

Better School-to-Home Communication Starting in Middle School Will Benefit Student Academic Performance, Parents Say

96% of parents with a child in grades K-12 view parent involvement as a key factor in student achievement; 95% think achievement would improve if there was better communication between school and home

SUMMARY

A recent independent survey of U.S. parents with a child currently in grades K-12 showed that parents are seeking ways to become more involved in their child's progress at school through the use of technology. Parents widely view their involvement as a key factor in a child's overall achievement and indicated a strong desire to be more informed about overall progress, especially grades, in order to positively impact their child's school performance. The survey revealed that middle school is a critical time for schools to give parents the opportunity to get more involved—the impact being better academic performance later on in high school. Parents see the benefits of better communication, specifically online communication, as affording a student earlier intervention to solve problems and as a motivating factor for their child to take on more responsibility with respect to the outcome of his or her academic performance.

ADDITIONAL KEY FINDINGS

If given the opportunity, 96% of parents would like to take advantage of online access to their child's grades and homework, as well as to communicate with teachers—94% believe this would have a positive impact on student achievement.

93% of parents think their child will take more personal responsibility knowing their parents are actively involved in their schooling; 88% think their child is likely to try harder academically as a result of online access to his or her performance information.

Benefits to parents associate most with having online access to their child's school performance records:

- Improved communication to minimize surprises – 87%
- Academic improvement – 75%
- Increased student responsibility – 66%

About the Survey – The survey of 548 U.S. parents, age 30 and older, with one or more children in grades K-12, was conducted by independent online service Zoomerang. Complete survey results are available at <http://www.pearsonschools.com/survey>



A majority of parents (84%) agree that the opportunity to be involved during the high school years is very important. However, a full 99% of parents surveyed viewed the opportunity to get more involved in their child's schooling during the middle school years as a positive—that academic performance later on in high school would benefit for the following reasons:

86% Earlier intervention to mitigate problems

75% Increased achievement

72% Better study habits

71% Improved collaboration between teachers and students

1. Do you think students whose parents are actively involved in their schooling are more likely to perform better than those students whose parents are less involved?

Yes	522	95%
No	26	5%
Total	548	100%

2. Do you believe that parent involvement is a key factor in overall student achievement?

Yes	524	96%
No	24	4%
Total	548	100%

3. How often do you receive academic or progress information from your child's school?

Weekly	214	39%
Monthly	164	30%
Whenever Report Cards Are Issued	171	31%
Total	548	100%

4. What is your child's school's primary method for communicating with you? (Select One)

Mail	87	16%
Email	136	25%
Newsletter	108	20%
Parent-Teacher Conferences	144	26%
Phone	73	13%
Total	548	100%

5. How often would you like updates on your child's performance?

Daily	66	12%
Weekly	310	57%
Monthly	172	31%
Total	548	100%

6. Do your child(ren) have online access to grades, attendance and teacher comments?

Yes	228	42%
No	320	58%
Total	548	100%



7. If yes, would you say that your child(ren) use online access more or less than you?

More	151	28%
Less	397	72%
Total	548	100%

8. If you could access your child's performance information such as grades and homework, and communicate with teachers online, would you?

Yes	524	96%
No	24	4%
Total	548	100%

9. Do you have online access to your child's performance information today?

Yes	207	38%
No	341	62%
Total	548	100%

10. Do you think student achievement would improve if there was better communication between school and home?

Yes	522	95%
No	26	5%
Total	548	100%

11. Do you think granting parents' better access to information and teachers over email would positively impact student academic performance?

Yes	514	94%
No	34	6%
Total	548	100%

12. Have you ever been surprised by a poor grade on your child's report card?

Yes	269	49%
No	279	51%
Total	548	100%



13. On a scale of 1-5, with one being least important and five being most important, please rate how important the following information would be to you if you could access your child's performance records

Top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. Bottom % is percent of the total respondents selecting the option.

	1	2	3	4	5
Grades	74 14%	51 9%	58 11%	69 13%	296 54%
Attendance	209 38%	86 16%	74 14%	117 21%	62 11%
Homework status	32 6%	110 20%	195 36%	169 31%	42 8%
Progress reporting	49 9%	168 31%	130 24%	128 23%	73 13%
Upcoming assignments	184 34%	133 24%	91 17%	65 12%	75 14%

14. Do you believe that your children are appreciative of your involvement in their education?

Yes	450	82%
No	98	18%
Total	548	100%

15. Is your child likely to try harder academically if you have access to his or her performance information?

Yes	481	88%
No	67	12%
Total	548	100%

16. Do you think students take more personal responsibility knowing their parents are actively involved in their schooling?

Yes	512	93%
No	36	7%
Total	548	100%

17. What benefits do you associate most with granting parents and students online access to performance records? Please check all that apply.

Academic Improvement	411	75%
Better communication between school and home	478	87%
Increased student responsibility	362	66%
Parent-Teacher Conferences	144	26%
Uptick in attendance	160	29%
Teacher efficiency	282	51%

18. How important is it to grant parents the opportunity to be more involved in their's child's progress during the high school years?

Very Important	462	84%
Important	81	15%
Not Important	5	1%
Total	548	100%

19. Are you in favor of giving parents the opportunity to be more involved in their child's progress during the middle school years? (Approximately grades 5-8?)

Yes	540	99%
No	8	1%
Total	548	100%

20. If parents of middle school-aged students were given the opportunity to be more involved, do you think this would have a positive or negative impact on their child's academic performance later on in high school?

Positive	541	99%
Negative	7	1%
Total	548	100%

21. If positive, what advantages do you perceive there to be? (Check all that apply.)

Better student study habits	393	72%
------------------------------------	-----	------------

Earlier intervention to mitigate problems	472	86%
--	-----	------------

Better classroom instruction	223	41%
-------------------------------------	-----	------------

Improved collaboration between teachers and students	389	71%
---	-----	------------

Increased student achievement	412	71%
--------------------------------------	-----	------------

22. At what point in a child's education is it important for parents to become more involved?

Middle School	82	15%
----------------------	----	------------

High School	5	1%
--------------------	---	-----------

Both	450	82%
-------------	-----	------------

Neither	11	2%
----------------	----	-----------

Total	548	100%
--------------	-----	-------------

