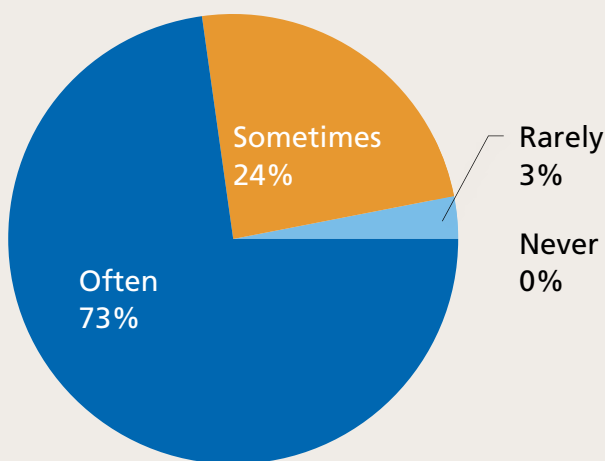


SURVEY REVEALS HIGH STRESS AMONG TEACHERS

Job-related stress leaves more than three out of four teachers emotionally and physically exhausted at the end of the day, a first-of-its-kind survey reveals. The 80-question survey, developed by the AFT and the Badass Teachers Association, was completed last spring by more than 34,000 teachers and staff. Fewer than half of those responding say they are treated with respect by public officials, the media, and school boards. Among the greatest reported workplace stressors are the adoption of new school initiatives without proper training or professional development, mandated curricula, and standardized tests. The AFT is calling on the Department of Education to conduct a scientific study to shed light on the concerns raised in the survey. Preliminary findings are available at <http://go.aft.org/AE315news1>.

HOW OFTEN DO YOU FIND YOUR WORK STRESSFUL?



SOURCE: "QUALITY OF WORKLIFE SURVEY," PAGE 3.

TIPPING POINT ON TESTING?

The 47th annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools shows that 64 percent of Americans think there is too much emphasis on standardized testing in schools, and fewer than 20 percent consider test scores to be a good measure of school effectiveness and student performance. In what may be a reflection of growing concerns about testing, the poll also reveals that 54 percent of Americans oppose having teachers use the Common Core State Standards. "Americans are fed up with the overemphasis and high-stakes consequences of standardized tests," AFT President Randi Weingarten commented following the poll's August 23 release. "They've seen those consequences and effects firsthand and now oppose the Common Core State Standards and using test scores in teacher evaluations. What's infuriating is that parents and teachers have repeatedly raised the red flag over high-stakes testing, but policymakers routinely dismissed them." The 2015 poll marks the third straight year that a majority of the public opposes using standardized test scores to evaluate teachers. And a wide margin of Americans again identified lack of financial support as the biggest problem facing schools. The full report and survey highlights are available at <http://pdkpoll2015.pdkintl.org>.

ESEA REAUTHORIZATION MOVES AHEAD

A House-Senate conference committee is working to reconcile two very different visions for reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), known in its current form as No Child Left Behind. In the Senate, a bipartisan majority in July approved its version of the bill, called the Every Child Achieves Act, by a vote of 81-17. It was a much different story in the House, where a companion bill, the Student Success Act, passed along party lines. The conference committee must iron out differences between the two bills, and the AFT is one of dozens of organizations urging Congress to approve a final bill that resembles the Senate's version. In a recent column, AFT President Randi Weingarten detailed the keys to crafting a strong ESEA bill, available at <http://go.aft.org/AE315news2>.

PLANS TO INCREASE COLLEGE AFFORDABILITY

Democratic presidential contender Hillary Clinton in August released the New College Compact, a \$350 billion plan to ease college borrowers' massive debt burden and make higher education a more affordable, debt-free option for the next generation. The plan from Clinton, the AFT's endorsed candidate in the 2016 Democratic primary, addresses state disinvestment, which is a major contributor to soaring college costs, and would allow borrowers to refinance at current interest rates. This would help an estimated 25 million borrowers, who could save an average of \$2,000 over the life of their loans. Clinton also is calling for additional help for parents who are college students by adding 250,000 spaces at on-campus child-care centers through state-matched federal grants. Read details of the plan at www.bit.ly/1T198It.

PRIVATIZATION: RESPONDING GLOBALLY

Commercialization and privatization were top-tier education issues when delegates from 171 countries convened for the 7th World Congress sponsored by Education International (EI) in Ottawa, Canada, in July. The body adopted a resolution calling on EI to mount a global response to the rise of a \$5 trillion for-profit education industry, and to call out the growing trend to outsource education-related activities and services. The resolution also won support from guest speaker Jordan Naidoo of UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization). The U.N. agency "is fully committed to education as a human right and the protection of that right as a public good," he said. The resolution is at www.bit.ly/1Nqx6mX.

TEACHable MOMENTS

More than 2,000 educators traveled to Washington, D.C., in July for TEACH (Together Educating America's Children), the AFT's biennial education conference. In her keynote address, AFT President Randi Weingarten urged members to raise their collective voice through collective bargaining, in schools and communities, and in the political arena. A united voice, Weingarten said, allows educators to counter threats such as public officials who are intent on overtesting students, demonizing teachers, and destroying public schools and the communities they serve. For comprehensive coverage of TEACH, including videos of general sessions, visit <http://go.aft.org/AE315news3>.