

MetLife



The MetLife Survey of

THE
AMERICAN
TEACHER

Collaborating for Student Success
Part 2: Student Achievement

The MetLife Survey of the American Teacher: Collaborating for Student Success

The MetLife Survey of the American Teacher: Collaborating for Student Success (2009) examines the views of teachers, principals and students about respective roles and responsibilities, current practice and priorities for the future. The results are based on a national survey of 1,003 K-12 public school teachers, 500 K-12 public school principals and 1,018 public school students in grades 3-12 conducted in Fall, 2009. In addition, public school principals and teachers, as well as thought leaders in education participated in an online strategy session.

The Survey findings are being released as a series during the first quarter of 2010 with the following parts:

- Part 1: *Effective Teaching and Leadership* examines views about responsibility and accountability, what collaboration looks like in schools, and if and to what degree it is currently practiced.
- Part 2: *Student Achievement* examines views on student goals, teacher expectations, and what educators believe would increase student achievement.
- Part 3: *Teaching as a Career* examines collaboration in the context of teacher professional growth, experience level and career path.

Message from MetLife

The 21st century workplace teaches that an education is never complete. There are always adaptations to be made, new things to learn, and opportunities for innovation. Collaboration plays a tremendous role in today's work environment. Success depends on commitment to a common purpose and working to accomplish more together than can be achieved individually, whether with colleagues down the hall, across the nation or around the globe.

The MetLife Survey of the American Teacher: Collaborating for Student Success looks at the school as a workplace, among its many functions. It asks if, how and to what extent teachers, principals and students work and learn together to increase their success.

Last year we observed the 25th anniversary of the annual MetLife Survey of the American Teacher series, and are pleased to continue our commitment to sharing the voices of those closest to the classroom. This year, we are releasing Survey results in three shorter reports, exploring new methods for presenting and accessing information, and emphasizing digital communication.

The voices in this Survey can help all of us – educators, parents, community members, employers, policymakers – consider our roles as collaborators in assuring the success of our schools and the students who are our future.



C. Robert Henrikson
Chairman of the Board, President and Chief Executive Officer
MetLife, Inc.

The MetLife Survey of the American Teacher: Collaborating for Student Success

Part 2: Student Achievement

Summary

Part 2 of the *Survey* examines views about student achievement: factors both within and beyond the classroom and school that have the most impact on improving student achievement, and to what extent schools are addressing them. **Public school teachers and principals share a belief** in the relationship between student success and **high expectations for all students**. However, **gaps exist between the beliefs of teachers and principals** in the important role that high expectations play in academic achievement **and the extent to which they are communicated and demonstrated** in practice **for all students**. Teachers, principals and students in secondary schools, as well as educators in low income schools, point to greater challenges in several areas related to student achievement, including beliefs and demonstrations in practice. Students themselves have high expectations for their education, with most saying they plan to go to college after high school. However, gender differences in aspiration, confidence and effort are evident. Girls have high expectations for their achievement; they are more likely than boys to plan to go to a four-year college and to be very confident that they will achieve their goals.

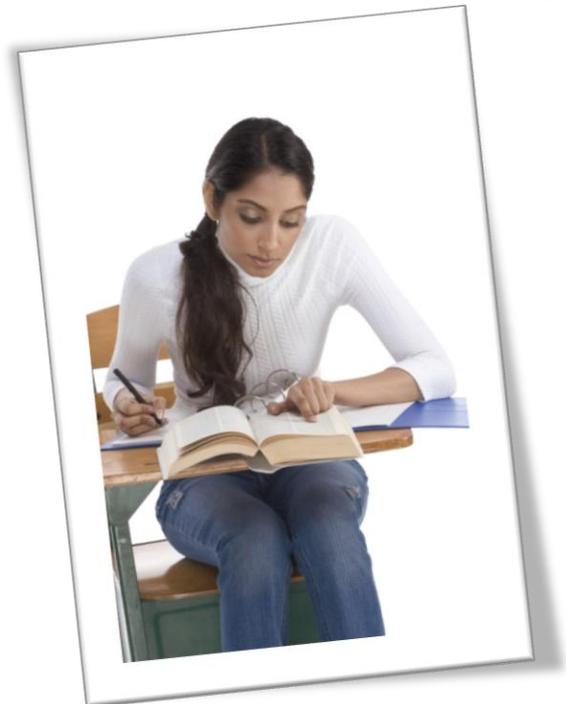
Among the major findings are:

- Nearly nine in ten teachers (86%) and principals (89%) believe that setting high expectations for all students would have a major impact on improving student achievement.
- Most teachers (84%) are very confident that they have the knowledge and skills necessary to enable all of their students to succeed academically.
- Only 36% of teachers and 51% of principals believe that all of their students have the ability to succeed academically.
- Just over half of students (53%) strongly agree that all of the teachers in their school want them to succeed.
- About two-thirds of teachers (64%) and principals (69%) strongly agree that it is important for all students to have one year or more of post-secondary education.
- On average, teachers expect that 50% of their students will attend a two- or four-year college, and principals expect 57% of their students to attend.
- Eight in ten students (79%) plan to attend a two-or four-year college after high school, but only about half of students (55%) are very confident that they will achieve their goals for the future.
- More girls than boys have aspirations to attend college (85% vs. 73%) and believe they will achieve their goals (59% vs. 50%).
- Nine in ten teachers (92%) and nearly all principals (96%) believe that having adequate public funding and support for education are very important for improving student achievement.
- Nine in ten teachers (88%) and principals (89%) believe that strengthening ties among schools and parents is very important for improving student achievement.

Background

Student success is a broad term that encompasses intellectual and personal development and the acquisition and demonstration of knowledge and skills. Student success depends on many factors: teachers, parents, schools and communities, and, of course, the students themselves. This report focuses specifically on academic achievement as a major component of student success, preparation for education beyond high school as an important goal and indicator, and the critical relationship between teacher and student. It is important to note that parents, school counselors and higher education institutions can be particularly important collaborators in addressing student achievement and college going, although their perspectives are not part of this *Survey*.

Although there is no more important topic in education than student achievement – what it is and should be, how to develop, assess and increase it, and who is accountable for it – discussion often focuses more on adults’ roles than on the students themselves. Students, however, are being challenged as never before to succeed academically in ways that will prepare them to continue their education after high school and for a lifetime. Projections for personal financial security and for American global competitiveness underscore that necessity. An estimated 85% of current jobs and nearly 90% of fast growing and well paying jobs depend on some form of postsecondary education.¹ Many education leaders and policy makers at all levels are emphasizing the necessity for education beyond high school.



Just as lives and careers take different paths, effective preparation must also take account of the individual, including students’ varied talents, challenges, interests and life circumstances. There is no “one size fits all” for effective teaching and learning. While teachers, schools, families and society largely agree on the values of high standards and expectations for **all** students, clear and formidable challenges remain for practice to help **each and every** student achieve at the level a secure future demands. Large numbers of teachers (43%) emphasize what this challenge means day to day when they report that their classes have become so mixed in terms of students’ learning abilities that they cannot teach them effectively.² Advocates for collaboration believe that student achievement will benefit when a team approach in schools taps the skill and experience of every teacher for the benefit of every student. In *Part 1: Effective Teaching and Leadership* of the *MetLife Survey of the American Teacher: Collaborating for Student Success*, teachers and principals show agreement that greater collaboration among them would have a major impact on student achievement. They also report that the most

¹ Alliance for Excellent Education. *High School Teaching for the 21st Century: Preparing Students for College*. (2007). Washington, D.C.

² *MetLife Survey of the American Teacher: Past, Present and Future*. (2008).

frequent collaborative activity in their schools is for teachers to meet in teams to learn what is necessary to help their students achieve at higher levels. Additional research exists that links higher levels of teacher collaboration with higher gains in student achievement.^{3,4}

In this continuation of the *MetLife Survey* report, *Part 2: Student Achievement* compares values and current practices related to student achievement, drawing on the responses of teachers and students. It looks at student goals and aspirations, motivation, and the influence of teacher expectations, and explores how effectively expectations are communicated. In addition, the report examines teacher and principal views on a variety of factors influencing student achievement, both within and beyond the classroom and school.

Students, teachers and principals recognize the importance of education beyond high school. This *MetLife Survey* confirms again that college aspiration among students is very high. Educators also rate raising awareness of **all** students on what is needed to succeed in higher education as very important among factors that would increase student achievement. In an earlier *MetLife Survey*, most teachers (77%) and principals (78%) agreed that their schools were doing a good or excellent job at preparing students for college.⁵ Yet research challenges those views, addressing student readiness for college level work, college remediation, first year persistence, core academic performance and degree completion, and persistent disparities in the proportions of minorities and of men enrolling in and completing higher education.^{6,7,8,9,10} The results of this *Survey* raise many questions and concerns about how well standards and expectations are communicated to students by public schools and by higher education institutions to those aspiring students and their teachers.

 From the Survey Archives:

1989. “Educators have long been aware of the ‘Pygmalion effect’ in schools – the process through which students whose teachers expect them to learn do, and those not expected to learn do not. Teacher pessimism about students in poorly functioning schools is likely to result in the ‘Pygmalion effect’ working negatively in schools which are currently serving their students poorly.”

³ Stevens, David W., *If Small Is Not Enough...?: The Characteristics of Successful Small High Schools in Chicago*. Consortium on Chicago School Research. (2008).

⁴ Sebring, Penny Bender, Allensworth, Elaine, Bryk, Anthony S., Easton, John Q., and Luppescu, Stuart. *The Essential Supports for School Improvement*. Consortium on Chicago School Research. (2006).

⁵ *MetLife Survey of the American Teacher: Past, Present and Future*. (2008).

⁶ Adelman, Clifford. *The Toolbox Revisited: Paths to Degree Completion From High School Through College*. (2006).

⁷ Roderick, Melissa, Nagaoka, Jenny, and Coca, Vanessa. *College Readiness for All: Future of Children*. (2009).

⁸ *Measuring Up: The National Report Card on Higher Education*. National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education. (2008).

⁹ *The Condition of College Readiness*. ACT. (2009).

¹⁰ American Council on Education. *Gender Equity in Higher Education*. (2010).

High Expectations and Student Achievement

For teachers and principals, core skills and high expectations for students are critical to improving student achievement. Nine in ten teachers (90%) and principals (92%) believe that providing all students with core reading, writing and math skills would have a major impact on improving student achievement. Similarly high numbers of teachers (86%) and principals (89%) believe that setting high expectations for all students would have a major impact on improving student achievement.

Secondary school teachers are less likely than their elementary school counterparts to believe that providing all students with core reading, writing and math skills (81% vs. 94%) and that setting high expectations for all students (74% vs. 90%) would have a major impact on improving student achievement. Secondary school principals are also less likely than their elementary school colleagues to believe that setting high expectations for all students would have a major impact (85% vs. 91%).

A majority of teachers and principals also believe that the following school- and classroom-centered factors would have a major impact on improving student achievement:

- Connecting classroom instruction to the real world;
- A school culture where students feel responsible and accountable for their own education;
- Addressing the individual needs of diverse learners; and
- Greater collaboration among teachers and school leaders.

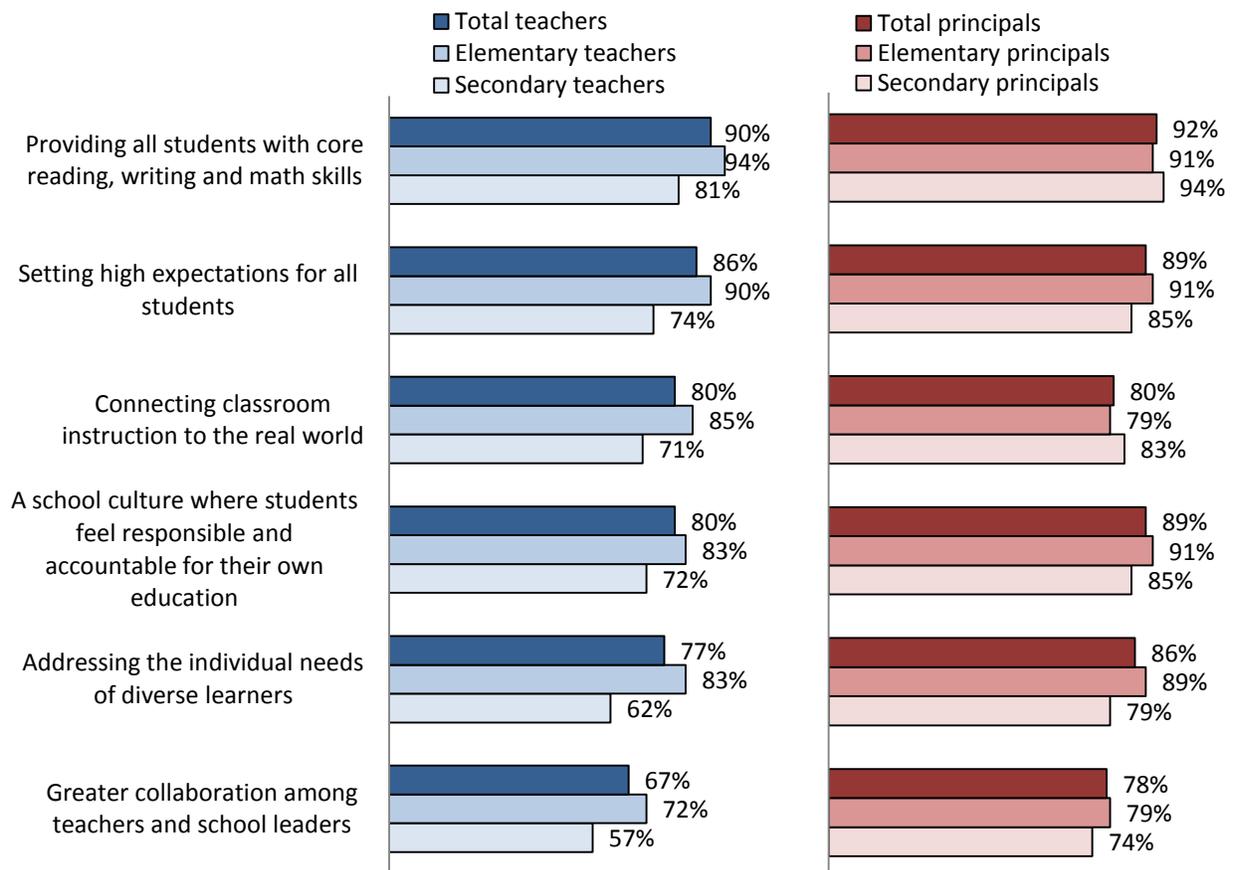
From the Survey Archives:

2008. Forty-six percent of teachers say that more than a quarter of their students come to school not fully prepared to learn at their grade level. While elementary and secondary school teachers report similar views in this regard, secondary school teachers are less likely than elementary school teachers to say that their students' skills are excellent or good in reading (67% vs. 83%), writing (53% vs. 68%), and math (53% vs. 79%).

A Closer Look:

For insights on how collaboration is currently practiced in schools, see *Part 1: Effective Teaching and Leadership of the MetLife Survey of the American Teacher: Collaborating for Student Success*.

Figure 2.1
Factors for Improving Student Achievement
 (% major impact)



Q726/Q721: Thinking about the future of education, how much of an impact would each of the following have on improving student achievement?; Base: Teachers (n=1,003); Principals (n=500)

Demonstrating High Expectations

A gap exists between educators’ belief in the important role that having high expectations for all students plays in academic achievement and the extent that high expectations for all students are communicated and demonstrated in practice. Most teachers and principals agree that setting high expectations for all students would have a major impact on improving student achievement. This year’s *Survey* examined how these expectations play out in schools and classrooms in three ways:

- Educator assessments of whether most teachers in their school hold high standards for all students;
- Teacher reports on their own expectations for their students’ academic achievement in general and their students’ going to college (a specific measure of student achievement); and
- Student and teacher reports on indicators of expectations in practice.

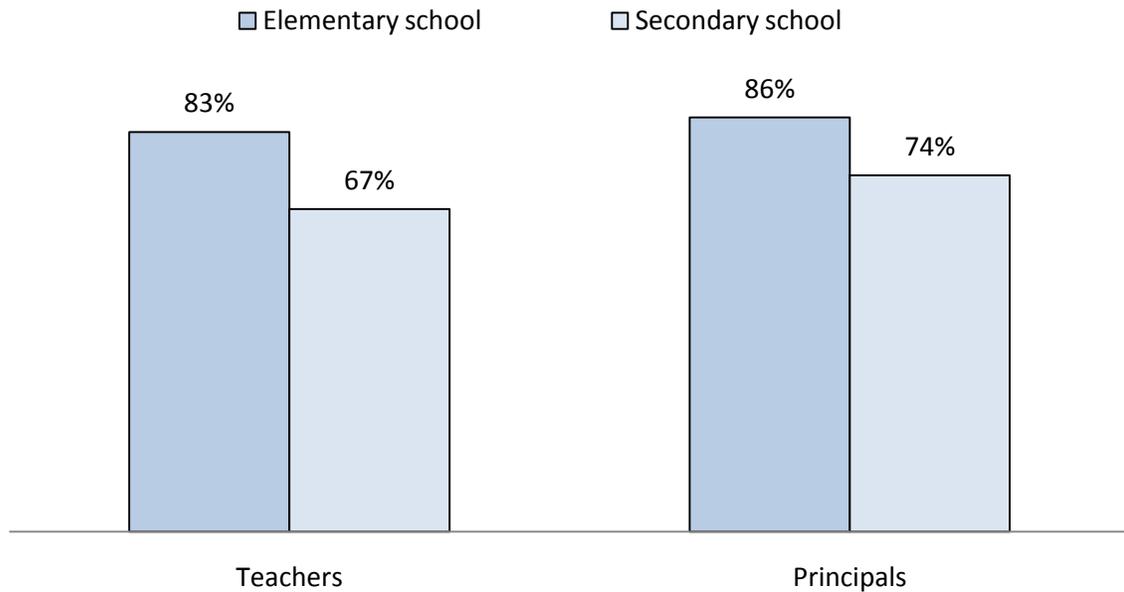
Teachers and principals believe that most teachers in their schools hold high standards for all students. Three-quarters of teachers (77%) strongly agree that most teachers in their school hold high standards for all of the students, although fewer secondary school teachers than elementary school teachers strongly hold this view (67% vs. 83%). Similar numbers of principals (82%) also strongly agree that most teachers in their school hold high standards for all students, and here too, this belief is less commonly held at the secondary than elementary level (74% vs. 86%). Teachers and principals in schools with high proportions (two-thirds or more) of low income students are less likely than those with few (one-third or less) such students to report that most teachers in their school hold high standards for all of the students (teachers: 71% vs. 81% strongly agree; principals: 78% vs. 91% strongly agree).

Then and Now in the Survey:

1984. Teachers today rate academic standards nearly twice as high as in 1984. Half (53%) of teachers in 2008 rated their school's academic standards as "excellent"; compared to 26% of teachers in 1984.

Figure 2.2
Agreement That Most Teachers Hold High Standards for All Students
 (% strongly agree)

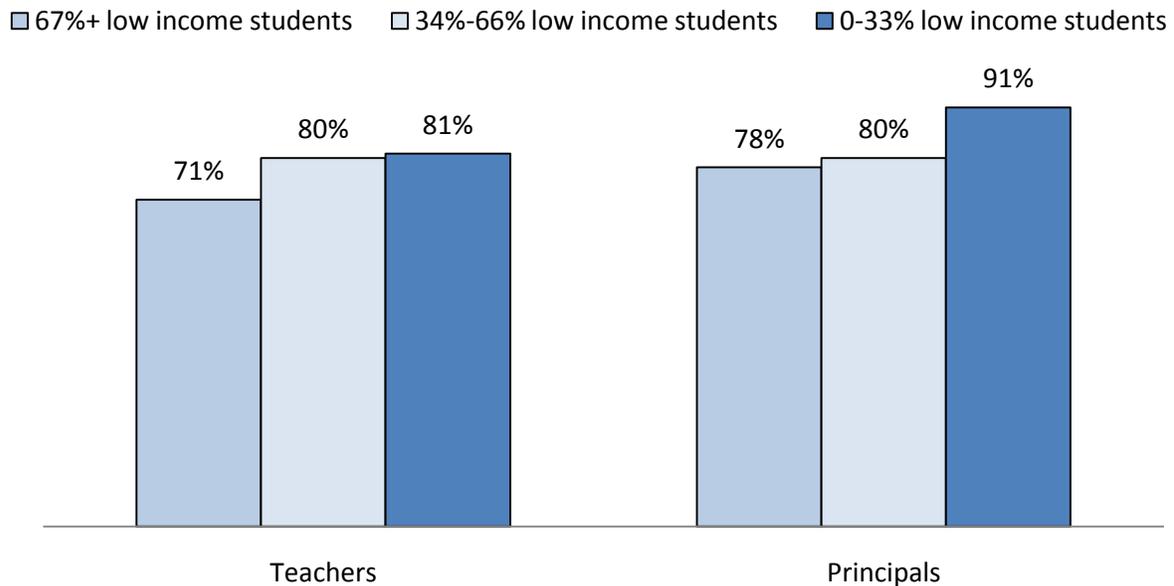
By School Level



Q710: How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Most teachers in my school hold high standards for all of the students?; Base: Teachers (n=1,003); Principals (n=500)

Figure 2.3
Agreement That Most Teachers Hold High Standards for All Students
 (% strongly agree)

By Number of Low Income Students in School



Q710: How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Most teachers in my school hold high standards for all of the students?; Base: Teachers (n=1,003); Principals (n=500)

Despite the widespread belief in the importance of high expectations for all and that teachers display this in the classroom, teachers’ own reports demonstrate that high expectations exist for many or some students, but not for all. Only 36% of teachers and 51% of principals believe that **all** of their students **have the ability to succeed academically**. Differences do not exist between educators at the elementary and secondary school levels. However, teachers in schools with high proportions of low income students are less likely than those with few such students to say that all of their students have the ability to succeed academically (31% vs. 42%). Even fewer teachers (13%) and principals (17%) believe that all of their students **are motivated to succeed academically**. For teachers, school level differences are stark; three times as many elementary school teachers as secondary school teachers believe that **all** of their students are motivated to succeed academically (17% vs. 5%).

The views of teachers on student motivation and effort suggest a lack of high expectations in practice. Half of teachers (51%) agree that students only do enough work to do as well as they need to get by in their school, including 71% of secondary school teachers. Significant numbers of students also hold this view, but at lower levels than teachers, raising concerns about how well teacher expectations are communicated and practiced.

“Teachers who expect a lot articulate that as such; they tell students what they want, they support them in acquiring the knowledge and help when they struggle. They work hard to ensure that high expectations are met.”
 - Education thought leader

Over one-third (36%) of students agree that they only do enough work to do as well as they need to get by in school. Elementary and secondary school students do not differ in this regard. However, boys are more likely than girls to report that they only do enough work to do as well as they need to get by (41% vs. 31%).

Many students perceive a lack of high teacher expectations for all. Just over half of students (53%) strongly agree that all of the teachers in their school want them to succeed, a belief less common among secondary school than elementary school students (44% vs. 66%). Six in ten students (59%) report that their teachers very much encourage them to do their best, and again this experience is less common among secondary school than elementary school students (50% vs. 72%). Nearly half of students (45%) agree that many students in their school are promoted to the next grade level without really being ready, another indication of the gap between the belief and practice of high standards for all.

Figure 2.4
Students Have the Ability to Succeed
Academically

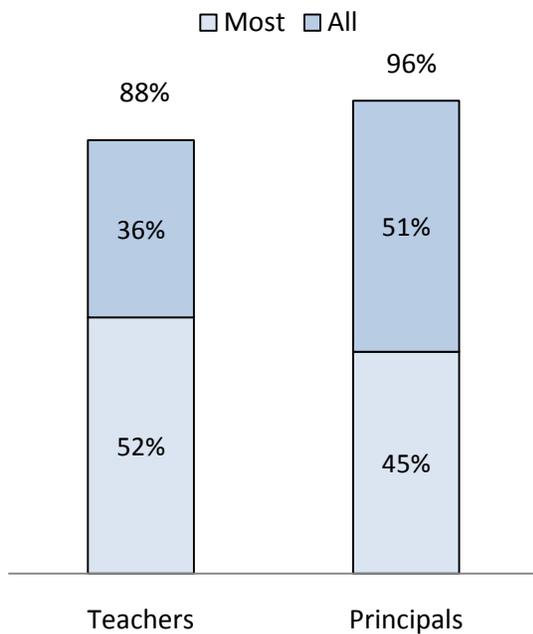
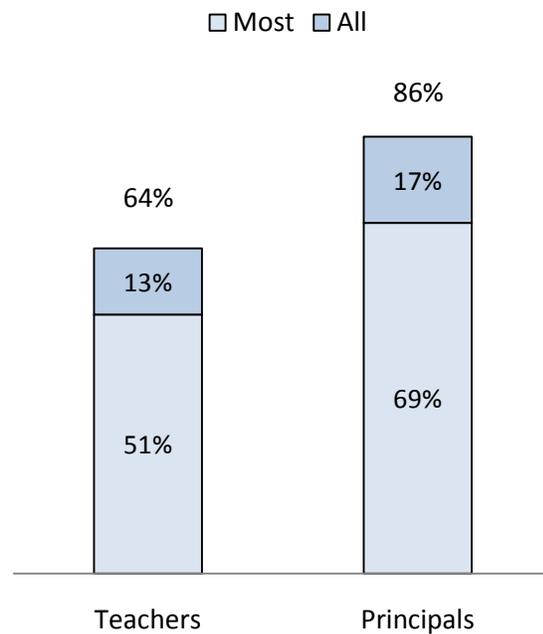


Figure 2.5
Students Are Motivated to Succeed
Academically



Q701/3,4: How many of your students/the students in your school have the ability to succeed academically?; How many of your students/the students in your school are motivated to succeed academically?; Base: Teachers (n=1,003); Principals (n=500)

Many teachers' expectations for themselves are high.

Although most teachers do not believe all of their students have the ability to succeed academically, most teachers (84%) are very confident that they have the knowledge and skills necessary to enable all of their students to succeed academically. This level of confidence is similar among teachers from different school levels and years of experience. However, teachers in schools with high proportions (two-thirds or more) of low income students are less likely than those with few (one-third or less) such students to be very confident that they have the necessary knowledge and skills to enable their students to succeed academically (81% vs. 89%). The same pattern holds for teachers with high and low proportions of minority students (79% vs. 87%). In addition, seven in ten teachers (71%) and principals (70%) strongly agree that most teachers in their school adjust instruction and assessment to meet the needs of diverse learners. This behavior is more prevalent at the elementary than secondary levels (teachers: 76% vs. 63%; principals: 74% vs. 63%).

Many teachers do not have high expectations for all students on another measure of academic achievement – going to college.

On average, teachers expect that 50% of their students will attend a two- or four-year college after they leave high school. Elementary and secondary school teachers share similar perspectives on this issue. On average, principals expect that 57% of their students will attend a two- or four-year college. Students' expectations for a college education are much higher, as the next section explores in more detail.

80% of students agree that "I have set goals for my education," including 49% of secondary school students and 32% of elementary school students who strongly agree.

When asked to describe these goals and how they are trying to reach them, students' responses ranged from the ambitious to the mundane and included both short-term and long-term objectives:

"I want to be really good at science. I have to wait to be in 6th grade to do more." 3rd grade boy

"I want to be a scientist and help the Earth and the people. I am saving all my money for my college fund. I read a lot and like to draw." 3rd grade girl

"I want to become a Navy Seal. My aunt says I need to go to college to get ready." 4th grade boy

"I'm trying to keep A's or at least high B's in every subject and stay in the band playing trombone. I also play soccer and basketball and pick good things to eat to stay healthy." 6th grade boy

"I play saxophone like my Daddy. I want to follow in his footsteps. I want to go to college like my mother." 7th grade girl

"I want to be an engineer. I am trying to get good grades." 8th grade boy

"I will go to a two year college at first to get the experience and gather the amount of money to go on to a four-year college." 10th grade girl

"To graduate from high school. I'm trying to reach them by doing the bare minimum required of me." 12th grade boy

"I have specific points I want to complete over the course of my education (i.e. study abroad, proficiency in a certain language etc.) and try to structure any plan to accommodate as many of these needs as possible." 12th grade boy

The Goal of Education Beyond High School for All

Students and educators share similar levels of belief in the importance of a post-secondary school education; a majority strongly agrees that it is important in order to be prepared for work or a career.

Two-thirds of students (68%) in grades 3 – 12 strongly agree that it is important that they go to school or college after high school in order to be prepared for work or a career. Girls and boys share similar views on this point. About two-thirds of teachers (64%) and principals (69%) strongly agree that it is important for all students to have one year or more of post-secondary education after high school in order to be prepared for work or a career. Students at the elementary school and secondary school level are equally likely to believe in the importance of a post-secondary school education and this pattern holds for teachers as well. However, secondary school principals are more likely than their elementary school colleagues to strongly agree that a post-secondary school education is important for all students (77% vs. 65%).

From the Survey Archives:

2008. Eight in ten teachers (77%) and principals (78%) rated their school as “excellent” or “good” for the preparation of students for college.

Most students plan to go to a two- or four-year college after high school.

Eight in ten (79%) students plan to attend college, including 69% who plan to attend a four-year college after high school. More girls than boys plan to attend college overall (85% vs. 73%), and a four-year college in particular (75% vs. 62%). More secondary school students than elementary school students plan to attend college overall (82% vs. 74%), but the number who plan to attend a four-year college does not differ significantly (71% vs. 65%). The number of secondary school students who plan to attend college remains at a similar level as reported in *The MetLife Survey of the American Teacher, 2000*

(79% overall, including 71% who planned to attend a four-year college). However, while most students believe it is important to get a post-secondary school education in order to be prepared for work or a career and most plan to attend college, **only about half of students (55%) are very confident that they will achieve their goals for the future.** Again, a gender difference is evident; girls are more likely than boys to be very confident that they will achieve their goals (59% vs. 50%).

Many students have not spoken with their teachers about their plans for college or work after high school or what they should be doing now to prepare for college.

Overall, four in ten students (54% of elementary school students and 31% of secondary school students) have never spoken to their teachers one-on-one about their plans for college or work after high school. One-third of students (47% of elementary school students and 25% of secondary school students) have never spoken to their teachers one-on-one about what they should be doing now to do well in college someday. An additional 28% of secondary school students (and an equivalent number in elementary schools) report having



that conversation only a few times a year. However, four in ten students (rising from 27% of elementary school students to 46% of secondary school students) do speak to their teachers at least once a month about what they should be doing now to do well in college someday. In contrast to their discussions about college, more students say that their teachers speak with them one-on-one about their interests and things that are important to them. Half (47%) report that their teachers speak with them about their interests and things that are important to them at least once a month, with this type of conversation occurring more frequently among elementary school students (53% vs. 43% of secondary school students) and boys (52% vs. 43% of girls).

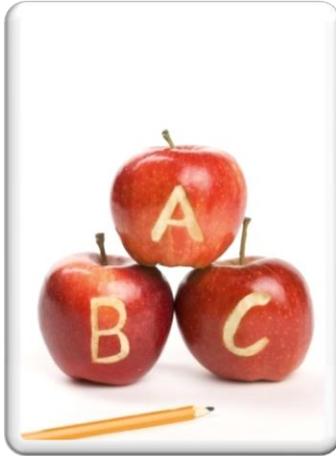
Figure 2.6
Student Gender Differences On Academic Goals

	Total (n=1018)	Boys (n=483)	Girls (n=535)
It is important that I to go to school or college after high school (% strongly agree)	68%	65%	71%
Plan to attend college (two- or four-year)	79%	73%	85%
Plan to attend a four-year college	69%	62%	75%
Will achieve goals for the future (% very confident)	55%	50%	59%
It is my responsibility to pay attention and do the work it takes to succeed in school (% strongly agree)	73%	69%	77%
Speak one-on-one with teachers about my interests and things that are important to me (% at least once a month)	47%	52%	43%
I only do enough work to do as well as I need to get by in school (% strongly/somewhat agree)	36%	41%	31%

Most educators believe that raising the awareness of all students of what is needed to succeed in higher education is very important for improving academic achievement, and many (but not all) put this belief into practice. Eight in ten teachers (77%) and principals (80%) believe that raising the awareness of all students of what is needed to succeed in higher education is very important for improving student achievement. Seven in ten teachers (68% of elementary school teachers and 77% of secondary school teachers) report that they tell all of their students it is important to prepare now for college. Half of teachers (49% of elementary school teachers and 59% of secondary school teachers) report that they regularly talk about what college is like with all of their students. It is noteworthy that teachers in schools with **high** proportions of low income or minority students are more likely than those in schools with few such students to talk about both topics with **all** of their students.

Influences on Student Achievement Beyond the School and Classroom

Teachers and principals believe that the most important factors for improving student achievement are having adequate public funding and support, and involving parents. Nine in ten teachers and principals believe that having adequate public funding and support for education (92% of teachers and 96% of principals) and that strengthening ties among schools and parents (88% of teachers and 89% of principals) are very important for improving student achievement. They also rate as important for improving student achievement other factors that have strong influences beyond the school, such as keeping pace with technology, social changes, and the global economy.



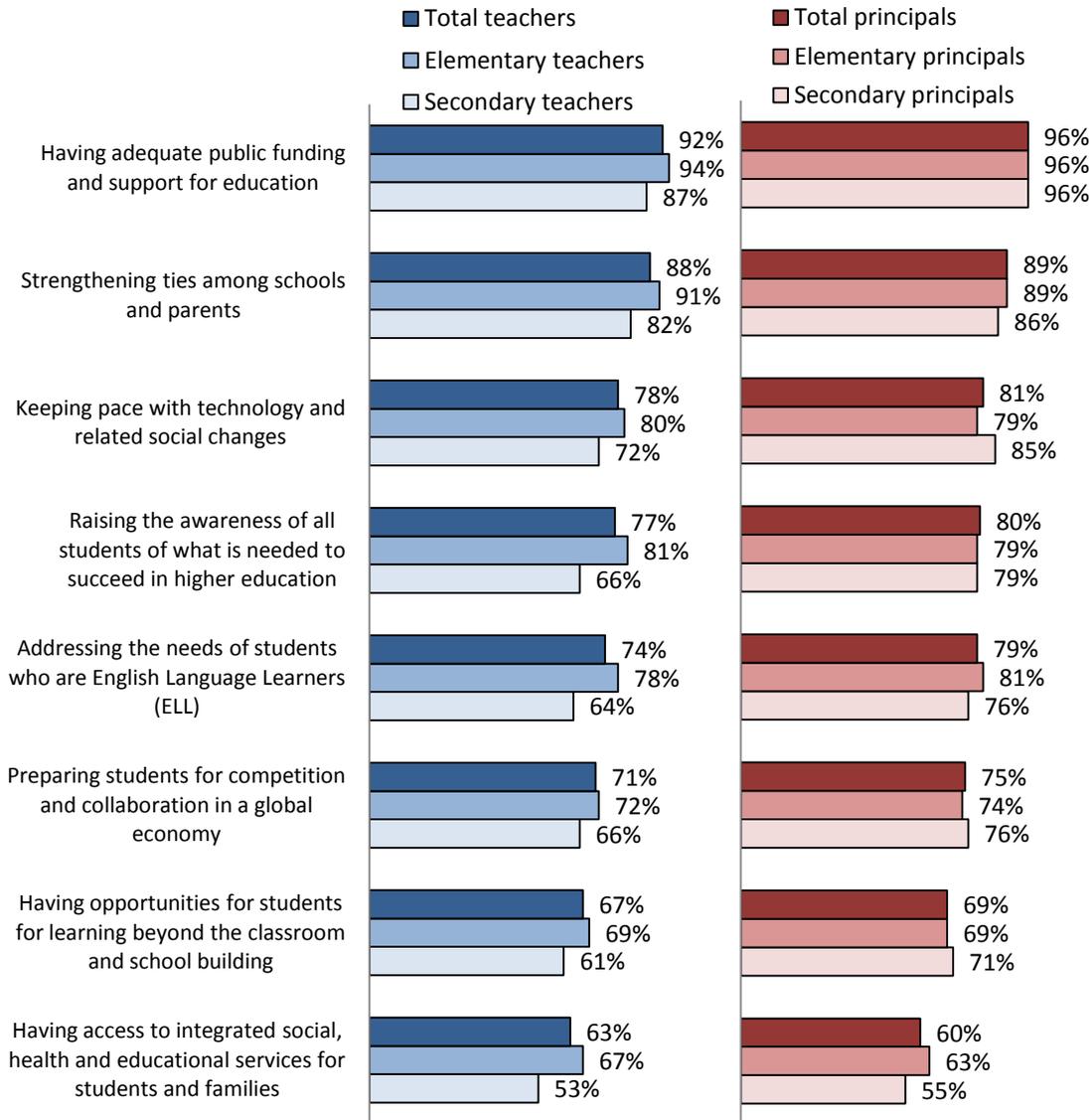
Addressing the needs of English Language Learners is important. Three-quarters of teachers (74%) and principals (79%) believe that addressing the needs of students who are English Language Learners (ELL) is very important for improving student achievement. Teachers and principals in schools with high proportions of low income and minority students are particularly likely to believe in the importance of this support. A majority of teachers (58%) and principals (61%) strongly agree that their school does a good job of teaching students who are English Language Learners, particularly schools with at least two-thirds ELL students (75% of teachers and 77% of principals in higher ELL schools). However, from students' point of view, schools are not doing as well. Only one-quarter of students (25%) strongly agree that their school does a good job of helping students who are learning to speak English.

Providing access to integrated social, health and educational services is viewed as important by a smaller majority of educators. Many teachers (63%) and principals (60%) believe that having access to integrated social, health and educational services for students and families is very important for improving student achievement. General agreement is less, however, than on other factors rated, but increases relative to concentration of student and family need. Teachers and principals in schools with high proportions of low income and minority students are particularly likely to believe in the importance of these services. Fewer than half of teachers (43%) and principals (43%) strongly agree that students and families in their school have access to integrated health, mental health, social and educational services. In this area, it is teachers with few (one-third or less) low income or minority students who are more likely to strongly agree that their students have access to these types of services. Half (52%) of teachers in schools with few low income students strongly agree that students and families in their school have access to these types of services, compared to 38% of teachers in schools with two-thirds or more low income students. Nearly half (46%) of teachers in schools with few minority students strongly agree that students and families in their school have access to integrated services, compared to 35% of teachers in schools with two-thirds or more minority students.

Then and Now in the Survey:

According to *The MetLife Survey of the American Teacher: Past, Present and Future (2008)*, several areas in which challenges that can hinder student learning have become more prevalent since 1992: problems speaking or understanding the English language, poverty, poor nutrition and poor health.

Figure 2.7
Factors for Improving Student Achievement
 (% very important)



Q926/Q911: Thinking about the future of education, how important do you think the following are for improving student achievement?; Base: Teachers (n=1,003); Principals (n=500)

 **More Student Assessments of Teachers and Schools**

Students hold strong views on many of the measures asked of teachers. Their perspectives often indicate a gap between teachers' expressed ideals and their classroom implementation:

- **Teachers** indicate that a factor that would have a major impact on student achievement is a school culture where students feel responsible and accountable for their own education. Nearly three-quarters (73%) of **students** strongly agree that it is their responsibility to pay attention and do the work it takes to succeed in school, a view that is more common among girls than boys (77% vs. 69%).
- **Teachers** believe that connecting classroom instruction to the real world has a major impact on improving student achievement. However, only one-third of **students** (32%) strongly agree that their teachers give examples of how things they learn in school can be used in the real world, an experience more common among elementary school students than secondary school students (40% vs. 26%).
- **Teachers** believe that addressing the individual needs of diverse learners has a major impact on improving student achievement. However, only one-third of **students** (32%) strongly agree that students in their school get to be creative and use their abilities at school, a view more common among elementary school students than secondary school students (39% vs. 27%).

Conclusion

Academic achievement is an important component of overall student success and a critical factor in preparation for post-secondary education. Teachers, students and principals agree on the importance of preparation for education beyond high school. However, the *Survey* reveals significant gaps among what teachers believe about student achievement, their actual practice, and what students perceive. Teachers believe in their own ability to succeed in teaching all students more than they believe in the ability of all students to succeed. Gaps between teacher belief and practice are greater in secondary schools and schools with higher concentrations of low income students. Gender differences in student aspiration, confidence and effort are also evident. Particularly when viewed in light of the data on student access to and performance in higher education, the findings raise questions and concerns about how well standards and expectations are being communicated by teachers to students and by higher education to aspiring students and their teachers.

About the 2009 Survey and The MetLife Survey of the American Teacher Series

The MetLife Survey of the American Teacher: Collaborating for Student Success (2009) was conducted by Harris Interactive among a national sample of 1,003 public school teachers of grades K through 12 and 500 principals in schools with grades K through 12 by telephone, and 1,018 public school students in grades 3 through 12 online between October 14 and November 13, 2009. The data were weighted to key demographic variables to align with the national population of the respective groups. No estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated. In addition, an online strategy session was conducted on September 15, 2009 among a group of 25 public school teacher leaders, principals, and public education thought leaders to inform the development of the survey.

MetLife has sponsored the *MetLife Survey of the American Teacher* series since 1984 to give voice to those closest to the classroom. The reports for the entire series are now available online at www.metlife.com/teachersurvey with links to the ERIC (Education Resources Information Center) website: <http://eric.ed.gov>.

About MetLife

MetLife is a leading provider of insurance and financial services with operations throughout the United States and the Latin America, Europe and Asia Pacific regions. MetLife Foundation places strong emphasis on education and draws on the findings of the Survey to inform its grantmaking. For more information about MetLife, please visit the company's web site at www.metlife.com. Additional information about the Foundation is available at www.metlife.org.

About Harris Interactive

Harris Interactive is one of the world's leading custom market research firms, leveraging research, technology, and business acumen to transform relevant insight into actionable foresight. Known widely for the Harris Poll and for pioneering innovative research methodologies, Harris offers expertise in a wide range of industries and serves clients in over 215 countries and territories. For more information, please visit www.harrisinteractive.com.