**Making Homework Work**

Faculty Professional Development Workshop

Presented by Dr. Denise Pope, Co-founder, Challenge Success and Senior Lecturer, Stanford University

**Audience:** Middle and High School Teachers

**Overview**

This 90-minute, interactive, recorded workshop examines critical questions that educators confront every day: What is the purpose of homework? How much homework is appropriate? What kinds of homework policies and practices are most effective? This workshop will help you change the homework conversation at your school and address the tension that teachers, parents, and students all feel.

This workshop is designed for teachers and administrators and should be viewed in cross-departmental group learning environments. The recording itself is just under 1 hour, with an additional 30 minutes expected for group work and discussion.

**Learning Objectives**

In this workshop, participants will:

* Learn the latest trends and research on homework
* Discuss best practices for creating effective homework assignments
* Examine the concerns about homework in your school community and explore practical and effective solutions

**Accessing the video link**

* Our videos are privately hosted on Vimeo and require that you have a free Vimeo account to view them. Please follow the steps outlined here to gain live access to the video link below.
* Access the Making Homework Work Professional Development Workshop for High School Educators here and for Middle School Educators here. If you have trouble launching your recording after being granted individual access, check to make sure you are logged into your Vimeo account.

**Preparing for your Workshop**

* Confirm that you have a reliable internet connection and the appropriate technology to support viewing in a group setting. We recommend doing a test run before your event.
* Copy workshop materials. You’ll need 1 packet for each group of 2-3 individuals.

**Workshop Facilitator Instructions**

* Ask workshop participants to sit in small groups of 2 or 3. For best results, ensure that teachers work with peers from other departments.
* Inform participants that this video is interactive and there will be times when they are asked to raise their hands, give a thumbs-up or -down, and engage in small group discussion. Encourage active participation and request that the group be honest and withhold judgment of themselves and others.
* **Pause for Live Group Discussion:**
	+ Approximately 25 minutes into the recorded workshop, you will be prompted to stop the video for small group discussion. At this time, pause the recording, pass out the workshop materials, and have your groups get started.
	+ Allow participants 20-25 minutes to work together and discuss the homework samples.
* Reconvene your participants when you are ready to resume the video portion of the workshop. You will see a 10 second countdown on the screen so you know exactly when Dr. Pope will come back on.

**Technical Considerations**

The Vimeo platform is highly stable and works well in a wide range of settings; however, here are a few technical items to consider as you set up for group viewing:

* We recommend using Google Chrome as your Internet browser.
* Be sure that all other browser tabs are closed and no other programs are running in the background.
* A successful screening will depend on the school’s technical capacity, including reliability of equipment and access to on-the-ground IT support.

**About Us**

**Dr. Denise Pope** is a senior lecturer at the Stanford University Graduate School of Education and co-founder of Challenge Success. Dr. Pope specializes in student engagement, curriculum studies, qualitative research methods, and service learning. She is lead author of the recent book, *Overloaded and Underprepared: Strategies for Stronger Schools and Healthy, Successful Kids* and lectures nationally on parenting techniques and pedagogical strategies to increase student well-being, engagement with learning, and integrity.

**Challenge Success** provides schools and families with the information and strategies they need to create a more balanced and academically fulfilling life for their kids. We work with teams of educators, parents, and students at schools to identify problems and implement best practices and policies in areas such as curriculum, assessment, homework, school schedule, and a healthy school climate. We provide support to parents by giving them the tools to help their children regain their balance, strengthen their sense of self, increase their motivation and critical thinking skills, and learn how to deal effectively with the inevitable challenges of life. And we conduct, collect, and synthesize research, so that the public can make informed decisions that will enable all children to thrive. Visit [www.challengesuccess.org](http://www.challengesuccess.org) for more information.

**Homework Resources for Educators**

Challenge Success offers the following suggestions and resources to help identify next steps and build consensus for policy and practice changes around homework.

* Read Chapter 3, The Homework Dilemma, in the Challenge Success book, [*Overloaded and Underprepared: Strategies for Stronger Schools and Healthy, Successful Kids*](http://www.amazon.com/Overloaded-Underprepared-Strategies-Stronger-Successful/dp/1119022444/ref%3Dsr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1436912888&sr=1-1&keywords=underprepared)*.*
* Download the Challenge Success whitepaper: [Changing the Conversation about Homework](http://challengesucc.wpengine.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/ChallengeSuccess-Homework-WhitePaper.pdf#http://challengesucc.wpengine.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/ChallengeSuccess-Homework-WhitePaper.pdf). Share this publication with various stakeholders in the community to begin the dialogue about homework. This paper offers an overview of homework research and includes tips and citations for further reading.
* Provide a parent education workshop for parents about their role with homework. Click [here](http://www.challengesuccess.org/parents/presentations/#http://www.challengesuccess.org/parents/presentations/) to learn more about the *Parents and Homework: What is Your Role?* presentation.
* View our [vodcast](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C37PV2xDpmY#https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C37PV2xDpmY%20) detailing how two schools changed their homework policies.
* Consider trying these homework strategies at your school:
	+ Examine your own homework assignments using the Challenge Success cover sheet to assess each of the areas identified in the workshop
	+ Staple the cover sheet to homework assignments for feedback from students about the different areas
	+ Host an “in class” homework campaign and allow students to complete assignments in class to see how much time it takes them to complete
	+ Have students keep a homework log or diary for a period of time
	+ Consider providing no homework weekends and vacations
	+ Provide an opt-in or opt-out of homework option
	+ Poll students as to what they actually learn from the homework
	+ Offer no-homework electives
	+ Teach a unit with no homework and compare the assessment results with previous years
	+ Provide voice and choice for homework assignments
* Use both pages of our [time management and scheduling tool](http://www.challengesuccess.org/resources/school-resources/from-our-partner-schools/#http://www.challengesuccess.org/resources/school-resources/from-our-partner-schools/) to help students plan their course load each semester. The tool allows students to enter total homework time for all of their proposed courses, along with estimated time for extracurriculars and other activities, including sleep. Page two must be developed with input from with students, faculty, and administrators to ensure a more balanced student schedule.
* Host a Shadow Day. The exercise allows teachers to experience homework from the students’ perspective. Full protocol available in our [book](https://www.amazon.com/Overloaded-Underprepared-Strategies-Stronger-Successful/dp/1119022444).
* Conduct student fishbowls on various topics (stress, homework, school climate) and learn from students about their perceptions. Fishbowl directions and sample questions are included in our [book](https://www.amazon.com/Overloaded-Underprepared-Strategies-Stronger-Successful/dp/1119022444).
* [School Surveys](http://www.challengesuccess.org/schools/school-surveys/#http://www.challengesuccess.org/schools/school-surveys/) **-** Stanford Survey of Adolescent Student Experiences –survey students to pinpoint areas of strength and areas for improvement and receive a comprehensive report.
* [School Program](http://www.challengesuccess.org/schools/new-schools/options-pricing/#http://www.challengesuccess.org/schools/new-schools/options-pricing/) **-** Site-Specific School Reform – Bring a team of educators, parents, and students to our conferences to hear the latest research on best practices and to learn from each other how to bring about lasting change. Schools work with our coaches to improve daily schedules, change homework policies, implement relevant and hands-on lessons, and create a caring climate.