



ISSUE BRIEF:

What Educational Research Says about the Connections Academy Model

Parental involvement, individualized instruction, and high-quality teaching – three hallmarks of Connections Academy – are directly correlated by research to top student achievement.

Parent Involvement: Decades of research show that parent participation in education is very closely related to student achievement. In *A New Generation of Evidence: The Family Is Critical To Student Achievement*¹, Anne T. Henderson and Nancy Berla document concrete benefits of parent involvement for students, including higher grades and test scores, higher graduation rates, and greater enrollment in postsecondary education. A Stanford study found that using parents as tutors brought significant and immediate changes in children's I.Q. scores.

Individualized Instruction: Students also clearly benefit from instruction that is individualized in terms of pace, content, sequence and style. Among the many studies on this topic, Margaret Haertel and her colleagues show in "What Helps Students Learn?"² that "curriculum and assessment tailored to student ability and academic background" to assure "an appropriate level of task difficulty for students and an appropriate instructional pace" is a proven tool for helping students achieve. At Connections Academy, instruction is individualized for every student, every day.

High-Quality Teaching: Along with their learning coaches, students benefit from their contact with Connections Academy's highly qualified teachers. Each teacher is equipped with the skills and technology they need to bring out the best in every student. In his landmark study correlating test data with teacher quality, Harold Wenglinsky³ of the Educational Testing Service showed a direct link between good teaching and higher test scores.

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¹ Henderson, A., & Berla, N. (eds.). *A New Generation Of Evidence: The Family Is Critical to Student Achievement*. National Committee for Citizens in Education, Center for Law and Education, Washington, DC, 1994.

²Wang, Margaret C., Haertel, Geneva D., and Walberg, Herbert J. "What Helps Students Learn?" *Educational Leadership*, 1993.

³ Wenglinsky, Harold. *How Teaching Matters: Bringing the Classroom Back Into Discussions of Teacher Quality*. Educational Testing Service, 2000.