



## 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 shows that the amount of time devoted to learning is related to achievement in a subject. Homework provides an opportunity for students to develop and practice 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:

- 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 will be assigned as needed. Below are the typical times that students should spend on homework each night:
  - Grades K-2: up to 20 minutes/night
  - Grades 3-5: up to 50 minutes/night
- \*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. The teacher will support the student to address his/her needs.
- Students should read independently or with a family member each night for the suggested times:
  - Grades K-1: at least 15 minutes/night
  - Grades 2-3: at least 20 minutes/night
  - Grades 4-5: at least 30 minutes/night
- 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 any type of unexcused absences which include family vacations/travel taken during the school year. Teachers are also not required to help students make up missed work due to unexcused absences.
- Students and their parents are responsible for replacing damaged or lost school materials provided by the school. Report cards will be withheld if a student has an outstanding balance.

## Evaluation and Grading

Homework will not be a significant factor in determining academic grades. In most cases, homework completion will be included in the *Learning Skills* section on 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 your homework when it is assigned by the teacher.
- **Ask for help when needed, but prior to the due date of the assignment.**
- Complete the assigned homework neatly and hand in assignments on time.
- Review homework with parents.

## Parents' Job

To help children be successful with homework, 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 a set time for homework have been linked to higher achievement.
- Make sure your child(ren) have the supplies they need to complete assignments.
- Be available if your child(ren) have questions. Parents can support their child(ren) by looking over homework and giving suggestions, but they should not do the homework for their child(ren).
- **Let teachers know if homework assignments are too difficult or unclear. Feel free to write a note or email the teacher to share this information.**
- Monitor assignment completion through the use of student planners, homework folders 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 Leadership Team, Summer, 2014.)