

End of Term, Summer Break, and Student Cell Phone Usage

Horace Mann Educator Advisory Panel

June 2009

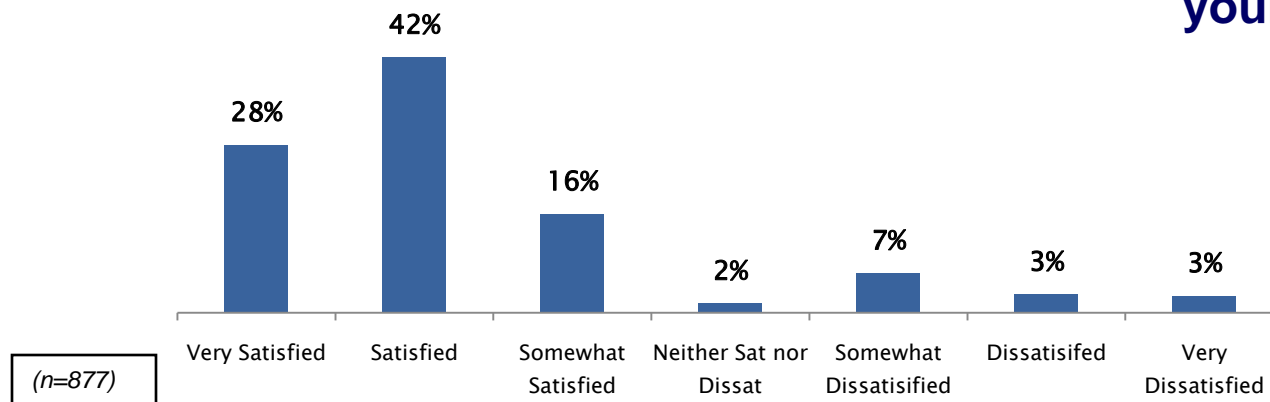


End of Term, Summer Break, Cell Phone Usage - Summary

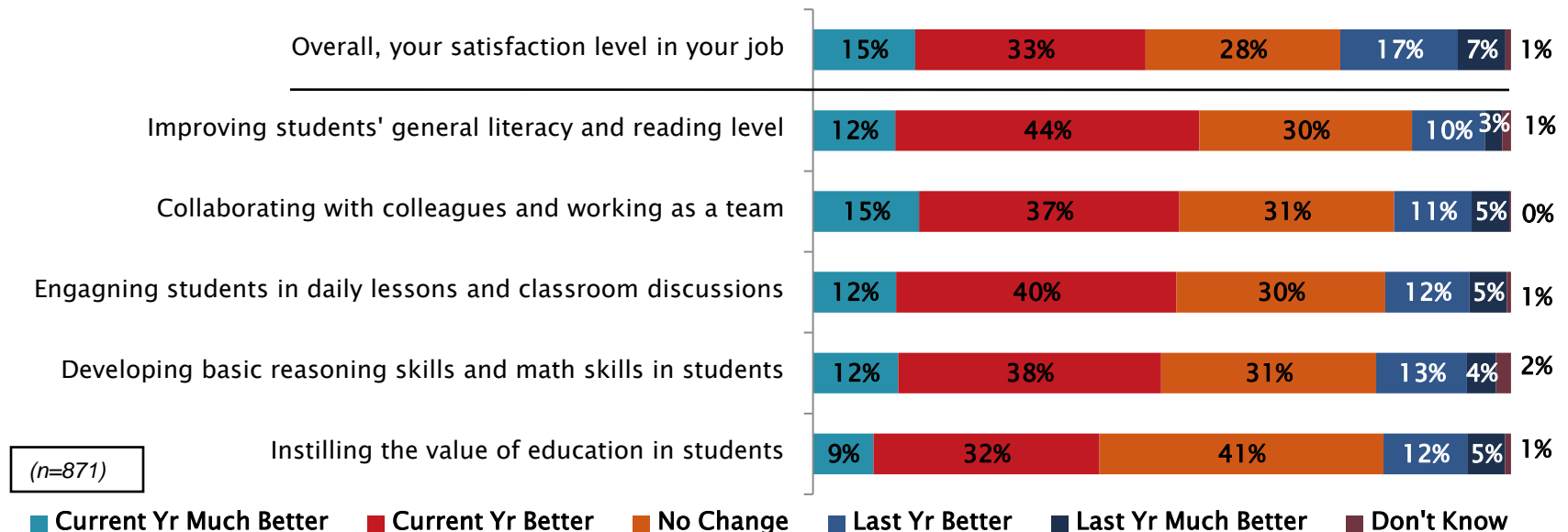
In June 2009, 880 educators responded to the latest Horace Mann Educator Advisory Panel survey evaluating the school year just ended, summer break, and student cell phone usage.

- Over half of the educators responding to the survey believe the current school year was better than the last on several dimensions such as improving students' general literacy and reading level, collaborating with colleagues, and engaging students in daily lessons and classroom discussions.
- Summer break ranges from 1.5 months to 3 months, or year round school, but 85% of educators report being on a 9 month schedule with a 3 month summer break. 60% of educators believe year round school is especially beneficial for mathematics, and 58% believe it could effectively address overcrowding in schools. 57%, however, believe traditional summer break is essential for certain types of learning that children experience in the summer.
- 43% of educators report that students can have cell phones at school but they must be turned off while 24% report that students aren't allowed to have cell phones at all. Problems relating to student cell phone usage vary greatly by grade level taught. High school teachers consider cell phones to be a much bigger problem, both in the classroom and outside the classroom, than elementary and middle school teachers.
- Problems cited most often with cell phone usage are texting during class and phones ringing during class. Some comments suggest that cell phones are a general distraction for students, and kids are simply too preoccupied with them. Students making calls in the hallway between classes or in the restroom is also a problem.
- Educators don't think the positive uses of student cell phones are necessarily important, either to the curriculum or to the school. The only exception to that is communicating a security threat or a potential crisis. 49% think cell phones used this way is either somewhat important, very important, or extremely important.

As the current school year comes to an end, overall, how satisfied are you in your job as an educator?



Please compare the current school year (08/09) to last school year (07/08) on each of the following dimensions?



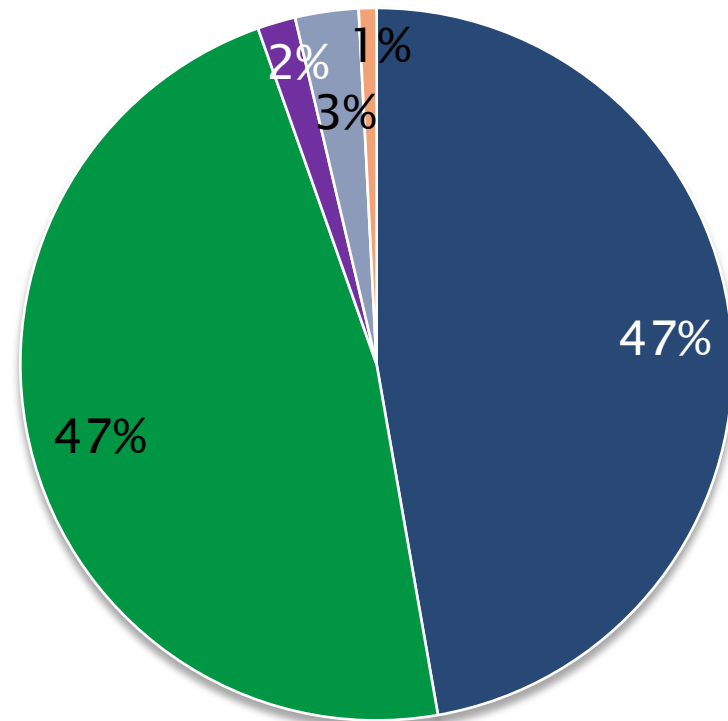
How successful was your school district this year at the following tasks?



(n=870)

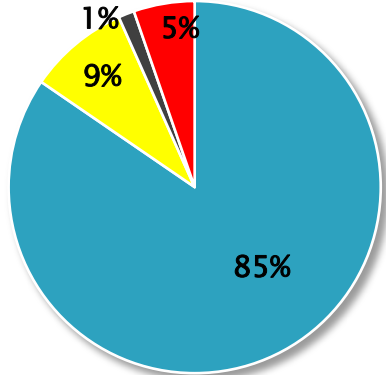
Should a course on financial education be offered to, or required of, all high school students?

- Yes, should be offered to all high school students
- Yes, should be required of all high school students
- No, not necessary to offer this type of course
- Not sure
- No opinion



(n=870)

What type of schedule is your school currently on?

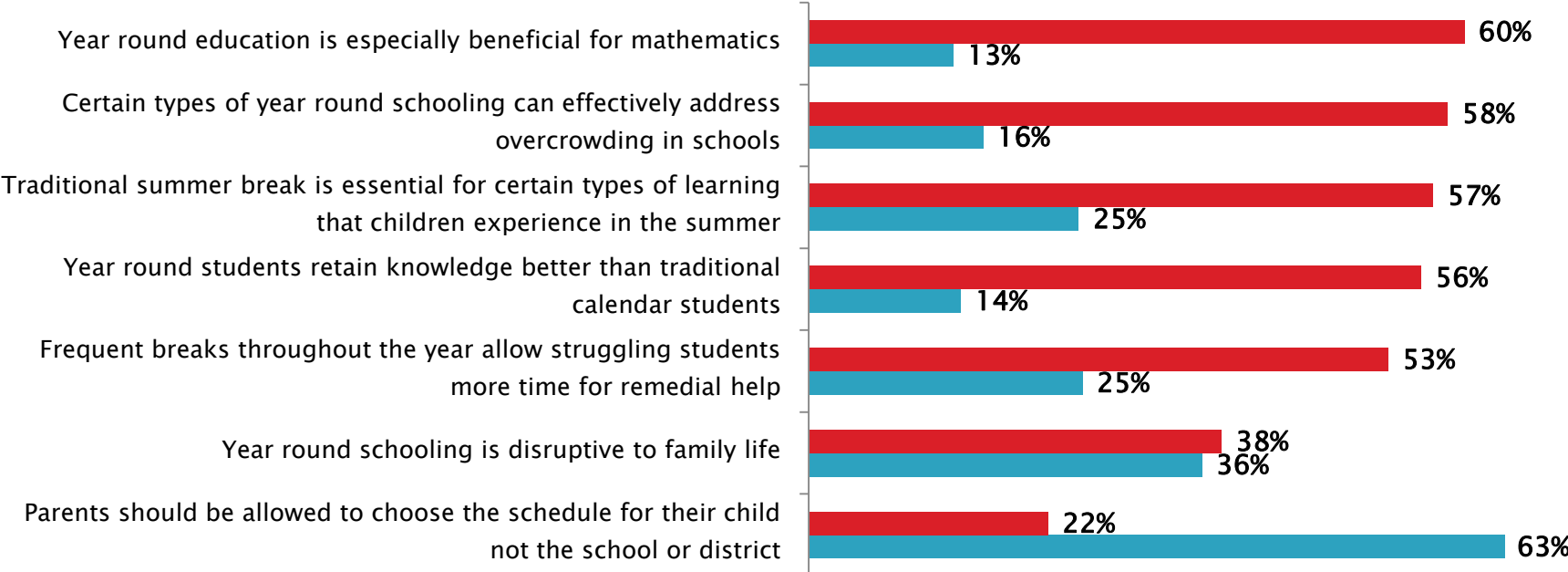


(n=868)

- Traditional nine month schedule with three month summer break
- Balanced calendar with shortened summer break
- Year round calendar with periodic breaks throughout the year
- Other

Summer break ranged from 1.5 months to 3 months, or year round school.

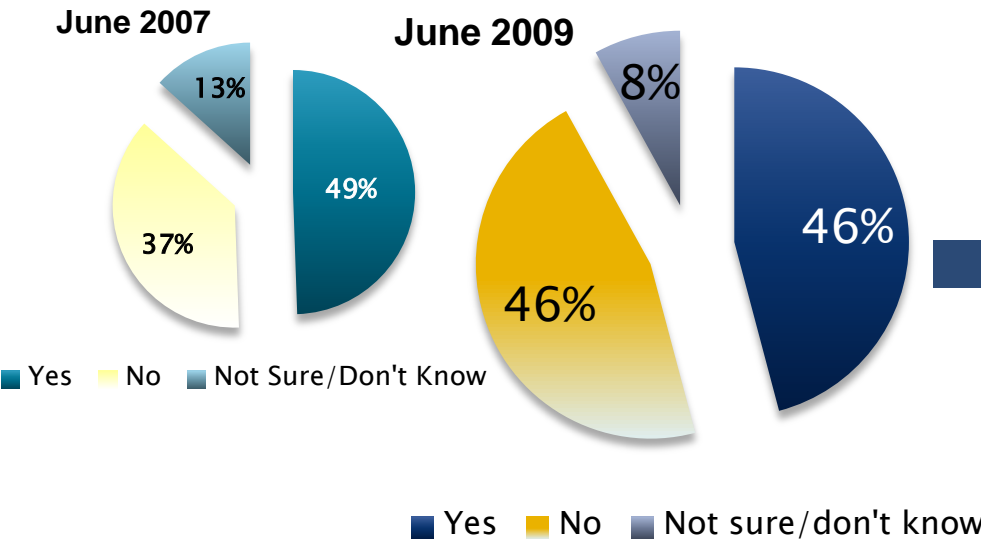
How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding school calendars and summer breaks?



■ Strongly agree/Agree ■ Strongly disagree/Disagree

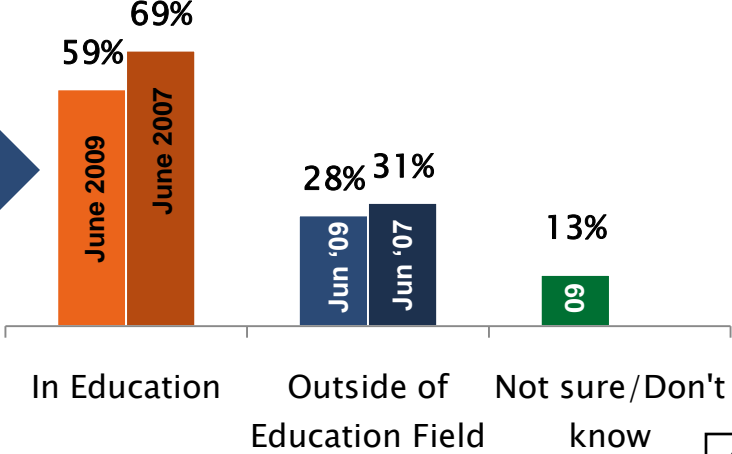
(n=843)

Will you be working during the summer?



(n=871)

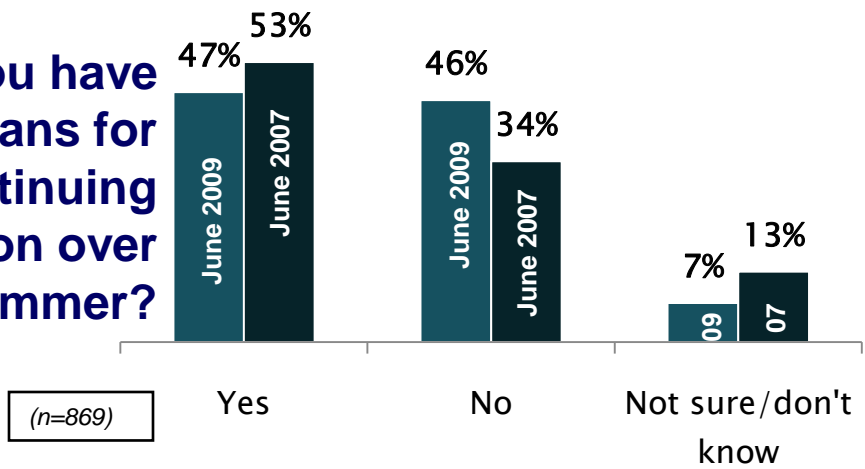
If yes, will you be working in education or outside of education?



(n=461)

Teachers will be out of their classrooms an average of 9.5 weeks this summer.

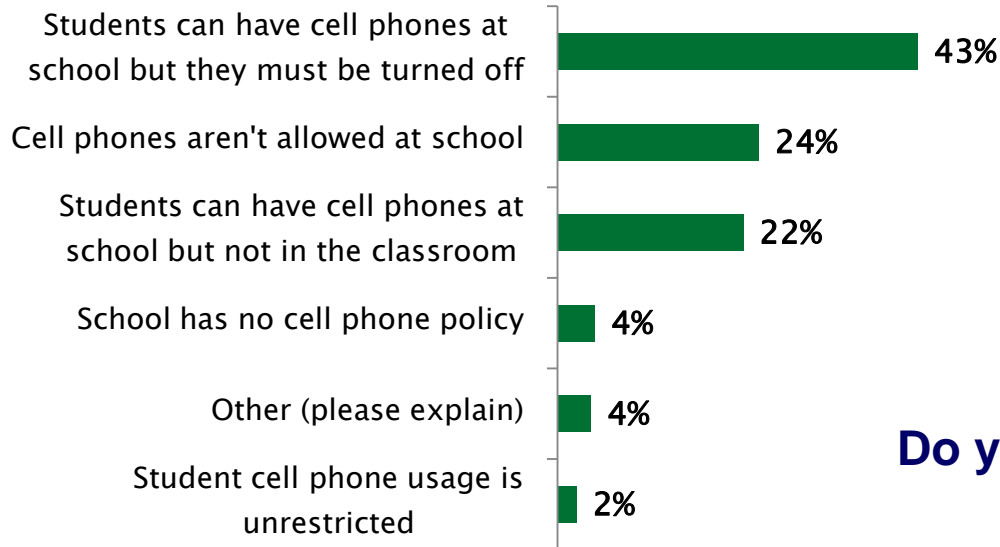
Do you have plans for continuing education over the summer?



(n=869)

Cell Phone Usage

Which of the following most closely resembles your school's policy on student cell phone usage?



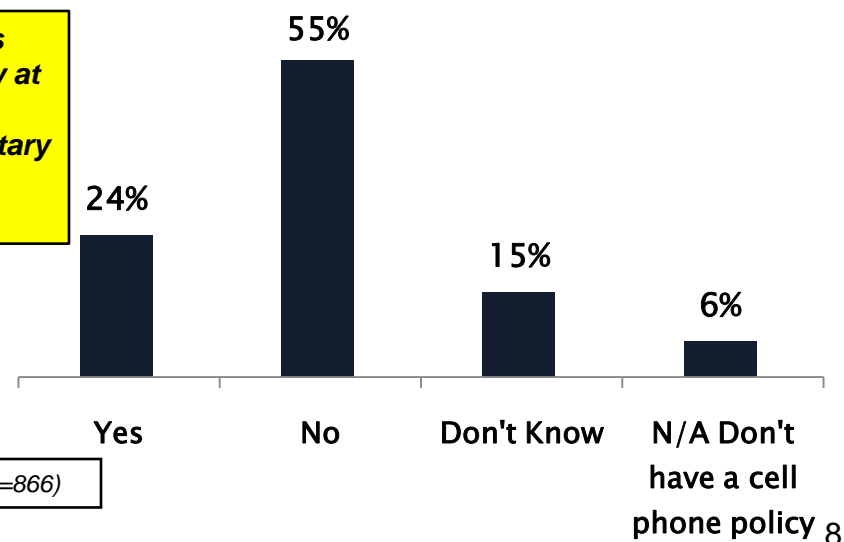
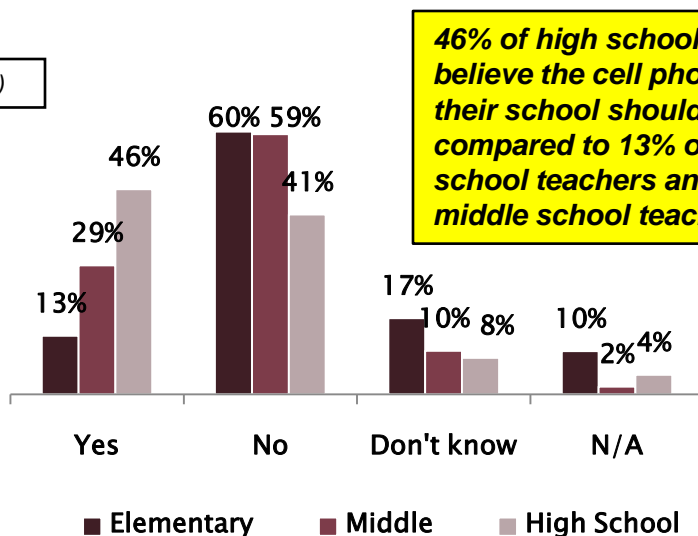
Other cell phone policies presented by educators:

- Cell phones are collected as the students come in or are turned in at the office.
- No phones are allowed at school but students don't comply.
- Phones can't be seen or heard.
- Must pay a cell phone fee.
- Teachers set their own policy for their classroom .

Do you believe the cell phone policy at your school should change?

46% of high school teachers believe the cell phone policy at their school should change compared to 13% of elementary school teachers and 29% of middle school teachers.

(n=870)

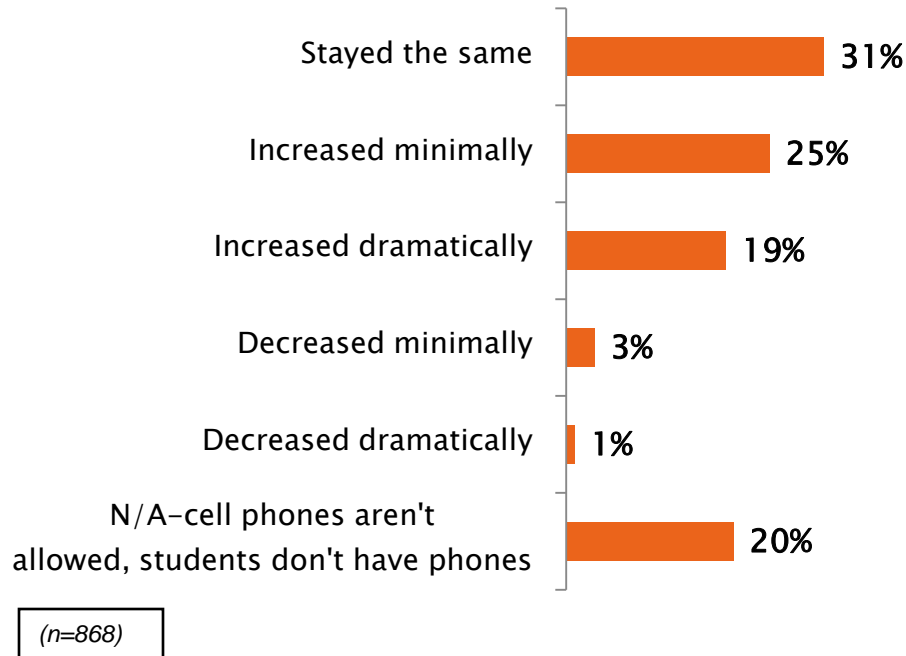


(n=866)

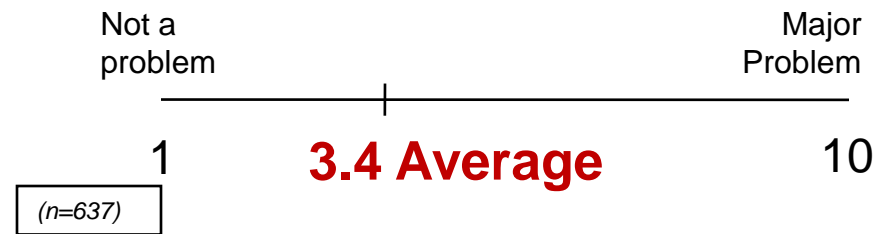
Don't have a cell phone policy 8

Cell Phone Usage

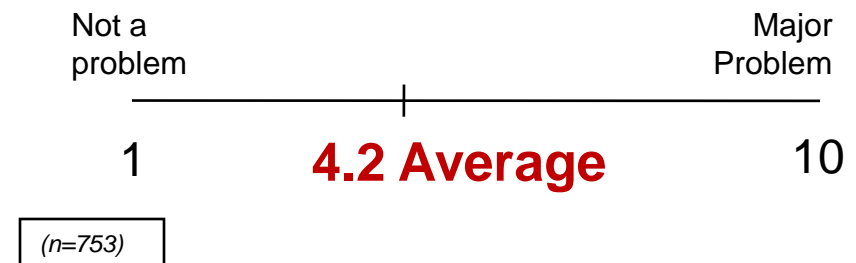
How has the use of cell phones by students at your school changed during this school year compared to last?



How much of a problem is student cell phone usage in your classroom?



How much of a problem is student cell phone usage at your school outside of your classroom?

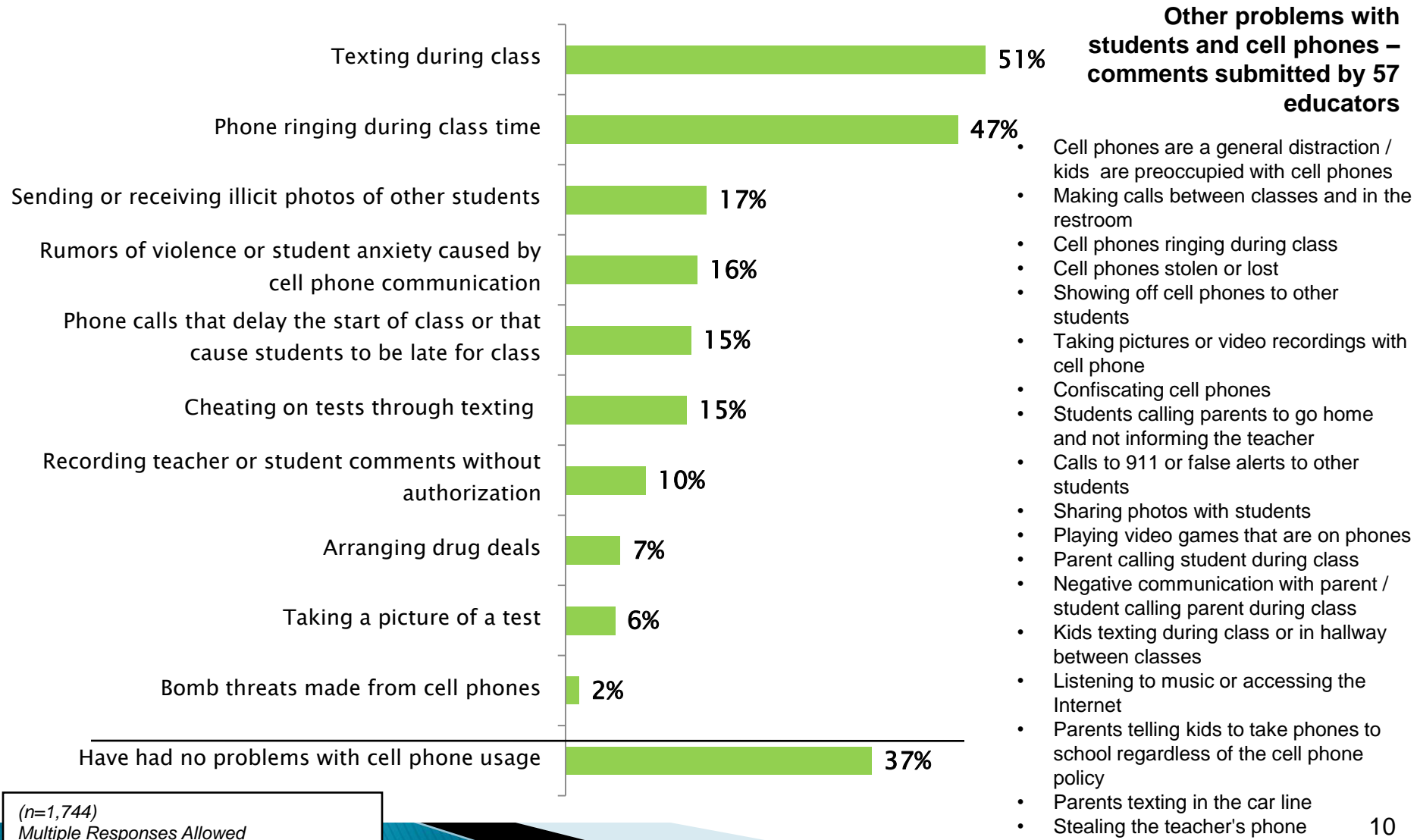


Problems relating to student cell phone usage vary greatly by grade level.

Average Rating on a 10 point scale	Elementary Teachers	Middle Teachers	High School Teachers
Problem in the classroom	3.0	4.5	6.1
Problem in school, outside of classroom	3.9	5.5	7.4

Cell Phone Usage

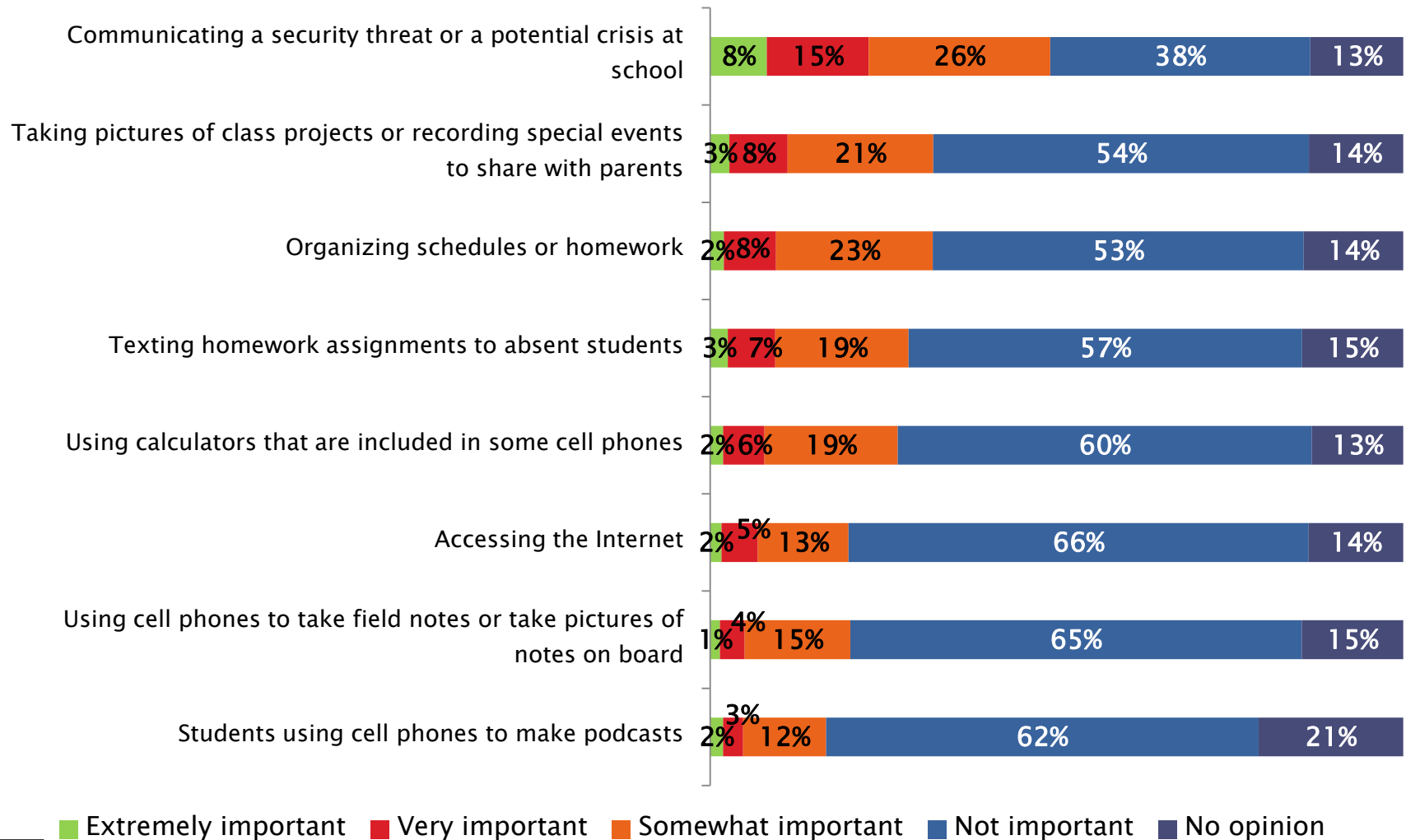
What problems related to student cell phone usage have you experienced either in your classroom or at your school?



(n=1,744)
Multiple Responses Allowed

Cell Phone Usage

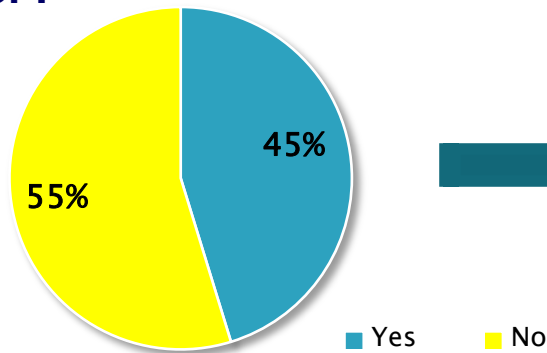
How important do you think the following student cell phone uses are to the educational curriculum at your school or to your school in general?



(n=863)

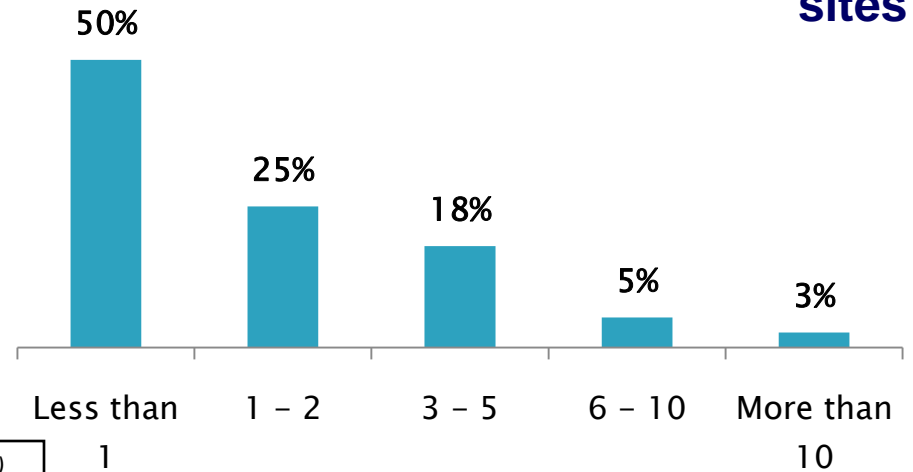
Social Networking

Do you belong to a social networking site such as Facebook, Myspace, or Twitter?



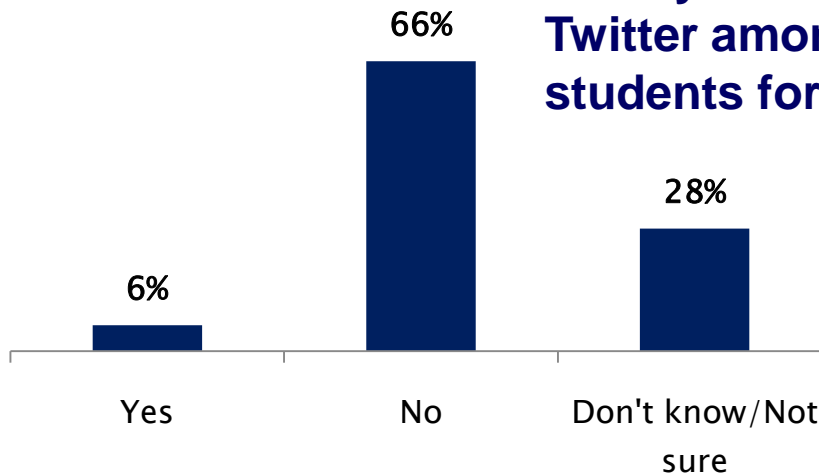
(n=864)

If yes, about how many hours per week do you spend on social networking sites?



(n=420)

Does your school involve the use of Twitter among faculty, parents, and students for school purposes?



(n=865)