

Research

Snapshot: Students Want Online Learning

By [David Nagel](#)

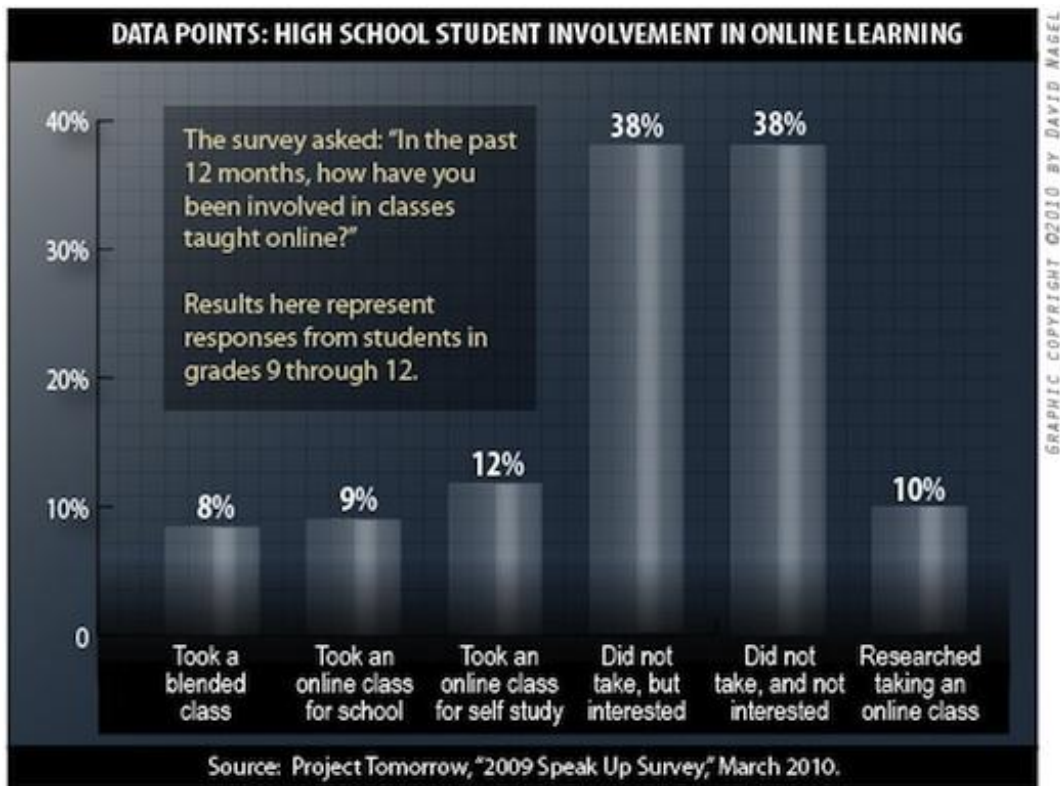
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High school students seem to be overwhelmingly in favor of online instruction as a component of their educations. The vast majority have taken an online course or expressed interest in taking one, according to new data released this week by [Project Tomorrow](#).

The data, released this week as part of the [2009 Speak Up report](#), showed that while only 17 percent of high school students (grades 9 through 12) took a fully online or blended course for school in the last 12 months, another 12 percent took a class for self-study. But interest doesn't end there. Thirty-eight percent indicated that, while they had not taken an online class, they were at least "interested" in online learning. And 10 percent indicated that they had at least researched online learning in the last year.

"However," the report said, "while student interest is on the rise, students also tell us that the primary barriers to actually taking an online class are a lack of information about available classes and the logistical steps for taking an online class."

The chart below breaks down some of the data points from the report.



What do these high school students see as the benefits of taking a class online? According to respondents, more than half (51 percent) said it allows them to work at their own pace. Others indicated that online learning allows them to take a class not offered on campus (44 percent), to get extra help (35 percent), to earn college credit (49 percent), to fit classes into their schedule (37 percent), and to get more attention from teachers (19 percent).

Project Tomorrow's [2009 Speak Up report](#), released this week, is the latest annual survey focused on the national discussion about 21st century education. The survey this year polled more than 369,000 students, teachers, parents, and administrators and involved 5,757 schools from 1,215 districts. (According to Project Tomorrow, since 2003, more than 1.85 million K-12 students, teachers, school leaders, and parents from more than 23,000 schools have participated in the survey.)

Further information about the 2009 Speak Up report, including free online access to data covering high schools, middle schools, and elementary schools, can be found [here](#).

About the Author

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