



Garrett Park Elementary School Homework Policy

Philosophy

We affirm the Montgomery County Board of Education's belief that homework complements classroom learning and benefits a student's overall educational program. Research confirms that the amount of time devoted to learning is related to achievement in a subject. Further, homework provides an opportunity for students to develop personal responsibility and study skills, including good organization, self-reliance, and time management. Finally, homework informs parents about current areas of study and student working levels.

Purposes of Homework

Teachers should clearly express the purpose and objectives of homework to students and parents. The purposes of homework are as follows:

- Provide background information for upcoming lessons and units of study (Previewing)
- Provide opportunities for concept and skill development (Practice)
- Extend classroom learning and/or provide practice in applying concepts initially learned in the classroom (Application)
- Provide opportunities for extensions (Enrichment)
- Provide opportunities to identify and use resources, such as the library, the Internet, reference books, and other community resources. (Application)

Guidelines and Procedures

- Homework should be assigned three to five times a week. Below are the times, on average, that students should spend on homework each night:
 - Grades K-1: up to 20 minutes/night + independent reading
 - Grades 2-3: up to 30 minutes/night + independent reading
 - Grades 3-5: up to 50 minutes/night + independent reading

*If a student has worked constructively for the suggested time frames, but the assignment is not complete or the child is frustrated, parents are encouraged to write a note to the teacher stating this. The assignment will be counted as completed and the teacher will work with the student to address his/her needs.
- Homework will not be assigned on designated religious holidays or when students will be absent due to religious observances.
- Students may make up assignments missed due to excused absences. Note: Teachers are not expected to provide assignments in advance for absences of any type.

Evaluation and Grading

Homework will not be a significant factor in determining academic grades. In most cases, homework completion will be included on the learning skills section of the report card. Occasionally, homework will be used to assess students' learning after they have had ample practice and feedback on identified skills or concepts. In these cases, homework may be used in determining both learning skills and academic grades. Parents and students will be notified when a homework assignment will be graded.

Teacher's Job

- Communicate classroom policies and procedures to students and parents in September.
- Communicate due dates and directions for completing each homework assignment to students and parents.
- Provide homework assignments that are directly related to instructional objectives and take into account the differences among students so that it can be completed independently.
- Provide opportunities for students to ask questions and receive clarification of expectations when the assignment is given.
- Review and provide feedback to students. This feedback may include self-evaluation and/or tracking of progress, peer feedback, or teacher comments.
- Seek feedback from students and parents regarding the level of assistance needed to complete homework assignments as needed.

Student's Job

- Make sure you understand the homework when the teacher assigns it.
- Ask for help when needed.
- Complete the assigned homework neatly and hand in assignments on time.
- Review homework with parents.

Parents' Job

To help children be successful with work at home, parents can:

- Create a place that supports studying. Most children do best in quiet, well-lit environments.
- Set aside a specific time to do homework each day. Family routines, including set homework times, have been linked to higher achievement.
- Make sure children have the supplies they need to complete assignments.
- Be available if children have questions. Parents can support their children by looking over homework and giving suggestions, but should not do the homework for them.
- Let teachers know if homework assignments are too difficult or unclear. Please feel free to write the teacher a note.
- Monitor assignment completion through the use of student planners or other established classroom procedures.

(References: MCPS Homework Policy [IKB] and Regulation [IKB-RA]; *Getting the Most out of Homework*, North West Regional Educational Laboratory; *A Handbook for Classroom Instruction That Works*, Robert Marzano, revised by the Garrett Park School Improvement Team, Summer, 2009.)