

Teachers Like the Internet -- If They Use It

By Nicholas Morehead

An education technology group's recent survey found that 84 percent of teachers say the Internet improves education.

In examining the use of the Internet in the classroom, California-based NetDay (www.netday.org), also found that 87 percent of teachers said they felt comfortable using the Internet, but 60 percent reported using the Internet less than 30 minutes each day. Twenty-seven percent use it for 30 minutes to an hour. "We basically asked, "Well, all of these school connections have been made, but what's happening with them?" said Julie Evans, chief executive officer of NetDay.

"The fact that most teachers only use the Internet for less than 30 minutes a day really isn't that surprising when you consider that their No. 1 constraint is time," Evans said. "They just simply don't have the time to incorporate the Internet into their curriculum as much as they'd like to."

The survey seems to show good news in terms of bridging the digital divide, as 97 percent of teachers surveyed said they did indeed have access to the Internet. But, 77 percent agreed that teachers without Internet access in the classroom are at a disadvantage.

"(Teachers) see the value in this but haven't gotten down the road yet," Evans said, citing that 67 percent do not believe the Internet is well integrated into the classroom.

The survey indicated that there might not be much pressure to further integrate the Internet into their curriculum, as 73 percent of the teachers said that they do not feel any such pressure.

Of those who do feel pressure, 28 percent said the pressure comes from district administrators, while 26 percent cited colleagues and peers. Fourteen percent cited students, and 10 percent cited principals.

Lake Snell Perry & Associates Inc., in conjunction with the Tarrance Group, conducted the survey, which consisted of telephone interviews of 600 randomly selected public and private school teachers nationwide between Jan. 31 and Feb. 6.

Polling data was stratified geographically, based on the proportion of teachers in each state. The survey has a margin of error of plus or minus 4 percent.