

# Newsworthy Trends

## New National Survey Finds Americans Have Dim Outlook on K–12 Education, Want School Choice

(NAPSA)—The majority of Americans of all ages are pessimistic about the direction in which K–12 education is heading today, and most are supportive of expanding school choice options, according to an annual survey conducted by EdChoice and Braun Research, Inc. The 2016 Schooling in America Survey measures the nation’s public opinion and awareness on a range of K–12 education topics and policies, such as school performance, schooling preferences, educational choice reforms and more.

This year, the survey found:

**1. Most Americans—and nearly every demographic—think K–12 education is on the “wrong track.”** Only 24 percent said they think education is headed in the “right direction.” And negative sentiment has increased by 2 percent since last year’s survey.

**2. Most parents are not accessing the educational options they say they prefer for their children.** More than 53 percent of American school parents give their district schools a rating of C, D or F. When asked their preferred school, 42 percent said a private school; 28 percent, a public district school; 11 percent, a charter school; 10 percent, home school. Yet actual enrollments today show 84 percent of children attend public district schools.

**3. Americans are more likely to favor education savings accounts (ESAs), the newest, most flexible type of educational choice program.** Education savings accounts (ESAs) allow parents to withdraw their children from public district or charter schools and receive a deposit of public funds into government-authorized savings accounts with restricted, but multiple, uses. Those funds—often dis-



**A recent survey discovered that parents make many sacrifices for their children’s education.**

tributed to families via debit card—can cover private school tuition and fees, online learning programs, private tutoring, community college costs, higher education expenses and other approved customized learning services and materials. Millennials and Gen Xers, those most likely to be parents of school-aged children, have stronger support for ESAs than older generations. Millennials’ top reasons for supporting ESAs are “more freedom and flexibility for parents” and “more individual attention.”

**4. Parents take inconvenient, often life-altering, steps to secure the best education for their children’s needs.** More than a third have changed their children’s school: 20 percent because they didn’t like their previous school, 14 percent because they preferred another school type and nearly one in 10 because they were seeking more one-on-one personalized education. To secure a better education for their kids, 14 percent changed jobs, 21 percent took on a second job, 11 percent took out a loan and 22 percent paid for tutoring. Notably, 41 percent of millennials have significantly changed their daily routine to accommodate their children’s education.

Learn more at [www.edchoice.org](http://www.edchoice.org).