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#### Key Media Contacts

Megan Fischer  
Media Relations  
Administrator  
Communications  
414-298-8789 x7407  
[mcoulomb@asq.org](mailto:mcoulomb@asq.org)

Lynda Nicely  
Media Relations  
Administrator  
Communications  
414-298-8789 x7587  
[lnicely@asq.org](mailto:lnicely@asq.org)

#### For Immediate Release

### Quality in Education: Many K-12 Students Behind in 21st Century Skills

*Schools Not Turning Out Problem-Solvers, ASQ Survey Shows*

**Milwaukee, Wisconsin, November 9, 2007** – Many kids in our nation's school systems are not being provided the skills they will need to succeed in the 21st century, according to a recent survey conducted by Harris International on behalf of the American Society for Quality (ASQ). An overwhelming majority of adults feel that students today need to improve upon skills needed for the 21st century.

ASQ conducted the survey to provide educators with a better understanding of some of the most pressing education quality concerns that are facing schools today.

The survey finds that adults do NOT think K-12 U.S. schools are adequately teaching the following 21st century skills:

- Organizational skills, e.g. to prioritize and manage time
- Communications skills, e.g. listening and speaking (49%)
- Problem-solving and reasoning (48%)
- Creativity, e.g. providing innovative solutions to everyday problems (48%)
- Teamwork and collaboration (39%)
- Science and technology (36%)

Among adults who think students today need to improve such skills, 64% of U.S. school systems are not making these skills a priority. 64% place the blame on a lack of parental involvement, 47% say kids lack motivation to succeed and 35% hold schools accountable to adequately train students.

"It's evident that many Americans believe our schools must be able to function and contribute in a highly competitive 21st century," said Jay Marino, chair of ASQ's K-12 Education Committee. "While we have been striving to improve test scores, the survey shows that the skills adults really support are efforts to improve skills like problem-solving and creativity which are not tracked on these tests." Marino is also superintendent for the Cedar Rapids Community School District.

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**Other findings:**

- Kids age 8 to 18 are significantly happier with what is k 12 education than adults (62% kids vs. 24% adults).
- In fact, nearly 9 out of 10 adults (87%) agree that the education system needs improvement with about half ( needs major improvement.
- Men are more likely than women to say that the U.S. K system is not doing an effective job of training student: problem-solving and reasoning (51% men v.s 45% woi and technology (39% men vs. 32% women) in order to 21st century.
- Of the adults who think students need to improve their in the 21st century, 34% of adults specifically place blame leaders for not having the vision to change their school say the problem is that teachers don't have the right q

**About the Survey**

Harris Interactive fielded the online survey on behalf of the An Quality between October 19 and October 23, 2007 among 2,8 ages 18 years of age or older and fielded a separate youth onl between October 17 and October 23, 2007 among 1,284 yoult estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated; a fu statement for both studies is available.

**About American Society for Quality**

The American Society for Quality sponsors the annual Nationa Conference, <http://nqec.asq.org/>, the nation's leading confere administrators, and support personnel to learn about the use c concepts that can be applied to improve U.S. schools. Since 1 offered training and other quality tools to help educators impl improvement initiatives in their districts.

The American Society for Quality, [www.asq.org](http://www.asq.org), has been the authority on quality for more than 60 years. With more than 4 and organizational members, the professional association adv: quality improvement and knowledge exchange to improve bus to create better workplaces and communities worldwide. As of quality movement, ASQ offers technologies, concepts, tools ar quality professionals, quality practitioners and everyday consi encouraging all to Make Good Great®. ASQ has been the sole the prestigious Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award since Headquartered in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, ASQ is a founding p: American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI), a prominent qu indicator, and also produces the Quarterly Quality Report.

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