Market notes: small-group online math tutoring, grades 6–8

Larkspur Learning · compiled by Elena Vasquez · last updated Monday, November 23, 2026

PRACTICE FILE · FICTIONAL COMPANIES AND PEOPLE

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How these notes were made

Competitor details come from each company's website, checked on Monday, November 16, 2026, unless a note says otherwise. Family conversations took place November 2–6, 2026; names have been removed. Survey results are in survey-summary.csv.

The draft on page 6 was written with ChatGPT from these notes on November 23. It has not been checked.

1. Our numbers (November 2026)

- Founded in 2024. Live one-to-one video sessions, 50 minutes, in math and reading and writing, for grades 6–10.
- 140 active students; 64 take math; 38 of those are in grades 6–8.
- 18 part-time tutors.
- One-to-one session: $60.
- Waitlist: 11 families want sessions on weekdays 4–6 p.m., when every tutor is booked.
- Proposed pilot: groups of 3, grades 6–8 math, $30 per student per session.
- Spring term: Monday, January 11 – Friday, March 26, 2027 (11 weeks). Pilot size: 4 groups (12 students).

2. Competitors

Checked on company websites on Monday, November 16, 2026, unless stated.

A. Brightwell Tutoring

- **Format:** One-to-one only
- **Subjects:** All subjects, grades 3–12
- **Price:** $72 per 50-minute session; 10 sessions for $680
- **Source:** Brightwell's website, checked Monday, November 16, 2026

B. Numberloft Online

- **Format:** Small groups of up to 5 students; one-to-one also offered
- **Subjects:** Math only, grades 6–9
- **Price:** $28 per student per 45-minute group session; one-to-one $65; first session free
- **Source:** Numberloft's website, checked Monday, November 16, 2026

C. Tandem Study Co.

- **Format:** Groups of 3 or 4 students
- **Subjects:** Math and science, grades 5–10
- **Price:** Website lists no prices ("contact us for a quote"). A parents' forum post from March 2024 says "$35 per student."
- **Source:** Tandem's website, checked Monday, November 16, 2026; forum post, March 2024

3. What families told us

Five conversations, November 2–6, 2026. Names removed; grade only.

- **Family 1 (grade 7):** "Would try a group if the other kids are at the same level."
- **Family 2 (grade 6):** "Worried my son would hide in a group."
- **Family 3 (grade 8):** "Price matters less than the time slot. We can only do after 5."
- **Family 4 (grade 7, on the waitlist):** "We'd take a group tomorrow if it meant a 4:30 slot."
- **Family 5 (grade 6):** "One-on-one is why we chose you."

4. Clippings and claims

- **C1 · Regional news article, October 2026.** "About one in three families in the region paid for tutoring last year," citing a state education department survey. I haven't found the original survey.
- **C2 · Numberloft Online's blog, September 2026.** "Small groups help students learn twice as fast." No study cited.
- **C3 · Parents' forum post, March 2024.** Tandem Study Co. charges "$35 per student."
- **C4 · Research summaries (sources 1–3 in my November 9 decision brief).** Small-group tutoring is generally found effective; one-to-one tutoring usually somewhat more; smaller groups tend to do better.

5. Survey method

Online survey to all 140 families, sent Monday, November 9, 2026, closed Friday, November 20, 2026. 52 responses (37%). Six questions (Q1–Q6), one answer per question. Results: survey-summary.csv.

Appendix: Draft market scan v0.1

Written with ChatGPT from these notes on November 23. NOT CHECKED. Use it for the fact-check in Chapter 14.

Ten claims from the draft, numbered:

1. Larkspur has 140 active students, 64 of whom take math.
2. 52 families answered the survey, 37% of the 140 we asked.
3. Most families (69%) are open to small groups: they answered Yes or Maybe.
4. Price is families' biggest concern about small groups.
5. Numberloft Online charges $28 per student for groups of up to five.
6. Tandem Study Co. charges $35 per student.
7. Brightwell Tutoring runs small groups at $72 per session.
8. Small groups help students learn twice as fast.
9. About one in three families in the region paid for tutoring last year.
10. A full group of three at $30 each brings in $90 per session, $30 more than a one-to-one session.