



Poll: Parenthood Trumps Partisanship in Views on Student Debt, School Choice and Career Readiness Education

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Eighty-three percent of parents say student debt is a serious problem; favored solutions include broader exposure to future career opportunities and increased opportunities to earn college credits in high school.

HERNDON, Va.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Jul. 10, 2019-- Parents across the political spectrum agree on education issues from standardized testing to summer break, according to a survey released today by [K12 Inc.](#) (NYSE: LRN). The research, conducted by Morning Consult, found most parents are concerned about student debt and want to see schools and companies doing more to help kids prepare for career success before high school graduation.

"The U.S. education system has been home to some of the fiercest political fights this century, but when it comes to their own kids, parents speak with a unified voice," said Dr. Shaun McAlmont, President of Career Readiness Education at K12. "They want options, they want innovation, and they want their kids to be able to move into college or a career without a lifetime of crushing student debt."

- Only 12% of parents strongly agreed that the K-12 school system is doing enough to prepare students for a career after graduation. The percentage declines with age, as younger parents (ages 18-29) were more likely to strongly agree (21%) than older parents (ages 45-54, 6% strongly agree), who presumably have children closer to graduation.
- 89% of parents said it was very (54%) or somewhat (35%) important to have multiple school options for their children. The results were virtually identical for Democrats (52% / 38%), Republicans (56% / 36%) and Independents (53% / 32%).
- 83% said student debt was a serious (34%) or very serious (49%) problem, with Democrats leaning slightly more toward very serious (55%) than Republicans (45%).
- 92% of parents agreed that giving high school students more exposure to future career opportunities and experiences before they enter college would help alleviate student debt. A similar number (91%) said schools should give students more opportunities to earn college credits before graduating.
- 90% of parents think improving the quality of K-12 education in the U.S. should be a very big (49%) or big (41%) priority for the current administration.

"A staggering number of job openings are going unfilled right now, in career fields that are critical to the economy and can support a family," said Dr. McAlmont. "And yet we still have a K-12 education system that pushes kids into debt-filled futures without nearly enough guidance and exposure to those opportunities."

Only a quarter of parents think companies are definitely (7%) or probably (20%) doing enough to help schools prepare today's students for tomorrow's careers. A broader vision for Career Readiness Education includes connecting students to companies that can offer first-hand experience. It's an opportunity to learn important soft skills like punctuality and professionalism, while also developing a personal vision for the future.

This poll was conducted between June 6-11, 2019 among a national sample of 911 parents. The interviews were conducted online, and the data were weighted to approximate a target sample of parents based on age, educational attainment, gender, race, and region. Results from the full survey have a margin of error of plus or minus three percentage points.

About K12

K12 Inc. (NYSE: LRN) takes a personalized approach to education by removing barriers to learning, reaching students where they are, and providing innovative, high-quality online and blended education solutions, curriculum, and programs to charter schools, public school districts, private schools, and families. In total, this work serves more than 70 public and private schools, more than 2,000 school districts, and students in all 50 states and more than 100 countries. The company, which has delivered millions of courses over the past decade, is taking a leadership role in career readiness education through K12-powered Destinations Career Academies and Programs which combine traditional high school academics with Career Technical Education (CTE). K12 is a proud sponsor of the [Foundation for Blended and Online Learning](#), a nonprofit organization dedicated to closing the gap between the pace of technology in daily life and the pace of change in education. More information can be found at [K12.com](#), [destinationsacademy.com](#), [jobshadowweek.com](#), and [getfueled.com](#).

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