

# Future of the **First Amendment**

**2007 Follow-Up Survey**

## Key Findings '07

A study commissioned by  
**John S. and James L. Knight Foundation**

Conducted by **Kenneth Dautrich and David Yalof**  
**University of Connecticut**

**September 2007**

**[www.firstamendmentfuture.org](http://www.firstamendmentfuture.org)**



[j-ideas.org](http://j-ideas.org)



[knightfoundation.org](http://knightfoundation.org)



**Channel One News™**

[channelone.com](http://channelone.com)

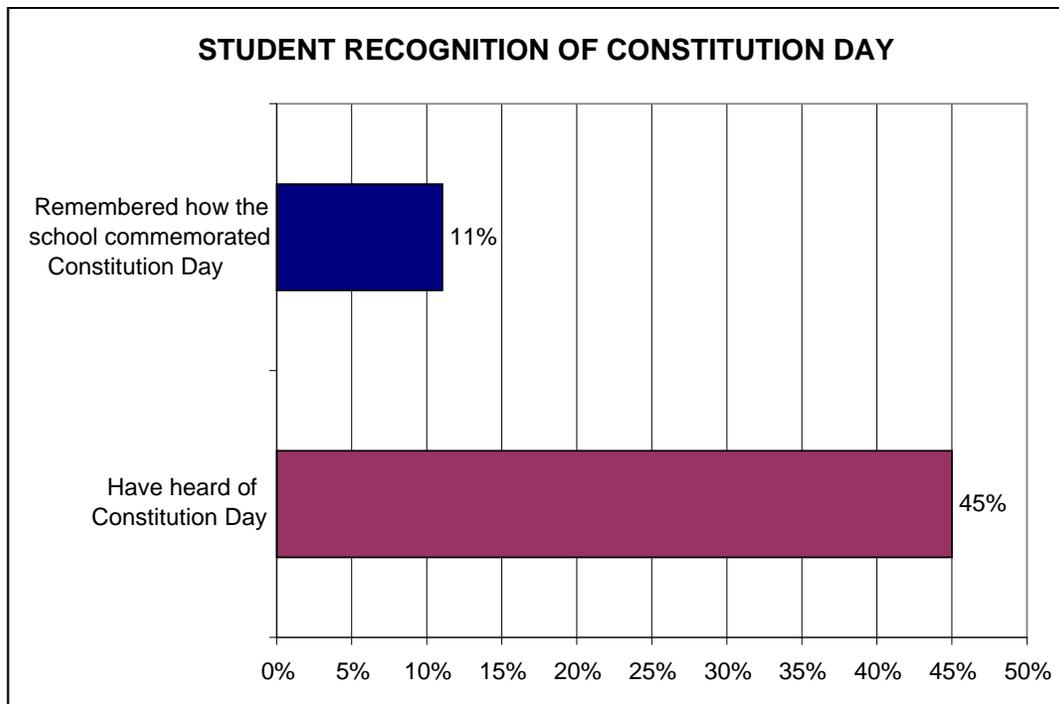
# Key Findings

## September 2007

- 1.** More than half of all high school students say they have not heard of Constitution Day, mandated by federal law to be the day the Constitution is taught in schools. Just 1 in 10 remember how their high school celebrated the day last year.
- 2.** Despite increases in First Amendment classes from 2004 through 2006, nearly three-fourths of students still don't know how they feel about the First Amendment, or take it for granted.
- 3.** Students support individual free expression rights that directly affect or interest them; they're less supportive of rights that are less relevant to their lives.
- 4.** Parents, not teachers, have the greatest influence on students' choice of news sources.
- 5.** More students are turning to the Internet to find their news. Their definition of news isn't much different than that of their parents.

*The research methodology and annotated surveys  
can be found at the end of this report.*

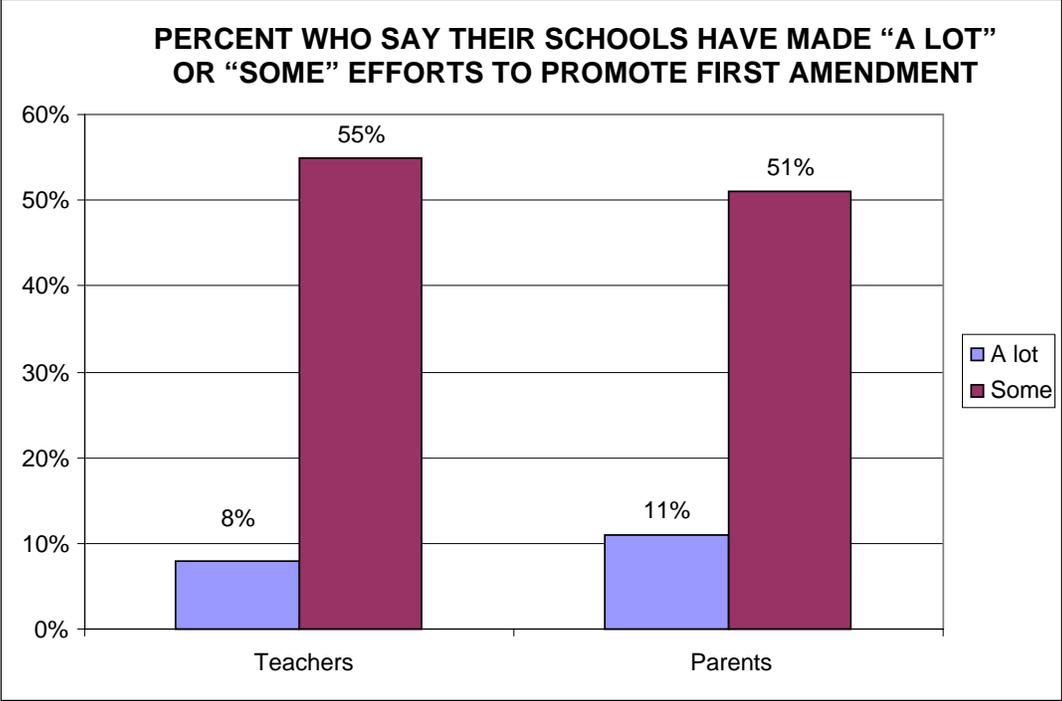
1. More than half of all high school students say they have not heard of “Constitution Day,” mandated by federal law to be the day the Constitution is taught in schools; and only about 1 in 10 remember how their high school celebrated that day in the last school year.



**51% of students say they have not heard of Constitution Day, and another 4% say they aren't sure if they've heard about it.**

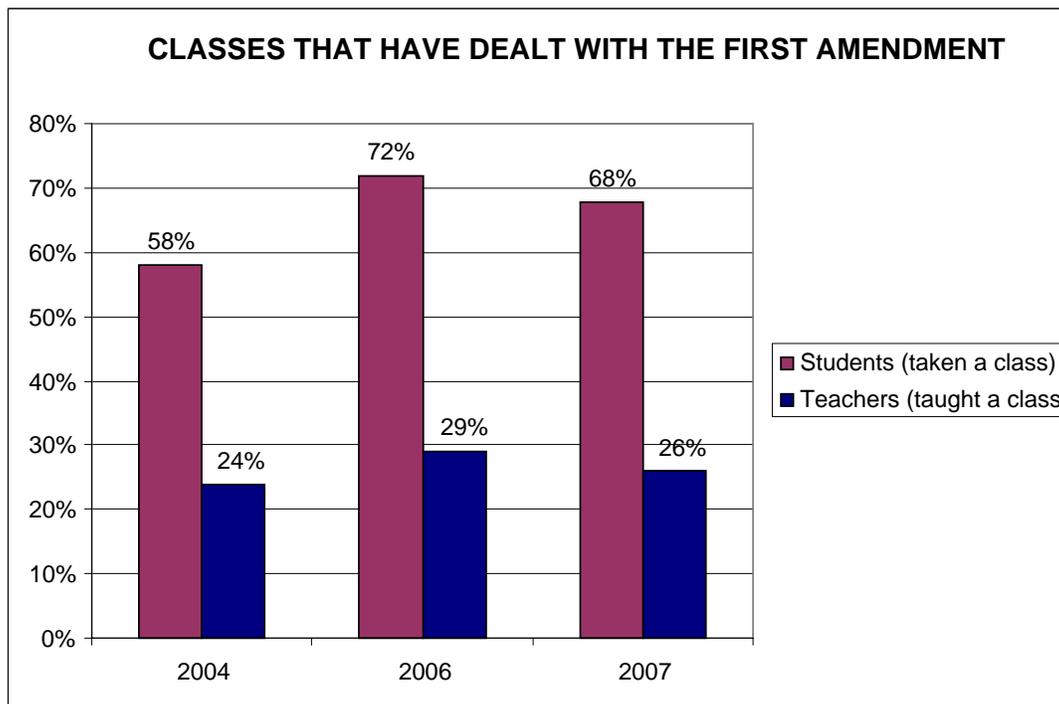
*Only a small percentage of teachers and parents believe that their high schools have exerted “a lot of effort” toward promoting student understanding of the First Amendment.*

*Just 8% of teachers say that their school has made “a lot” of effort to promote First Amendment principles through school activities, conversations and policies. Another 55% say their school has made “some” efforts at this. Similar numbers of parents say their child’s school has made “a lot” (11%) or “some” (52%) effort to promote the First Amendment.*



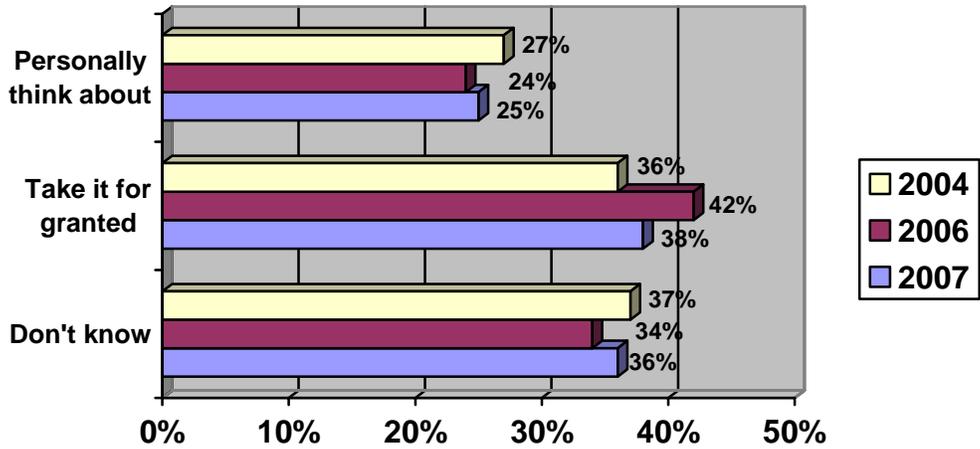
2. Despite increases in First Amendment classes from 2004 through 2006, nearly three-fourths of students still don't know how they feel about the First Amendment, or take it for granted.

*Currently, 68% of students say they've taken a class that dealt with the First Amendment, and 26% of teachers indicate that have taught such a class. Some of the increase in First Amendment education that occurred between 2004 and 2006 has been lost over the past year.*



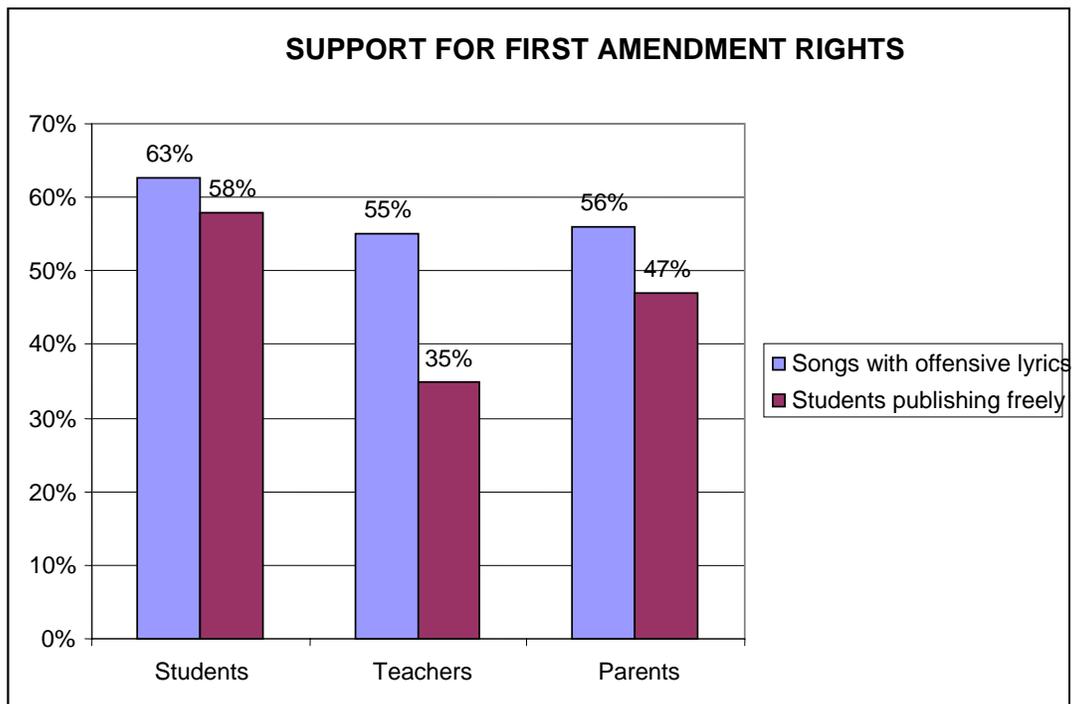
*Students still say they don't care much about the First Amendment. In 2007, only a quarter of the nation's students personally think about the First Amendment, while 38% say they take it for granted.*

### STUDENTS AND THE FIRST AMENDMENT

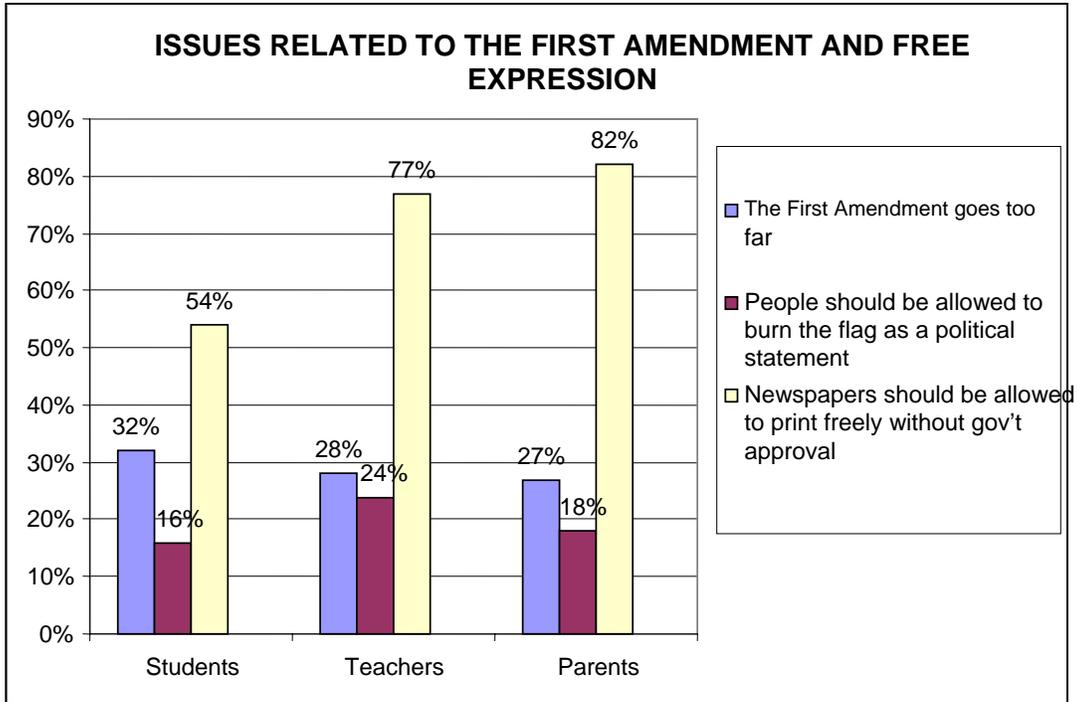


3. Students support individual free expression rights that directly affect or interest them; they're less supportive of rights that are less relevant to their lives.

*On the issues of musicians being allowed to sing songs that might be offensive, and school newspapers being allowed to publish without the prior approval of school authorities, students express higher levels of support for free expression than either teachers or parents.*



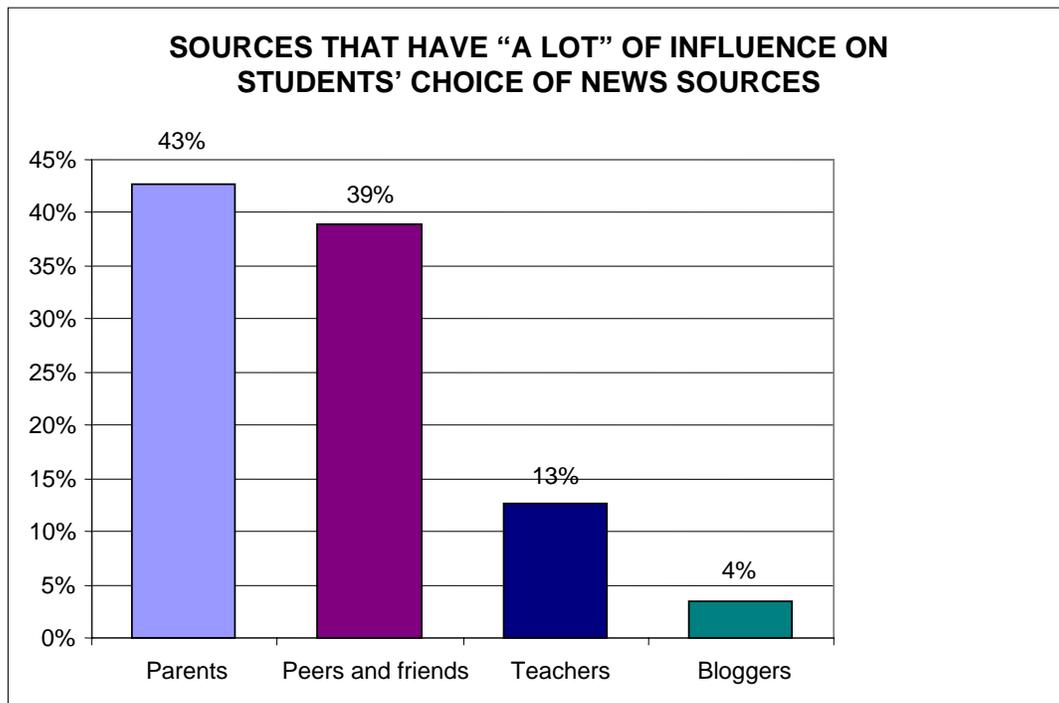
*By contrast, on more general issues related to the First Amendment, and on rights that do not directly affect students, teachers and parents express higher levels of support than students:*



**4. Parents, not teachers, have the greatest influence on students’ choice of news sources.**

*Forty-three percent of high schools students say that their parents have “a lot” of influence on their decisions to use news sources. Peers are also relatively more influential, as 39% of students say peers have “a lot” of influence.*

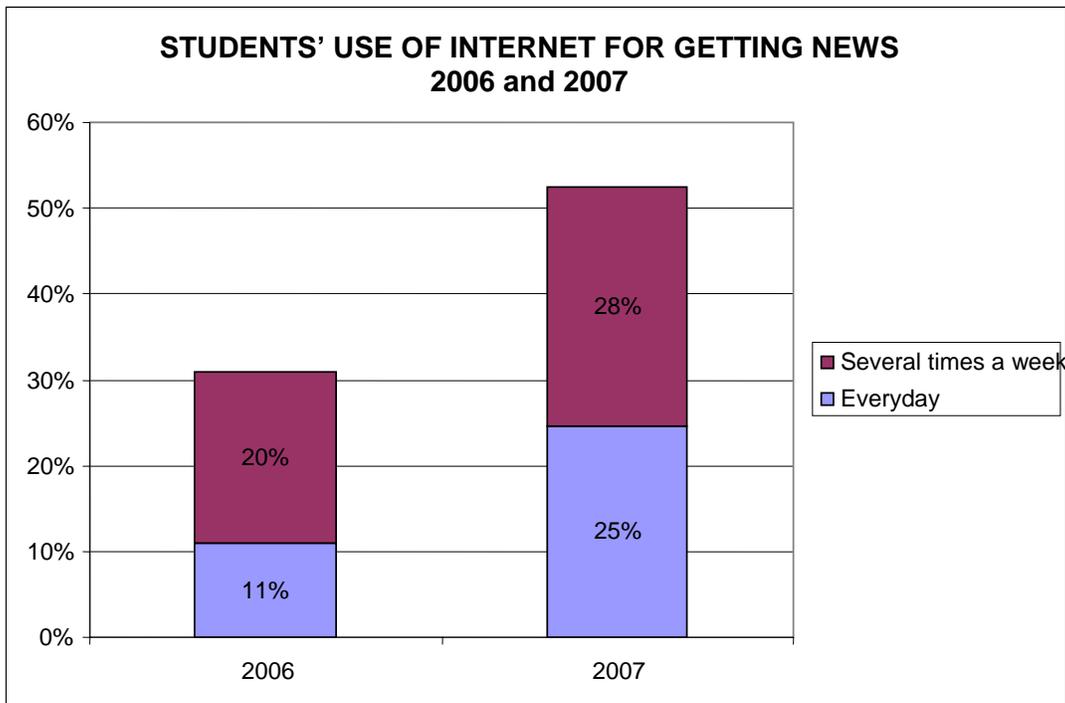
*Far less influential in students’ decisions to use news sources are teachers, as only 13% of students say they have “a lot” of influence.*



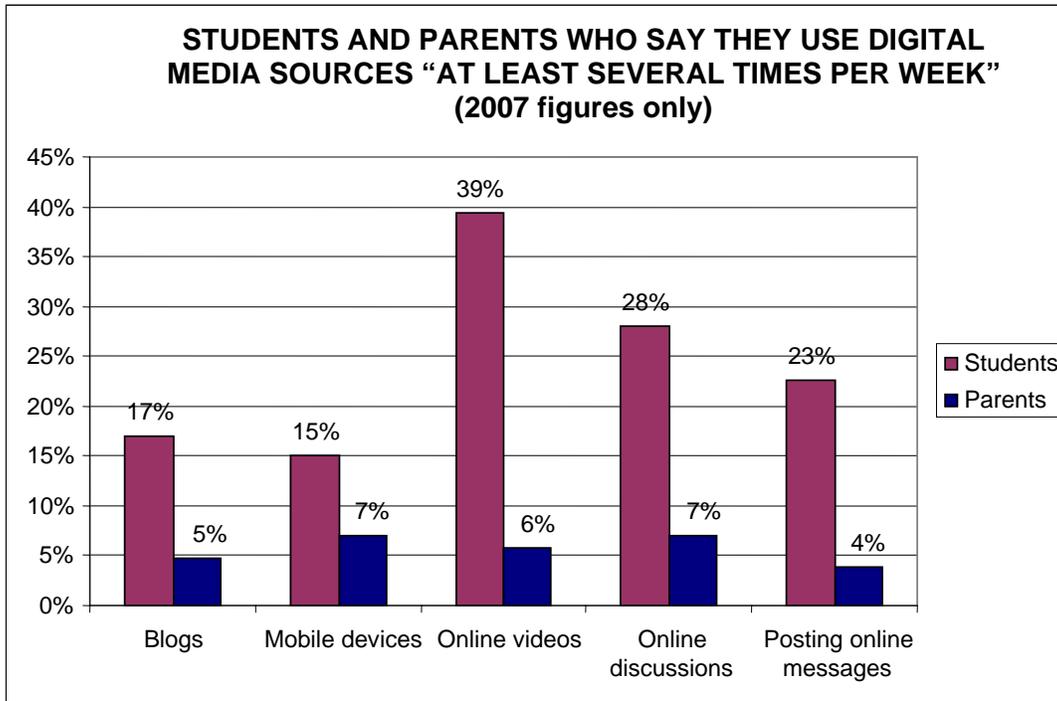
5. More students are turning to the Internet to find their news. Their definition of news isn't much different than that of their parents.

*Currently, 25% of students say they get news and information “everyday” from online and Internet sources, and another 28% say they get news and information this way at least several times per week. An additional 20 % of students say they get news and information from the Internet about once per week. Thus, 72% of all high school students use the Internet at least once a week to get news and information.*

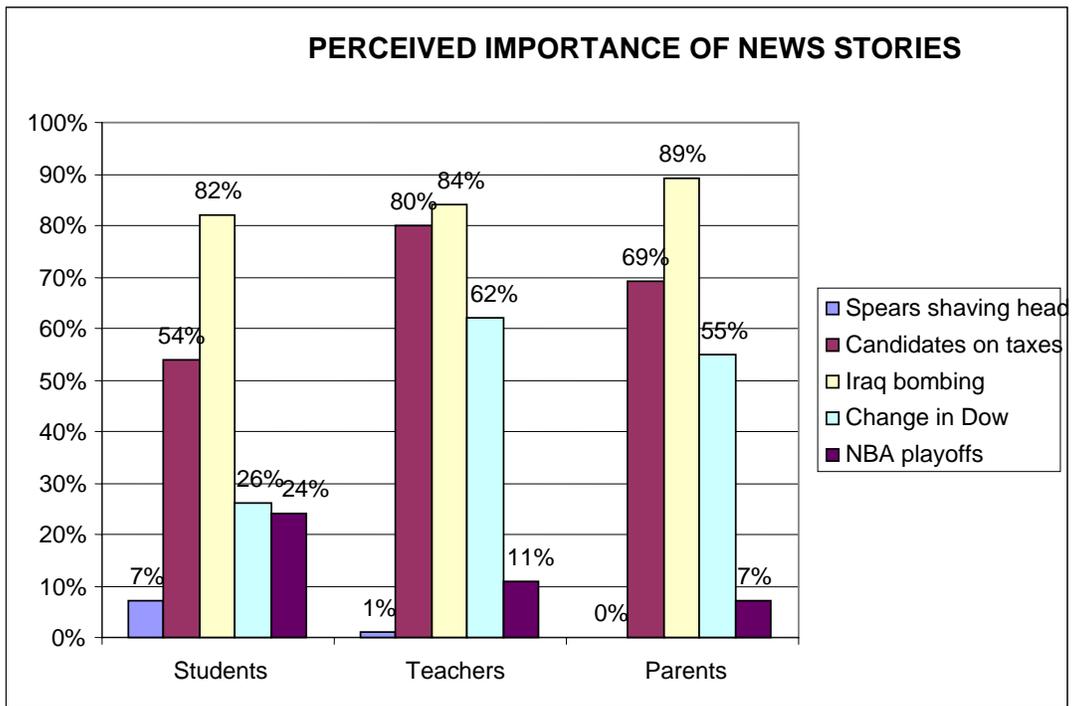
*These figures represent a large jump in student uses of the Internet for getting news and information. A year ago, 31% of students reported using the Internet for getting news and information at least several times a week, while 53% report that level of use today.*



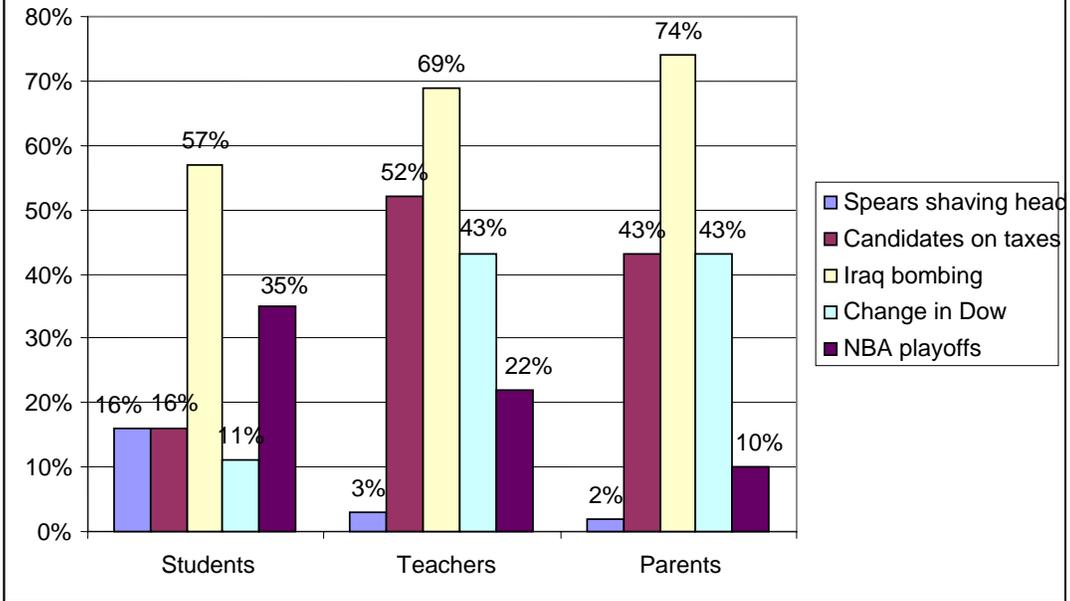
*Currently, 39% of students watch videos on web sites, such as Youtube and Google video, at least several times per week; 28% participate in online discussions at least several times a week; 23% post messages to online columns that often; 17% get news from blogs; and 15% use mobile devices, such as cell phones and BlackBerries, to get news and information at least several times per week.*



Generally, students can distinguish between important news and interesting news. Students, teachers and parents were presented with five specific stories that were running in the news at the time this survey was conducted. For each story they were asked how important they thought it was as a news story and how interested they were in each story. The first graphic below shows the percentage saying the story was either “very” or “extremely” important, and the second shows the percentage saying they were “very” or “extremely” interested in it:



### EXPRESSED INTEREST IN NEWS STORIES



## **Summary of Methodology**

The overall design for conducting this project featured a multi-stage cluster sampling methodology. Employing this technique produced a scientific, and thus generalizable, survey of high school students and teachers in the United States. This technique involved drawing an initial sample of 40 high school buildings in the United States.

For each of these 40 schools, a phone call was placed to the school principal, asking if his/her school would be willing to participate in the project. Thirty principals agreed to have their schools participate in the survey.

These 30 school administrators were asked to coordinate the administration of surveys to all students and teachers in the school building. A subsample of parents was drawn and sent questionnaires via the mail. Copies of the surveys that were administered to students and teachers may be found in the appendix to this report.

The field period for the survey began in April 2007, and closed in June 2007.

In total, 5,484 students, 558 parents, and 464 teachers completed the questionnaires.

This project was designed and conducted by Dr. David Yalof and Dr. Kenneth Dautrich at the University of Connecticut.

Please note: For the student survey, the results are accurate to within a margin of plus or minus 1.3 percentage points, at the 95% level of confidence. For the parent sample, the margin of error is 4.1 percentage points. For the teachers, the results are accurate to within a plus or minus 4.5 percentage points.

**APPENDIX A:**

**KNIGHT FOFA – HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT SURVEY – 2004, 2006 & 2007**

1. What grade are you currently in?

	2004	2006	2007
Below 9 <sup>th</sup>	2%	0%	0%
9 <sup>th</sup>	29%	30%	29%
10 <sup>th</sup>	27%	27%	29%
11 <sup>th</sup>	23%	24%	27%
12 <sup>th</sup>	19%	18%	15%

2. Do you currently have access to the internet:

	2006*	2007
At home	87%	90%
At School	97%	99%

3. Which of the following sources do you consider your main source of news?

	2007
Newspapers in print form	24%
Newspapers on online	9%
Radio news broadcasts	22%
Television news broadcasts	63%
Television on-line websites	6%
Internet service provider websites such as Google or Yahoo News	29%
Blogs	3%
Entertainment programs featuring current events	14%

4. How often, if at all, do you get news and information from online or Internet sources in general?

	2006	2007
Everyday	11%	25%

Several times a week	20%	28%
About once a week	20%	20%
Less than once a week	20%	18%
Never	29%	10%

5. Short for “web logs,” “blogs” are defined as online journals in which people post diary entries about their personal experiences and opinions, to be read online by others. How often, if at all, do you get news and information from blogs?

2006 2007

Everyday	9%	7%
Several times a week	11%	10%
About once a week	12%	11%
Less than once a week	16%	20%
Never	52%	54%

6. How often, if at all, do you get news and information from mobile devices such as a cell phone or a BlackBerry?

2007

Everyday	8%
Several times a week	7%
About once a week	7%
Less than once a week	11%
Never	67%

7. How often, if at all, do you watch videos on websites such as “Youtube” or “Google video”?

2007

Everyday	13%
Several times a week	26%
About once a week	19%
Less than once a week	24%
Never	18%

8. Now thinking about what you do online... How often, if at all, do you ... use the Internet, the World Wide Web or an online service to text message or instant message?

2007

Everyday	45%
Several times a week	22%
About once a week	10%
Less than once a week	9%
Never	14%

9. Now thinking about what you do online... How often, if at all, do you ... use the Internet, the World Wide Web or an online service to participate in online discussions or chat groups?

2006 2007

Everyday	18%	15%
Several times a week	16%	13%
About once a week	10%	9%
Less than once a week	16%	15%
Never	41%	48%

10. Now thinking about what you do online... How often, if at all, do you ... use the Internet, the World Wide Web or an online service to post messages or opinions to online columns or blogs that may be read by the general public?

2006 2007

Everyday	10%	11%
Several times a week	11%	12%
About once a week	11%	12%
Less than once a week	17%	17%
Never	51%	48%

11. Below is a list of some stories that have appeared in the news recently. Please indicate, with the corresponding number in the space provided, whether you think the story is:

- a. Britney Spears shaving her head:

2007

Extremely important	5%
Very important	2%
Somewhat important	8%
Not that important	85%

- b. A presidential candidate giving a speech on tax policy:

2007

Extremely important	15%
Very important	39%
Somewhat important	33%
Not that important	14%

- c. The latest bombing in Iraq that killed U.S. military personnel:

2007

Extremely important	48%
Very important	34%
Somewhat important	13%
Not that important	5%

- d. Recent declines in the Dow Jones Industrial stock average:

2007

Extremely important	6%
Very important	20%
Somewhat important	42%
Not that important	32%

- e. Highlights of the latest round of the NBA basketball playoffs:

2007

Extremely important	13%
Very important	11%
Somewhat important	27%
Not that important	50%

12. Now I'd like you to go back through the list of stories. Please indicate, with the corresponding number in the space provided, how interested you are in each story:

a. Britney Spears shaving her head:

2007

Extremely interested	9%
Very interested	7%
Somewhat interested	20%
Not that interested	64%

b. A presidential candidate giving a speech on tax policy:

2007

Extremely interested	5%
Very interested	11%
Somewhat interested	30%
Not that interested	53%

c. The latest bombing in Iraq that killed U.S. military personnel:

2007

Extremely interested	26%
Very interested	31%
Somewhat interested	29%
Not that interested	14%

d. Recent declines in the Dow Jones Industrial stock average:

2007

Extremely interested	4%
Very interested	7%
Somewhat interested	20%
Not that interested	68%

e. Highlights of the latest round of the NBA basketball playoffs:

2007

Extremely interested	20%
Very interested	15%
Somewhat interested	19%
Not that interested	46%

13. Please indicate, with the corresponding number in the space provided, how much influence, if any, do each of the following have on your decisions regarding what type of media you use for news:

a. Peers and friends:

2007

A Lot	39%
Some	31%
A little	17%
None at all	12%

b. Teachers:

2007

A Lot	13%
Some	35%
A little	32%
None at all	21%

c. Parents:

2007

A Lot	43%
Some	30%
A little	16%
None at all	11%

d. Bloggers:

2007

A Lot	4%
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Some	7%
A little	14%
None at all	75%

e. Websites:

2007

A Lot	13%
Some	20%
A little	28%
None at all	40%

14. Which of the following people feel the same way that you do about the First Amendment?

2007

My friends	63%
My teachers	28%
My parents	49%
No one	6%
Other	19%

15. The First Amendment became part of the U.S. Constitution more than 200 years ago. This is what it says:

*“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.”*

Based on your own feelings about the First Amendment, please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statement: *The First Amendment goes too far in the rights it guarantees.*

	2004	2006	2007
Strongly agree	12%	18%	12%
Mildly agree	23%	27%	20%
Mildly disagree	19%	16%	21%

Strongly disagree	25%	21%	25%
Don't know	21%	19%	21%

16. Overall, do you think the *press in America* has too much freedom to do what it wants, too little freedom to do what it wants, or is the amount of freedom the press has about right?

	2004	2006	2007
Too much freedom	32%	30%	33%
Too little freedom	10%	11%	12%
About right	37%	41%	38%
Don't know	21%	18%	18%

17. People should be allowed to express unpopular opinions.

	2004	2006	2007
Strongly agree	51%	52%	43%
Mildly agree	32%	33%	33%
Mildly disagree	5%	5%	8%
Strongly disagree	2%	2%	4%
Don't know	10%	10%	12%

18. People should be allowed to burn or deface the American flag as a political statement.

	2004	2006	2007
Strongly agree	8%	7%	8%
Mildly agree	8%	9%	8%
Mildly disagree	11%	12%	12%
Strongly disagree	63%	64%	60%
Don't know	10%	8%	11%

19. Musicians should be allowed to sing songs with lyrics that others might find offensive.

	2004	2006	2007
Strongly agree	40%	37%	33%
Mildly agree	30%	32%	30%

Mildly disagree	14%	16%	15%
Strongly disagree	7%	7%	9%
Don't know	9%	8%	13%

20. Newspapers should be allowed to publish freely without government approval of a story.

	2004	2006	2007
Strongly agree	24%	26%	26%
Mildly agree	27%	28%	28%
Mildly disagree	22%	23%	21%
Strongly disagree	14%	13%	11%
Don't know	13%	10%	14%

21. High school students should be allowed to report controversial issues in their student newspapers without the approval of school authorities.

	2004	2006	2007
Strongly agree	30%	34%	30%
Mildly agree	28%	30%	28%
Mildly disagree	18%	17%	18%
Strongly disagree	11%	8%	9%
Don't know	13%	11%	14%

- 21a. Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statement: To be an American means, at least in part, to accept the responsibility to guard the rights of others, even those with whom we deeply disagree”

	2007
Strongly agree	34%
Mildly agree	48%
Mildly disagree	12%
Strongly disagree	6%

22. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?  
*“Americans don't appreciate First Amendment freedoms the way they ought to.”*

	2004	2006	2007
--	------	------	------

Strongly agree	17%	15%	20%
Mildly agree	33%	38%	34%
Mildly disagree	18%	17%	15%
Strongly disagree	9%	7%	7%
Don't know	23%	23%	25%

23. Are the rights guaranteed by the First Amendment something you personally think about or are they something you take for granted?

	2004	2006	2007
Personally think about	27%	24%	25%
Take for granted	36%	42%	38%
Don't know	37%	34%	36%

24. Have you ever taken classes in high school that dealt with the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution?

	2004	2006	2007
Yes	58%	72%	68%
No	42%	28%	32%

25. Have you ever taken classes in high school that discuss the role of media in society?

	2004	2006	2007
Yes	52%	62%	62%
No	48%	38%	38%

26. Have you ever taken classes in high school that dealt primarily with journalism skills?

	2004	2006	2007
Yes	21%	26%	26%
No	79%	74%	74%

27. Have you ever taken a class in high school where the teacher required as a class assignment that you read a newspaper or watch television news?

	2004	2006	2007
Yes	75%	81%	78%
No	25%	19%	22%

30. In 2005 Congress began requiring all secondary schools and colleges to celebrate “Constitution Day” every September 17<sup>th</sup>. Do you remember specifically how your high school chose to commemorate or celebrate Constitution Day?

	2007
Yes	11%
No	34%
Never heard of Constitution Day	51%
DK/Ref	4%

31. Since 1990, Channel One has been a leading source of news and information for young people, delivering news broadcasts to more than 7 million teens in middle schools and high schools across the country. Have you ever heard anything before about Channel One’s broadcasts?

	2007
Yes	36%
No	56%
DK/Ref	8%

32. Does your high school currently receive Channel One broadcasts?

	2007
Yes	27%
No	50%
DK/Ref.	23%

33. How often have you viewed a Channel One broadcast?

	2007
Everyday	12%
Several times a week	7%

About once a week	7%
Less than once a week	11%
Never	63%

## KNIGHT FOFA – HIGH SCHOOL PARENT SURVEY – 2007

1. Which of the following sources do you consider your main source of news?

2007

Newspapers in print form	46%
Newspapers on online	11%
Radio news broadcasts	24%
Television news broadcasts	62%
Television on-line websites	4%
Internet service provider websites such as Google or Yahoo News	17%
Blogs	1%
Entertainment programs featuring current events	5%

2. How often, if at all, do you get news and information from online or Internet sources in general?

2007

Everyday	33%
Several times a week	23%
About once a week	15%
Less than once a week	16%
Never	13%

3. Short for “web logs,” “blogs” are defined as online journals in which people post diary entries about their personal experiences and opinions, to be read online by others. How often, if at all, do you get news and information from blogs?

2007

Everyday	2%
Several times a week	3%
About once a week	3%
Less than once a week	14%
Never	77%

4. How often, if at all, do you get news and information from mobile devices such as a cell phone or a BlackBerry?

2007

Everyday	5%
Several times a week	2%
About once a week	2%
Less than once a week	5%
Never	86%

5. How often, if at all, do you watch videos on websites such as “Youtube” or “Google video”?

2007

Everyday	1%
Several times a week	5%
About once a week	8%
Less than once a week	26%
Never	61%

6. Now thinking about what you do online... How often, if at all, do you ... use the Internet, the World Wide Web or an online service to send or receive e-mails to select individuals or groups of individuals?

2007

Everyday	64%
Several times a week	15%
About once a week	8%
Less than once a week	7%
Never	6%

7. Now thinking about what you do online... How often, if at all, do you ... use the Internet, the World Wide Web or an online service to participate in online discussions or chat groups?

2007

Everyday	4%
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Several times a week	3%
About once a week	4%
Less than once a week	12%
Never	78%

8. Now thinking about what you do online... How often, if at all, do you ... use the Internet, the World Wide Web or an online service to post messages or opinions to online columns or blogs that may be read by the general public?

2007

Everyday	1%
Several times a week	3%
About once a week	1%
Less than once a week	13%
Never	82%

9. The First Amendment became part of the U.S. Constitution more than 200 years ago. This is what it says:

*“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.”*

Based on your own feelings about the First Amendment, please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statement: *The First Amendment goes too far in the rights it guarantees.*

2007

Strongly agree	6%
Mildly agree	21%
Mildly disagree	20%
Strongly disagree	47%
Don't know	6%

10. Overall, do you think the *press in America* has too much freedom to do what it wants, too little freedom to do what it wants, or is the amount of freedom the press has about right?

2007

Too much freedom	40%
Too little freedom	8%
About right	46%
Don't know	6%

11. People should be allowed to express unpopular opinions.

2007

Strongly agree	62%
Mildly agree	31%
Mildly disagree	4%
Strongly disagree	1%
Don't know	2%

12. People should be allowed to burn or deface the American flag as a political statement.

2007

Strongly agree	10%
Mildly agree	8%
Mildly disagree	9%
Strongly disagree	70%
Don't know	2%

13. Musicians should be allowed to sing songs with lyrics that others might find offensive.

2007

Strongly agree	22%
Mildly agree	34%
Mildly disagree	20%
Strongly disagree	21%
Don't know	3%

14. Newspapers should be allowed to publish freely without government approval of a story.

2007

Strongly agree	56%
Mildly agree	26%
Mildly disagree	10%
Strongly disagree	6%
Don't know	2%

15. High school students should be allowed to report controversial issues in their student newspapers without the approval of school authorities.

2007

Strongly agree	20%
Mildly agree	27%
Mildly disagree	28%
Strongly disagree	24%
Don't know	0%

16. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?  
*"Americans don't appreciate First Amendment freedoms the way they ought to."*

2007

Strongly agree	29%
Mildly agree	41%
Mildly disagree	15%
Strongly disagree	6%
Don't know	9%

- 16a. Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statement: To be an American means, at least in part, to accept the responsibility to guard the rights of others, even those with whom we deeply disagree"

2007

Strongly agree	52%
Mildly agree	39%
Mildly disagree	7%
Strongly disagree	2%

17. Are the rights guaranteed by the First Amendment something you personally think about or are they something you take for granted?

2007

Personally think about	48%
Take for granted	44%
Don't know	7%

18. How much, if at all, does the following statement apply to your school: "My school has made specific efforts to promote the First Amendment principles through school activities, conversations and/or policies."

2007

A Lot	11%
Some	51%
Only a little	25%
Not at all	12%

20. How important do you feel it is that ALL students be taught as part of the curriculum how to distinguish news from entertainment or other types of items that may be disseminated to the public?

2007

Very important	74%
Somewhat important	22%
Not too important	2%
Not important at all	1%
Don't know	1%

21. Below is a list of some stories that have appeared in the news recently. Please indicate, with the corresponding number in the space provided, whether you think the story is:

- a. Britney Spears shaving her head:

2007

Extremely important	0%
Very important	0%
Somewhat important	3%
Not that important	97%

- b. A presidential candidate giving a speech on tax policy:

2007

Extremely important	27%
Very important	42%
Somewhat important	30%
Not that important	1%

- c. The latest bombing in Iraq that killed U.S. military personnel:

2007

Extremely important	53%
Very important	36%
Somewhat important	10%
Not that important	1%

- d. Recent declines in the Dow Jones Industrial stock average:

2007

Extremely important	13%
Very important	42%
Somewhat important	39%
Not that important	5%

- e. Highlights of the latest round of the NBA basketball playoffs:

2007

Extremely important	2%
Very important	5%
Somewhat important	32%
Not that important	61%

22. Now I'd like you to go back through the list of stories. Please indicate, with the corresponding number in the space provided, how interested you are in each story:

a. Britney Spears shaving her head:

2007

Extremely interested	1%
Very interested	1%
Somewhat interested	8%
Not that interested	91%

b. A presidential candidate giving a speech on tax policy:

2007

Extremely interested	18%
Very interested	25%
Somewhat interested	42%
Not that interested	15%

c. The latest bombing in Iraq that killed U.S. military personnel:

2007

Extremely interested	41%
Very interested	33%
Somewhat interested	23%
Not that interested	3%

d. Recent declines in the Dow Jones Industrial stock average:

2007

Extremely interested	12%
Very interested	31%
Somewhat interested	37%
Not that interested	20%

e. Highlights of the latest round of the NBA basketball playoffs:

2007

Extremely interested	3%
Very interested	7%
Somewhat interested	21%
Not that interested	69%

23. Please agree or disagree with the following statement: “In general, parents are currently taking enough steps to limit inappropriate uses of the Internet by their own children”

2007

Strongly agree	7%
Mildly agree	22%
Mildly disagree	29%
Strongly disagree	41%

24. Have you placed any restrictions on your child’s use of the Internet?

2007

Yes	79%
No	21%

## HIGH SCHOOL FACULTY SURVEY – 2004, 2006 & 2007

1. Which of the following sources do you consider your main source of news?

	2007
Newspapers in print form	39%
Newspapers online	15%
Radio news broadcasts	23%
Television news broadcasts	59%
Television on-line websites	5%
Internet server provider websites such as Google	17%
Blogs	2%
Entertainment programs featuring current events	3%

2. During the past year, have you taught any classes that dealt primarily with journalism skills?

	2004	2006	2007
Yes	7%	8%	12%
No	93%	92%	88%

3. During the past year, have you taught any classes that dealt with the First Amendment?

	2004	2006	2007
Yes	24%	29%	26%
No	76%	71%	74%

4. During the past year, have you taught any classes that discuss the role of media in society?

	2004	2006	2007
Yes	42%	44%	44%
No	58%	56%	56%

5. During the past year, have you required as an assignment that your students read a newspaper or watch the television news, and if so, how often were they required to do so?

	2004	2006	2007
Never	44%	45%	38%
Once per year	12%	11%	19%
On a quarterly basis	17%	16%	20%
On a monthly basis	12%	11%	11%
On a weekly basis	14%	17%	12%

6. If you did require that students read a newspaper or watch the television news, which (if any) of the following activities did you require as part of that class assignment?

	2004	2006	2007
Students wrote reports 33%	48%	26%	
Students wrote a letter to the editor/station manager 9%	8%	3%	
Students gave oral presentations to the class 33%	39%	21%	
No activities required 34%	9%	8%	
Other _____ 21%	34%	21%	

7. During the past year, how often did you require as part of an assignment that your students do research using the World Wide Web or the Internet?

	2006	2007
Never	14%	17%
Once per year	14%	18%
On a quarterly basis	34%	29%
On a monthly basis	26%	25%
On a weekly basis	12%	11%

8. If you did require that students do research using the World Wide Web or the Internet, which (if any) of the following activities did you require as part of that class assignment?

2007

Students wrote reports	65%
Students wrote a letter to the Internet site editor	4%
Students gave oral presentations to the class	52%
No activities required	16%
Other _____	16%

9. How important do you feel it is that ALL students be taught as part of the curriculum how to distinguish news from entertainment or other types of information that may be disseminated to the public?

2007

Very important	75%
Somewhat important	21%
Not too important	2%
Not important at all	1%
Don't know	2%

10. The First Amendment became part of the U.S. Constitution more than 200 years ago. This is what it says:

*“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.”*

Based on your own feelings about the First Amendment, please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statement: The First Amendment goes too far in the rights it guarantees.

2004    2006    2007

Strongly agree	9%	12%	8%
Mildly agree	20%	21%	20%
Mildly disagree	16%	12%	20%
Strongly disagree	50%	50%	43%
Don't know	5%	5%	8%

11. Overall, how would you rate the job that the American educational system does in teaching students about First Amendment freedoms?

	2004	2006	2007
Excellent	7%	6%	7%
Good	46%	42%	40%
Fair	29%	33%	36%
Poor	7%	9%	8%
Don't know	11%	10%	9%

12. Overall, do you think the press in America has too much freedom to do what it wants, too little freedom to do what it wants, or is the amount of freedom the press has about right?

	2004	2006	2007
Too much freedom	38%	29%	41%
Too little freedom	8%	10%	7%
About right	49%	55%	46%
Don't know	6%	6%	6%

13. People should be allowed to express unpopular opinions.

	2004	2006	2007
Strongly agree	72%	75%	62%
Mildly agree	25%	21%	32%
Mildly disagree	2%	3%	3%
Strongly disagree	1%	1%	2%
Don't Know	1%	0%	2%

14. People should be allowed to burn or deface the American flag as a political statement.

	2004	2006	2007
Strongly agree	15%	16%	12%
Mildly agree	13%	13%	12%
Mildly disagree	11%	11%	11%
Strongly disagree	59%	58%	61%
Don't know	2%	2%	3%

15. Musicians should be allowed to sing songs with lyrics that others might find offensive.

	2004	2006	2007
Strongly agree	28%	35%	25%
Mildly agree	30%	29%	30%
Mildly disagree	19%	19%	21%
Strongly disagree	21%	15%	22%
Don't know	2%	2%	3%

16. Newspapers should be allowed to publish freely without government approval of a story.

	2004	2006	2007
Strongly agree	53%	57%	49%
Mildly agree	27%	22%	28%
Mildly disagree	12%	13%	15%
Strongly disagree	6%	7%	5%
Don't know	2%	1%	3%

17. High school students should be allowed to report controversial issues in their student newspapers without the approval of school authorities.

	2004	2006	2007
Strongly agree	13%	13%	12%
Mildly agree	26%	27%	23%
Mildly disagree	27%	28%	24%
Strongly disagree	33%	31%	38%
Don't know	1%	1%	3%

18. Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statement:  
 "To be an American means, at least in part, to accept the responsibility to guard the rights of others, even those with whom we deeply disagree."

	2007
Strongly agree	59%
Mildly agree	35%
Mildly disagree	5%
Strongly disagree	2%

19. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: "Americans don't appreciate the First Amendment the way they ought to."

	2004	2006	2007
Strongly agree	30%	32%	40%
Mildly agree	43%	47%	40%
Mildly disagree	14%	12%	10%
Strongly disagree	5%	4%	4%
Don't know	7%	5%	7%

20. Are the rights guaranteed by the First Amendment something you personally think about or are they something you take for granted?

	2004	2006	2007
Personally think about	50%	49%	49%
Take for granted	46%	47%	47%
Don't know	4%	4%	5%

21. What about most people in the United States – do you think the rights guaranteed by the First Amendment are something people specifically think about or are they something they take for granted?

	2004	2006	2007
Personally think about	7%	5%	8%
Take for granted	86%	89%	85%
Don't know	7%	6%	7%

22. Below is a list of some stories that have appeared in the news recently. Please indicate, with the corresponding number in the space provided, whether you think the story is:

a. Britney Spears shaving her head

	2007
Extremely important	1%
Very important	0%
Somewhat important	3%
Not that important	96%

b. A presidential candidate giving a speech on tax policy

	2007
Extremely important	35%
Very important	45%
Somewhat important	20%
Not that important	1%

- c. The latest bombing in Iraq that killed U.S. military personnel

2007

Extremely important	48%
Very important	36%
Somewhat important	14%
Not that important	1%

- d. Recent declines in the Dow Jones Industrial stock average

2007

Extremely important	17%
Very important	45%
Somewhat important	34%
Not that important	3%

- e. Highlights of the latest round of the NBA basketball playoffs

2007

Extremely important	3%
Very important	8%
Somewhat important	38%
Not that important	52%

23. Now I'd like you to go back through the list of stories. Please indicate, with the corresponding number in the space provided, how interested you are in each story:

- a. Britney Spears shaving her head

2007

Extremely interested	1%
Very interested	2%
Somewhat interested	11%
Not that interested	87%

b. A presidential candidate giving a speech on tax policy

2007

Extremely interested	22%
Very interested	30%
Somewhat interested	33%
Not that interested	15%

c. The latest bombing in Iraq that killed U.S. military personnel

2007

Extremely interested	38%
Very interested	31%
Somewhat interested	28%
Not that interested	3%

d. Recent declines in the Dow Jones Industrial stock average

2007

Extremely interested	14%
Very interested	29%
Somewhat interested	37%
Not that interested	21%

e. Highlights of the latest round of the NBA basketball playoffs

2007

Extremely interested	7%
Very interested	15%
Somewhat interested	23%
Not that interested	55%

24. How important do you feel it is that ALL students be allowed to freely post material to blogs within the school itself during breaks in classroom instruction or other free periods?

2007

Very important	3%
Somewhat important	11%
Not too important	21%
Not important at all	58%
Don't know	7%

25. How much, if at all, does the following statement apply to your school: "My school has made specific efforts to promote the First Amendment principles through school activities, conversations and/or policies."

2007

A lot	8%
Some	55%
Only a little	29%
Not at all	9%

26. Have you ever received any formal instruction in the First Amendment?

2004    2006    2007

Yes	51%	57%	58%
No	49%	43%	42%