

Homework/Makeup Work

Alameda Unified School District Values

Homework is defined as school-related and assigned work completed beyond the regular school day. Homework may be assigned when necessary to support classroom lessons, enable students to complete unfinished assignments, or review and apply academic content for better understanding.

The following values are foundational to the district's vision for effective implementation of a school sites homework policy:

1. Parents/guardians and teachers shall be mindful of the need for students to live balanced lives so they may achieve optimal health, development and learning.
2. Homework shall have a positive impact on learning and achievement.
3. Homework shall have a positive impact on student attitude, self-esteem, and healthy development of the whole student.
4. Homework shall be the work of the student.
5. Teachers shall not be required to assign homework.
6. All supplies, materials, and equipment needed to complete assigned homework shall be provided to pupils free of charge.
7. No assignment shall be made which is punitive in nature.
8. Loss of recess shall not be a consequence for lack of homework completion.
9. Whenever possible, homework should take into consideration individual student needs and abilities through various forms of differentiation. Homework assigned should be appropriate to the student's age and developmental level with regard to length of assignment and time available for completion.
10. Accommodations or modifications specified in IEP/504 plans shall take precedence over any of the requirements/guidance stated in this policy.

The Board acknowledges the body of scholarly research demonstrating the minimal to modest impact of homework on student achievement. This acknowledged research, including meta-analyses by researchers such as Harris Cooper and John Hattie, have been unable to reveal a significant positive impact at the elementary level and demonstrate a moderate positive impact at the secondary level, though this impact diminishes when the quantity of homework becomes too large.

A. Purpose of Homework

When assigned, homework must include a clear articulation of the following: The purpose(s) and expected outcome(s) shall be clearly articulated in advance. There are four general types of homework that may be optionally assigned, each having a different intended purpose. The purpose of any assigned homework must be aligned with the course curriculum and be grade level appropriate. If homework is assigned, students shall be provided adequate direction and understanding of the assignment as a precedent for assigning homework. Where appropriate, classroom instructional time shall be given at the onset to assist students in effectively understanding and starting the assignment. Instruction

shall include opportunities for development of organizational and study skills. Teachers will be able to articulate, How the assignment is related to prior and/or future classroom instruction? Why is it being assigned? How will it be used?

B. The Four Types of Homework Defined

1. Practice: Work to review or reinforce skills and concepts taught in class.
2. Incomplete classwork: Work assigned during the class period that was not completed in class.
3. Review: Work that prepares students for upcoming lessons, assessments and or units of study.
4. Make up Work: Defined in accordance with educational code.

No student shall lose academic credit for any excused absence when missed assignments and tests are satisfactorily completed within a reasonable period of time. A reasonable period of time shall be defined as at least two school days per day of excused absence. Excused absences include field trips and school-sponsored sports and other activities.

Upon timely request, students shall be given the opportunity to complete all assignments and tests for full credit. As determined by the teacher, the assignments and tests can be reasonably equivalent to, but not necessarily identical to, the assignments and tests missed during the absence.

The Superintendent or designee shall notify parents/guardians that no student may have his/her grade reduced or lose academic credit for any excused absence when missed assignments and tests are satisfactorily completed within a reasonable period of time. Such notification shall include the full text of Education Code [48205](#). (Education Code [48980](#))

The teacher of any class from which a student is suspended shall give and may require, in accordance with Ed Code, the student to complete any assignments and tests missed during the suspension. (Education Code [48913](#))

Co-curricular performances/contests/events are considered instructional time. Rehearsals and practices are considered homework.

If a conflict arises between two school-related/school-sponsored activities, the parent and teacher can create a resolution that does not have an adverse effect on the student or the class grade. This may also apply to a student activity which has a significant impact on post high school planning.

(cf. [5121](#) - Grades/Evaluation of Student Achievement)

(cf. [5145.6](#) - Parental Notifications)

(cf. [5144.1](#) - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process)

C. Maximum Amount of Homework Time

In designing and assigning homework teachers shall take into account the need for students to lead balanced lives and engage in activities beyond schoolwork. This shall include consideration of the total length of time it takes to complete a given assignment as well as the time allotted for a student to work on the assignment prior to the due date. Further, this shall also include consideration of any requirement that students collaborate with each other to achieve the stated purpose and outcomes.

Homework may be assigned four nights per week, Monday through Thursday. The time limits stated below are the maximum time for any one night. (See Weekend and Holidays.) Whenever possible, teachers are encouraged to provide assignments in advance to allow flexible time management opportunities to students and their families.

When a student does not complete an assignment during the class time, s/he may be assigned the in-class work to complete in addition to the homework.

When a student takes a course which is generally offered above his/her grade level, that student can expect to spend the amount of time doing homework specified for the course level. (AP, Honors, advanced placement classes)

Although art may be a part of an assigned project in a non-art class, the evaluation of the project shall not penalize students who lack strengths in using art as a medium of expression.

Loss of recess/breaks or lunch break shall not be a consequence for lack of homework completion. While teachers may occasionally keep a student for a momentary check for understanding, recess/breaks or lunch break should otherwise not be denied.

Please use the following as a guide for the maximum time Homework should take or be assigned by grade level per day:

Transitional Kindergarten and Kindergarten (≤ 10 minutes)

First Grade (≤ 15 minutes)

Second Grade (≤ 25 minutes)

Third Grade (≤ 30 minutes)

Fourth Grade (≤ 45 minutes)

Fifth Grade (≤ 50 minutes)

Sixth Grade

Sixty minutes per day may be assigned. This includes social studies and science homework. Music practice may also be assigned 80 additional minutes per week.

Seventh - Eighth Grade

English and mathematics classes may each assign twenty minutes per day. Other academic classes, including foreign language and science, may assign fifteen minutes per day. For example, a schedule with English, Mathematics, and three other academic classes, this would result in no more than 85 minutes of homework per day. Music practice may be assigned 80 additional minutes per week.

Ninth - Twelfth Grade

English and mathematics classes may each assign thirty minutes per day. Other academic classes, including foreign language, music or science, that do not carry the designation Honors or AP may assign twenty minutes per day.

For a schedule with English, Mathematics, and three other academic classes, this would result in two hours of homework per day. High school Honors and Advanced Placement (AP) classes may require more. Consult the school's course catalog and course syllabus.

The remainder of this policy applies to all grades and all classes, including Honors and AP.

D. Weekend and Holiday Assignments

Weekend and holiday homework shall not be assigned with the expectation that it be completed during those times. For example, a one-day assignment made on Friday would not be due until Tuesday; a **two-day assignment would be due on Wednesday, and so on.**

E. Long-Term Homework Assignments

Long-term homework assignments, i.e. those assigned over more than five school days, shall provide a proportionate learning benefit relative to the time required to complete the assignment. The time needed to accomplish long-term assignments should be integrated into the total time needed for all homework assignments, short and long term.

Teachers shall provide clear, written directions for assignments. These directions to students should include all relevant information, such as the due date, the required length (if any), any required format specifics, planned checkpoints, and penalties for late or non-completion of work.

Classroom instructional time should be given at the onset of projects to assist students in understanding and starting the project satisfactorily.

Some checkpoints or scaffolding should be provided during class time with adequate feedback from the teacher with respect to student progress.

No summer homework may be assigned with the exception of Advanced Placement if required or recommended by the College Board

F. Collaboration

The Superintendent or designee shall collaborate with school administrators and teachers to develop and regularly review guidelines for the assignment of homework and the related responsibilities of students, staff, and parents/guardians. One of the goals of collaboration may be to establish common philosophies and practices across school sites, grade levels, and courses. Monthly site collaboration time as well as other staff meeting times may be used to create accessible common school-wide calendars, coordinate assignments to minimize overlapping tests and projects, and for discussion of best practices related to homework assignments.

G. Professional Development

Ongoing professional development shall focus on the quality of homework. As needed, teachers may receive training in designing relevant homework assignments that reinforce classroom learning objectives. Professional development for teachers may include:

- Training in design of relevant homework assignments that reinforce classroom learning objectives
- Training in research-based practices for grading including the specific impact of zeros
- Training in best practices for each of the four types of homework

(cf. 4131 - Staff Development)

H. Notification

At the beginning of the school year, teachers shall communicate homework expectations to students and their parents/guardians. Homework guidelines also shall be included in student and/or parent handbooks. These communications shall include the manner in which homework relates to achievement of academic standards and course content, the impact of homework assignments on students' grades, any school resources and programs that are available to provide homework support, and ways in which parents/guardians may appropriately assist their children.

Throughout the school year parents/guardians shall be provided access to the following information:

- a. What homework has been assigned and whether it will be included in a student's grade
- b. The date of assignment and due date

This shall be done in a manner that allows parents/guardians to access the above information outside of school hours and without having to travel to the physical school campus. It is recommended that such access be through direct provision of the information via an online medium, in particular at the secondary grade level where the district provides access to online course tools.

If a student repeatedly fails to complete his/her homework, the teacher shall notify the student's parents/guardians as soon as possible so that corrective action can be taken prior to the release of any final grades or report cards.

Although it is the student's responsibility to undertake assignments independently, parents/guardians may serve as a resource and are encouraged to ensure that their child's homework assignments are completed. When a student repeatedly fails to complete their homework, the teacher shall notify the student's parents/guardians as soon as possible so that corrective action can be taken prior to the release of any final grades or report cards.

I. Annual Review

On an annual basis, the Superintendent or designee shall initiate evaluation of this policy and its regulations and provide recommendations for revision as needed.

J. Roles and Responsibilities

Students are responsible for:

1. Ensuring understanding of the homework and asking for clarification or help when needed.
2. Regularly completing assigned homework in a timely manner.
3. Planning for long-term assignments, when developmentally appropriate.
4. Recording assignments in their planner or using another means of recording homework.
5. Putting forth their best effort to produce quality work.
6. Communicating to parents and teachers when homework assignments become overwhelming or if they are not consistently able to do the homework within the time guidelines, or if challenges or questions arise.

Teachers are responsible for:

1. Know and comply with the homework policy as it applies to their classes.
2. Encourage a partnership with family and students that promotes timely, regular communication and supports families in the homework process.
3. Provide multiple ways for students and parents to access homework assignments and due dates. For example, web sites, classroom postings, weekly assignment handouts, and use of planners/calendars can all be effective.
4. Communicate the objective of the homework task or explain how it helps learning and share expectations for homework with students and parents, including when it is appropriate for the student to cease working on the day's home work (e.g. it is taking too much time or the student is unable to complete the assignment independently).
5. Ensure any homework assigned is necessary, directly related to classroom instruction, and consists of clear and purposeful activities.
6. Provide feedback in a timely and clear manner so the student may incorporate that feedback into subsequent related class/course work.
7. Whenever possible, homework should take into consideration individual student needs and abilities through various forms of differentiation. Homework assigned should be appropriate to the student's age and developmental level with regard to length of assignment and time available for completion. Accommodations or modifications specified in IEP/504 plans shall take precedence over any of the requirements/guidance stated in this policy.

Parents/Guardians/Caregivers are encouraged to:

(NOTE: More student independence is emphasized as students progress toward middle and high school)

1. Encourage reading at all grade levels.
2. Make their best effort to provide an appropriate environment for homework to be done.
3. Provide a healthy balance between homework, extra and co-curricular activities, and family commitments.

4. Support their student in following-up with their teacher before, during, and/or after an absence. If an absence is planned in advance, parents/guardians/caregivers are encouraged to follow-up with their student's teacher prior to the date(s) of absence.
5. When able, check student homework to assess if the student is completing correct tasks.
6. Support students to set aside time for nightly homework and outline plans for longer term assignments.

Principals and Site Administrators are responsible for:

1. Ensuring compliance with the homework policy.
2. Coordinating school-wide resources and practices that support homework, e.g. use of planners, library facilities, academic support programs, ensuring effective communication between teachers so that homework assignments are balanced across content areas and courses.
3. Ensuring this policy is easily accessible (and translated as needed) on the school's website or upon request.
4. Supporting and facilitating teacher collaboration and professional dialogue about homework and balancing the overall load of assignments across multiple teachers.
5. Introducing parents/guardians to the homework policy within the first month of school (at minimum this should be done on Back to School Night).

The Superintendent or designee is responsible for:

1. Publicizing and making it easily available on the district's website the homework policy as adopted by the Board of Education; make translations and hard copies available as needed.
2. Providing training for administrators to work with their staff on implementation of the homework policy.
3. Crafting, publicizing, and overseeing administrative remedies that students, parents/guardians, and teachers can access in the event this board policy and/or administrative guidelines are not implemented.
4. Directing staff to design an evaluation process to be completed after the first full year of implementation of the policy. If changes are made to the policy or regulations given the outcome of the evaluation, a second evaluation will be completed after full implementation of the revised BP/AR.
5. Including at least one question assessing the quality and amount of homework in an annual school survey of parents/guardians. The Superintendent and/or designee shall monitor responses to check for policy compliance.