

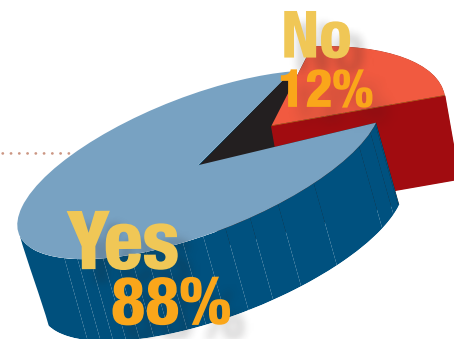
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## POLL RESULTS

### Is Distance Learning Effective?

Response at the poll was strong in support of distance learning, but many of those who wrote agree that it is not for everyone.



#### It's a Great Option

As somebody who's earned a master's degree online and now teaches at a virtual middle school, I think distance learning compares very well with "traditional" learning. However, it's not for everyone. Distance learning requires a lot of personal commitment and hard work, as much of the learning is done on your own, with teacher guidance provided by e-mail, phone, or other long-distance communication. If students don't want to be solely responsible and accountable for their own learning, then they might not want to try distance learning. However, for those who are willing to work harder, I highly recommend it.

*Chris Scofield*  
Florida Connections Academy  
Orlando, Florida

#### It Is Essential

As someone who lived and worked in a remote Northern community I can say unequivocally that I would never have completed my EdD without access to distance learning. For those in similar situations, distance learning is not only an effective teaching/learning option, it is a matter of equity.

*Alexander McAuley*  
University of Prince Edward Island  
Charlottetown, PEI, Canada

#### Depends On the Teacher

Distance learning both benefits and suffers from the same issues as face-to-face classes. A teacher's content knowledge, style, and classroom management ability are the true factors that determine the success of any

class, not the format in which the class is delivered. Distance learning is absolutely effective.

*Theresa Meade*  
Math Science Innovation Center  
Richmond, Virginia

#### Depends On the Student

I'm an online instructor in educational technology, so I can't speak for online learning with younger students. What I have found most evident in my classes: Online learning is not for everyone. It takes a certain drive and stick-to-it attitude for an online student's success. The online student needs to be resourceful, able to scour the Internet with speed and efficiency, and dedicated to self-learning. The student with a hunger to try new tools and communication methods will sort through many such endeavors, ultimately finding ways to get the job done, and educating himself or herself along the way.

*Terry Smith*  
Concordia University  
Portland, Oregon

#### Promotes Meaningful Discussion

Web-based discussions are richer and deeper than face-to-face discussions for two reasons. First, no one can dominate the discussion and everyone will be heard. Second, discussants can take longer to formulate, edit, and rehearse their contributions before dropping them into the discussion pot.

*Ken Messersmith*  
University of Nebraska  
Kearney, Nebraska

#### Creates Diversity

Students from five states enrolled in an online course I taught last year. Students, with varied backgrounds, enabled the important, deep discussion to take place. Feedback indicated students learned and enjoyed the "class discussions!" Without the online capability, the diversity of ideas would not have been present.

*Georgia A. Cobbs*  
The University of Montana  
Missoula, Montana

#### Research Supports It

Research comparing distance learning with traditional classroom learning reveals that distance learning can be equally as effective. But distance learning does even more. It effectively provides educational opportunities to citizens who are unable to participate in traditional classroom learning environments. So, I say resoundingly, "Yes!"

*David J. Ayersman*  
New River Community and Technical College  
Beckley, West Virginia

#### A Mix Can Be Ideal

Hybrid has provided my "geographically challenged" students equal opportunities to learning, without giving up close-knit relationships only face-to-face can provide. It also allows me to easily hold students accountable to a learning process, as they must prepare for face-to-face meetings. Mostly, it mandates my preservice teachers become tech-savvy.

*Teresa S. Foulger*  
Arizona State University  
Phoenix, Arizona