

San Carlos ESD

Board Policy

Homework/Learning Beyond School Hours

BP 6154

Instruction

The Governing Board recognizes the importance of students mastering critical life skills such as responsibility, self-discipline, time-management and problem-solving, in addition to reaching expected academic standards. The Board also recognizes that regardless of whether learning is taking place in school or out of school, not all students learn best in one specific environment, or through the same activities or at the same speeds. Therefore, the Board expects that students will build academic and other skills through a variety of learning experiences that occur both within and outside of classrooms and schools.

The Board further believes that out of school learning, whether teacher-assigned or student-driven, should be purposeful and tailored to individual student needs with respect to quantity, rigor and learning objectives.

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that administrators and teachers develop and implement an effective plan that is consistent both within and across all school sites, to ensure that any assigned learning to be completed outside of school will meet the above expectations.

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that appropriate learning spaces are provided during the day and, to the degree possible, after school, to allow students to thrive and to provide students the opportunities to receive support and clarification whether from their peers, parents, volunteers, or an educator (e.g., from after school programs, tutors, flex periods, etc.).

The Board expects teachers at all grade levels to use parents/guardians and other community members as contributing resources for a child's learning. If students are struggling to master certain content or life skills at school, parents/guardians shall be notified and asked to discuss the matter with the teacher and/or other educators.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The Teacher has responsibility to encourage students to pursue their own learning outside of school and to define and communicate expectations to students and parents/guardians for all assignments, including those to be completed outside of school. The Teacher also has responsibility to incorporate and connect out-of-school learning activities into classroom instruction and will coordinate with all grade-level colleagues to ensure that expectations for out-of-school work, across all classes, are reasonable and consistent with this policy.

2. The Principal has responsibility to coordinate with staff members and communicate to parents/guardians a plan that adheres to this district policy. She/he

must take measures to ensure that only reasonable amounts of homework are assigned and that this amount does not cause undue stress or hardship for students and families.

3. Parent/guardian has responsibility to cooperatively support this portion of the educational program through encouragement and involvement with the student.
4. The Student is expected to take ownership of his or her own learning both within and outside of the classroom. She/he must organize his/her materials and complete and turn in all assignments, whether these assignments are self-selected/directed or are assigned by a teacher.
5. Parents, teachers and students have the responsibility to collaborate when a student is absent to ensure that the student has the opportunity to learn content that was missed during his/her absence and shall receive full credit for work satisfactorily completed within a reasonable period of time. (Education Code 48205)
6. The Superintendent (or Designee) will ensure that homework plans are included in the handbooks at each site and that they are consistent within and across grade levels, schools and the entire District.

Time Spent on Assignments

Research does not support the notion that a specific amount of time spent doing homework leads to higher academic achievement or school performance. As such, any specific amounts of time suggested for students that are included in school handbooks shall serve only as a general guide for students, parents and staff, and are not to be viewed as prescriptive or required.

GUIDELINES

Regardless of whether a teacher stipulates that a specific assignment or project is to be done outside of school, or whether the student is continuing work begun in class, or s/he has selected a self-driven set of assignments, the following guidelines will apply:

All Students:

Out of classroom learning will vary according to a student's grade level, ability, need and interests, whenever possible.

Students are expected to read (independently or assisted) on a daily basis. With the exception of reading, students are not expected to do teacher-assigned work over the weekends, or school holidays and/or breaks, unless the student and parents believe that weekend work is more conducive to supporting the student's learning and/or reduces stress for students and families.

Daily practice in math may be assigned in order to support students mastering critical skills required to progress to the next level in their math courses of study.

Students who wish to do more work than what may be assigned by a teacher shall be provided a menu of options (online or otherwise) that will allow them to work on a variety of relevant material at a pace selected by them.

Assessments of students' overall performance or grade in a subject shall not be overly affected by performance on homework, except to the degree that, and in instances where, the homework is intended to provide an opportunity for a child to catch up, have a second chance on a test (such as test revisions, etc.), or to demonstrate mastery on something that the student was previously unable to do.

Grades Pre-K through 3:

Time reading books and being read to by older readers or peers is the main expectation for out of classroom learning. Additional work shall be encouraged or assigned if it deepens learning of classroom projects, if it is student-driven, or if both the teacher and the parent/guardian determine that it is necessary for a specific student to master academic content.

Grades 4-5:

Students, in collaboration with their teachers (and in some cases their parents), shall be encouraged to create personalized, at-home learning goals that complement, expand and deepen lessons and learning experiences taking place during the school day. Students will also be encouraged to work independently or collaboratively on activities that will enhance an assigned piece of writing, experiment or project.

Math homework may be assigned to support students who require additional daily practice to ensure that they are mastering critical basic skills required for continued success in math as students approach middle school years. Such practice will, however, be kept to a minimum.

Grades 6-8:

Middle School Students shall be encouraged to create personalized, at-home learning goals that complement, expand and deepen lessons and work taking place during the school day. These learning goals shall include developing and practicing a variety of time-management strategies that will allow students to successfully complete long-term projects that are assigned over a period of weeks or months.

Students will also be encouraged to spend out of school learning time on activities that build character, knowledge and skills that may or may not be addressed during school hours. Examples include practicing an instrument, exploring different types of careers, serving the community, or participating in organized sports.

Additional out of school work may be encouraged or assigned if both the teacher and the parent/guardian determine that it is necessary for a specific student to master academic content.

Students taking band, orchestra or a compacted math course should expect to do additional work/practice at least 4 days a week.

SAN CARLOS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT

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San Carlos, California

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