



The FRONT P.A.G.E. NEWS

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The PAGE committee deeply appreciates those approximately forty teachers who came out to phone bank. In the near future the PAGE committee will host a barbeque for those who assisted with phone banking in order to thank them for their involvement.

Recently a pro-teacher documentary produced by Reel Links Films was released entitled, **Race to Nowhere**. Beginning in 1983, but dramatically escalating in 2002 under No Child Left Behind (NCLB), the amount of homework given to children dramatically increased. NCLB pressured districts to increase test scores or face sanctions, and thus districts pressured teachers to get their students to enhance their performance, which resulted in the quantity of homework going through the roof.

What is telling is that some countries that out perform the United States academically give less homework. At the elementary grade levels, homework has no correlation with improving test scores. In middle school homework has only a slight influence on test scores, and at high school homework is correlated with higher test scores for the first two hours of homework and then after that there is little correlation between homework and test scores.

Race to Nowhere also discusses how schools are increasingly dictating the amount of time that families have together. This intrusion into the private lives of many American citizens has often had a negative effect on their families. In order to be successful in this society and get in to a quality

university, students must compete with other students. Often low-income students feel the pressure more than high-income students, because not only must they compete for highly desired spots in prestigious universities, but they must also compete for financial aid in order to pay for tuition, books, and housing once they do get accepted.

To get in to a good higher educational institution, today's students must participate in clubs, sports, and do community service while often doing one hour of homework per high school class. And they still have the pressure of making themselves "pretty," or "unique" in order to increase their chances of standing out from the crowd. Some parents in the film only see their kids for a half hour at dinner during the day because their children are attempting to participate in as many activities as possible that good universities require for admission.

The pressure to succeed and get into a good university has caused parents to pressure their children all the way down to the elementary levels. Parents push their children to get good grades so their children will have successful lives. But often the cost is great. The pressure to do well on tests and get good grades has caused a host of negative consequences, such as headaches, stomachaches, lack of sleep, heart disease, and eating disorders, even in elementary students. The pressure on students has been so great that suicides have shot up significantly in the United States among young people, but especially with young women.