

DRAFT: Revised AUSD Board Policy 6154 Homework/Makeup Work

The Board of Education recognizes that meaningful homework assignments can be a valuable extension of student learning time while affirming that the school setting is the primary and most effective teaching and learning environment. Homework serves to supplement and complement classroom instruction and the Board believes, as research supports, that student learning is positively affected when homework assignments are purposeful, engaging, and appropriate in quality and quantity.

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 Superintendent or designee shall ensure that each school site develops and implements an effective homework plan that is in compliance with relevant Board Policy and Administrative Regulation.

The purpose of homework shall be to promote high quality student learning and achievement, and to nurture a desire for students to extend their learning. Homework shall be the work of the student. When assigned, homework will contribute to the healthy development of the whole student.

A student's homework performance may help, but not hurt their overall grade in the class/course. In a course with multiple grading categories, a student whose grade in the homework category is less than their grade in all other categories combined shall receive the grade without homework factored in. This shall not apply to work that, while completed in part or whole at home and subject to the overall time limitations set forth in this policy, is more appropriately placed in a non-homework grading category (e.g. projects, essays).

As an extension of the classroom, homework shall be planned, organized, purposeful, grade-appropriate, and achievable for each student. Instruction shall include opportunities for development of organizational and study skills.

Homework shall not place an undue burden on teachers, students, or families. Whenever possible, homework should take into consideration individual student needs and abilities through various forms of differentiation. Feedback and evaluation shall be timely and clear so the student may meaningfully incorporate that feedback into subsequent related class/course work. Schools are encouraged to explore opportunities to support students in need of homework assistance.

Accommodations or modifications specified in IEP/504 plans shall take precedence over any of the requirements/guidance stated in this policy.

The following assumptions are foundational to this policy:

1. Homework shall have a positive impact on learning and achievement.
2. Homework shall have a positive impact on student attitude and self-esteem.
3. Homework time shall be measured as focused time on task.*
4. This policy applies solely to assigned homework.
5. Additional teacher-guided or self-directed enrichment work is encouraged, provided no grade is assigned.

6. 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.
7. Teachers shall not be required to assign homework.

*'Focused time on task' is defined as uninterrupted time engaged in the specific homework assignment. Examples of potential interruptions include television, social media (beyond specific collaboration on the assigned task), video games, and other sources of distraction.

TYPES OF HOMEWORK

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 course curriculum and be grade level appropriate. All teachers must ask themselves the following questions when assigning any type of homework: What is it? Why is it assigned? How will it be used?

Homework Types

1. Practice: Work that reviews and reinforces skills and concepts taught in class.
 - a. Helps students develop fluency and moves learning into long term memory.
 - b. Prepares students to perform the required skill(s) independently.
 - c. Example: 3-10 math problems that reinforce the day's learning; reading to or with an adult
2. Completion: Work assigned during the school day not completed in class.
 - a. Helps prevent students from falling behind.
 - b. Complete work that was not finished in class; if student is working efficiently and regularly not finishing, teacher conference is indicated.
 - c. Example: Complete a math assignment; do a rewrite of an essay; fill out questionnaire on what went well/not well on a group project.
3. Preparation: Work that prepares students for upcoming lessons or units.
 - a. Provides background which prepares students for a study, or it helps to connect their own prior knowledge and/or experiences for an upcoming study.
 - b. Provide student with necessary books and resources prior to assignment so it is readily available in all homes to enable student with same prior knowledge as classmates when lesson begins.
 - c. Example: Student reads background information on historical event; interview a parent/adult about family traditions prior to a writing assignment on cultural traditions in our world.
4. Extension: Work that explores and refines learning in new contexts or integrates and expands on classroom learning.
 - a. Encourages students to problem solve, think creatively, and think critically.
 - b. To be effective, this homework does not require a student to learn curriculum content independently; instead, students deepen understanding and relate learning to the real world.
 - c. Example: Extend science project on 'how seeds grow' by having student take home seeds and plant, tend, and report/chart what happens.

NOTE: While the established definition of 'Homework' in this policy is 'school-related and assigned work completed beyond the regular school day,' there are range of instances in which an assignment

that is completed in part beyond the regular school day may not ultimately reside in the homework grading category.

COLLABORATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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 shall 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.

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)

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 s/he is not consistently able to do the homework by herself/himself within the time guidelines, or if challenges or questions arise.

Parents/Guardians/Caregivers are encouraged to:

(NOTE: Responsibilities for Parents/Guardians/Caregivers shift to emphasize more student independence 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. Check student homework to assess if student is completing correct tasks.

6. Support students to set aside time for nightly homework and outline plans for longer term assignments.

Teachers are responsible for:

1. Designing homework assignments that clearly articulate their purpose and expected outcome, allowing for student questions and planning.
2. Providing timely and meaningful feedback to students.
3. Ensuring any homework assigned is directly related to the classroom instruction and consists of clear, purposeful, and engaging activities.
4. Providing multiple ways for students and parents to access homework assignments and due dates within a reasonable amount of time of it being assigned, including an online medium accessible to parents/guardians and students. Where possible, homework assignments shall be provided for the following week in advance. (Example: providing the following week's reading assignments to allow for students and families to plan their time and balance competing commitments)
5. Assigning homework that is appropriate to the student's age, developmental level, skills, and individual needs.
6. Demonstrating organizational strategies for the successful completion of homework.
7. Articulating and carefully planning homework in partnership with other site teachers as appropriate to make expectations consistent.
8. Ensuring that all supplies, materials, and equipment needed to complete assigned homework are provided to pupils free of charge.

Teachers shall communicate with parents/guardians and students through an online medium about homework submission and completion within the amount of time necessary to complete the work.

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 the amount of homework assigned does not exceed what is permitted within the policy.
3. Ensuring this policy is easily accessed (and translated as needed) on the school's website or upon request.
4. Promoting teacher collaboration and supporting professional dialogue.
5. Introducing parents/guardians to the homework policy within the first month of school, (i.e., Back to School Night).

The Superintendent or designee is responsible for:

1. Publicizing and making 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 staffs 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 policy and/or its 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.

TIME

When a student takes a course which is generally offered above their grade level, that student can expect to spend the amount of time doing homework specified for the course level.

Loss of recess shall not be a consequence for lack of homework completion.

(cf. 6142.7 - Physical Education)

Should individual sites wish to redistribute the homework time allotment among subjects to better suit their curriculum, a site plan will be developed and communicated with parents and students.

Elementary Grades

There is a strong connection between reading to or with elementary children every day and student achievement. As a result, homework assigned in the early grades shall primarily take the form of silent reading or reading aloud. Assigned reading should be suited to the child's reading level. Children may always choose to read longer if they are so inclined.

Maximum Amount of Homework Time

1. Kindergarten through Second Grade:

One hundred minutes per week may be assigned. This accommodates both the adopted mathematics curriculum as well as daily reading.

2. Third Grade:

One hundred fifty minutes per week may be assigned. This accommodates both the adopted mathematics curriculum as well as daily reading.

3. Fourth Grade:

Two hundred minutes per week may be assigned. This includes science homework. Music practice may also be assigned up to 40 additional minutes per week.

4. Fifth Grade:

Two hundred twenty five minutes may be assigned. This includes social studies and science homework. Music practice may also be assigned up to 40 additional minutes per week.

5. Sixth Grade:

English, mathematics, history, and science may each assign 75 minutes per week for a maximum of 375 minutes per week.. Music practice may also be assigned 80 additional minutes per week.

6. Seventh through Eighth Grade:

English and mathematics classes may each assign 100 minutes per week. Other academic classes, including foreign language and science, may assign 75 minutes per week. For example, a schedule with English, mathematics, and three other academic classes, this would result in no more than 425 minutes of homework per week. Music practice may be assigned 80 additional minutes per week.

7. Ninth through Twelfth Grade:

English and mathematics classes may each assign 150 minutes per week. Other academic classes, including foreign language, music or science, that do not carry the designation Honors or AP may assign 100 minutes per week. For a schedule with English, mathematics, and three other academic classes, this would result in ten hours of homework per week. High school Honors, Advanced Placement (AP), and auditioned music courses may require more homework and must specify this in the school's course catalog and each course syllabus. High School Honors, Advanced Placement (AP), and auditioned music courses are also exempted from the policies below governing weekend and holiday assignments. All other elements of this policy outside of time limits apply to these courses.

Weekend and Extended Break Assignments

Homework assigned over weekend days shall be counted toward the weekly maximum amounts established above. Weeks of extended break (Fall, Winter, Spring, and other week-long breaks) do not generate a weekly allotment of time to assign additional homework. Students shall not be assigned work that is expected to be completed specifically during extended breaks.

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 formatting requirements, planned checkpoints, and consequences for late-work submitted beyond the established timeline.

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

* Teachers shall provide checkpoints or scaffolding 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 and Honors courses.

The time limits in this policy do not apply to the continuation school or independent study programs. However, homework expectations for those programs will be described in the enrollment agreement.

LATE/MAKEUP WORK

Although on-time completion of homework is important to maintain academic progress, the Board recognizes that students learn at different rates. In order to encourage student learning, students shall receive credit for work that is completed and turned in late within the time periods specified below.

Students who miss school work (including but not limited to classwork, assignments, tests, and quizzes) as a result of an absence shall be given the opportunity to complete all work that can be reasonably provided. If a particular aspect of the work cannot be reasonably provided, a comparable alternative will be provided or the assignment will not be counted toward the student's grade. As determined by the teacher, the assignments and tests shall be reasonably equivalent to, but not necessarily identical to, the assignments, quizzes, and tests missed. Students who are absent shall receive full credit for work satisfactorily completed within a reasonable period of time. For the purposes of this policy, a 'reasonable period of time' shall be defined as at least two school days per day of absence.

The Superintendent or designee shall notify parents/guardians that no student may have their grade reduced or lose academic credit for any missed assignments, quizzes, or tests that are satisfactorily completed within a reasonable period of time. Such notification shall include the full text of Education Code 48205. (Education Code 48980)

(cf. 5113 - Absences and Excuses)

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

(cf. 5145.6 - Parental Notifications)

The teacher of any class from which a student is suspended may require the student to complete any assignments and tests missed during the suspension. (Education Code 48913) However, it is the intent of this policy that students who are suspended should also have at least two school days per day of absence to complete missed work.

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

Students who do not submit assigned work when no absence is involved shall also receive credit for work that is completed and turned in. No late penalty need be imposed. If a penalty is imposed, it shall be limited to a maximum amount that is proportionate to the relative lateness of the submission. For example, if an assignment is due after a 20 day period from the initial assigning and a student turns it in one day late, the maximum penalty assigned would be 1/20, or 5% of the total value. Again, no penalty need be imposed and this establishes the maximum amount. No minimum amount is set forth in this policy.

If a conflict arises between two school-related/school sponsored activities, the student or parent/guardian and the teacher can create a resolution that does not have an adverse effect on the student or the class grade.

ACCESS AND SUPPORTS

Age-appropriate instruction may be given to help students allocate their time wisely, meet their deadlines, and develop good personal study habits.

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 a support plan may be put in place. Where possible, parents/guardians who have concerns regarding their student's homework should first approach their student's teacher in an effort to resolve issues at the lowest level.

To further support students' homework efforts, the Superintendent or designee may establish and maintain telephone help lines, provide access to school library media centers and technological resources, and/or provide before-school and after-school programs where students can receive homework assistance from teachers, volunteers, and/or student tutors. The Board encourages the Superintendent or designee to design class and transportation schedules that will enable students to make use of homework support services.

(cf. 1240 - Volunteer Assistance)

(cf. 1700 - Relations between Private Industry and the Schools)

(cf. 3541 - Transportation Routes and Services)

(cf. 5148 - Child Care and Development)

(cf. 5148.2 - Before/After School Programs)

(cf. 6112 - School Day)

(cf. 6142.4 - Service Learning/Community Service Classes)

(cf. 6163.1 - Library Media Centers)

If computer or internet-based research is assigned with homework, then an adequate amount of time in school or access at school or in a library shall be scheduled to accommodate those students who do not have access to computers or the internet at home. A list of publicly available computer/internet resources shall be provided to students in the planner and made available in site offices.

NOTIFICATION

This policy shall be included in student and parent/guardian handbooks and secondary school course catalogues, as well as on district and school websites. Means to access the homework policy shall be described in student agendas/planners.

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, course syllabi, and student agendas/planners. 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.

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.

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

8420-8428 21st Century High School After School Safety and Enrichment for Teens

8482-8484.65 After School Education and Safety Program

8484.7-8484.9 21st Century Community Learning Centers

48205 Absences for personal reasons

48913 Completion of work missed by suspended student

48980 Parental notifications

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20

7171-7176 21st Century Community Learning Centers