

February 28th, 2017 Board Report
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Hello everyone! Today, we'd like to take some time to discuss the Stanford Challenge Success Survey that was administered at Princeton High School last December.

Of the 1,589 students that were in school on the days of the survey, 1,417 students answered most or all of the questions to the best of their ability, giving us an effective participation rate of 89%. This value is significantly higher than the 70% targeted by the team at Challenge Success.

Students reported an average 3 hours of homework per night on weekdays. This number was consistent with the one we found in our October survey with 195 students. Interestingly enough, when looking at a breakdown of average hours of homework per night across the four grades. It was evident that there was little difference between the amount of time students spent on homework each night regardless of which grade they were in. Across all schools that have taken the Challenge Success Survey, the average falls in the range of 2 to 2.5 hours of homework so we do see numbers from PHS resting above the majority of other schools.

The data revealed that across all grades, average nightly hours of sleep on school days centered at about 6.25 hours. This value is actually slightly below the average 6.6 hours of sleep from data we gathered in a survey of 290 students last September. As compared to school districts with similar demographics and AP course load, anywhere in the range of 6.5 hours is relatively consistent. Therefore, this is not unique to Princeton High School, but rather falls in line with a nationwide phenomenon of decreasing amounts of sleep among high schoolers. Based on current research, the National Sleep Foundation recommends approximately 9 hours of sleep per night for teenagers to promote both healthy mental development and physical well-being. Since Princeton High School falls significantly below that target amount, we hope that the district can generate productive discussions around this topic.

Two Fridays ago, Assistant Principal Baxter presented the data from the Challenge Success Survey to all of the teachers at PHS. She found that they were eager to understand the statistics and the implications of the conclusions drawn within the report. Discussions quickly surfaced around the room as teachers began conversing about academic workload and stress, generating ideas that they felt would be helpful to student success. Perhaps this kind of passion and enthusiasm explains the 3.75 out of 5 students who report that they feel supported by their teachers!

In the following weeks, the administration will gradually and appropriately release the results of the survey. This is to give our teachers time to generate ideas to respond to the results of the survey. We look forward to seeing what they come up with to better the lives of our students.

We would like to strongly applaud the administration for taking these issues seriously and making the effort to incorporate student voice. However, we would also like to stress that without continued focus, this survey is just that: a survey. Data gives us the ability to understand a situation, but it cannot inherently fix the underlying problems. Those solutions need to come from all of us.

It is vital that changes in Princeton come by means of multilateral cooperation. They cannot simply be from one source without thorough consideration and discussion. There are so many students and teachers that are coming up with innovative ways to make our district a pioneer in successful education, but they are not always heard.

We need increased collaboration so that everyone can feel invested in our progress and proud of our schools. We each have a stake in the success of our children, our classmates, our students. Change cannot come soon enough, but it must be accompanied by the communication that helps it last.

We hope to create a committee of students, teachers, and parents alike to ensure change comes from a multitude of perspectives and incorporates opinions of those most affected by the results of the survey. It is critical that all opinions are taken seriously and change comes of this. We hope this can happen as soon as possible to address and solve as many concerns the survey raised. We are both excited to help brainstorm solutions as well as listen to solutions proposed by our peers and administration.

Thank you!