

HOMEWORK

Homework is defined as student learning activities conducted outside of school hours not under the direct supervision of the professional educator.

The Board of Education believes that homework is an essential part of an effective and well-planned instructional program. Homework serves to extend learning opportunities for students beyond the classroom and the school day developing students' life-long skills and attitudes towards learning and contributing to academic achievement particularly at the middle school level.

The Board of Education acknowledges that students have many opportunities to engage in personal learning activities (such as sports, music, or scouts) and that sufficient time must be allowed for these and other family activities. Excessive homework could have negative consequences on some children producing undue stress and fatigue and denying access to leisure time. Such consequences depend greatly on the child's age, ability, and other personal factors.

The District's homework program shall vary according to the age and grade level of students. The amount of time and the rigors of homework should increase as children get older and matriculate through the grades. Consequently, the purposes and guidelines that regulate the homework program differ among the primary, intermediate and middle school years.

Quantity of Homework

The District has defined the anticipated maximum amount of homework for each grade level. Teachers are responsible to determine the amount of time expected to complete assignments. Teachers are encouraged to attempt to meet their instructional objectives through an amount of time that is less than the stipulated maximums.

Communication

Communication about homework between home and school is critical. The District Policy and the classroom teacher's homework practices will be communicated to parents/guardians each school year. Teachers will clarify with students the expected quality and estimated time for the homework program and monitor the amount of time students are spending.

Parents/guardians and students are encouraged to contact the teacher if assignments seem to be taking a great deal longer than the estimated time for completion or if the assignments are causing excessive frustration for students.

General Guidelines for the District Homework Program

The following guidelines will regulate the District Homework Program for all grades and subject areas:

1. Homework may differ in content and amount from day to day -according to students' needs to address the materials.
2. When necessary, homework assignments may need to be modified to meet the individual needs of students.
3. Under most circumstances, homework will not be assigned during weekends, vacations and breaks unless sufficient school time was already provided.
4. Materials necessary to complete the homework are readily accessible for all students.
5. Practice for instrumental music should occur in addition to academic assignments.

6. Teachers should recognize that parents may draw conclusions about the quality and relevance of the overall instructional program from their children's homework assignments.
7. If the quantity of homework increases from the previous year such increase should allow students to adjust to the new level of expectation as the year progresses.

Monitoring and Assessing

It is the role and responsibility of the school principal or administrative designee to monitor the homework program of teachers including assessing quality and length of homework. Principals should also develop ongoing procedures and systems to assess the perspective of parents and report problems to individual teachers or the faculty as a whole.

Homework Policy

Teachers are responsible to develop a homework program, appropriate to grade level that reflects the purposes, guidelines and standards of the District Policy. It is the responsibility of the principal or administrative designee to monitor the homework program by assessing the purposes and standards as defined below and to provide leadership to individual teachers or the faculty as a whole in developing a relevant and appropriate program.

Purposes of Homework**Primary Level (K-2)**

1. Engages students in a regular and ongoing reading program.
2. Provides opportunity for students to practice skills under parent supervision that are introduced by the classroom teacher during the school day.
3. Provides opportunities for struggling students or for students desiring extra challenge to receive additional help at home from parents.

Intermediate Grades (3-5)

1. Engages students in a regular and ongoing reading program.
2. Provides an opportunity for students to complete classroom assignments.
3. Reinforces the lessons of the school day and provides opportunities for students to extend learning and to practice skills.

Middle School (6-8)

1. Reinforces the lessons of the school day and provides opportunities for students to extend learning and to practice skills.
2. Provides an opportunity for students to complete classroom assignments.
3. Provides a manner by which students can demonstrate learning.
4. Enables teachers and students to more comprehensively cover a rigorous curriculum by adding more learning time.

Ancillary Purposes of Homework

Ancillary purposes of the homework program at all levels:

1. Provides opportunities for all students through the grade level to increase their development of individual responsibility, independent learning and self discipline.
2. Provides parents with an understanding of the instructional program and curriculum.

Standards for Operations**Primary Level (K-2)**

1. Students' participation in a home reading program is the most common activity.
2. Teachers may occasionally assign homework to students who need support, practice or extension of classroom lessons.
3. Parents/guardians, in consultation with the teacher, who monitor the homework of their children may extend or reduce the assigned homework according to the personal needs of the child.

4. The following is the maximum time for homework at the primary level:

Kindergarten	Reading each night
Grade 1	20 minutes daily that includes reading (Monday – Thursday)
Grade 2	30 minutes daily that includes reading (Monday – Thursday)

Intermediate Grades (3-5)

1. Independent reading should be emphasized in the homework program.
2. Homework shall serve as a factor in determining students' grades at the upper intermediate level.
3. Teachers should provide sensible make-up periods for homework that is missed due to excused absences.
4. Assignments, if practical and if applicable, should be provided so students have more than one day to complete them to provide opportunities to complete the work and engage in personal and family activities.
5. The following is the maximum weekly time that intermediate grade students should expect from Monday through Thursday.

Grade 3	180 minutes
Grade 4	240 minutes
Grade 5	320 minutes

Middle School (6-8)

1. Expectations and the amount of homework understandably will reflect the rigor of the student's academic program. Classes that meet high school requirements will require a more extensive homework program and may include assignments during weekends and vacation periods.
2. Teachers will attempt to schedule tests and major homework assignments in a manner so that students are not preparing for multiple challenges on the same day.
3. Teachers will provide sensible make-up periods for homework that is missed due to excused absences.
4. Long term assignments and projects will be scheduled in a manner that encourages students to organize and structure their personal time.
5. Homework will be used as a factor when determining student grades.
6. Sixth grade should be considered an important transitional year in which students may need support in adjusting to homework programs that are provided by more than one teacher.
7. The following is the maximum weekly time that middle school students should expect for homework Monday through Thursday, in core academic subjects, unless students are engaged in accelerated academic programs:

Grade 6	400 minutes
Grade 7	480 minutes
Grade 8	540 minutes

Annual Review

The Superintendent will provide an annual report to the Board of Education regarding the District Homework Program, assessing how well the District Policy is being implemented at each site.