



Cumberland School Department Policy Manual

INSTRUCTION

I

HOMEWORK POLICY

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PURPOSE

The Cumberland School Department recognizes that the intent and purpose of meaningful homework assigned to students can allow for the following:

Preparation: provides background information, which allows students to gather/organize information before a lesson/instruction.

Checking for Understanding: provides students and teachers the opportunity to assess students' grasp of newly acquired learning.

Practice: reinforces newly acquired knowledge and skills.

Extension of Learning: provides the pursuit of further knowledge and/or higher-level cognitive applications, or a comprehensive assignment in which students have been provided current instruction and should be completed at home.

In order to meet the needs of all learners, teachers may differentiate homework to connect content and skills most relevant to the learner. Differentiation of assignments will occur when teachers, using formative assessment strategies, have determined that assigning the same homework assignment to all learners will prevent access to relevant content, require some students to engage in work on which they have already demonstrated mastery, or prevent some students from extending their learning.

Assessment Definitions (Formative, Progress, Summative, Comprehensive):

Quality use of these scoring and reporting practices is directly dependent on the quality of formative, interim and summative assessments teachers use on a regular basis to measure achievement, growth and progress.

Formative Assessments:

Formative assessment is the ongoing collection of information that enables teachers to support a student's continuous progress towards proficiency in the academic standards. Formative assessment practices focus on learning by providing meaningful feedback and allowing students to make mistakes during the learning process and not be penalized by scores. Daily homework and classwork are considered formative assessments. Formative assessments and experiences are for feedback purposes only, and are not to be assigned a grade.



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Progress Assessments:

Progress Assessments are given to provide measurable feedback on student progress while working towards the summative. These assessments are aligned to unit targets and content standards, and are scored on department rubrics.

Summative Assessments:

Summative Assessments are designed to measure a student's proficiency of the academic standards. Summative Assessments are to be administered after sufficient formative assessments and instruction has occurred. When possible, teachers should strive for a system that assesses students at their point of readiness. Summative assessments will also be used to successfully compile a graduation portfolio, a requirement for graduation. A student that achieves standard proficiency on a school wide rubric may use the task in their graduation portfolio.

On-Demand Assessments:

On-Demand Assessments are given within the classroom, without the use of any resources, such as Unit Test or performance task. These assessments are typically given within a predetermined amount of time.

Extended Task Assessments:

Extended tasks do not have to occur within the classroom, and can be taken with the use of resources. These assessments could take the form of papers, projects, labs or presentations. Teachers will ensure timely and effective feedback on all assessments ensuring that feedback is clear, descriptive, and actionable.

Comprehensive Assessments:

Comprehensive Assessments must be developed in a manner consistent with Rhode Island's Secondary Regulations. Comprehensive Assessments are on-demand assessments that measure all academic measurement standards instructed in the marking period. These assessments will be given at the culmination of each semester (such as a midterm and a final exam), and will count toward the final average.



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Lower Elementary Homework Policy (Grades K-2)

A summary of homework research suggests the following:

1. Home assignments (such as measuring in the kitchen, cooking, and exploring nature) have a positive impact on reading, math fluency and life skills.
2. When parents read books above reading level to their child, there is a positive effect on increasing student vocabulary, comprehension, and background knowledge.
3. Game-based learning is an effective home-based strategy.

The following criteria will be observed:

- Teachers will encourage students to engage in reading 10-20 minutes per night (either being read to or reading independently). Reading logs will be required for all students.
- Along with nightly reading, teachers shall assign no more than between 30 minutes of homework and no more than 40 minutes total for all core areas on a nightly basis.
- Teachers will provide and encourage students to engage in reading and math fluency practice and games on a weekly basis.
- Teachers will encourage parents to include their children in life skills activities and the application of learning such as measuring in the kitchen, cooking, and exploring nature.
- Math homework should take no longer than 15 minutes to complete. If a student cannot complete the homework in the above-recommended amount of time and has put forth sufficient effort, a student's parent/guardian may attach a note to their work indicating that the student was unable to complete the assignment. Teachers will not penalize students; instead, teachers will utilize this information to support the needs of the individual student.
- Teachers are expected to provide written or oral feedback to students.
- Teachers will assess homework formatively. Preparation, check for understanding, and practice homework shall be assessed as a Learner Quality. Extension of Learning homework may be graded as either a Learner Quality or a Standard's Grade.
- At the onset of the school year, grade levels will develop and provide students and parents with a consistent protocol and implementation of homework practices to include missed homework protocols and communication of due dates.
- Homework practices and policies will be outlined in the student handbook.
- Students who have been found eligible for special services may have accommodations or modifications as determined by their individual educational program (IEP) and building team.



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Upper Elementary Homework Policy (Grades 3-5)

A summary of homework research suggests the following:

1. Homework practice should match what students most need.
2. Homework has minimal, but some, effects upon academic achievement.
3. Reading has a positive effect on long-term student growth.
4. Parent involvement in homework has positive effects for elementary school students.

The following criteria will be observed:

- Students will be assigned reading nightly for a minimum of 20 minutes (self-selected or assigned). Reading logs will be required for all students.
- Along with nightly reading, teachers will assign no more than a combined 40 minutes of homework in core areas on a nightly basis (this includes reading).
- Teachers are not to assign homework over long-holiday weekends, or vacations.
- When possible, on days of standardized testing, homework shall not be assigned.
- Homework assigned on a Friday should be limited to one night's work. Reference bullets 1 and 2.
- If a student cannot complete the homework in the above-recommended amount of time and has put forth sufficient effort, a student's parent/guardian may attach a note to their work indicating that the student was unable to complete the assignment. Teachers will not penalize students; instead, teachers will utilize this information to support the needs of the individual student.
- Teachers are expected to provide written or oral feedback to students.
- Teachers will assess homework formatively. Preparation, check for understanding, and practice homework shall be assessed as a Learner Quality. Extension of Learning homework may be graded as either a Learner Quality or a Standard's Grade.
- At the onset of the school year, grade levels will develop and provide students and parents with a consistent protocol and implementation of homework practices to include missed homework protocols and communication of due dates.
- Teachers will provide models and support on how to complete assignments before assigning homework (for example, problem set responses, writing exemplars).
- Homework practices and policies will be outlined in the student handbook.
- Students who have been found eligible for special services may have accommodations or modifications as determined by their individual educational program (IEP) and building team.



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Middle School Homework Policy

A summary of homework research suggests the following:

1. Homework can positively instill student work habits and autonomy.
2. Homework is an important link between home and school.
3. Homework reinforces critical content knowledge and skill acquisition at the middle school level.
4. Homework provides an informal assessment of student progress and will inform teachers planning for instruction.

The following criteria will be observed:

- Students may be assigned reading nightly for a minimum of 20 minutes (self-selected or assigned). If reading is assigned, no additional homework will be assigned for that content area.
- Students may receive up to 20 minutes of homework per content area. The amount of time a student spends per night on homework may vary by individual.
- Teachers are not to assign homework on long-holiday weekends or vacations.
- Homework assigned on a Friday should be limited to one night's work. Reference bullets 1 and 2.
- When possible, on days of standardized testing, homework shall not be assigned.
- If a student cannot complete the homework in the above-recommended amount of time and has put forth sufficient effort, a student's parent/guardian may attach a note to their work indicating that the student was unable to complete the assignment. Teachers will not penalize students; instead, teachers will utilize this information to support the needs of the individual student.
- Teachers will not administer summative assessments on the day school resumes after a weekend or school vacation (excluding district benchmark assessments and progress assessments).
- Teachers are expected to provide timely teacher-directed feedback for any homework assignment.
- All homework and requisite materials must be assigned during the class period.
- Assigned homework will be posted or linked in the student information system or Google Classroom.
- Students who have been found eligible for special services may have accommodations or modifications as determined by their individual educational program (IEP) and building team.



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High School Homework Policy

A summary of homework research suggests the following:

1. High school students should only be assigned meaningful homework that reinforces and encourages the learning processes.
2. Homework must be assigned in a timely manner to reduce student stress.
3. Teachers who teach the same course must be consistent in their practices regarding homework assignments.
4. Students need instruction on proper organization and time management of their work so as to reduce daily stress.

The following criteria will be observed:

- Teachers will assign all homework and requisite materials during the class period.
- Teachers will post or link assigned homework on Google Classroom.
- Teachers will not assign homework to be completed during school vacations, long holiday weekends, or due on the first school day back from break, with the exception of long-range assignments (for example: process steps in projects that span before and after a school break) and Advanced Placement coursework.
- When possible, on days of standardized testing, homework shall not be assigned.
- When possible, teachers will avoid giving summative assessments the first day back from a school vacation or a long-holiday weekend, with the exception of mid-term and final exams.
- Teachers who teach the same courses will collaboratively develop and provide written homework grading practices and protocols that are consistent within each course at the start of the year/course.
- Homework practices and policies will be outlined in the student handbook.
- Advanced Placement Courses: Advanced Placement (AP) curricula and coursework is determined by the College Board. Students will be given a clear outline of expectations for AP homework. On average, students will receive approximately one hour of coursework per night, per course. This average is in addition to any other homework students may receive. Students should consider this strongly when registering for multiple AP courses.
- Students who have been found eligible for special services may have accommodations or modifications as determined by their individual educational program (IEP) and building team.



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Reviewed and Approved by Policy & Procedures Sub-Committee: 5/21/2019

1st Reading Approved by Cumberland School Committee: _____

2nd Reading & Final Approval by Cumberland School Committee: _____

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