Stud.

Swipe, Study, Succeed.

Executive Summary

Product Overview

Stud. delivers personalized academic matchmaking and resources for college students through a swipe-based feed and AI-driven learning modules (Figure 1). By capitalizing on the effectiveness of social media platforms in forming online communities and maximizing app usage, Stud. embraces an interactive and engaging take on an academic support platform.

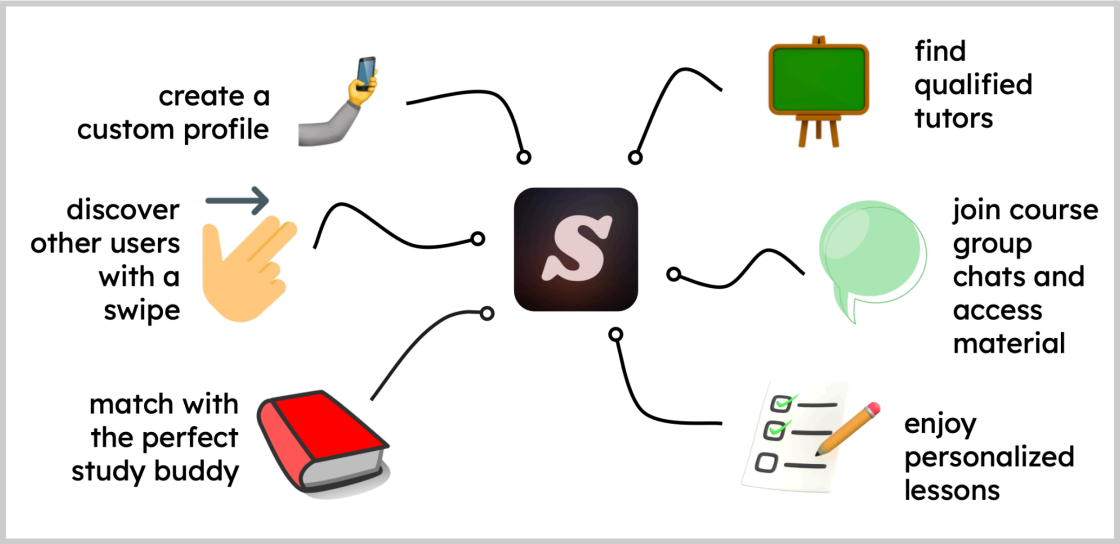

Figure 1: Product Overview

Problem Statement

Countless studies have demonstrated that studying in pairs or groups can dramatically improve academic performance. According to Pearson, 85% of students struggle to connect with like-minded peers. This lack of engagement among peers limits collaboration and can result in lower levels of comprehension and content retention. As the National Education Association found, group learning boosts success by 15% and is an impactful method of advancing education.

Solution

Inspired by the popularity and success of single-swipe apps, or apps that allow users to engage with content through a single and simple action, Stud. aims to incorporate the proven function into an academic platform in a growing EdTech market. Upon downloading the Stud. app, the user is prompted to create a profile with personal information such as their major, school, graduation year, interests, and personality type. The main feature of the Stud. app is a feed through which users can swipe (right to indicate that they are interested in connecting with the user and left to indicate that they are not) and discover profiles of suitable study buddies (based on location, age, major, interests, etc.). An additional key feature of Stud. is the AI-driven learning modules, which are custom-built for each user to help them learn concepts within their majors using relevant information from their profiles.

Revenue Model

Stud. will operate on a freemium structure. All basic (free) users will have access to the main feature, which is creating a profile and discovering other users through the feed. However, the use of this feature will be limited to 20 right swipes per day (similar to Tinder). Additionally, basic users won't have access to the AI-powered learning module feature and will have relevant advertisements (based on the interest and personality information in their profiles) pop up on their feeds as they swipe. Premium users will pay a subscription fee of $4.99 per month for unlimited right swipes, full access to the AI feature, and no ads. We expect 5% of users to opt for the premium plan and an advertisement revenue of around $0.5 per month per basic user. The main costs we will face are server/storage, maintenance, and distribution channel fees, as well as salaries for our employees and student ambassadors. Even with these costs, we expect to break even at 22 months, or just under two years.

User Adoption and Market Size

The initial target user base of Stud. will be 250,000 students across more than 50 universities in Boston, MA. As Stud. grows, the goal is to tap into the more expansive nationwide student base of over 18 million university students in the US, followed by the global student base of over 250 million university students. The user adoption rate follows an S-curve which will be achieved primarily through student ambassadors for Stud. on large college campuses as well as targeted ads across all major social media platforms. The US EdTech market is valued at $80.27 billion, and the global EdTech market is valued at $142.37 billion.

Ecosystem

The key players in the target ecosystem are major education, productivity, and messaging apps such as Chegg and GroupMe. Although these companies are largely

impactful, they fail to tackle the specific problem that Stud. solves: a lack of long-term content learning and retention resources for college students. Rather than provide short-term solutions for academic problems (specific questions), Stud. aims to help students build their studying abilities and create habits that support real learning. Additionally, institutions of higher education (colleges and universities) will play key roles in Stud.'s development and distribution due to their concentrated student populations. Furthermore, Stud.'s accessibility to college students – powered by its entirely college-student team and the hiring of student ambassadors – would allow Stud. to tap into quick growth and customer discovery to help when adjusting the app according to user needs.

Diving into the Details

Overview and Mission

Stud.'s mission is to foster meaningful academic collaboration in a world where in-person interactions are increasingly limited. Stud. aims to deliver one-on-one, personalized study connections that empower university students to succeed academically through matchmaking technology and gamified engagement.

User Base and Opportunity

Stud.'s initial user base will consist of university students in the United States, offering a potential market of over 18 million users. This includes 250,000 students in Boston, MA, as an initial focus area. In the future, Stud. aims to expand its services to university students worldwide, accessing a global market of 254 million students and addressing the growing demand for personalized and collaborative learning tools.

Stud.'s growth opportunity lies in addressing the challenge of low engagement among students, with 85% of students struggling to connect with like-minded peers, according to Pearson. Despite the proven benefits of group learning—shown by the National Education Association to boost academic outcomes by up to 15%—many students lack the tools to collaborate effectively. Stud. fills this gap by blending a familiar swipe-based interface with a customized experience, offering a unique and engaging platform that will help students foster meaningful peer-to-peer connections that will boost their academic success.

Stud. targets an annual adoption growth rate of 1.5% (based on Tinder's early exponential growth model). To drive market adoption further, Stud. will leverage social media campaigns, student ambassadors, and partnerships with student organizations and universities. To address initial adoption barriers, the app will rely on incentives for early users and gamification features. With these initiatives, Stud. positions itself as a

transformative tool for academic success and achieves promising user growth predictions (Figure 2 in Appendix).

The Product

Stud.'s main goal is to provide students with a resource to find their perfect study partner. After creating their custom profile and swiping on other users, students will be able to access other study materials such as finding qualified tutors who have taken courses in previous years or learning through personalized AI-driven study lessons. Students will also be able to join course-specific group chats to meet other students and share study materials such as guides or notes. To combat plagiarism, the admin will be monitoring these groups and the resources being distributed.

To expand Stud.'s capabilities, we plan on introducing a range of new features to expand students' professional and academic growth. This includes connecting alumni to jobs, internships, and research opportunities, and using AI to track students' study progress and optimize schedules to allow students to reach specific goals and deadlines. Additionally, we hope to collaborate with businesses around campus to reward students with special deals and offers once they have reached milestones. Lastly, we hope to create a user-to-user marketplace where students can code their own app features and sell them to other users for a profit to help foster creativity and entrepreneurship in students. With these innovative features, Stud. aims to become more than just a study partner matching platform, but seeks to provide students with everything they need for academic success.

Our Industry

The EdTech market is rapidly expanding in value, as previously mentioned. In this competitive landscape, Stud. distinguishes itself by combining academic collaboration with social networking. Unlike platforms such as Quizlet, which focuses primarily on resource sharing, or apps like Tinder, which mostly focus on swipe-based interaction, Stud. innovatively merges these elements to address a crucial gap: enabling students to find compatible study partners with ease.

Potential competitors in this space include platforms such as Tandem, StudyStream, and MoocLabs, which offer tools for online study groups or subject-specific resources. However, we offer clear advantages over these platforms. We offer a diversity of subjects, so students with all majors, from sciences to arts, can use this app to succeed. We prioritize personalized, one-on-one connections instead of bulk collaboration, since our algorithm would be matching students based on their specific studying habits. And collaboration is localized to users' institutions, so each match feels accessible and we can facilitate in-person group learning. This blend of innovation and user-centric design

positions Stud. as a leader in the growing ecosystem of tools designed to support academic success.

Sales and Marketing

Stud.'s sales and marketing strategy will focus on leveraging direct engagement with its target audience: the student population. The primary approach involves employing student ambassadors, who will act as on-campus representatives for the app. These ambassadors will promote Stud. directly to their peers by hosting events, sharing resources, and integrating the app into student life. A similar model has been successfully implemented by companies like BeReal and Bumble, where student reps and on-campus advertisements effectively create marketing momentum at the grassroots level.

Additionally, targeted social media advertising will play a significant role. Platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and Snapchat will showcase Stud.'s unique features, such as AI-driven learning modules and personalized profile matching. Advertisements will focus on the app's ability to foster meaningful academic connections, impacting the college demographic. Influencer partnerships with well-known, college-aged content creators will further amplify this message.

Stud. also plans to create a robust referral system to enhance user engagement within the community. To complement that, we seek to collaborate with well-known restaurant chains and brands to create an incentive program as well. These steps will drive efficient market saturation while also compelling financial incentives for further investment into the app's development and expansion.

Partnerships and Collaborations

Stud. will form strategic partnerships to enhance its functionality, distribution, and adoption while leveraging its competitive advantages in the EdTech market.

To strengthen its matching algorithm, Stud. plans to collaborate with AI and data analytics firms. These partnerships will ensure continuous improvement in delivering personalized, one-on-one connections tailored to users' academic needs. For funding, Stud. aims to engage with venture capital firms such as Sequoia Capital and Owl Ventures, leveraging their expertise and support for innovative EdTech solutions. Securing this investment will provide the resources necessary for scaling the app and introducing new features.

Regarding distribution channels, the app will be accessible via major platforms like the Apple App Store and Google Play, ensuring widespread availability to its target

audience. Finally, to maximize marketing reach, Stud. will take advantage of social media platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and X. As explained previously, these platforms serve as key avenues for targeted advertisements and influencer-driven promotions, utilizing their influence to drive downloads and engagement.

Profit Model

The freemium structure of our strategy will allow for quick early growth – as users would be attracted to the free offerings of the product – with the profit module featuring a similar s-curve shape to that of the user growth (Figure 3 in Appendix). We predict 9816 total users (Figure 4 in Appendix) at the end of our first year, which is around 4% of the college student population in Boston. This large number of early adopters, the majority of whom would not be paying members, would still generate some early revenue for Stud. through our targeted ads and could further demonstrate our concept. We understand that our costs at $550,432.78 would largely outweigh our revenue at $20,498.40 through the first year, but predict to break even towards the end of the second year (at 22 months) as we climb to nearly 200,000 total users and round out the year with over $177,000 in profits. Year three would illustrate continued growth, as we expand our user base past 300,000 and begin generating a more substantial revenue from the increased number of subscribed users.

Seed Funding

The seed funding amount that we are seeking is $600,00 to help support our first year costs. Each of our five founding members will earn a $70,000 salary to cover basic living expenses in Boston. We also expect to hire two software developers (one proficient in backend and server development and the other in UI/UX design and frontend development) at $65,000 salaries each. We predict our server costs to be $1000 + $0.05 cents/user per month, which for the first year (following our user base models) would be around $13,000. Distribution channel fees include a $99/year charge and a 15% revenue fee for app stores, accounted for in our profit models in the Appendix. The central aspect of our marketing plan is our student ambassadors, which should cost approximately $4,500/month (at 20 hours of work per month for 15 ambassadors at $15/hour) or $54,000 annually. This amounts to $550,432.78 in the first three years of expenses, with $49,567.22 for additional maintenance and marketing.

Exit Strategy

Once Stud. has proven itself to be a profitable and successful product, we hope to sell our company to a much larger edtech company with the resources to continue to grow Stud, such as Pearson, Chegg, and Brainly. This acquisition could allow Stud to reach a broader audience that would otherwise be difficult to reach, like colleges outside of the U.S. or educational institutions that are more isolated. Additionally, this sale would

greatly benefit shareholders and stakeholders, and allow the founding team to continue to new ventures.

Founding Team

The founding team of Stud. consists of a group of engineering college students, who combine technical skill sets with an understanding of challenges faced by fellow students. Our team includes a CEO (Adam Yanai), COO (Hannah Song), CFO (Nicolas Martinez), CTO (Sanya Saurabh), and CMO (Victor Caldeira), each bringing their unique skills and perspectives from a diverse range of engineering disciplines. Our advisor, Abhijit Sarid, provides guidance to help steer the team's growth and development. Key hires will include software engineers to develop Stud. and student ambassadors to promote the product within college communities.

Milestones and Future Steps

Stud. has already achieved some key milestones. During the third quarter of 2024 (Figure 5), the founding team powered through the product ideation phase and mapped out key elements and features. Now, in the fourth quarter of 2024, the team is working through creating concrete plans for Stud.'s development, distribution, and revenue. Once the planning process is complete, the next step would be to spend the early majority of the first quarter of 2025 developing a simple app, or an app that contains the key features of Stud. but is not necessarily an entirely working product. The simple app will complement our customer discovery in demonstrating our proof of concept. Throughout the remainder of quarter one and quarter two, we hope to raise $600,000 in seed funding to support our working app development and salaries as well as the initial maintenance, storage, marketing, and distribution. We plan to spend the remainder of quarter two and quarter three developing the working app and marketing plan, as well as gearing up for launch at the end of the third quarter in September 2025, just in time for the start of the school year.

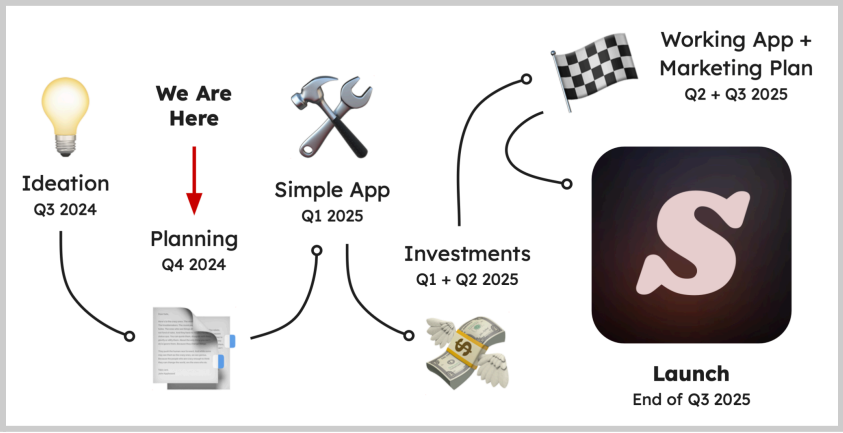

Figure 5: High-Level Timeline

Conclusion

We believe that Stud. (Figure 6) has some promising features and components that could certainly create an impact on students, but we also understand that there are many aspects of the EdTech landscape – especially amongst its social-based platforms – that make the market difficult to predict and therefore complicate the road to sustainable revenue. We believe that the best approach to pursuing this idea further would be to first create a simple app and gain some customer insight based on actual usage of the app. This way we could identify the features that truly hold the most value to the user base, and shift our focus away from less important aspects of Stud. and towards the development of the most impactful features so that they are as effective as possible. Furthermore, since the target market of Stud. is composed entirely of college students, the app could earn large user growth quickly since student-targeted apps can spread quickly through proper marketing channels on social media platforms.

Thus, in order for Stud. to have success as an EdTech product we would have to place an even stronger emphasis on customer discovery and attend to the specific pains of the target market. We would also have to build a strong marketing team with many student ambassadors located throughout all major college cities in the US (and later in the world), and ensure that the subscription plan in our freemium structure is attracting enough paying users to facilitate our growth. Therefore, the innovative state of the EdTech market and the openness of college students to new and exciting software products – particularly with a freemium or entirely ad-based structure – positions Stud. in a strong position for success as a new idea built with proven functions.

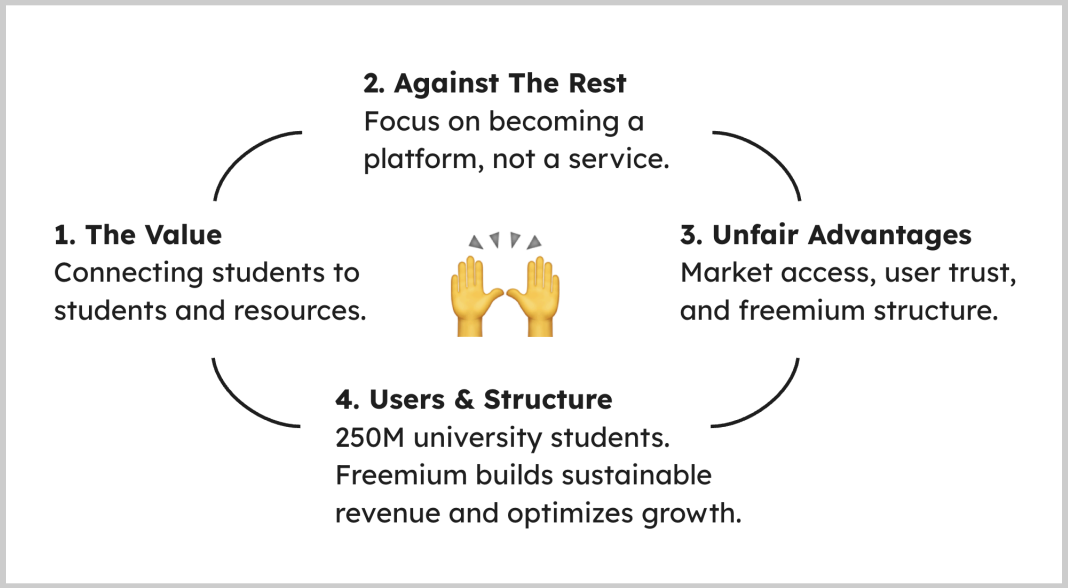

Figure 6: Product Summary

Appendix

User-Base Projections:

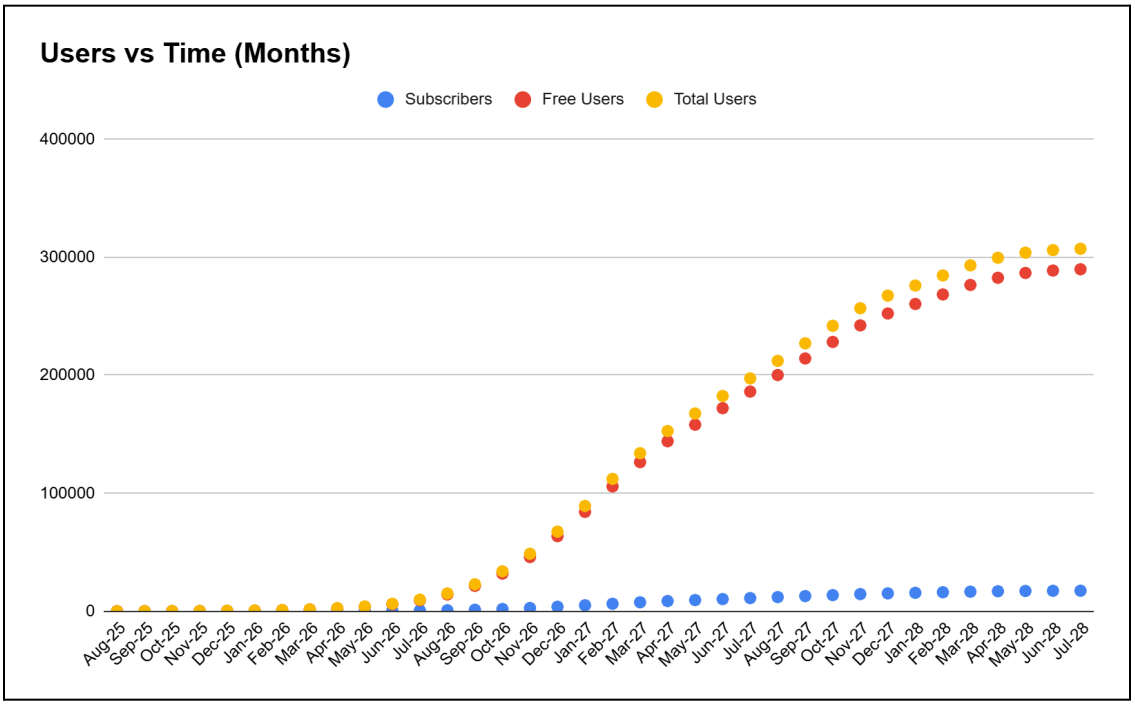

Figure 2: User Growth Over 3 Years

Net Profit Projections:

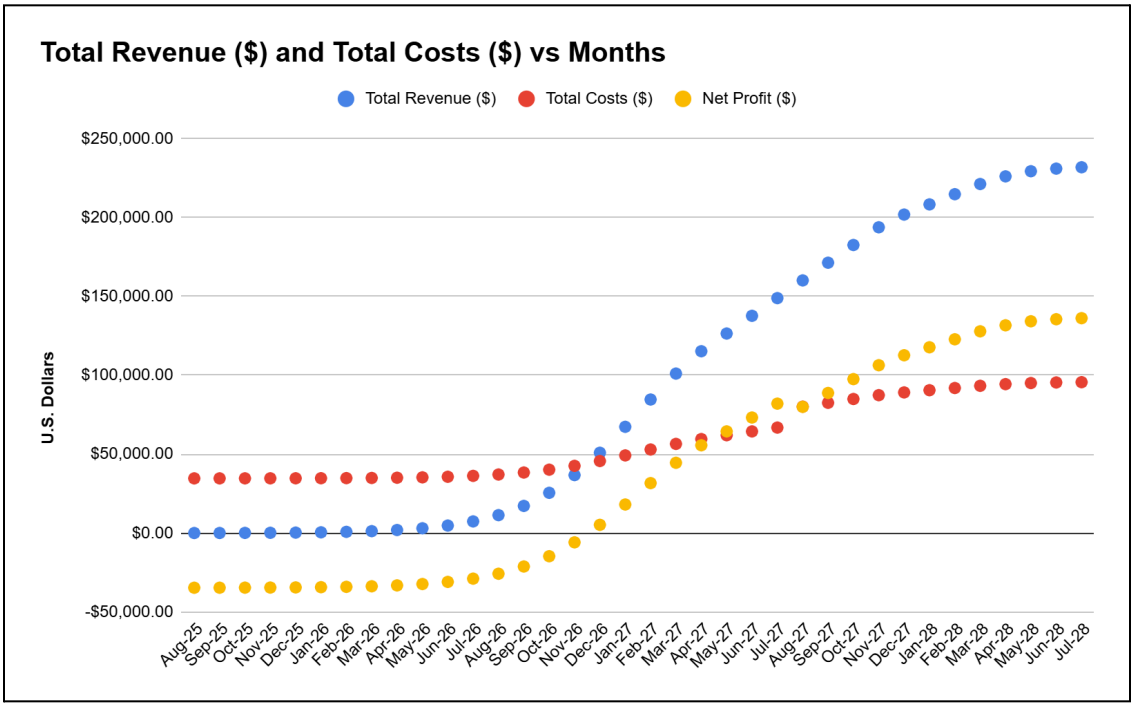

Figure 3: Profit Model

Financial Details:

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Users	0	9,816	197,302	307,173
Ad Revenue	N/A	$12,811.50	$577,000.50	$1,545,071.00
Subscription Revenue	N/A	$7,686.90	$346,200.30	$927,042.60
Total Revenue	N/A	$20,498.40	$923,200.80	$2,472,113.60
Salary Costs	0	$480,000.00	$480,000.00	$660,000.00
General Server Cost	0	$12,000.00	$12,000.00	$12,000.00
User Server Cost	0	$1,358.02	$61,162.05	$163,777.53
Ambassador Cost	0	$54,000.00	$54,000.00	$54,000.00
Store Fee	0	$3,074.76	$138,480.12	$370,817.04
Costs	N/A	$550,432.78	$745,642.17	$1,260,594.57
Profit	0	-$529,934.38	$177,558.63	$1,211,519.03

Figure 4: Financial Details

References

"Education Technology Market Size, Share & Trends Analysis Report By Sector (Preschool, K-12, Higher Education), By End-use (Business, Consumer), By Type, By Deployment, By Region, And Segment Forecasts, 2024 - 2030." *Grand View Research*, 2023, https://www.grandviewresearch.com/industry-analysis/education-technology-market.

Gates, Sabrina. "Benefits of Collaboration | NEA." *National Education Association*, 18 October 2018, https://www.nea.org/professional-excellence/student-engagement/tools-tips/benefits-collaboration. Accessed 4 December 2024.

Korhonen, Veera. "U.S. college enrollment and forecast 1965-2031." *Statista*, 22 August 2024, https://www.statista.com/statistics/183995/us-college-enrollment-and-projections-in-public-and-private-institutions/. Accessed 4 December 2024.

Pearson. "Pearson Global Learners Survey 2020." *Pearson*, 2020, https://plc.pearson.com/sites/pearson-corp/files/footer-image/pearson-global-learners-survey-2020.pdf.

"United States (US) EdTech Market Summary, Competitive Analysis and Forecast to 2028." *GlobalData*, 2023, https://www.globaldata.com/store/report/usa-edtech-market-analysis/#:~:text=United%20States%20(US)%20EdTech%20Market%20Report%20Overview,11%25%20during%202023%2D28.