

DG 19970020E1

附件
7

2/12/97 教育園地

Survey Reveals Teens Yearn for High Standards

By Ann Bradley

American teenagers readily admit that they aren't working very hard in school and say that higher academic standards would give them the push they need to fulfill their potential, concludes a report scheduled for release this week.

Three-fourths of the teenagers surveyed said that requiring students to learn more and making them pass tests before they could graduate would make students pay more attention to their studies. Almost two-thirds of the students said they could do much better in school if they tried.

Public Agenda, a New York City-based public opinion research organization, conducted the study, "Getting By: What American Teenagers Really Think About Their Schools." The report follows three previous Public Agenda studies exploring the views of teachers, parents, and community and school leaders on similar topics.

The responses not only show that stu-

Continued on Page 38

Teens Yearn for Higher Academic Standards, Survey Reveals

Continued from Page 1

dents are their schools' toughest critics; they also dispute some commonly held beliefs about adolescents' attitudes.

Unlike some surveys of high school students, the Public Agenda Poll probes deeply into the topics and uses sound methodology.

The report is based on a telephone survey of 1,000 randomly selected public high school students conducted last fall. In addition, the pollsters oversampled specific groups, such as minority and private school students. The

study also includes the results of 12 focus groups conducted with middle and high school students. The margin of error for the 1,000 students was plus or minus 3 percentage points.

Despite the adolescents' professed support for higher academic standards, the report cautions that adults shouldn't assume that standards alone will do the job. The youths overwhelmingly viewed their teachers as "the most important variable in whether they learn or not." Sixty-three percent of them said having more good teachers was key.

The students voiced strong support for close monitoring. Nearly 80 percent said students would learn more if schools made sure that students were on time and completed their homework. More than 70 percent said schools should require after-school classes for youths earning D's and F's.

Instead of that kind of support, however, large numbers of teens reported that their schools allow them to muddle through.

Half of those surveyed said that too many students in their schools got away with being late and neglecting their work. Half of

them said that their schools didn't challenge them to do their best. And 42 percent said that too many teachers in their schools did "a bad job."

"I got a 3.8 my freshman year, and I was never there," a student from Sunnyvale, Calif., said in a focus group. "I did a few homeworks once in a while."

"You can just glide through," said a Seattle student. "They practically hand you a diploma."

'Crying Out'

Deborah Wadsworth, the executive director of Public Agenda,

said the findings show that "students seem to be crying out for the adults in their lives to take a stand and inspire them to do more."

On the positive side, the study found that a big majority of teenagers have absorbed the message about the importance of education to their futures. They didn't hold negative views about academic achievement, despite fears that many African-American students, in particular, disdain it.

The proportion of respondents who said that their friends "look down on" someone who earns good grades—19 percent—was not significantly different among white, black, and Hispanic students. But the figure was still large enough to be disturbing to the study's authors.

Also of concern were the teenagers' negative views about specific academic subjects such as history, science, and literature. Most said they viewed much of what they study in school as "tedious and irrelevant."

The few teenagers who said that they had enjoyed a specific course attributed their interest to the skills of a particular teacher, rather than to an intrinsic appeal in the subject.

African-American students were much more likely than their white counterparts to say that studying American history, world history, biology, chemistry, and advanced mathematics is extremely important. Nearly 60 percent said it was "extremely important" to study American history, compared with 25 percent of white students.

"The vast majority of youngsters showed little curiosity or sense of wonder," the study says. "Most understood the value society places on 'being educated,' but they interpret this almost exclusively as 'getting a college degree.'"

Lack of Respect

Nevertheless, in line with adult respondents in an earlier survey, the report found that support for higher standards among high schoolers was "significant and noteworthy." (See *Education Week*, Oct. 18, 1995.)

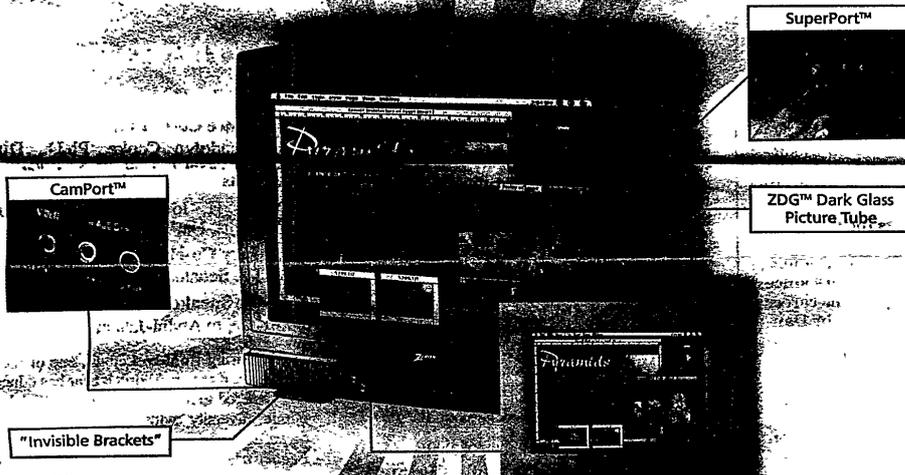
Three-fourths of those surveyed said that students shouldn't be allowed to graduate unless they had mastered English. A similar proportion said they should only be promoted to the next grade if they had learned the material.

The study found that teenagers share their teachers' concerns about the lack of respect and civility in public schools. Only 13 percent of public high school students—compared with 43 percent of private school students—said that their classmates were "very respectful" of teachers.

Students in focus groups also complained about teachers treating them with disrespect. "Some come in and yell at you and talk to you like you're four years old, and they don't give you any respect. So you don't give them respect," a girl from Westchester County, N.Y., said.

The young people also were disturbed about their peers' empha-

WE'VE DONE OUR HOMEWORK.



Introducing the new Zenith Presentation Series™ — the first line of televisions specifically designed for today's and tomorrow's classroom.

You told us what you wanted in a classroom television, and we delivered. The Zenith Presentation Series™ offers breakthrough technologies like PCZTV™ integrated scan conversion — connect your computer directly to your television for full-size classroom presentations without additional set-top boxes or extra cables; SuperPort™ "plug in" technology — upgrade your television quickly and easily to take advantage of the newest educational technologies; and the End User-Ready Control System — "lock out" controls to prevent tampering.

The Zenith Presentation Series also offers "common sense" features like extra

Featuring PCZTV™ Integrated Scan Conversion

long 20-foot, 3-wire polarized power cords, S-Video inputs and Integral "Invisible Brackets," for increased security without all the belts and straps.

The Presentation Series is available in 25", 27", 32" and 35" screen sizes.

For a real education on classroom televisions, call 1-800-884-1742. We'll show you how Zenith is moving television to the head of the class.

TURN ON THE FUTURE



The Quality Goes In Before The Name Goes On.

