

**Elementary Homework Study Team Meeting Minutes**  
**10/11/2017**  
**Professional Development Center**

Present: Mandy Redfern, Elizabeth Ranjbar, Rachel Harter, Erick Valdez, Meredith Beyer, Holly Russell, Cristina Diaz, Mickey Block, Laurie Hopkins, Lori Arbucci, Jenny Franz, Kathy Selsor, Vanessa Schwartz, Christina Oakland, Karen Hurley, Debra Craddock, Emily Blaney, Wendy Sinnette, Anais Wenn, Jim Cartnal.

Meeting began at 3:34 p.m.

**Welcome and Introductions:**

All committee members introduced themselves and shared the reason they joined this committee.

**Meeting Norms:**

Meeting norms were reviewed and approved by the committee.

**Future meeting dates:**

The three meeting dates for the year are November 16, January 18 and March 8.

**Challenge Success survey:**

Jim Cartnal shared the results of the Challenge Success homework survey conducted at the high school. One third of students reported that the work they were assigned for homework was busy work, while about the same percentage reported that their homework was relevant, valid, and enhanced learning. Some students reported that they spent up to 6 hours doing homework.

**Purpose of Homework study team:**

Committee's work will be grounded in research. Current practices will be discussed and finally a recommendation will be made to adjust homework policies to share with Cabinet. Minutes with links to articles will be posted on the website to allow all teachers and parents to access.

**Discussion of Article:**

A discussion of the Challenge Success article, ["Changing the Conversation About Homework from Quantity and Achievement to Quality and Engagement."](#) was held.

Committee members shared parts of the article that stood out to them.

- Giving students options helps them feel empowered and engaged in their work.
- Homework needs to be "just right", not too difficult and not too easy. They should be able to complete it independently and it should be developmentally appropriate. If it is not just right, it is a disservice to students. However, it is challenging to design homework that is "just right."

- A first grade teacher shared their “Must do” or “May do” homework which they implemented this year.
- Another teacher spoke about the meaningfulness of the homework. Are the teachers going to check it or is it going to end up in a pile?
- Studying for tests is meaningful homework. Students may use flashcards, quizlet, kahoot, etc.
- Some students are too busy to complete homework because they are overscheduled. It does not matter what type of homework is given, they do not have the time to complete it.
- Students need to engage in play time, down time, family time.
- A teacher shared that 11 students did not complete their homework for genuine reasons. This made her reconsider assigning homework. Should she take a break from homework? Should it be having dinner with their families?
- Sometimes homework is not more meaningful than the activity they love the most. Those activities are meaningful and make them who they are.
- Some of the homework assignments are intended to prepare them for future grade levels. Can this happen at school instead of home?
- What is the purpose of homework? Teachers should keep purpose in mind when they are assigning homework.

**Non negotiables of homework:**

- Students need the structure.
- Students need to read every night. This is non negotiable.
- Parents would like to see some homework. They want to know what their children are learning in the classroom.
- Some parents do the work for the students.
- We know that there should be some homework but what type of homework is what we are going to discuss.

**Homework for next meeting:**

Teachers were asked to:

- a. Have students complete one homework assignment in class
- b. Evaluate the time spent to complete it, independence level, and learning outcome(s)
- c. Bring findings to the next meeting

**Meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.**



