

HOMEWORK

Homework can provide an essential communication link between the school and the home. One measure of a program or course is the quality of the work done at home by the student. A strong home-school partnership, with many lasting benefits for the individual student and his/her family, can be greatly enhanced by a sound program of homework. In addition, homework should be an important tool in developing independent thought, self-direction, and self-discipline. It can assist the student in developing good work habits and in the wise use of time. It is expected that homework is assigned.

Purpose: The purpose of homework in Essex County Public Schools is to:

- provide additional practice for applying new knowledge or an area of need;
- organize new information;
- generate interest in an upcoming topic or unit of study; and,
- prepare for an upcoming assessment.

Guidelines for homework include:

1. Homework will only be assigned if it is justified by one or more of the above purpose statements.
2. Homework should be assigned after introduction and thorough explanation of the skills necessary to successfully complete the assignment.
3. Homework should be assigned in such a manner that it will be clearly understood by all students.
4. Homework should serve a valid purpose and be closely related to classroom activities.
5. A student's access to resource materials should be considered when making assignments.
6. Homework should be evaluated promptly and returned to the student at most three days after the assignment deadline. Appropriate rewards should be given to those students who successfully complete assigned work. Effort and competency should be recognized and rewarded.
7. Teachers should not avoid giving homework because they believe students will not do the work.
8. Homework will not be used for disciplinary purposes.
9. Homework will not be assigned over school holidays or extended breaks including Thanksgiving break, the winter holiday, and spring break. During these breaks and/or holidays, students may choose to work on previously assigned long-term projects. However, no assignment or assessment (excluding state testing) will be required or completed on the first day that students return to class. Exceptions for advanced courses are outlined in guideline number 12.
10. Homework should be assigned in such a manner that the daily amount of time the student spends on **all subjects combined should not exceed the daily time allotments** below:

HOMework DAILY TIME ALLOTMENTS GUIDANCE

Grade	Frequency	Maximum Daily Time Allotment
K-1	Monday-Thursday	20 minutes
2-3	Monday-Thursday	30 minutes
4-5	Monday-Thursday	50 minutes
6-8	Monday-Friday	80 minutes
9-12	Monday-Friday	120 minutes

11. Teachers will collaborate to ensure that these maximum allotments are not exceeded; and, work to minimize overlap of long-term projects/assignments and assessments.
12. Homework assigned in advanced courses (e.g., Advanced Placement, Honors, and Governor's School courses) may exceed the maximum time allotment listed in guideline number 10.
13. Daily reading for homework is strongly encouraged at all levels, particularly grades K-8, to ensure that our students are reading at or above grade level. **Reading time is included** in the maximum daily time allotment for homework.
14. Teachers will assign deadlines for homework assignments. Homework will be accepted no later than a week after it has been assigned or it will be considered late.
15. Parents should provide assistance when needed, but encourage their child to do their homework **independently**.
16. Teachers and administrators should take appropriate steps to communicate with parents regarding the division's homework policy, solicit their support, and inform them when a student has not submitted homework after no more than three missed assignments.
17. Grading homework will count for **no more than 10%** of the overall grade.

Adopted: May 8, 2023 (implementation July 1, 2023)

Legal Ref.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, § 22.1-78.
Cross Ref.: IB Academic Freedom