

HOMEWORK/MAKEUP WORK**Homework**

In keeping with the district's Mission Statement: "Develop confident, successful students in an optimal learning environment that builds on a tradition of academic excellence and fosters critical and creative thinking, strong character traits and a love of learning in each child," the Board of Trustees recognizes that a moderate amount of homework contributes toward building responsibility, self-discipline and life-long learning habits.

Homework is any assigned activity which is primarily accomplished outside of regular classroom time, has a definite relationship to the student's educational growth, is designed to reinforce classroom work, and is grade level appropriate. Homework shall not serve as a replacement for in-depth classroom lessons or teacher-directed instruction.

Research shows that as students progress through their academic lives, in middle school and beyond, homework has a positive effect on achievement. Therefore, the amount of assigned homework will increase incrementally as children proceed from grade one through grade eight. However, homework levels should reflect the important balance between the academic and other needs of children as identified by the American Academy of Pediatrics: time for physical activity, unstructured play, reading for pleasure, and family time.

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that administrators, staff, and parents implement the homework policy at each school site that is based on the Administrative Regulations of the district.

It is essential that the school ensures that homework assignments are useful, well explained, clearly understood, and appropriate to the ability and maturity level of students.

Although it is the student's responsibility to complete most homework assignments independently, the Board expects that parents support the homework process. When students repeatedly fail to complete and submit their homework, parents/guardians shall be notified by the school.

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](#))

(cf. [5113](#) - Absences and Excuses)

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

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Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

48205 Absences for personal reasons

48913 Completion of work missed by suspended student

48980 Parental notifications

58700-58702 Tutoring and homework assistance program; summer school apportionment credit

Management Resources:

SBE POLICIES

Parent Involvement in the Education of Their Children, 1994

Policy Statement on Homework, 1995

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The principal, staff and parents at each school shall regularly review the homework policy, which includes regulations for the assignment of homework and describes the responsibilities of students, staff and parents/guardians.

Definition

Homework is any assigned activity which is primarily accomplished outside of regular classroom time, has a definite relationship to the student's educational growth, is designed to reinforce classroom work, and is grade level appropriate. Homework shall not serve as a replacement for in-depth classroom lessons or teacher-directed instruction.

Purposes

Homework is planned to serve one or more of the following purposes:

- (a) Development of independent study habits, organization, and disciplined use of time.
- (b) Completion of unfinished classroom work.
- (c) Make-up of schoolwork assigned during the student's absence.
- (d) Practice or review of content previously studied.
- (e) Application or extension of concepts taught in a preceding class.
- (f) Research related to classroom activities.
- (g) Reading on varied subjects.
- (h) Use of resources such as the library, museums, and electronic media.
- (i) Provision of optional or self-selected assignments based on student learning styles, interests and/or talents.
- (j) Increase parent awareness of the teacher's expectations and curriculum.

Roles and Responsibilities in the Homework Process**School Administration****1. Communication**

- (a) The principal shall be responsible for communicating the homework policy to the school community at least once a year. This information may be shared in the school handbooks, websites, newsletters, at Back-To School Night, and parent-teacher conferences.
- (b) The school shall communicate to parents the resources available to help children successfully complete homework, including:
 - Assistance and/or tutoring that is available to children during and/or after school.

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- Hours the school's library/media center will be open for student study, research, and materials/books to check-out.
- (c) Annually teachers shall review the policy and be provided training, when appropriate, related to designing relevant, challenging and meaningful homework assignments consistent with this Administrative Regulation that reinforce learning objectives and build upon “best practices.”

2. Monitoring/Feedback

- (a) Prior to Back-To-School Night, site principal will review and discuss the homework policy with staff, enabling teachers to review and set expectations for homework at Back-To School Night parent presentations.
- (b) Site principal will meet with individual grade levels during the first trimester to discuss implementation of the homework policy. Each site will continue to work on vertical articulation in order to promote a satisfactory progression of effective homework practices from one grade level to the next.
- (c) Site principal will discuss homework best practices with staff that include the following: homework assignments posted in the classroom, estimated completion time communicated for each assignment, long-term assignments broken down into small pieces with periodic due dates, consistent source for parents to view homework assignments.
- (d) A Homework Concern Process will be in place at each site to address any issues.
- (e) The Homework Policy and Homework Concern Process will be reviewed at the start of each school year by the School Site Council and approved by the Assistant Superintendent.
- (f) In order to monitor homework policy implementation, each site will regularly submit to the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction summative data from the Homework Concern Process.
- (g) Questions regarding homework will be included in an annual LASD parent survey to be conducted near the mid-point of each year. Pertinent data will be collated, analyzed and reported to site administrators for their review with School Site Councils.

Teachers**1. In designing and presenting relevant homework assignments teachers shall:**

- (a) Provide homework that is needed, meaningful, and challenging for students; avoid activities with minimal educational value.
- (b) Assign material appropriate to the current skill and grade level of their students. State Standards (content) and State Subject-Area Frameworks (instructional practices) for each grade level shall serve as benchmarks used to gauge appropriateness of assignments.
- (c) Ensure that students receive sufficient specific instruction and explanation of subject matter prior to the assignment of homework.

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- (d) With the class clearly preview homework assignments, their due dates, and their estimated completion time. By third grade, children should write homework assignments in a homework book, homework log, or specific binder section.
2. To monitor and evaluate homework, teachers shall:
- (a) Acknowledge or grade most completed homework and promptly return it to students.
 - (b) Use homework as a tool to monitor and communicate student progress and make program adjustments.
 - (c) Teachers will communicate with students and parents the estimated length of homework assignments.
 - (d) Periodically check with students and/or parents that estimated homework times are accurate.
 - (e) Provide parents and students with email address and/or telephone number and encourage immediate feedback if the amount of time it takes to complete each homework component or the amount of nightly homework assigned exceeds LASD grade level guidelines.
 - (f) If homework assignments are regularly exceeding the LASD grade level guidelines, a teacher conference, principal conference, or initiation of the Homework Concern Process may be appropriate.
 - (g) Initiate parent-teacher conferences aimed to help children successfully complete their homework assignments.
 - (h) Regularly communicate at the grade levels and across subject areas so students do not receive an overload of homework.

Students

To do a good job with homework, students should:

1. Listen carefully to all directions regarding homework; ask questions if the assignment is not clear.
2. Complete and turn in all homework assignments on time.
3. Keep a notebook record of all assignments, including due dates and other specific requirements.
4. Have a definite time and place for study, free from interruptions, and stocked with working materials.
5. Budget time wisely and maintain a schedule for study time. Keep in mind the identified length of time the teacher has estimated each assignment should take.
6. Use libraries, dictionaries, maps and general reference materials, and learn appropriate ways to approach and question people who are knowledgeable in various fields.
7. Strive for the best results, rather than the minimum.

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8. Take the initiative in making up work missed for any reason.
9. Use a study method appropriate to the assignment – such as working independently, in a small group, as part of a team, or other useful processes or procedures.

In general, most students should be able to complete nightly homework assignments within the recommended minutes. Enrollment in advanced classes may require additional “out of class” study and homework than designated in these guidelines.

Students and parents should consider carefully the extra time required before enrolling.

Assigning homework to be completed over weekends is prohibited. Assigning homework over official breaks and holiday periods is also prohibited. Homework shall not be assigned on a Friday and expected to be returned on the following Monday. Homework shall not be assigned immediately prior to a holiday break with the expectation it is due upon return. However, long-term projects may span official breaks and multiple weekends. Families or students may choose to work on assignments during these periods at their discretion.

Parents

1. To help ensure student completion of homework, parents shall:
 - (a) In the presence of the child, exhibit positive attitudes toward homework
 - (b) Provide the child with a quiet and well-lighted study setting
 - (c) On occasion, help the child gather additional resources necessary to successfully complete homework
 - (d) Ask questions that help the child solve problems independently
 - (e) Help the child set goals, organize, and prioritize homework. Examples:
 - Set goals - parents help the child set the long term goal of being responsible for independent learning, and reinforce that goal through discussion with the child as situations arise throughout the year
 - Organize - parents help the child understand that organization of time is key to learning success. Setting a nightly parameter, perhaps when to finish rather than when to start, instills sequence in the learning process
 - Prioritize - the parents and child verbally "talk through" factors to consider when determining the order of completion of homework;
 - (f) Provide guidance, but not do homework for the child. However, the parents may provide brief help to the student when:
 - The teacher has asked for a check or critique of work completed
 - Clarification of directions is necessary

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- The student is truly stuck on part of an assignment, and brief assistance will help him/her get moving toward completion
- (g) Remember that the final homework product must be the work of the child.
- (h) Communicate with the teacher if they find that a large number of assignments are too difficult or time consuming for the child.
- (i) Keep in mind the identified length of time the teacher has estimated each assignment should take.
- (j) Read to children and encourage reading as an activity whenever possible.

Guidelines**1. Nightly or Short-Term Assignments**

Homework shall be given regularly and generally increase in time as the child progresses through the grades.

- (a) Homework shall be confined to Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.
- (b) Except for outside reading, homework shall not be assigned over weekends, holidays, vacation days, conference days or professional development days.
- (c) Completion of homework is an integral part of a student's grade.
- (d) If a child is legitimately spending excessive time nightly on homework, either the teacher or the parents shall initiate a conference. At the conference, an analysis of time spent by the child on each homework component, (math, reading, project, etc.) should be a topic of discussion. If it is determined by the teacher and parent that an accommodation is appropriate, the student shall receive full credit for work completed.
- (e) Teachers are encouraged to provide students who may need additional practice work on certain concepts with applicable re-teaching or review activities.
- (f) For a student with disabilities, accommodations or modifications to homework specified in the student's IEP or 504 Plan shall be implemented by the student's teacher(s) and the student shall receive full credit for work completed.

2. Long-Term Assignments and Homework Projects

- (a) When designing a long-term project (three or more weeks to complete), the teacher should adhere to the following criteria:
 - First and foremost - alignment with the California Content Standards
 - Level of difficulty matched to age or maturity of the student
 - Extension of themes, concepts, skills taught in class

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- Promotion of critical thinking or problem-solving skills
 - Exposure of student to data gathering, research, and digital literacy skills
 - A final product accomplished primarily by the child
 - Promotion of student organization, time management, study skills, and self-efficacy
- (b) The project's objective(s) and process should be clearly stated to pupils in class and written on the student project sheet.
- (c) The project sheet must include a written timeline, and the student should be monitored upon arrival of each timeline due date.
- (d) When grading projects, teachers are encouraged to develop and share scoring rubrics with their students. Rubrics should be objective, helping the student understand both the teacher's expectations and the criteria used for evaluation.
- (e) When a project involves group work, in-class time shall be given for cooperative group work to take place. Independent work to be completed outside of class may be assigned to each member of the group.
- (f) At K-6 schools, the child's teacher(s) shall meet to ensure that long term homework projects do not overlap; K-6 students shall not be required to work on more than one long term project during a given time period. At grade 7-8 schools, all staff members shall meet and articulate to minimize project overlap.

3. Time Spent on Homework

- (a) Acknowledging that each child is unique and that students will complete homework at varying rates, homework should be designed to not exceed the highest end of the following ranges for most Los Altos School District students:

K Occasional Short Homework

- 1 10 - 20 minutes
- 2 20 - 30 minutes
- 3 30 - 40 minutes
- 4 40 - 50 minutes
- 5 50 - 65 minutes
- 6 60 - 80 minutes
- 7-8 90 - 120 minutes (for core subjects)

- (b) Minutes represent a nightly average over the course of a week (Monday – Thursday).
- (c) Time for the student to complete both short and long term projects is included within the above minute average for each grade level. Outside reading is encouraged and expected but is not included. (This is defined as pleasure or supplemental reading, not assigned reading from a textbook or for a specific subject.) In the primary grades, the District recognizes reading with your child is very important to building for success in school. We encourage and recommend parents read with their child nightly.

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- (d) Instrumental music, grade 5-6 band and orchestra, are considered optional; therefore, they are not included within the above minute average.
- (e) Advanced Math cannot add to the grade level expectation by more than 10 minutes per night.