



South San Francisco
UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Homework Practices Community Forum

10.24.2019

SSFUSD Board Policy Regarding Homework (BP 6154)

The Governing Board recognizes that homework contributes toward building responsibility, self-discipline and life-long learning habits, and that time spent on homework directly influences students' ability to meet the district's academic standards. The Board expects students, parents/ guardians and staff to view homework as a routine and important part of students' daily lives.

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that administrators and teachers develop and implement an effective homework plan at each school site. **As needed, teachers may receive training in designing relevant, challenging and meaningful homework assignments that reinforce classroom learning objectives.** Teachers' expectations related to homework may be addressed in their evaluations.

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Although it is the student's responsibility to do most homework assignments independently, the Board expects teachers at all grade levels to use parents/ guardians as a contributing resource. When students repeatedly fail to do their homework, parents/ guardians shall be notified and asked to contact the teacher.

To further support students' homework efforts, the Superintendent or designee may establish and maintain telephone help lines and/ or after-school centers where students can receive encouragement and clarification about homework assignments from teachers, volunteers and/ or more advanced students who are performing community service. The Board encourages the Superintendent or designee to design class and transportation schedules that will enable students to make use of homework support services.

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Makeup Work

Students who miss school work because of an **excused absence shall be given the opportunity to complete all assignments and tests that can be reasonably provided.** As determined by the teacher, the assignments and tests shall be reasonably equivalent to, but not necessarily identical to, the assignments and tests missed during the absence. **Students shall receive full credit for work satisfactorily completed within a reasonable period of time.** (Education Code [48205](#))

Students who miss school work because of unexcused absences may be given the opportunity to make up missed work for full or reduced credit. Teachers shall assign such makeup work as necessary to ensure academic progress, **not as a punitive measure.**

What The Research Suggests

“Homework can indeed produce academic benefits, such as increased understanding and retention of the material, says Duke University social psychologist Harris Cooper, PhD, one of the nation's leading homework researchers. But not all students benefit. In a review of over 60 studies published from 1987 to 2003, Cooper and his colleagues found that the positive correlation was much stronger for secondary students, those in grades 7 through 12, than those in elementary school.

(*Review of Educational Research*, 2006).

What The Research Suggests

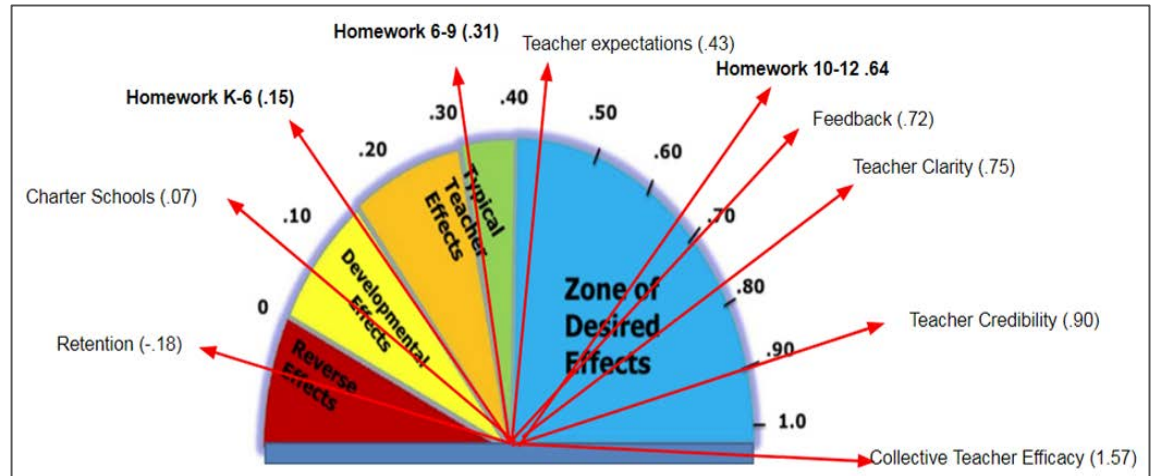
“Homework which is planned is more beneficial than routine homework and not linked with what is being learned in class. It should never be used as a punishment or penalty for poor performance and that a variety of tasks with different levels of challenge is likely to be beneficial. **The quality of homework is more important than the quantity.** Pupils should receive feedback on homework which is specific and timely. Teachers should also ensure that the purpose of homework is made clear to children.”

(Source: Education Endowment Foundation)

Impact of Homework by Grade Level - Cooper (1989a)

In one of the biggest meta-analysis done on homework, Cooper (1989a) reported the following effect sizes (ES).

- ❑ Grades K-3: ES = n/ a
- ❑ Grades 4–6: ES = .15
- ❑ Grades 7–9: ES = .31
- ❑ Grades 10–12: ES = .64



10 Minute Rule

The National PTA and the National Education Association recommendations fall in line with general guidelines suggested by researcher Harris Cooper: 10-20 minutes per night in the first grade, and an additional 10 minutes per grade level thereafter.

K	1st	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th
-	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100	120

Possible Positive Effects Homework

1. Research shows homework can increase in student achievement, especially at the secondary level.
2. Homework can increase student understanding and retention as well as improve critical thinking skills.
3. Homework allows parents the ability to be involved with their child's learning.
4. Homework can help students develop study skills and habits and increase students' willingness to learn independently.
5. Homework can help students develop personal responsibility and time-management skills.
6. Homework assignments that tap into students' interests can be motivating.

Possible Negative Effects of Homework

1. Too much homework can harm students' health and impact quality family time.
2. Too much homework diminishes in its effectiveness and can have a negative effect on student achievement.
3. Homework may disadvantage low-income students and widen the achievement gap
4. Lack of completion of homework can significantly skew grades and result in disciplinary actions.
5. Homework can cause friction within the family and between home and school.
6. Homework can encourage academic dishonesty.

Community Feedback Open Forum

SSFUSD's school board now encourages community members to openly express their thoughts about homework and its impact on students.

Some possible things to consider:

1. Hopes you have regarding homework and homework policies in SSFUSD.
2. Concerns you have regarding homework and homework policies.
3. Possible solutions to concerns raised regarding homework.
4. Any other feedback you want the Board and staff to take under consideration as they explore revising homework policies.

What's a Good Practice?

Experts advise schools or districts to include teachers, parents, and students in any effort to set homework policies. Policies should address the purposes of homework; amount and frequency; school and teacher responsibilities; student responsibilities; and, the role of parents or others who assist students with homework. (NEA)



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Thank You!

Works Cited

[Synthesis of Research on Homework, Cooper, C., \(2009\)](#)

[Research Spotlight on Homework, NEA Reviews of the Research on Best Practices in Education, National Education Foundation \(NEA\)](#)

[Does Homework Improve Academic Achievement? A Synthesis of Research, 1987–2003 Cooper, H., Robinson, J. C., & Patall, E. A. \(2006\)](#)

[Special Topic / The Case For and Against Homework, Marzano, R., Pickering, D., \(2007\)](#)

[Hattie Ranking: 252 Influences And Effect Sizes Related To Student Achievement](#)

[The Cult of Homework America's devotion to the practice stems in part from the fact that it's what today's parents and teachers grew up with themselves. Pinsky, J., \(2018\)](#)

[Is homework a necessary evil? American Psychological Association](#)

[What's the Right Amount of Homework? Terada, Y., \(2018\)](#)

Research Based Homework Guidelines

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

- **Assign purposeful homework.** Legitimate purposes for homework include introducing new content, practicing a skill or process that students can do independently but not fluently, elaborating on information that has been addressed in class to deepen students' knowledge, and providing opportunities for students to explore topics of their own interest.
- **Design homework to maximize the chances that students will complete it.** For example, ensure that homework is at the appropriate level of difficulty. Students should be able to complete homework assignments independently with relatively high success rates, but they should still find the assignments challenging enough to be interesting.
- **Involve parents in appropriate ways** (for example, as a sounding board to help students summarize what they learned from the homework) without requiring parents to act as teachers or to police students' homework completion.
- **Carefully monitor the amount of homework assigned so that it is appropriate to students' age levels** and does not take too much time away from other home activities.