

**Is HOMEWORK causing
more harm than good?**

Who?

- Ryan Garrity- middle school science teacher and dept. chair
- Lauren Railey- middle/high school history and dept. chair
- Lindsay Zika- 5th-grade teacher

Why?

- Curriculum 2.0

HW Analysis

- What did you assign last week?
- Why did you assign it?
- What did you want students to get out of it?
- How much time did it take?
- How did it improve their learning?

**A few words from the
students...**

Research Process

LS Policy

- **Grades K-1 No Assigned Homework**
- **Grade 2 20 minutes Monday through Thursday**
- **Grade 3 30-40 minutes Monday through Thursday**
- **Grade 4 40-50 minutes Monday through Thursday**
- **Grade 5 50-60 minutes Monday through Thursday**

MS Policy

- **6th grade** students can expect an average of 90 minutes of homework per night (approximately 20 minutes per core academic subject)
- **7th grade** students can expect an average of 120 minutes of homework per night (approximately 25 minutes per core academic subject)
- **8th grade** students can expect an average of 150 minutes of homework per night (approximately 30 minutes per core academic subject)

US Policy

- **In 9th and 10th grade**, students should expect an average of 30 minutes of homework per class meeting. The average of 2.5 hours of homework per subject/ per week represents an ideal.
- **In 11th and 12th grade**, students should expect an average of 30-40 minutes of homework per subject. Students taking AP courses should expect 45 minutes of homework for each AP class. Most students should expect an average of 3.5 hours of homework per subject/ per week.

Peer School Policies

1. Harvard Westlake (9-12 Los Angeles)
 - 3 hrs. per week, per course
 - 20 minutes of reading per night (slower is better)
2. Lick Wilmerding (9-12 S.F.)
 - up to 60 minutes per class
 - recommends 3 hrs. per night of “focused, distraction free HW time”
3. Lakeside (5-12 Seattle)
 - 5th- 1 hr., 6th- 1hr 20 min., 7th- 1 hr. 40 min., 8th- 2 hrs.
 - 9th- 2 hr. 20 min, 10th 2 hr. 45 min., 11th- 3hr 5 min., 12th- 3 hr. 40 min
4. Redwood Day (k-8 Oakland)
 - K: expected to show parents work done at school
 - 1-2: 10-20 minutes per night (Mon.-Thurs.)
 - 3-5: 30-60 minutes per night (Mon.-Thurs.)
 - 6-8: 60-120 minutes per night (some weekend work)

Research Starting Point

- **“Much of the research supporting and refuting the benefits of homework seems to be contradictory, and some of the arguments actually have no research to support their claims. Given that much of the research points to little or no benefits of homework, we urge educators to take a hard look at their current practices and policies. Some educators in the lower grades might consider eliminating homework altogether, and just ask students to spend time reading for pleasure (which is positively connected to achievement), or allow them the extra time to enjoy time for play and time with family. At the very least, we suggest that educators and parents note the overwhelmingly positive research on the value of engaging students in learning and the ties between student engagement and achievement in school. If homework is going to be assigned, it should be developmentally appropriate, meaningful, and engaging for the students.” Challenge Success 2012**

Surfacing Issues

- Achievement
- Time
- Parent Involvement
- Teachers
- Student Health

Achievement

--No evidence of increased achievement in LS due to HW (negative effects in 3rd), very low evidence in grades 6-9, spikes in achievement in grade 10. Again, depends on how you measure achievement (grades, completion, test scores).

-- In a meta-analysis of multiple teacher HW assignments... less than half are determined to be relevant and positive to student achievement

--Almost no correlation between the amount of HW and achievement in k-5

--Little correlation in MS students due to HW, fades after 90 minutes

--Identified correlation in HS students due to HW, fades after 2 hours

Time

- There is no concrete or ideal amount or conditions for homework. It must be differentiated, just like we are being asked to do with our students in the class (ie. time, rigor, amount). Social justice component.
- Rigor... the Goldilocks zone... not too easy to be pointless, not too hard to be dismissed and lead to cheating or non-completion
- No evidence that HW longer than 45 minutes helps 8th graders
- Positive outcomes of HW decreases after 2 hours (for HS)
- More hours in the classroom are least likely to produce better outcomes when learning creativity is involved (greater student engagement produces better outcomes)
- 90% students report cheating on HW... increases with quantity (not quality) of HW assigned

Parent Involvement

--Many variables involved (type of aid, subject matter, achievement outcome assessed, grade level, ability level, mother vs. father)

-- Parental involvement in homework studies show mixed results... parents must be competent in the subject area, positive, and tempered in their time involvement... or else it has negative impact

--Encouraged support for autonomy can lead to increased grades, test scores, completion rate... direct parental aid pushes all these areas down

--Positive parental attitude towards homework has positive effect on student

Teachers

--Identified “best” teachers gave less HW and more choice on HW (less skilled teachers assigned more HW)

--Good to perform a HW inventory, evaluate strength of assignments

--Communicate and share homework policies with colleagues (especially of same grade level)

Student Health

- Stress for students related to homework often sits above divorce, socio-economics, moving, illness. Negative effects of HW include disengagement, lack of sleep, depression, physical illness (especially in HS).
- Students in high schools should ideally experience 9.25 hours of sleep at night, and school should start at 9am
- 70% of high achieving students (HAS) report being stressed always or often
- 56% of HAS worry always or often about grades/ tests/ college
- 95% of HAS report copying of HW or cheating on tests/ quizzes
- 60% of HAS report that HW keeps them from other things (family time, being with friends, extracurricular activities, sleep)
- High Achieving Students will trade health and well-being for “academic success”

Best Practices

- Evaluate individual HW policy and school HW policy
- Eliminate homework (other than outside reading) for k-5
- Estimate the homework time to accommodate the slowest working students
- Collaborate with grade level teachers on HW quantity and quality
- Trade grading of homework for engaged lesson planning
- Change the mindset from “homework” to “home-learning”
- Stop giving so much homework and make your own observations (Are students less happy? Less engaged? Has learning been compromised? Are you less happy as a teacher?)

Key Questions

Is this assignment/ activity relevant, is there value, can we predict the time/ quality/ effect?

Does the HW improve learning, or meant to practice/ produce a behavior?

Is the school's HW policy in line with physical/ mental health goals, motivation goals, and achievement goals?

Roadblocks

- lack of understanding of "differentiation"
- lack of time for collaboration/ training (do you know what other teachers are assigning for homework?)
- standardized test pressures
- collegiate expectations
- parental expectations
- tradition
- distrust of change (what if you gave less/ no homework)

Timeline to now

- Research summer 2014
- Present to 2.0 committee end of summer 2014
- Present to k-12 faculty 9/14
- Grade level discussions, division discussions
- Present to Student Life Board Committee 1/15

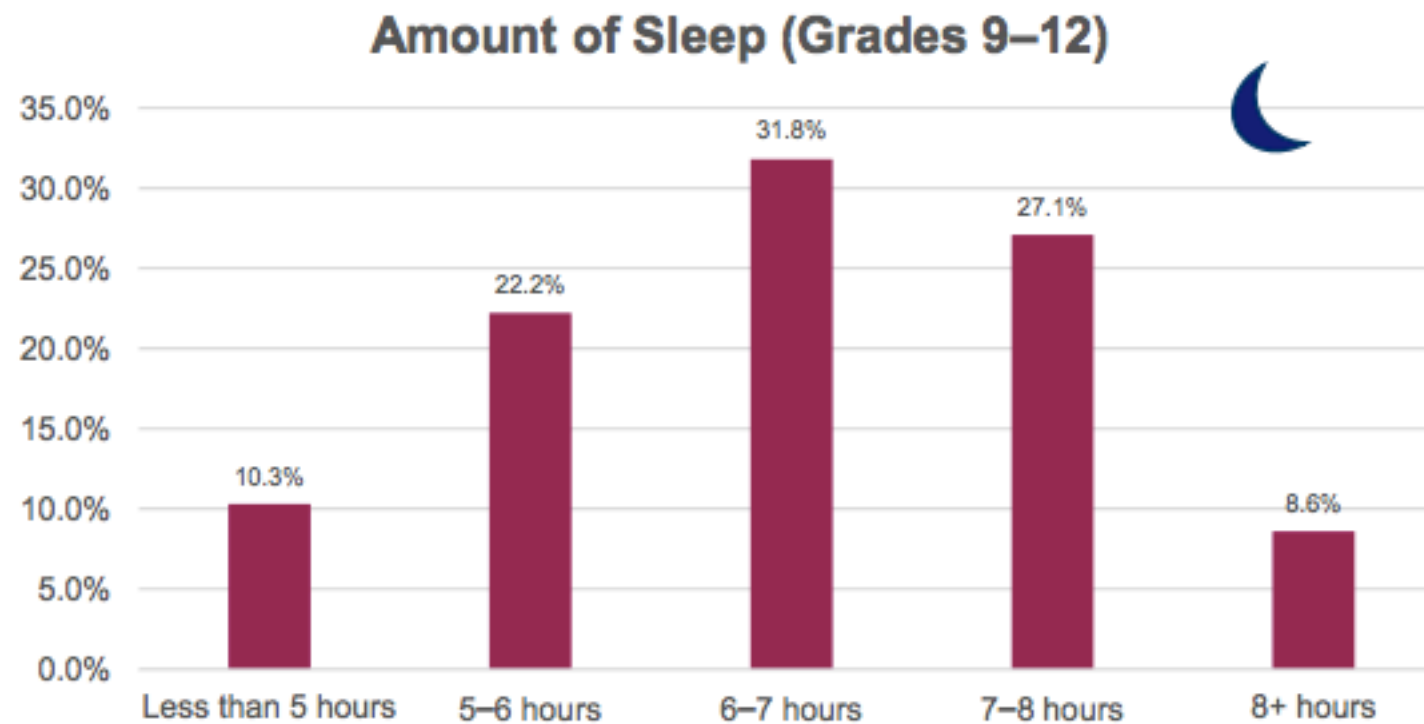
Going forward

- Continue research
- Survey kids
- Pilot programs
- Policy changes? ex. Kips Bay, Manhattan

NAIS Wellness Research

(released fall 2014 -- managed by Hartford Hospital)

STUDENT WELLNESS



Faculty reactions?

- lower school
- middle school
- upper school

HW Analysis 2.0

- What will you assign next week?
- Why will you assign it?
- What will your students get out of it?
- How much time will it take? Really??
- How will it improve their learning?

**Your thoughts and
questions**

Our final thoughts...

- Don't go rogue!
- Make the work meaningful
- Communicate with admin.
- Communicate with parents
- Maximize engagement

Home Learning

~~Homework~~

- “If you truly want to engage kids, you have to pull back on control and create the conditions in which they can tap into their own inner motivations.”

Taken from interview with Daniel Pink, Educational Leadership