized can encourage students to learn additional languages, further enriching their educational experience and job prospects.

### **Simplifying Legal Procedures**

Immigration and naturalization processes often require verification of educational qualifications. Language congruent assessments can make this process more straightforward and less prone to errors or misinterpretations.

### **Enhancing Global Competitiveness**

When employers or universities know that an Outstanda certification holds the same value regardless of the language it was earned in, it elevates the competitiveness of individuals on a global stage.

### **Enabling Global Benchmarking for Schools**

Language congruency allows schools in different parts of the world to compare their performance more easily, fostering a healthy competition that can drive educational improvements globally. In fact, any school can easily compare itself to any other school in the world that is using Outstanda.

### **The Universal Language of Learning**

Outstanda's commitment to language congruency in assessments is not just a logistical convenience; it's a powerful tool for fostering global unity and prosperity. By ensuring that every assessment holds the same value, irrespective of the language, Outstanda takes a giant leap toward creating a truly global classroom.

# THE SYMBIOSIS OF OUTSTANDA AND UNIVERSITIES PIONEERING A NEW ERA IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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**O**utstanda is pioneering a revolutionary change in the educational landscape, making education at all levels accessible and even profitable for students. However, its role is not to replace universities but to complement and enhance them. Contrary to the fear that free access to college-level courses might undermine the traditional university system, Outstanda offers a plethora of advantages that could make higher education more effective, profitable, and globally recognized.

**THE ADVANTAGES OF OUTSTANDA'S IMPACT ON  
UNIVERSITIES**

### **Financially Viable Students**

Outstanda's model of paying students to learn ensures that more students can afford the university experience, including residence and extra-curricular activities, which are a significant source of revenue for universities.

### **Increased Enrollment**

When students are financially secure and academically prepared, enrollment rates are likely to rise, benefiting universities.

### **Global Student Base**

Outstanda's global reach can attract international students, diversifying the student body and enhancing the educational experience. Reduced cheating and standardized micro-assessments enhance a universities ability to assess the student's qualifications.

### **Streamlined Admissions**

Outstanda's standardized assessments can simplify the admissions process, providing a more accurate measure of a student's academic readiness. It also gives universities a better look at a student in terms of work ethic, which can be a new criteria for admission.

### **Lower Teaching Costs**

The Outstanda model can reduce the cost of instruction, freeing up resources for research and extra-curricular activities. Universities are already good at creating a holistic student experience and this will only be enhanced.

**Seamless Transfers**

Outstanda's universal educational standards can make transferring between universities more seamless.

**Dual Enrollment**

The standardized system could enable students to be enrolled in multiple institutions simultaneously, expanding their educational opportunities.

**Research Funding**

With lower operational costs, universities can channel more funds into research, enhancing their academic reputation and providing students with more hands-on experience.

**Alumni Success**

Outstanda's practical, project-based learning can produce more successful graduates, increasing universities' prestige and alumni donations. Plus the university is a big part of the academic profile of each student, including the university signatures of each learning gig.

**Community Engagement**

Outstanda's project-based learning often involves community projects, which can strengthen the university's relationship with its local community.

**Global Rankings**

Standardized, universally recognized assessments can provide a more accurate basis for global university rankings. No more paying for false rankings. The system is based on the success of students and cannot be bought or influenced.

### **Advanced Courses**

Universities can offer more specialized courses and degrees, knowing that fundamental subjects are covered by Outstanda.

### **Faculty Development**

With the availability of more funds, universities can invest in faculty development programs, enhancing the quality of education. Any instructor is also a student, and their profile will reflect their ongoing commitment to learning.

### **Real-world Preparedness**

Outstanda's focus on practical skills ensures that students are better prepared for real-world challenges and they have knowledge that makes them a better critical thinker, making university education more valuable.

### **Lifelong Learning**

Universities can offer continuous learning opportunities, as Outstanda's model encourages lifelong education.

### **Accreditation Simplification**



Outstanda's standardized assessments can simplify the accreditation process for universities. The outside assessment for each learning gig means that you no longer have to take a university's word for it.

### **Entrepreneurship**

Outstanda's financial incentives can encourage student entrepreneurship, adding a new dimension to university education.

### **Inclusion**

By making education accessible to all, Outstanda can help universities become more inclusive. The onramp for university studies will overlap with high school studies to a greater degree, gradually building student confidence and interest in otherwise marginalized groups.

### **Quality Control**

Outstanda's assessments provide a way to maintain educational quality, both within a university and across different institutions. If certain courses are not trending in line with standard outcomes for your student population, the university has data on which they can act.

### **Cultural Exchange**

The global nature of Outstanda can facilitate cultural exchange programs, enriching the educational environment. Creating a standard for learning that is accepted universally makes mobility and enrichment much easier.

## | A BRIGHT FUTURE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Far from being a threat, Outstanda represents an unprecedented opportunity for universities to evolve and adapt to the changing educational landscape. The model offers a win-win situation for both students and institutions, making higher education more accessible, effective, and globally relevant. Universities that embrace this innovative approach stand to gain immensely in this new era of education.

## THE OUTSTANDA EFFECT

# FOSTERING PHILANTHROPY FROM THE CLASSROOM TO THE WORLD

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**T**he Outstanda model, with its radical approach of paying students for learning, has the potential to not only transform education but also leave a lasting impact on philanthropy. Encouraging affluent students to donate a portion of their earnings from learning gigs to philanthropic endeavors can create a new generation of socially conscious citizens who contribute to society in meaningful ways.

### | THE DONOR MINDSET: BORN OR MADE?

There is definitely a lot of debate about how a person becomes more philanthropic. One thing that is obvious in a variety of research is that when people have more money and less pressure, they are more philanthropic, on average.

With this in mind, what will be the long-term impact when a student has had more money and resources and been the beneficiary of kindness, such as being appreciated and paid for working on their academics and in some cases building a habit of giving that is recognized?

## | THE OUTSTANDA PHILANTHROPIC REVOLUTION

### **Boosting Donations**

With a new influx of young donors, philanthropic organizations like the World Wildlife Fund could see a considerable increase in contributions, aiding in global conservation efforts.

### **Local Impact**

Wealthier school districts can encourage students to donate a portion of their earnings to less well-funded schools, enhancing educational equality within the community.

### **Fostering Empathy**

Learning to give at a young age can foster empathy and social awareness, traits that are critical for community cohesion and societal well-being.

### **Volunteering Opportunities**

Schools working with Outstanda can partner with local non-profits to offer volunteering as part of their project-based learning, making community service an integral part of education.

**Corporate Partnerships**

Businesses can match student donations, amplifying the impact and encouraging a culture of corporate social responsibility.

**Scholarships**

Students can even contribute to scholarship funds, helping their peers access educational opportunities that might otherwise be out of reach.

**Global Reach**

As Outstanda expands globally, the potential for international philanthropy grows, encouraging cross-border donations and aid.

**Philanthropy Education**

Outstanda can offer courses on effective altruism, social justice, and community development, educating students on how to make their donations count.

**Peer Influence**

Students who donate or volunteer can influence their peers, creating a ripple effect of philanthropic activity within schools.

**Lifelong Philanthropists**

With early exposure to the benefits of giving, students are more likely to continue these behaviors into adulthood, becoming lifelong philanthropists.

### **The Gift that Keeps on Giving**

The Outstanda model offers an unprecedented opportunity to engrain philanthropy into the educational system, creating a new generation of socially responsible citizens. By encouraging students to engage in philanthropic activities from a young age, Outstanda is not just revolutionizing how we think about education but also how we envision community, empathy, and global responsibility.

### **Hitting Problems from Both Sides**

Consider how the increase in donations, volunteering, and philanthropy is coupled with the increases in access to earning for students, which will boost communities and mitigate many issues. The result will be squeezing many social ills from both sides, greatly reducing problems.

## | STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

Ivy, 5th Grade, Longcoy School in Kent, Ohio

Do you think students should be paid to learn?

**Yes, because kids work hard and parents work hard and earn money at jobs. I think kids would do better if they got paid.**

If you made more than \$3,000 per year learning, how would it change your school experience?

**It would be more encouraging to learn and want to do it. My mom would get paid back for a babysitter and I could get more animals.**

If you graduated from high school and had access to a savings account that had \$10,000 in it, what do you think you would do with the money?

**Build an animal palace and start my animal babysitting business.**

Tell a true story about a time in your life when having \$500 would have helped you a lot.

**We could get many round bales of hay at once to feed my animals and my mom and I would not have to work as hard because we already work hard enough.**

ELEVATE YOUR TALENT

# THE OUTSTANDA ADVANTAGE IN CORPORATE TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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**T**he corporate world is ever-changing, with new technologies and methodologies emerging at a rapid pace. To keep up, businesses need a workforce that is not just skilled but also continuously evolving. While Outstanda may not specialize in custom corporate training, its vast catalog of courses and project-based learning opportunities offer an invaluable resource for corporations to foster professional development. Companies can essentially act as their own schools, allowing employees to engage in learning gigs that not only enhance their skills but also earn them monetary rewards and valuable certificates.

**TOP TEN REASONS BUSINESSES SHOULD ADOPT  
OUTSTANDA LEARNING GIGS**



### **1. Skill Enhancement**

Employees can take courses that are directly related to their job functions, thereby enhancing their professional skills and contributing more effectively to the organization.

### **2. Employee Retention**

Offering a platform for continuous learning and growth can make employees feel valued, increasing job satisfaction and reducing turnover rates.

### **3. Cost-Effective**

Outstanda's wide range of topics can replace or supplement existing, more expensive training programs, saving companies money in the long term.

### **4. Flexibility**

Employees can choose from a wide range of courses and learning gigs that fit their schedule, making it easy for them to balance work, learning, and personal life.

### **5. Performance Metrics**

Companies can track employees' progress through Outstanda's reporting features, offering insights into workforce capabilities and areas for improvement.

### **6. Team Building**

Group projects within Outstanda can serve as team-building exercises, fostering collaboration and teamwork among employees.

### **7. Global Talent Pool**

Outstanda's universal language congruency allows multinational corporations to provide consistent training across different locations and cultures.

### **8. Lifelong Learning Profile**

Employees' certificates and achievements stay with them even after they leave the company, serving as a lifelong learning profile that enhances their employability.

### **9. Corporate Social Responsibility**

Businesses can encourage employees to donate a portion of their learning gig earnings to philanthropic causes, enhancing the company's social responsibility profile.

### **10. Competitive Edge**

A workforce that is continuously upgrading its skills through Outstanda learning gigs is a competitive advantage in today's fast-paced corporate world.

Corporations using Outstanda can combine learning and working on solving a real world problem into one activity. For example, a course on Supply Chain Optimization might include assessing an organization's supply chain and recommending improvements as the ongoing projects that support the learning.

## | THE FUTURE IS HERE AND NOW

Incorporating Outstanda into your corporate training and professional development strategy offers numerous benefits that go beyond mere skill acquisition. It fosters a culture of continuous learning and improvement, making your business more adaptable, more competitive, and more attuned to the needs of its employees.

## THE OUTSTANDA EDGE

# PREPARING TODAY'S YOUTH FOR TOMORROW'S WORKFORCE

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**W**hile academic knowledge is crucial, the importance of job-specific skills cannot be overstated. Outstanda is committed to ensuring that students are not just academically sound but also job-ready. With courses designed to imbue practical skills like customer service, management, and positive workplace habits, Outstanda aims to prepare students for real-world challenges. Earning certificates in these areas not only boost their resume but also demonstrates their commitment to being a valuable employee.

## TEN ESSENTIAL SKILLS FOR JOB READINESS

### 1. Customer Service Skills

Courses on customer service help students understand the nuances of dealing with different kinds of customers, resolving conflicts, and ensuring customer satisfaction—skills essential for any customer-facing role.

## **2. Time Management**

Learning gigs focused on time management teach students how to prioritize tasks, manage their time efficiently, and meet deadlines, thus making them more productive employees.

## **3. Communication Skills**

Courses on effective communication train students in both verbal and written communication, which are key to succeeding in any professional environment.

## **4. Leadership and Management**

Outstanda offers learning gigs that impart fundamental management skills, including team leadership, project management, and effective decision-making.

## **5. Emotional Intelligence**

Learning to read and respond to emotional cues can be a great asset in the workplace. Outstanda offers courses that help improve emotional intelligence.

## **6. Basic Accounting and Budgeting**

A basic understanding of accounting and budget management can be valuable in almost any job role, from entry-level positions to management. Even when an employee does not work with the books, they will still have a better appreciation for the costs and responsibilities when in a job.

## **7. Conflict Resolution**

Learning gigs in this area equip students with the skills to manage and resolve conflicts in a professional setting efficiently.

### **8. Networking Skills**

Courses on networking teach students how to build and maintain professional relationships, which can open doors for them throughout their careers.

### **9. Professional Etiquette**

From email correspondence to dressing appropriately, courses in professional etiquette prepare students for the unwritten rules of the workplace.

### **10. Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving**

Learning gigs that enhance critical thinking skills teach students to analyze complex problems and find effective solutions, making them invaluable assets to any employer.

All of these skills are not only learning gigs students can study, but they are also skills they will develop and practice in the project-based mastery format. Working in teams to solve problems will be second nature for future students.

Outstanda doesn't just prepare students for academic success; it prepares them for life. By offering courses that are directly aligned with the skills required in the job market, Outstanda is equipping the youth to not just get jobs but to excel in them.

# THE CHALLENGES OF CREATING A GLOBALLY ACCEPTABLE CURRICULUM

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In an era where education is increasingly globalized, the need for a universally acceptable curriculum is more urgent than ever. Outstanda aims to bridge this gap, offering a global platform where learning is inclusive, unbiased, and respectful of all perspectives. However, achieving this is no small feat. This article delves into the challenges Outstanda faces in creating a curriculum that appeals to a diverse, global audience while maintaining its core values.

## | THE ETHICAL IMPERATIVE

Outstanda operates under a strong ethical framework that prohibits discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, caste, or disability. We also steer clear of publishing opinions and conspiracy theories as facts. While this might seem straightforward, it presents challenges when it comes to gaining acceptance in cultures or regimes that hold opposing views.

## **CONTROVERSIAL TOPICS: TO INCLUDE OR NOT TO INCLUDE?**

One of the major challenges in creating a universally acceptable curriculum is dealing with topics that may be controversial in some communities. These could range from politics and religion to social issues like abortion, LGBTQ+ rights, or racial discrimination. Outstanda's approach is to include such topics only in college-level courses, which are still open to everyone, where they can be discussed with depth and nuance. Schools at any level always have the option to teach what is appropriate in their communities, in addition to Outstanda materials.

## **A BALANCED VIEW OF HISTORY**

History is often a subject of contention. What one culture perceives as a victorious moment, another may see as a time of oppression. Outstanda aims to provide a balanced view, respecting both sides but not giving equal weight to perspectives that come from a place of hate or aggression.

## **RESPECTING RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY**

Religion is another area where the waters get murky. Outstanda's policy is to treat all religions founded in kindness as equally valid cultural and historical movements. However, this too can be a point of contention in countries where religious freedom is restricted or where certain religions are favored over others.



## | EDUCATIONAL ISOLATIONISM: A RISKY PATH

Outstanda maintains its integrity by refusing to allow any entity to censor its materials. This policy, while steadfast, can lead to 'educational isolationism' where entire nations may choose to block Outstanda, thereby depriving their citizens of its benefits.

Schools individually have control. Each school chooses which learning gigs it will sponsor so students can be paid. This allows a school to incentivize some topics, and not others. But all materials are open to students who are interested.

## | NO ROOM FOR HATE

It's crucial to clarify that while Outstanda aims for inclusivity and balance, there is no room for hate speech, revisionist history, or any form of discrimination. This is non-negotiable and is integral to the platform's mission and values.

Outstanda is not a "freedom of speech" platform. It is a carefully thought out, curated, and developed set of programs that a vast majority of people can count on as a reliable and fair source of information.

Creating a globally acceptable curriculum is a Herculean task fraught with challenges. However, Outstanda remains committed to its mission of offering unbiased, respectful, and inclusive education to all. As we navigate these complexities, our goal remains clear: to provide an educational platform where everyone, regardless of their background, has the opportunity to learn, grow, and succeed.

# THE ZERO-TOLERANCE ZONE

# COMBATING CHEATING

# IN EDUCATION

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In a world where academic integrity is often compromised, Outstanda takes a firm stand against cheating. The stakes are higher than ever, given that students aren't just earning grades - they're earning scholarship money. This article outlines Outstanda's zero-tolerance policy on cheating, the technology and measures in place to prevent it, and the penalties for those found guilty.

## THE GRAVITY OF THE ISSUE

Cheating is a pervasive issue in educational settings worldwide. However, in an ecosystem like Outstanda, where learning is directly linked to financial rewards, the implications of cheating are far more severe. It's not just an academic issue; it's financial fraud.

## ZERO TOLERANCE: WHAT IT MEANS

Outstanda's zero-tolerance policy is straightforward: if you cheat, you lose the ability to earn income through the platform permanently. While exceptions may be considered for younger students, the general rule applies across the board. In an environment where assessments can be retaken as many times as needed, there is no justification for cheating.

## | THE ROLE OF AI AND HUMAN PROCTORS

Preventing cheating is a multi-faceted effort that combines the capabilities of AI with the vigilance of human proctors. Advanced algorithms monitor student behavior during exams, flagging any irregularities for further review. Multiple camera angles are also utilized to ensure the integrity of the exam setting. Human proctors, trained to recognize signs of cheating, supervise the examination process. Outstanda assessment centers will use multiple identity verification measures as well as proctoring tools to be thorough.

## | CONSEQUENCES FOR CHEATING

The repercussions are severe, not only for students but also for any human, including proctors, found to be aiding in cheating. Proctors will lose their employment and their ability to earn through the platform.

## | THE BEST POLICY: TRANSPARENCY

Outstanda believes in transparent education. Therefore, students are provided with all the necessary materials and guidelines to prepare for an assessment adequately. In fact, you do not need to log in to have access to most learning materials. It is truly open to all.

Given that exams can be retaken until mastery is demonstrated, the onus is on the student to prepare diligently, negating any reason to cheat.

Cheating undermines the very essence of what Outstanda aims to achieve - an equitable, efficient, and trustworthy educational ecosystem. Therefore, the zero-tolerance policy on cheating is non-negotiable. Outstanda is committed to maintaining the highest levels of integrity to ensure that the platform remains a reliable avenue for genuine learning and financial empowerment.

# THE CAPITALISTIC ESSENCE MERIT OVER HANDOUTS - A RECTIFICATION OF HISTORICAL WRONGS

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**P**eople sometimes think that paying students is a form of socialism. Maybe it would be if you paid them to just show up to school and sit there, doing nothing. But when you expect someone to work in order to be paid, it is pure capitalism.

With respect to the various forms of government in the world and how they define their economic aspirations, I do think it needs to be clearly stated that paying people for work, instead of forcing them to work for free, strongly aligns with values in free, open nations that tend towards capitalism and free markets.

**THE PHILOSOPHICAL UNDERPINNINGS: MERITOCRACY  
OVER REDISTRIBUTIVE HANDOUTS**

The core tenet of capitalism is the concept of meritocracy: the idea that rewards are accrued based on individual performance and effort. The proposition of paying students to learn aligns seamlessly with this principle. Far from a socialist redistribution of wealth, this model is a capitalistic meritocracy in its purest form. Students are not merely given money; they earn it through demonstrable mastery of skills and knowledge. This is akin to any performance-based payment system in the corporate world, a foundation stone of capitalistic economies. The system, therefore, serves as a microcosm of the larger capitalistic framework, teaching students the value of hard work, the importance of specialized skills, and the benefits of competitive excellence from a young age.

## **THE MARKET OF KNOWLEDGE: COMMODITIZING EDUCATION**

If capitalism is about creating markets, then paying students for their educational achievements creates a new, dynamic market for knowledge. In this market, education is not just an abstract concept but a tangible asset with real-world value. This reframing commoditizes education and makes it a part of the free market. Students become knowledge entrepreneurs, incentivized to invest in their own human capital because there is now a clear, immediate ROI (Return on Investment). This also opens up new avenues for educational investment from private sectors, further driving the cycle of competition and innovation that is central to capitalism.

## RIGHTING HISTORICAL WRONGS: THE UNPAID LABOR OF LEARNING

For more than a century, the conventional educational system has operated on the premise that students should be grateful for the opportunity to learn, regardless of the immense effort and time they invest. This is a stark contrast to capitalistic principles, where labor is compensated. Students have been the unpaid labor force of an educational system that benefits society at large. They contribute to scientific research, community service, and even produce art and literature, often without direct compensation. Paying students for learning is a rectification of this historical oversight, aligning the educational system more closely with the labor market and the principles of capitalism.

A similar thing just happened in college athletics. On July 1, 2021, the restriction that student-athletes could not receive benefits was lifted. For more than a century, students had been forced to play for the love of the game while society and the colleges benefited. Athletes risked injury and did an amazing amount of work to be elite athletes, and could not receive benefits. And let's face it, sports are more fun than math for most people.

We need to stop exploiting students just because they are minors. If we want students to do the work, they must be paid. Because students are paid for their learning at a young age and because it is results-driven, the students entering the job market in the future will be the most hard-working people in many generations.

## **STRENGTHENING THE FUTURE LABOR MARKET: A COMPETITIVE, SKILLED WORKFORCE**

Finally, by tying financial incentives to educational outcomes, we're not just rewarding merit in the short term; we're laying the groundwork for a more competitive labor market in the long term. A more educated workforce is a more productive workforce. In a global economy where skills are the new currency, this model serves to elevate the labor market to new heights of competitiveness and specialization. Businesses benefit from a pool of candidates who are not just academically qualified but have also demonstrated the work ethic required to earn their qualifications. This fosters a more dynamic, competitive, and ultimately more productive form of capitalism.

In summary, far from promoting a form of socialism, paying students to learn enriches the fabric of capitalism by introducing merit-based incentives at the foundational level of human development. It aligns the educational system with the principles of a free market economy, corrects historical imbalances, and promises a more competitive labor market.



## **Thank you for entertaining ideas that are out of the ordinary.**

This book is widely available for free on our website [Outstanda.org](https://outstanda.org) as well as other places. I wrote it to help people understand what happens when you start paying students for the work they are doing. If you want to discuss these things, join our substack at:

<https://outstanda.substack.com/>

Outstanda is a grassroots effort to make major changes.

You can support our nonprofit efforts via:

<https://www.outstanda.org/donate>



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