

# Oak Grove's Homework Policy

## Oak Grove Middle School Homework Policy

**Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to ensure Oak Grove Middle School has a consistent, building-wide approach to homework that is developmentally appropriate and research-based as well as helps prepare students for the rigor of high school and beyond.

**Guidelines:** Research consistently has demonstrated the positive effects of homework on student achievement beginning in middle school and increasing through high school. However, homework can produce both positive and negative effects on students as indicated by Table 1.

Table 1 Suggested Effects of Homework

| Positive Effects   | Negative Effects  |
|--|---|
| <p>Immediate achievement and learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Better retention of factual knowledge</li> <li>- Increased understanding</li> <li>- Better critical thinking, concept formation &amp; information processing</li> <li>- Curriculum enrichment</li> </ul> <p>Long-term academic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Learning encouraged during leisure time</li> <li>- Improved attitude toward school</li> <li>- Better study habits and skills</li> </ul> <p>Nonacademic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Greater self-direction</li> <li>- Greater self-discipline</li> <li>- Better time organization</li> <li>- More inquisitiveness</li> <li>- More independent problem solving</li> <li>- Greater parent involvement in schooling</li> </ul> | <p>Satiation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Loss of interest in academic material</li> <li>- Physical and emotional fatigue</li> </ul> <p>Denial of access to leisure time and community activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Parental interference</li> <li>- Pressure to complete and perform well</li> <li>- Confusion of instructional techniques</li> </ul> <p>Cheating</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Copying from other students</li> <li>- Help beyond tutoring</li> </ul> <p>Increased differences between high and low achievers</p> |

Chart provided by the CAREI Institute.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a practice that will maximize the positive effects of homework and minimize the negative effects. Bloomington Elementary Schools generally follow a guideline of 10 minutes per night for each year in school. For example, the average 5<sup>th</sup> grader would have approximately 60 minutes of homework per night (ten minutes times 6 years in school). The High Schools are on the four block model. Students can anticipate 30-40 minutes of homework per academic class per night. Students who take either an honors or AP course can expect approximately 60 minutes per night in each subject.

Given that students leave the elementary schools with approximately 60 minutes per night of homework and the minimum they can expect at the high school is 120 minutes, it makes sense to have the homework experience “grow” through the middle school years.

For this reason, the following are grade level guidelines:

- 6<sup>th</sup> grade – average 75-80 minutes per night.
- 7<sup>th</sup> grade – average 95 minutes per night.
- 8<sup>th</sup> grade – average 110 minutes per night.
- Honors students – 30-40 minutes more per night at each grade level.

For our purposes, homework is defined as “tasks assigned to students by school teachers that are meant to be carried out during non-school hours” (Cooper, 1989). **This definition does not include work that turns into homework due to a student’s off-task in-class behavior or absence.**

### Expectations:

What can you expect from teachers?

Teachers will

- coordinate assignments between exploratory and core classes to assure adherence to time restrictions.
- communicate clear expectations for each assignment to the students.
- create assignments with a purpose and assure students understand the purpose.
- communicate with parents about homework through team web sites.
- match assignments to the skills, interests, and needs of the students.

What we expect from students?

Students will

- keep track of all assignments in the assignment notebook.
- complete all assignments thoroughly and to the best of their ability.
- turn all assignments in on time.
- seek parental assistance for direction clarification only.
- seek assistance from teachers when assignments prove difficult.

What we expect from parents/guardians?

Parents/guardians should

- expect homework regularly.
- support your child completing his or her homework by providing an adequate work space and supplies.
- monitor your child’s homework (on-task behavior and completeness) but not do the homework for him or her.
- contact the teacher when issues arise regarding homework (too much or too little; too difficult or too easy).