***Hot Topic Questions***

1. “One hundred years ago, rather than diagnosing children with attention deficit disorder, pediatricians simply prescribed more outdoor exercise. Homework was blamed for nervous conditions in children, eyestrain, stress, lack of sleep, and other conditions. Homework was viewed as a culprit that robbed children of important opportunities for social interaction” (4).
2. Discuss the swinging pendulum throughout history in relation to the great homework debate. Why do you think it swings so clearly one way or another and doesn’t seem to ever seem to stop in the middle? Where is it now? (4-9) (16-18)
3. Discuss the five “Beliefs” pages 10-13. To what degree do you think these played a role in your own education? How do you feel about them now? Are any of them true?
4. How do the pressures in our community for our students to be successful play into the expectations parents have for homework loads? (18-19) Is excessive homework an inevitable part of the lives of students who achieve traditional academic success?
5. What are your thoughts on how homework could be widening the achievement gap for students of varied socioeconomic status? Do you consider any of the bulleted items on page 40 when assigning work to students at NBJH?
6. “Homework has become a contentious battleground in the fragile relationship between parents and schools” (44). How have the relationships between schools and parents changed? What evidence do you see of this in your interactions with parents?
7. “At the middle and high school levels, parents should back off tasks such as correcting mistakes, proofreading, or reviewing for tests. By this age, students should be self-checking and working with classmates to study or peer edit” (49). How do you feel about this? Is it realistic in our district? Would you consider giving any of the documents on pages 50-51 to parents?