

EDUCATION NEWS AND NOTES

Survey Grades The State Of Homework

(NAPSA)—How much value do parents and students place on homework assignments? The answers may surprise you.

Although homework has long been a topic of debate among educators and families, the MetLife Survey of the American Teacher: The Homework Experience reveals that a substantial majority of teachers, parents and even students feel strongly that homework is important, helping students learn more in school and paving the way for future success. The survey also revealed a strong connection between the importance that a student places on homework and academic success.

“Homework is a frequent topic of conversation among parents, teachers and students and that conversation often leads to larger discussions about teaching and learning, parenting and preparation for work, college and life. This survey shares the voices and perspectives of those closest to homework,” said MetLife Chairman and CEO Rob Henrikson.

The survey is the latest in the American Teacher series, which MetLife sponsors. Its purpose is to bring the perspectives of those closest to the classroom to the attention of policymakers and the public.

According to the findings, teachers, parents and students all give homework high marks, with a

Have You Done Your Homework?

- More than 75% of students and parents think homework is important.
- 76% of students indicate they have enough time to finish homework.
- 78% of parents report homework does not interfere with family time.
- Almost 90% of secondary school students do other things while doing homework, such as watch TV, IM and e-mail, and listen to music.
- 69% of elementary school students also multitask.

Source: MetLife American Teacher Survey



large majority indicating that doing homework is important or very important. Teachers report that they spend an average of 8.5 hours each week doing work related to students' homework, while most students (77 percent), regardless of grade level, spend at least 30 minutes doing homework on a typical school day. Forty-five percent reported spending at least an hour.

The survey did reveal areas for concern, however, with a significant percentage of parents and students raising questions regarding the quality of homework assigned. Although six in 10 parents believe their child's teachers assign the right amount of homework, fully one-third of parents rate the quality of homework

assignments as fair or poor and 40 percent believe that a great deal or some of the homework is not related to what students are learning in school. Although most students say they have enough time for homework, one-quarter of students think their homework is busywork and not related to what they are learning in school. In contrast, only 16 percent of teachers give such low marks to the quality of homework assigned.

On a related note, the survey also revealed that having the opinion that homework is unimportant is often associated with lower student achievement and other risk factors. Students who do not believe homework is important are more likely than other students to get Cs or below, not plan to go to college after high school, and rate the quality of their education as only fair or poor. Similarly, parents who report that homework is not important feel more alienated from their child's school, are less likely to have rules about homework and are more likely to say that homework is burdensome.

“These findings can be used by parents and educators to improve the homework experience for America's students,” added Sibyl Jacobson, MetLife Foundation President and CEO.

For more information, visit www.metlife.com/teachersurvey.