SUMMARY OF RECENT RESEARCH ON HOMEWORK

--Homework or no homework? According to research, student achievement has little relationship to whether or not the class has assigned homework. In elementary grades, teacher assigned homework actually correlated to students’ poor attitude toward school. Achievement does relate positively to how much time parents spend assisting with homework – Cooper, et. al. Journal of Experimental Education, vol 69(2) 181-199 and Journal of Educational Psychology (1998), vol 90(1), 70-83

--A study out of Ohio State University shows students do better with more frequent testing. Weekly spot quizzes had a greater effect on exam improvement than homework. Kass, S. 1999 APA Monitor, vol. 30(9)

--When 45 student dropouts were asked when they knew that they were going to drop out of school and why, almost all mention chaotic family lives, cramped living quarters, and kept mentioning inability to complete homework. Homework often punishes students in poverty for being poor. According to a 1998 survey by Public Agenda, nearly 50% of parents reported having a serious argument with their children over homework and 34% reported homework as a continuing source of stress and struggle.

Three homework myths:

1. **Homework increases academic achievement.** Even supporters of homework acknowledge the problems of research on homework. (Harris Cooper). Most researchers now concede that homework advocates have shifted their focus from homework’s questionable impact on student achievement to homework’s alleged importance in developing traits like self-discipline and time management. According to these views, developing homework habits early means that a student will be more disciplined about completing homework in high school and beyond. Lacking solid evidence, homework supporters ask to take on faith the notion that homework can instill desirable character traits.

2. **If our students don’t do lots of homework, their test scores will never be competitive internationally.** The 1995 Third International Math and Science Study (TIMSS) found that 8\textsuperscript{th} graders in Japan and Germany are assigned less homework but still outperform US students on tests (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2001).

3. **Those who call homework into question want to dilute the curriculum and kowtow to the inherent laziness of students.** By calling homework into question, it is not questioning the work of homework but how it is done. Students need to complete long-term independent projects as part of a rigorous academic program. They need to learn many skills through drill and practice. They need time to make new learning their own. Professional educators need to design rigorous academic work, scaffold new knowledge and coach new student habits. The place for such work is in the school.

Rather than looking at homework, with its questionable research benefit (especially in the elementary years), educators should direct national discussion to more important issues.

After close to 20 years of school reform measures, we now have some proven practices for increasing academic success. A recent RAND study of academic achievement compared 1993-1996 state test results and found that the states with higher test results shared three important characteristics: smaller class size, more pre-K education, and more resources for teachers.

Kralovec and Buell, *Educational Leadership*, Volume 58, Number 7, April 2001
When she was a child, Mary Russo knew that going to school was her job. The time used to complete homework assignments was considered sacred. "There was always a place in our home for homework," Russo recalls. "My grandmother--who spoke only Italian--would bring me and my brother sandwiches and milk while we studied." And, says Russo, although her grandmother couldn't *tell* them, her actions "showed us the value of what we were doing."

Russo is now the principal at Samuel Mason Elementary School in Roxbury, Mass., and regularly stresses the importance of homework to parents. "Children have to understand that their work--school work--is important," she asserts, and they get that message when families make homework a priority. What's more, says Russo, making homework a priority gives children more opportunities to learn. "We want children to continue learning beyond the school day," she explains. "Homework is a powerful way to extend learning."

Russo bases her claim on her 27 years of educational experience, as well as on research that has shown a correlation between homework and student achievement and the development of critical skills. Although there continues to be debate about the accuracy of studies that link increased academic achievement to homework, there has been no disagreement among educators that homework helps instill in students a sense of responsibility, accountability, motivation, and self-confidence.

"Homework teaches students good old-fashioned values," says Dorothy Rich, author of *What Do We Say? What Do We Do? Vital Solutions of Children's Educational Success*. Rich, president of the Megaskills Education Center, believes homework "gives students practice in persevering and accomplishing goals" and helps them learn "to take responsibility for keeping their minds active."

Still, Rich concedes, in today's modern world, an old-fashioned approach to homework won't work. Teachers have to "sell" homework and make it relevant to students' lives, says Rich. Schools today, she adds, also have to seek parental support for homework and show parents how to reinforce, at home, what students learn in the classroom.

**Homework for the Modern Age**

"We can't keep assigning homework like the homework we had in the 60s and 70s," asserts Patricia Caspary, a 4th grade teacher at Franklin Elementary School in Fond du Lac, Wisc. Traditional homework assignments were once the norm at Franklin, "but students weren't getting it done--they kept forgetting their homework." So Caspary and her colleagues tried a different approach. "We decided we needed to look at these kids and come up with an approach to homework that respects their lives," says Caspary.

They began by creating a mission statement that identifies homework as "any activity where learning is extended after school." This is not necessarily work done at home, Caspary explains, "but any work outside the classroom that isn't teacher directed." Teachers also decided that students should have multiple ways to complete homework assignments and that those assignments must be adaptable,
enabling students to complete their homework with the resources available to them. For example, one of Caspary's favorite assignments requires students to bake enough cookies for everyone in the class, which requires students to double or triple their cookie recipes. Students who don't have access to a kitchen or baking supplies can complete the homework by converting a recipe that makes six servings into one that makes 18 servings. Such flexible assignments are important, says Caspary, because Franklin's student body is diverse. "We have some students who have access to every resource; we have some students who have nothing," she notes.

David Boers, author of Happy Classrooms, applauds the school's approach to homework as one that is realistic. For too long, he says, teachers gave assignments that "discouraged learners by giving them homework they couldn't do and then punishing them when they didn't do it." Boers, a professor of graduate education at Marian College, describes as "discouraging" those assignments that require students "to go home and color" without ensuring that all students have crayons, for example.

According to Boers, assignments that feature "mindless, brainless stuff not related to a child's world" are also discouraging. A typical homework assignment for math, for example, requires students to solve scores of math problems. "If a student has mastered the skill in five problems, why should she finish the rest?" asks Boers. A better math assignment: "Ask students to watch a baseball game in their neighborhood and have them track one batter and record the number of hits he gets in the game." Students can then determine the player's batting average.

A little creativity goes a long way in designing homework that is relevant to students' lives, asserts Boers, who once taught middle and high school English. "My favorite assignments were those that gave students things they could do alone and without materials," he says. When studying the history of their town, for example, Boers asked students to "go out and talk to someone" about the history of their house and present their findings in class the next day.

Boers encourages the teacher candidates who now fill his classroom to develop their own homework philosophies and to "attach them to what they know about human development and growth." Boers also points out to his students that, as teachers, they must be able to justify the homework they've assigned. "If students ask, 'Why do I have to do this?', teachers should be able to respond right away and precisely," he says, adding that, "if you can't justify the homework and show how it fits in the curriculum, why bother giving the assignment?"

**The Link Between Home and School**

Rich agrees that teachers have a responsibility when assigning homework to "let kids know what you're teaching through the homework and why." But she finds that "this isn't typically taught" in preservice education or in professional development. What also isn't taught, says Russo, is the power homework has to engage parents in the school life. "Teachers need to consider how parents can contribute to a child's development," she contends. The homework policy at Samuel Mason Elementary School requires teachers to create homework assignments that are "interactive" and to include activities children can do with their parents or older siblings.

"We call our homework Homelinks because it's the link between home and school," says Peg Sands, a kindergarten teacher at Samuel Mason. "Through Homelinks, parents have an opportunity to reinforce learning, to become involved in their child's education."

The Homelinks program asks parents to guide students through the 30 minutes of homework assigned each night, except Friday. Each night's homework focuses on a different content area: On Monday, students take a book home, read it with a family member, and then do a short book report. On Tuesday,
the homework focuses on math. Wednesday's homework is connected to themes, such as bus safety or holidays. And on Thursday, the homework involves practicing a writing skill--letter, word, or sentence recognition, or differentiating between uppercase and lowercase letters, for example. Parents then sign the completed homework.

The Homelinks program also features parenting workshops that teach parents how to best help their children complete homework assignments. When the homework requires parents and children to read together, for example, Sands and her colleagues share with parents "the kinds of questions to ask to help develop early literacy skills." When parents ask children questions such as, What is the title of this book? Who is the author?, children learn to "examine books and understand a book's parts," says Sands.

An emphasis on communicating with parents is also part of a new approach to homework adopted by teachers at Franklin Elementary School. Each student at Franklin now carries a "planner"--a notebook calendar of school days that allows students to record daily homework assignments and enables teachers to describe what was accomplished during the day. "These planners go home with the students every night and parents have to sign the books after they read them," says Caspary, who views the planners as a way to open discussions with parents. "There is space for parents to write their comments and they often send us notes" about what's happening in the classroom and how they think their children are responding. Parents welcome the opportunity to share their opinions, she says, and have responded favorably to the planners.

Students, too, are enthusiastic. "The students feel empowered," states Caspary. "The planners help them learn to ask: What did I accomplish today and what will I do tomorrow? The planners teach them how to plan." And teaching students how to plan is important, she asserts, because they'll need that skill as adults.

Gary Tubbs, the Director of Academic Achievement for the Seattle (Wash.) Public Schools, approves of such efforts to involve parents in homework. In Seattle, the district's homework policy, like many other such policies across the United States, provides guidelines for parental involvement and encourages parents to be "part of the solution in helping students succeed." School districts may have left parents out in the past, says Tubbs, but educators must now work with parents, who will, in turn, "work with students in a way that supports instruction."

"All parents want their children to succeed," says Tubbs, so deciding to uphold the homework policy is a not difficult choice for parents. After all, Tubbs points out, homework "puts responsibility on the learner," and, above all, "gives students an extended opportunity to learn."
Beyond Class Time

Averting the Homework Crisis

by Neil T. Glazer and Sharron Williams

At Shaker Heights Middle School, four after-school programs help students complete their homework assignments.

From Charleston, North Carolina, to San Juan Capistrano, California, teachers and school administrators are agonizing over a growing crisis in many classrooms. Students are simply not doing their homework. Most of us know that students who consistently do their homework perform better in school. We also know that just doing the homework isn't enough; completing the entire assignment is what makes the difference between students' success or failure.

As administrators and teachers at Shaker Heights Middle School in Ohio, we want to help our 940 students—51 percent African American, 44 percent white, and 5 percent Hispanic and Asian American—complete their homework assignments. To deliver this important academic message, administrators meet with each of our eight middle school teams—approximately 110 students and five teachers comprise each team—during the first week of school. We start by sharing the recipes for school success that high school seniors have offered when they graduated, focusing on four key ingredients for achieving academic success.

Successful students come to school prepared for work. A physician, a carpenter, or an airline mechanic wouldn't think of reporting for work without all the tools necessary for the job. Students must come to school with pencils, paper, and a receptiveness to learning.

Students must take personal responsibility for their own learning. They will not succeed if they blame the system, their parents, or their teachers, or if they allow themselves to get sidetracked by distractions.

School work takes effort. Students get out of school what they put into school. If school seems too easy, then they are not putting forth their best efforts.

Successful students complete their homework every day. Those students who never seem to find time to complete their assignments will not succeed in school. Even if students don't have a specific assignment, they must take the time to review previous assignments or to start a long-term project.

We also share the results of our survey of middle school students, who described the roadblocks that kept them from completing homework. Their answers revealed several concerns.

- If I'm confused about a question, there is nobody to help me at home.
- Once I get home, it's hard to do schoolwork because there are so many other things I like to do.
- Sometimes I forget my assignments.
- I don't have a place at home to do my schoolwork.
I need more encouragement to do schoolwork at home.
If I'm absent from school, it's hard to find out what I missed. I don't have a good friend in every one of my classes who can tell me my assignments.

Our After-School Programs

Then we explain the school's four practical programs that address these concerns.

After-School Academic Sessions

Working closely with the faculty and the teachers' association, we have scheduled an after-school hour for modified small-group instruction. On Tuesday through Friday afternoons, teachers work with students between the official closing bell at 3:00 pm and the contractual end of the teachers' workday at 4:00 pm. Clubs, organizations, and athletics may not begin until 4:00 pm, and the students who participate in these activities must present a pass from a teacher verifying attendance at an after-school academic session.

Students who stay for the after-school hour may choose which teacher's classroom they will go to for study. Some days, usually just before a major test, a teacher may work with a sizable group of students during this hour. On other days, a teacher may work with a small group and, occasionally, may have no students. We have adjusted the school's bus schedules to accommodate the many students who take the bus to and from school. Parents support our efforts to make academics a top priority. Students see this after-school academic session as an opportunity to start their homework and to get answers to questions about their assignments.

The Homework Center

To help the students who voiced a concern over lack of space, time, or motivation to do their homework after they left school, we opened a homework center. Two teachers receive extra pay to staff the center from the end of the after-school academic session at 4:00 pm to the end of the activities period at 5:15 pm. The homework center uses classrooms adjacent to the exit closest to the bus pick-up area. As with the after-school academic sessions, the center attracts more students when progress reports are about to come out or when a grading period is drawing to a close. Parents support the homework center and help us encourage students to use the center.

Aside from responding to the students' need for a quiet space to complete homework, the center also addresses the need of students who may otherwise be unsupervised before their parents arrive home from work. Some parents require their children to attend the homework center and pick the students up at school on the way home from work.

The Homework Hotline

Many students indicated that they often misplace their lists of homework assignments somewhere between school and home. All students receive a planner for listing homework assignments and upcoming special events. Many teachers require students to copy homework assignments into the planner, but sometimes the planner doesn't get home, either.

As a service to students and parents, we have installed a special telephone homework assignment hotline that is accessible 24 hours a day, with special codes for each teacher's course. To make sure that everyone has the code numbers, we include a list of all the teachers' hotline codes in the monthly
newsletter that we send home to parents. Teachers can record their assignments on the hotline from school or from home. On Tuesdays, the teachers call in assignments for Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. On Thursday afternoons, teachers call in assignments for Friday, the weekend, and Monday of the following week. Teachers also use the hotline to offer words of encouragement and to announce upcoming tests, field trips, and special assembly programs. Parents have found this service an excellent way to check on school assignments. Students who are absent, sick, or even on vacation can obtain homework assignments by calling the hotline.

**The University Tutorial Program**

Colleges and universities surround Shaker Heights. Through a reciprocal agreement with nearby John Carroll University, we match university sophomores and juniors with one or two of our middle school students who have been identified as needing individual tutoring in certain subject areas. The tutorial sessions meet during the after-school academic session one or two afternoons a week. A middle school teacher coordinates the program and makes sure that the tutors and students have textbooks, appropriate work assignments, adequate space for tutoring, and access to our facilities.

These college-age tutors are outstanding role models for our students, inspiring the students to gain their tutors’ approbation by working hard to complete homework assignments. Usually 15 to 20 tutors work in our school each semester. The program is limited only by the number of university tutors available for this part of our homework program.

**Our Challenges**

We have made significant strides in helping students overcome the roadblocks that prevent them from completing homework assignments.

Our four initiatives address many of the needs expressed by the students. Although we do not have statistical measurements to assess our gains, the encouraging comments by teachers, parents, and students indicate that we are moving in the right direction.

Our programs have some limitations and challenges. One of the most formidable challenges is finding the money and resources to make all of our initiatives work. We struggle to find the funding necessary to coordinate the university tutorial program and the homework center, but we are confident that our investment will pay academic dividends in the future.

A limitation to the after-school programs is that we require only those students who are involved in cocurricular and extra-curricular activities—approximately 35 percent of the students—to attend the after-school academic sessions. Often, those students who do not participate in these activities are the students who need the most academic help. Seeking parental support is the best way to address this challenge, and we are encouraged by the number of parents who now require their children to take advantage of the after-school academic sessions and the homework center.

The homework crisis is a challenge for everyone in education. We have mitigated the crisis by undertaking these four programs. Yes, keeping them going is an uphill battle that demands the resources and the energies of everyone involved, but it is a battle well worth fighting.
Neil T. Glazer (glazer_n@shaker-heights.k12.oh.us) is Principal and Sharron Williams (williams_s@shaker-heights.k12.oh.us) is Assistant Principal of Shaker Heights Middle School, 20600 Shaker Blvd., Shaker Heights, OH 44122.
Beyond Class Time

End Homework Now

by Etta Kralovec and John Buell

Educators should stop squeezing time out of family life for the questionable benefits of homework.

Parents say that teachers require it. Teachers say that parents demand more of it. Politicians call for grading parents on their ability to help with it. Citizens run for school board seats on no-homework platforms. The National Parent Teacher Association and the National Education Association set guidelines. Some dismiss the current anti-homework outcry as just the latest swing of the opinion pendulum. School boards and politicians dictate homework policies for political rather than pedagogical reasons. Teachers say that they are increasingly uncomfortable about handing over to parents the learning for which teachers are accountable. Welcome to the homework wars.

When the school board in Piscataway, New Jersey, voted earlier this fall to limit homework in the elementary grades to half an hour each night and high school homework to two hours a night, the New York Times ran a front-page article on the school (Zernike, 2000) and national television networks followed suit. Homework is controversial, not only because of legitimate questions about its efficacy. Concern about homework is also part of a growing apprehension in the United States about the time pressures that both adults and children now face. Unstructured family time is shrinking in the face of longer workweeks and more hours of homework than ever before (Hofferth & Sandberg, in press). In the early 1990s, we discovered the impact of homework on students' lives when we helped conduct a study of alternative schools for Maine's Department of Education, aiming to find out why these schools had been so successful in helping former high school dropouts graduate from high school (Antonnuci & Mooser, 1993). We spoke with parents, school personnel, and school board members and conducted in-depth interviews with more than 45 at-risk students enrolled in these schools, asking them to identify when they had known they were going to drop out of school. Students told us about chaotic family lives, cramped living quarters, and parents who worked at night. They also kept mentioning their inability to complete homework as a factor in the decision to leave school. Surprised that homework contributed so dramatically to students' dropping out of school, we analyzed research reports and talked with hundreds of teachers, parents, high school dropouts, and high school students. Instead of focusing narrowly on homework's impact on academic achievement or its presumed role in developing self-discipline and good work habits, we examined homework in the context of the lives of students, families, and communities. From this perspective, we found that homework often disrupts family life, interferes with what parents want to teach their children, and punishes students in poverty for being poor. Perhaps more significantly for educators are the serious limitations of homework's pedagogical prowess (Kralovec & Buell, 2000).

In the past 20 years, family life in the United States has undergone dramatic demographic and economic changes. More mothers work, more single parents run households, and more parents work longer—all contributing to a decrease in unstructured family time (Hofferth & Sandberg, in press).
White middle-class parents in the past decade have increased their time at work by nearly six full-time weeks a year. African American middle-income families log an average of 4,278 hours per year, almost 500 hours per year more than white families (Mishel, Bernstein, & Schmitt, 2001).

Homework squeezes family life. All parents have educational agendas for their children. They want to pass on their cultural heritage, religious beliefs, and important life skills. They want to teach their children how to be good citizens and how to share in the responsibilities of running a home. More homework makes parents put their own agendas on hold even as they often struggle to help their children cope with homework assignments. Additionally, families need time to constitute themselves as families. According to a 1998 survey by Public Agenda, nearly 50 percent of parents reported having a serious argument with their children over homework, and 34 percent reported homework as a source of stress and struggle. Parents often have conflicting feelings about homework, viewing it as a way for their children to succeed but also as imposing serious limits on family time.

Homework reinforces the social inequities inherent in the unequal distribution of educational resources in the United States. Some students go home to well-educated parents and have easy access to computers with vast databases. Other students have family responsibilities, parents who work at night, and no educational resources in their homes. A principal once told us that he had solved the homework problem for students in poverty simply by not assigning them homework. This curious solution raises troubling questions: Either homework is of no educational value—in which case why is anyone doing it—or we are committing the worst form of educational discrimination by differentiating academic programs on the basis of economic class.

The poor person's version of the emblematic soccer mom is the burger mom—the mother who works nights in a fast food restaurant while her children sit in a booth waiting for her to help them with homework. Close to 20 percent of children in the United States live in poverty, and homework further exacerbates their academic problems. Well-meaning parents cannot overcome their lack of resources, including the time needed to make sure that their children complete school assignments.

**Homework: The Black Hole**

The call for greater accountability in education, with its increased focus on test scores and outcomes, puts homework on the line. When we leave a sizable portion of learning to parents, how can we hold schools and teachers responsible for meeting higher standards? To teach to standards means to teach in a more tightly controlled system, leaving no room for an unknown variable—the black hole of homework—in the education process. Moreover, how can teachers know the level of their students' learning if they don't know how students are getting their assignments done at home?

Cognitive scientists have contributed to a revolution in learning theory, building on the foundation laid by Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky. Educators accept that students have unique cognitive structures that determine their abilities to solve problems at different points in their development. We know that we must scaffold new learning onto existing mental frameworks to build new knowledge. Understanding students' mistakes is a crucial part of the teaching process. When work goes home, teachers have little understanding of the mistakes that students have made on the material and little control over who does the work. Teachers wonder, Did the students do their own work? Did they exchange answers with friends over the phone or before school? Did they send homework by e-mail to their grandparents, who did the work and returned it early the next morning? Did they download the paper they are handing in? Homework is a black hole in the learning process, leaving teachers unaware of each student's true educational level or progress and unable to scaffold new knowledge for the students.
Homework Myths

Three homework myths have persisted during the past century, making us unwilling to ask for solid evidence on the benefits of homework and acquiescent in accepting claims about its efficacy.

**Myth: Homework increases academic achievement.** Even supporters of homework acknowledge the problems of research on homework. Homework supporter Harris Cooper acknowledges that "the conclusions of past reviewers of homework research show extraordinary variability. . . . the reviews often directly contradict one another" (1989, p. 28). Most researchers now concede that homework does not improve academic achievement for elementary students (Cooper, 1994). Recently, homework advocates have shifted their focus from homework's questionable impact on student achievement to homework's alleged importance in developing traits like self-discipline and time management. According to these views, developing homework habits early means that a student will be more disciplined about completing homework in high school and beyond.

According to Piaget, however, asking children to perform tasks before they are developmentally ready proves counterproductive to development. We need to ask ourselves whether homework falls into this category. Lacking solid evidence, homework supporters ask us to take on faith the notion that homework can instill desirable character traits.

**Myth: If our students don't do lots of homework, their test scores will never be competitive internationally.** Comparisons of student test scores often pit U.S. students against students from other countries. Ironically, the 1995 Third International Math and Science Study (TIMSS) found that 8th graders in Japan and Germany are assigned less homework but still outperform U.S. students on tests (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2001). Japanese schools spend a greater portion of their budgets on professional development and organize their school days so that teachers can work collaboratively. Teachers in Japan are at school eight to nine hours a day, but they teach only four hours a day. In addition, the Japanese school calendar has longer school days, longer school years, longer lunches, and longer recess periods. The Japanese classroom is a sacred space that does not allow interruptions. We can learn many lessons from the Japanese system (Rohlen & LeTendre, 1995).

**Myth: Those who call homework into question want to dilute the curriculum and kowtow to the inherent laziness of students.** By calling homework into question, we are not questioning the work of homework, but rather the value of students completing that work at home. Students need to complete long-term, independent projects as part of a rigorous academic program. They need to learn many skills through drill and practice. They need time to make new learning their own. Professional educators need to design rigorous academic work, scaffold new knowledge, and coach new study habits. The place for such work is in the school.

Focus on Genuine Reforms

Educators are under the gun as never before to improve student achievement. With national attention now focused on school reform, education leaders have a valuable opening for educating the public about how to improve schools in the United States. Rather than defending the practice of homework, educators should direct national discussion to more important issues.

- After close to 20 years of school reform measures, we now have some proven practices for increasing academic success. A recent RAND study of academic achievement compared 1993–1996 state test results and found that the states with higher test results shared three important characteristics: smaller class size, more pre-K education, and
more resources for teachers (Grissmer, Flanagan, Kawata, & Williamson, 2000). A call for more school funding should be the mantra of our profession.

- The rush to fund and build after-school programs is now a major policy initiative with the potential to solve some of the homework problems we face (Miller, 2000). Education leaders should seek to ensure that after-school learning programs are academically rigorous and work closely with the community organizations that provide after-school services.

- Research on learning suggests the importance of physical movement in the learning process (Jensen, 2000). Beyond the back problems associated with heavy backpacks, students who sit all day in a classroom and then for hours to complete homework at night face a potential health threat. Turning up the pressure to achieve, instituting high-stakes testing programs, cutting physical activities, and piling on the homework are recipes for disaster. Educators should help parents and politicians understand how an overemphasis on testing will result in one-dimensional learning.

Piling on homework and arguing for its value are cheaper and less politically risky strategies, but educators need to inform the public about the real levers of school improvement. Do we have the courage to call for adequate school funding? Are we willing to declare an eight-hour workday for both students and teachers? Are we willing to commit ourselves to the professional development that teachers need to teach effectively in their classrooms? Are we willing to staff our after-school programs with professionals who can support student learning? Educators need to consider these questions before answering calls about homework from parents and the local news media.

References


---

**Etta Kralovec** is Vice President for Learning at Training and Development Corporation, Bucksport, ME 04416; homework@mint.net. **John Buell** is an author and freelance journalist. He may be reached at P.O. Box 226, Southwest Harbor, ME 04679; jbuell@acadia.net.