



NEWS RELEASE

Is Anybody Going Back to School this Fall?

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New survey finds parents are torn between their desire to send kids back to school and concerns over Delta variant

HERNDON, Va.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- As the **CDC calls for masks in schools nationwide this fall**, a survey conducted by **Stride, Inc.** finds that **over 60% of parents** are hesitant to send their children back to school amid new fears of COVID-19. The Delta variant is responsible for **83%** of new cases nationwide and parents are demanding alternatives to in-person learning options.

When asked about their greatest concerns related to COVID-19, parents emphasized they are worried about their child contracting the virus and the possibility that they could spread it to other family members.

"Parents are concerned about sending their children back to in-person school this fall, but their anxiety is further heightened to think of yet another year of learning loss under the failures of brick-and-mortar schools' emergency virtual operations," says James Rhyu, CEO at Stride. "The impromptu online options offered by public schools last year cost students tremendously in education strides and have left many struggling to catch up. Parents and students can't afford another year of subpar operations that leave them further behind.

"Online learning done right has the potential to alleviate educational and health concerns facing school districts, teachers, and parents everywhere," said Rhyu. "We welcome the opportunity to support schools and districts across the country that may need our help during this unprecedented time."

A survey from the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) found **Stride's established K12 schools outperformed the national trend of learning loss** and boosted student performance during the last school year.

Nearly 70% of parents are planning to send their child back to in-person learning this fall, but with the CDC issuing

updated mask guidance for vaccinated Americans and the pending questions about what the next variant will bring, families are being forced to make painful tradeoffs between safety and personal freedom. When asked about their feelings about the new school year, two out of three parents (67%) surveyed are concerned that their child will contract COVID, spread COVID to family members, or both.

Major cities such as New York City, Los Angeles, St. Louis, and Miami, are considered particularly high transmission areas and students in populated schools are more likely to spread the virus to their communities. Understandably, 65% of parents surveyed in urban areas believe that schools should always offer an online-only learning alternative to in-person classroom learning, compared to approximately 40% of parents in suburban and rural areas who said the same.

Parents want the ability to make the best choice for their child and family's health this school year. Over 47% of parents believe their children's school should always offer an online-only learning alternative to in-person learning, regardless of the circumstances.

"Parents remain equally concerned about the safety of their children and the quality of their education," adds Rhyu. "We can't afford to allow another year of disastrous learning loss to occur in our country. That's where proven online models, like Stride-powered programs, matter most."

In certain states across the country with low vaccination rates amongst adults, parents are also concerned about having their child exposed to unvaccinated adults at school every day. In fact, nearly 60% of all parents are worried about their child being exposed.

Interviews for this research were conducted online between July 12 -25, 2021, from a national sample of 1,013 U.S. adults by Stride, Inc. in partnership with third-party research provider Qualtrics. The results have a calculated error margin of $\pm 3\%$. Full survey results are available [here](#).

About Stride, Inc.

At **Stride, Inc.** (NYSE: LRN) we are reimagining learning – where learning is lifelong, deeply personal, and prepares learners for tomorrow. The company has transformed the teaching and learning experience for millions of people by providing innovative, high-quality, tech-enabled education solutions, curriculum, and programs directly to students, schools, the military, and enterprises in primary, secondary, and post-secondary settings. Stride is a premier provider of K-12 education for students, schools, and districts, including career learning services through middle and high school curriculum. For adult learners, Stride delivers professional skills training in healthcare and technology, as well as staffing and talent development for Fortune 500 companies. Stride has delivered millions of courses over the past decade and serves learners in all 50 states and more than 100 countries. The company is a

proud sponsor of the **Future of School**, a nonprofit organization dedicated to closing the gap between the pace of technology and the pace of change in education. More information can be found at stridelearning.com, K12.com, galvanize.com, techelevator.com, and medcerts.com.

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