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## **NEW PARENT SURVEY REVEALS WHY K-12 STUDENTS ATTEND ONLINE SCHOOLS FULL TIME**

***Connections Academy's 2014 Parent Survey highlights virtual schools' top enrollment factors: families want school options, greater flexibility***

Baltimore, MD, June 24, 2014 – New survey results from Connections Academy, <http://www.connectionsacademy.com>, one of the country's leading providers of full-time online school for students in grades K through 12, reveals the reasons parents enroll their children in online schools. The results are from the Connections Academy 2014 Parent Satisfaction Survey, an annual third-party survey now in its twelfth year. All families with students enrolled at the time of the survey were invited to participate – 45% of the families responded to the survey, totaling more than 18,000 respondents. The survey results suggest key explanations for the continuing growth of virtual schooling in the United States.

**When asked what the top three reasons were for considering Connections Academy for their child, parents with children enrolled in full-time Connections Academy online schools indicated:**

- 45% - wanted a change from their current school setting (and in a related finding, 50% of first-year parents agreed with the statement, "I have a child who does not learn well in a traditional school.")
- 44% - needed or wanted a flexible schedule
- 35% - expressed a desire for a safe learning environment

The Connections Academy parent survey also showed that other frequent factors leading parents to enroll students in the fully online schools included: the desire to have a greater involvement with their child's education (26%); student health issues (14%); a child bullied in his/her previous school (10%); and student arts or athletic pursuits (5%).

Additionally, 26% of parents stated that their child was academically ahead of peers; 18% indicated their child was academically behind peers prior to enrolling in Connections Academy.

Connections Academy's 2014 Parent Satisfaction Survey also revealed that families who make the choice to enroll students in the online schools

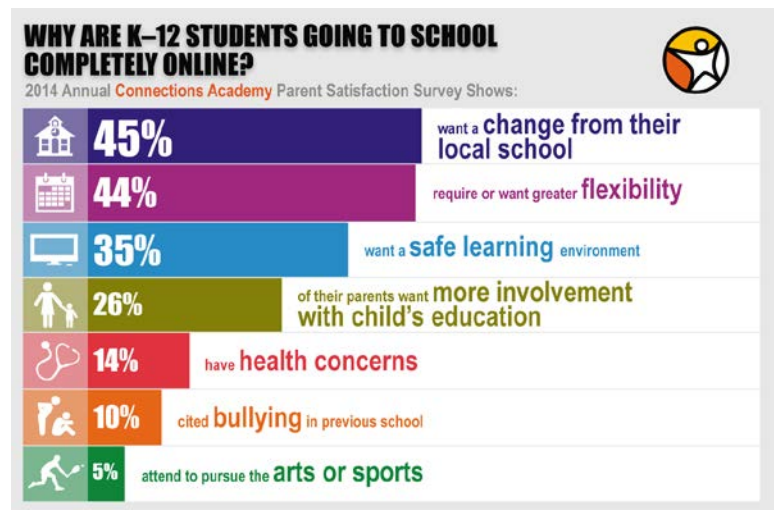
continue to be overwhelmingly pleased with their child's educational experience:

- **89% of parents gave the overall Connections Academy [online school](#) an "A" or "B" grade.** This is in comparison to public school ratings from the 45<sup>th</sup> Annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools, in which 71% of public school parents gave the public school their oldest child attends an "A" or a "B" grade.<sup>1</sup>
- **84% of Connections Academy parents say they are more satisfied with the virtual school than their child's previous school.**
- **92% recommend the school to other parents.**

Overall, parents continue to give Connections Academy schools high marks for academic rigor, program flexibility, quality [teachers](#), and for delivering high levels of student achievement.

Twelve percent of parents said they felt a virtual education was a better learning solution for their child. Three quarters of parents participating in the survey indicated that their children were previously enrolled in their neighborhood bricks-and-mortar public school prior to joining a Connections Academy school.

Although no individual survey responses were accessible to Connections Academy, parents were invited to share their thoughts and agreed to be quoted. Select parent quotes include:



<sup>1</sup> William J. Bushaw and Shane J. Lopez, The 45th Annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools, "Betting on Teachers." *Phi Delta Kappan*, September 2013.

*“The teachers are exceptional and will respond quickly whenever I have a question. I can arrange my children’s lessons to coincide with our active lifestyle. My children are learning so much with Connections and I get to be a part of it, I get to watch it all happen first hand.”* –Jennifer Jennings, Central California Connections Academy parent

*“I love that the teachers are understanding and available, they stay connected with my children and with me. I also love that as a parent I can log on to any computer anywhere and see what is happening in my children’s education in each class.”* –Michele Omvig, Iowa Connections Academy parent

*“I absolutely LOVE this program. It has been one of the best decisions our family has made. Quality teachers and a rigorous curriculum are of great importance to us and Connections Academy does not disappoint. My son loves his teachers and wants to work hard for them!”* –Joy Bauer, South Carolina Connections Academy parent

Mickey Revenaugh, co-founder and executive vice president for Connections, commented on today’s educational landscape – where families have choices when it comes to education. “For many students, who may not learn like the other kids in their class, there are increasingly more school options. Full-time virtual school can be a great solution for students seeking a [personalized learning](#) experience and something outside of the traditional classroom.”

### **Survey methodology**

Connections Academy conducts the annual Parent Satisfaction Survey to find out how parents, guardians and Learning Coaches grade the program in several key areas. The 2014 survey was conducted from January 14 to February 28, 2014 by Shapiro, an independent market research company which created the questionnaire, collected the data, and tabulated the results. No individual responses were accessible to Connections Academy. Parents of all students enrolled at the time of the survey were invited to complete the survey online. A WebMail invitation was sent to each parent, and one response per household was submitted. Forty-five percent of the 41,000 households with students enrolled in a Connections Academy school at the time of the survey responded to the survey.

**[Enrollment](#) for the 2014-2015 school year is going on now** and free information sessions are taking place across the country for families interested in learning more about Connections Academy virtual public schools. Visit [www.ConnectionsAcademy.com](http://www.ConnectionsAcademy.com) to learn more.

## About Connections Academy

Connections Academy is a leading, fully accredited provider of high-quality, highly accountable virtual schooling for students in grades K through 12. Through tuition-free public schools, and full-time and part-time private school programs, Connections Academy delivers superior, personalized education for students, with the freedom and flexibility to experience our online learning community from anywhere. The combination of certified teachers, a proven curriculum, technology tools, and community experiences creates a supportive and successful online learning opportunity for families and children who want an individualized approach to education. Among the schools supported by Connections in the 2013–14 school year are 32 Connections Academy virtual (online) public schools and Nexus Academy blended schools that operate in 23 states and expect to serve more than 45,000 students from across the U.S. It serves students worldwide through the online private school, International Connections Academy. Connections Academy offers grades K through 12, though some public school programs do not offer all grades. For more information, call 800–382–6010 or visit [www.ConnectionsAcademy.com](http://www.ConnectionsAcademy.com). Connections Academy and its parent company, Connections Education, are part of the global learning company Pearson (NYSE:PSO).

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