



American Association of School Administrators

December 16, 1999

EMBARGOED
NOT FOR PUBLIC RELEASE

Presentation of Findings
Briefing for the President's Domestic Policy Council
The White House

National Survey of Parents of Public School Children

Sponsored by the American Association of School Administrators (AASA)

Dr. Paul Houston, Executive Director

In partnership with Great American Life Insurance Company

Conducted by Lake Snell Perry & Associates

Talking Points: 5 Core themes supported by the survey data

STUDENT HAPPINESS MATTERS

- * Parents think public schools are not bad off—Parents “get it” when it comes to education
- * Parents place the highest value on student contentment and enthusiasm for school and learning
- * More than anything else parents want their children to be happy at school
- * Parents show sophisticated understanding of schools and their children's needs

VALUES MATTER: COMMON SCHOOLS/COMMON VALUES

- * Public education is a right and values have a rightful place in public schools
- * Parents think school improvement is linked to problems of overcrowded classrooms, drugs, violence, a lack of discipline, disruptive students, and lack of values
- * A plurality of parents say public schools and private schools are equal in quality

PARENTS MATTER

- * Meaningful and acknowledged parental engagement at all levels of schooling is vital
- * Nine out of ten parents are satisfied with the schools their children attend
- * The role of parents is as important as the role of quality teachers

continued

SAFETY MATTERS

- * Disruptive students should be removed from the classroom and the school is responsible for creating a safe learning environment
- * Parents most worried about drugs in schools
- * One reason parents give more favorable marks for elementary schools is because of greater concerns of school violence at the high school level

MEANINGFUL TESTING MATTERS

- * Standardized testing has value, however, other factors play important roles in gauging academic success
- * Parents want to know how their children are doing, but feel testing is not the only way to judge.
- * Parents listen to their children more than any other source and base their judgment concerning the quality of education on what children tell them and how happy they are with schooling.



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