

## PUSD Homework Policy

### Homework for All Grades

*Clarification is in blue italics*

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The Board believes homework should:

- Place a strong emphasis on reading. *Literature states reading activities derive the most significant achievement. Effective reading assignments include the teacher's "into, through and beyond" teaching strategy.*
- Apply **writing** skills.
- Practice previously taught mathematics skills.
- **Consider** individual student needs, learning styles, and abilities in order for students to complete their homework.
- Relate to the grade level standards and learning objectives as a direct extension of classroom instruction.
- Include clear instructions and performance expectations so students can complete homework independently.
- Be assigned regularly and be assigned in reasonable amounts.
- Provide timely feedback for the student.
- Set high expectations regarding the quality of work.

Homework will be assigned to all students on a regular basis.

Length of homework assignments will vary according to purpose and level. Effective long-term assignments require clear check-points along the way to monitor progress towards completion.

If weekend homework is deemed necessary the amount should not exceed a regular day's assignment. Students may choose to use weekends for review, voluntary work or completion of make up assignments.

Assigning homework over holidays is discouraged. **Parents should expect many tests and assignments before an extended break.**

*Clarification: Conversations with Poway students, teachers and parents revealed that homework completed on the weekend competes with family commitments and is often completed with very little substantive effort or quality. The policy recommends that homework on weekends and holidays should be discouraged for elementary and middle school grades. High school students generally have on-going assignments: labs, novels, research writing and often the weekend homework issue is more about time management. Would hope the school/dept. would get consensus around this issue in order to achieve consistency.*

Project based assignments should primarily be undertaken and completed in the classroom. Some portions of projects may be assigned as homework; however these tasks should not require group participation, significant assistance from parents or costly materials.

*Clarification: Homework is most effective when it is managed and completed with a minimum of supervision from the parents. Often project based assignments require substantial parental involvement to complete and often require monetary commitments. To ensure equity for all students with regard to required content projects should be limited in scope and have opportunities for significant portions completed in the classroom. This is not intended to limit long-term assignments,*

*research or other in-depth assignments. However, it is incumbent on the teachers to ensure all students have access to computers/library and provide class time for groups to work together, options with group work, or parent approval for group work required outside of class.*

Students should not be penalized for wrong answers on homework assigned specifically for practice of basic skills. These assignments may be graded for completion and effort. Application and reinforcement of previously taught material and or research assigned as homework may be graded for accuracy.

*Clarification: The goal is to encourage the practice of basic skills assigned as homework, such as mathematics problems; therefore, grading for effort and not for academic grades. Understanding that some measure of accountability must be in place to ensure quality homework completion, this area may require in-depth sharing among teachers to discover the systems already in place to accommodate managing this practice. .*

### **Homework for Middle School Grades**

1. At the middle school grades, homework should primarily consist of reading, practice in mathematics, application of writing skills, and beginning research. At this level, homework should continue to build independent study habits.
2. Long-term assignments at the middle grades should be limited in number and duration. These assignments should include clear checkpoints to monitor progress towards completion.
3. As a guideline, homework should be assigned on a regular basis. Total homework assignments should generally not exceed two hours nightly. Teachers should make efforts to be aware of other teacher's homework, assignments and testing schedules.
4. Homework at the middle school should generally not be assigned on the weekends.