

Homework Policy

The Board recognizes that development of study skills and self-discipline are integral and indispensable elements of a quality educational process.

Homework should be assigned on a routine and systematic basis consistent with the maturity, special needs, potential, and achievement level of the individual student. The student should learn that he has a responsibility for actively pursuing knowledge without immediate supervision outside as well as within the classroom.

It is critical that all students, regardless of their intellectual capacity, understand that mastery of skills is not always possible within the time constraints of the classroom. All students should exit the system with a firm foundation for pursuing knowledge and developing skills on an independent basis.

Homework should not carry the stigma of punishment. Its assignment should be specifically addressed to the objectives outlined herein.

The Superintendent is responsible for procedures that will achieve the following objectives through homework:

- Elevation of deficient performance to acceptable standards.
- Reinforcement and mastery of critical skills and concepts. Special emphasis will be placed on mastery of basic skills.
- Challenge through exploration of concepts and skills that complement and elaborate those introduced in the classroom.
- Feedback from the teacher through correction and clarification of all outside assignments.

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Home Practice Philosophy

Home practice, sometimes referred to as homework, is essential for increasing and reinforcing student learning and achievement for course standards. Through home practice, teachers provide students opportunities to increase their understanding of essential knowledge relating to course standards. Home practice means a student is engaged in applying new learning in order to get to as close to mastery of a standard as possible. Teachers should assign home practice work that extends course learning in a manner that is appropriate to a student's age, grade level, and achievement level. Home practice work may also be differentiated to meet individual students' learning needs to help increase student mastery of skills. Student participation is critical in order to receive specific feedback on how to improve and become successful in meeting course standards. In addition to increasing student achievement, home practice also provides the student opportunities to develop critical, independent study skills and self-discipline for their own educational journey.

Home Practice Guidelines and Procedures

Research provides strong evidence that, when used appropriately, home practice benefits student achievement. To make sure that home practice is appropriate, teachers should follow these guidelines:

Time Guidelines

- Carefully assign home practice so that it is appropriate to students' age and achievement levels. Also, be careful that home practice does not take too much time away from other home activities (Marzano & Pickering, 2007).
- Home practice directly related to the standards-based instructional objectives can be assigned using the following time guidelines:
 - Grades K-1: up to 30 minutes per night
 - Grades 2-3: up to 60 minutes per night
 - Grades 4-6: up to 90 minutes per night
 - Grades 7-8: up to 120 minutes per night
 - Content areas need to collaborate on how much work is given each evening.
- Larger projects or assignments should be split up over multiple days.
- Home practice times can be differentiated for the needs of each student.

Assigning Home Practice

- Assign purposeful work for students to practice at home. Focus on giving students home practice tasks such as practicing a skill that has been addressed in class to deepen the students' understanding and knowledge, providing students opportunities to extend their learning through independent investigation, or allowing for differentiation that allows students to explore topics of their own interest (Marzano & Pickering, 2007).
- Create home practice opportunities that maximize chances for student completion and success. Ensure home practice is the appropriate level of difficulty for each student so that they may complete the assignments with success independently. Home practice should also be challenging enough to make it interesting and valuable as a learning tool (Marzano & Pickering, 2007).
- When evaluating home practice, the teacher should provide students valuable feedback on their learning in a variety of ways. Feedback is critical for improving student achievement.

Parental Involvement

- Parental involvement in home practice should be supportive of student learning without the expectation that parents are teachers at home or are there to police the students' homework completion. Possibly have parents assist by listening to their students summarize their learning. It is important to recognize that each student has a different support system at home and that successful home practice should be possible for each student in each different home environment (Marzano & Pickering, 2007).

Making Up Assignments

- Students may make up assignments missed due to absences. Students shall be allowed the same number of days to complete make up work as they were absent, plus one. In order to alleviate a heavy workload during the school week, teachers may extend the makeup work deadline through the next weekend so that work will be turned in on the following Monday. Students may turn in work sooner.

Reference: Marzano, R. & Pickering, D. (2007). The Case for and Against Homework. *Responding to Changing Demographics*, 64(6), 74-79. Retrieved from: <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/mar07/vol64/num06/The-Case-For-and-Against-Homework.aspx>