

Little Bennett Elementary School Homework Policy



Background

Research studies have consistently shown that the amount of time devoted to learning is related to achievement in a subject. Homework, therefore, is important to a student's overall success in his/her academic program.

Additionally, homework should give the child a sense of satisfaction and achievement. It should enhance a student's self-confidence and self-esteem. Students need to be taught skills such as time and work management to accomplish these objectives.

Making homework meaningful to the student requires cooperation and communication among the teachers, students, and parents. The teacher can best determine the nature and length of homework assignments.

The Purpose of Homework

Homework is work completed outside of the classroom and is designed to:

- reinforce or provide practice of skills and concepts addressed instructionally
- extend skills and concepts addressed instructionally
- collect evidence of student understanding and application that has been taught
- prepare students for upcoming learning experiences in school

Guidelines

The teacher in accordance with the following guiding principles must carefully plan homework assignments.

- The purpose of the assignment and its relation to what has been learned in the classroom will be clearly understood by the student.
- Students will understand fully not only what to do, but also how to do it, and when it is due.
- Homework will be based on classroom tasks and projects or will focus on skill/strategy/concept reinforcement.
- Assignments will be varied and require the use of a number of skills.
- Every homework assignment will be checked for completion and may be given a grade.
- Assignments given to demonstrate mastery and to receive a grade will be evaluated by the classroom teacher. Assignments given as practice may be self-checked, checked by a paraprofessional or teacher, or shared with a peer.
- Teachers may count homework evaluated for learning toward the student's academic grade. Teachers will not count homework for practice toward the student's academic grade.
- Where team teaching is utilized, assignments will be coordinated among teachers.
- Teachers will provide students with an assignment folder/calendar in which to fully record daily and long-term assignments or in which assignments are listed. When appropriate, parent signatures on homework assignment books will be requested.
- Teachers will communicate regularly with parents to report incomplete homework assignments. Teachers will communicate about missing or incomplete assignments halfway through the grading period using an interim progress report form.
- Homework will not be assigned on designated religious holidays when students are absent because of religious observances.
- At the beginning of the year, teachers will communicate to students and parents the general homework plan for all content areas.

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Time Allotment

The National Parent Teacher Association (PTA) provides recommendations for homework duration by grade level:

Grade	Time Allotment (per day)
5	50
4	40
3	30
2	20
1	10
*Kindergarten	10

- * While the National PTA does not provide homework duration guidelines for Kindergarten, 10 minutes per evening can be expected.

These times are approximate. The skill levels of individual students should be taken into consideration. Problems or concerns should be communicated to the teacher immediately. When enough time has been allowed in school for classwork, and that work has not been completed, it may be assigned as homework; thereby exceeding the recommended daily time allotted to homework.

Student Responsibilities

With the assistance of the classroom teacher, the student will:

- take the responsibility to be aware of assignments
- organize his/her time to work on assignments
- turn assignments in on time
- finish assignments completely
- hold high standards regarding the quality of the work completed
- organize his or her materials before and after the assignment is completed

What Parents Can Do

While the student should assume the major responsibility for completing homework assignments, parents are encouraged to take an active interest in the student's homework by:

- communicating the importance of homework towards their child's learning
- providing a study area that is quiet, comfortable, and free from major disturbances
- providing a definite time for study or other home activities
- making available such resource materials as reference books, magazines, newspapers, and a dictionary
- assisting students with mastery of specific skills (i.e. math facts, letter formation)
- checking the student's work for neatness and legibility (unless directed by the teacher, students should use pencils for written work)
- arranging with the teacher for modified homework assignments when the child's individual needs require it
- monitoring their child's daily and/or weekly assignment sheets/folders/calendars and long-range assignments
- arranging with the teacher to secure assignments following a period of *excused* absence (in most cases assignments cannot be given prior to an excused absence)

Parents are permitted and encouraged to **assist** their child with homework. If a child's homework is consistently too difficult or exceeds the recommended time allotment, the child's teacher should be notified.

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Grading and Reporting of Homework Assignments

Depending upon the purpose of the homework assignment, it will count toward either the Learning Skills portion of the report card or for a grade in one or more academic subjects on the report card. More specifically:

- Teachers will give feedback, in a variety of ways, on homework that is assigned
- Homework for practice is not part of a student's academic grade and will be reported in the *Learning Skills* portion of the report card
- Teachers may grade homework that is assigned for mastery to show that a student has learned the skills or information

A carefully planned program for homework assignments is a very effective means of increasing a student's learning and improving learning skills. A well-planned program of homework activities provides another opportunity for the home and school to work together. It emphasizes the vital role both have to play in the cooperative efforts to provide a quality education for our boys and girls.

Reducing Homework Stress

The National PTA has made recommendations for parents to reduce the stress that homework occasionally creates. Their recommendations include the following.

- If your child has trouble completing homework without help, find out why.
- Talk with your child's teacher if you feel homework is excessive.
- Ask for individual adaptations for your child.
- Stop putting homework on your to-do list – gradually release the responsibility of completing homework to your child.
- Stand up for your right to a balanced family life – allowing time for play, hobbies, family time, and downtime.