

DUFFERIN-PEEL CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

Section: 400 - CURRICULUM
Procedure #: 415.00
Subject: **HOMEWORK - KINDERGARTEN TO GRADE 12**
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Introduction

As a faith-based system, the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board approaches all issues from a Catholic worldview that recognizes the importance of family time and honours the bonds between school, family, and parish in all that we do. The stronger these bonds, the more effectively our students are able to learn and to develop the unique talents and gifts with which they are blessed.

Definition

Homework, which plays an important role in the relationship between the school and the family, is typically defined as *'a learning experience assigned by a teacher, for completion outside of class time, that supports and enriches the learning and development of each student'*.

Characteristics of Effective Homework

There is no requirement that homework be assigned daily, but when it is assigned, homework must be directly related to *what the student is learning in class* and has the following characteristics:

- * is meaningful and relevant;
- * is purposefully planned to avoid student overload;
- * is clearly articulated by the teacher and understood by students;
- * is differentiated, as appropriate, to meet student learning;
- * is reviewed in a timely manner.

Homework is not necessarily limited to pencil and paper tasks. As examples, it may include other tasks such as practising, observing, rehearsing, interviewing, researching, and studying.

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Table A: Types of Commonly Assigned Homework			
Type	Definition	Intended Outcome	Notes
Completion*	any work assigned following instruction that is begun in class and completed at home	helps students to keep up to date with the instructional program	Student understanding must be monitored during class time to ensure that the work can be completed independently at home. Completion homework on a regular basis may indicate the need to adjust the instructional program.
Practice*	any work that reviews and reinforces skills and concepts learned in class	helps students to develop newly acquired skills and consolidate new concepts	To be effective, practice homework requires students to have the skills necessary to complete the work independently at home. The amount of practice homework assigned to consolidate new skills and concepts should reflect the learning needs of students.
Preparation*	any work that prepares students for new learning or for upcoming summative assessments / evaluations	requires students to gather information or artifacts in preparation for learning or requires students to prepare for tests, presentations, performances, etc.	Preparation homework should not require students to learn new curriculum content independently.
Extension / Projects / Major Assignments*	any work that explores learning in new contexts or integrates / expands on classroom learning	encourages students to problem solve, think creatively, and think critically	Students demonstrate learning by applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and / or evaluating. It is recommended that due dates for projects and major assignments be a “window” of several days to allow for effective time management by students.

*** Special Considerations**

Research indicates that some students face barriers which make the completion of tasks outside of school a challenge. In these circumstances, classroom and school supports need to be put into place to enable all students to meet with success.

Timing and Quantity of Homework

Catholic education views human life as an integration of body, mind, and spirit. The Christian vision of the human journey is best understood within the context of relationship. It is accomplished in community, in solidarity with brothers and sisters in the Church and beyond. It is important, therefore, that time spent on homework be balanced with the importance of personal and family wellness and the wide range of family obligations experienced in our society today.

Recognizing the variety of strengths, talents, and skills of learners, the timing and quantity of homework assigned depends on the following factors:

- time in the Liturgical year such as Holy Week, Easter, and Christmas, for example
- school / statutory holidays such as Thanksgiving, March Break, and Family Day, for example
- student's needs
- grade level
- subject
- proximity to tests
- proximity to project / major assignment due dates
- proximity to final examination period.

Parents who have concerns with homework expectations for their child should contact their child's teacher.

General Procedures

Following are several general procedures that shall be considered whenever homework is assigned:

- Completion homework and practice homework shall not be specifically assigned for scheduled school, statutory and/or liturgical holidays.
- Preparation homework shall not have due dates on the first day following scheduled school, statutory and / or liturgical holidays.
- A "window" of several days is recommended for extension / project / major assignment due dates to allow for effective time management by students.
- Fixed dates for events such as tests, presentations, and performances, for example, shall be communicated to students well in advance to allow for effective time management by students.

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- If it is necessary to assign homework specifically for the weekend (Saturday and Sunday), the quantity shall reflect the specific guidelines as outlined in Table B.
- All students, including those with Individual Education Plans (IEP), can be assigned homework as outlined in Table B. For students with accommodations and/or modifications¹ to their program, this may require consultation with support staff and family, as appropriate.
- In secondary schools, Culminating Performance Tasks (CPT) for the final 30% evaluation shall be completed during class time and under the supervision of the teacher, although minor aspects of the task may be completed outside of class time (e.g. rehearsing lines, practising an instrument, locating materials, or gathering research, for example).
- Components of group assignments that require collaboration must be completed in school. Those components of the group assignment that are designated as homework must be designed so that they can be completed independently by each group member.

¹ Refer to *Education for All* pg. 117 for definition (www.edu.gov.on.ca)

Table B: Specific Expectations

The following chart outlines specific expectations for each division with respect to the type and quantity of homework:

<p>Kindergarten</p> <p><i>Research indicates a strong connection between family involvement and student achievement.</i></p>	
<p>Learning outside of the classroom in kindergarten should include playing, talking, listening, viewing, and reading together in English or in the family’s first language. The teacher may provide suggestions and resources for such activities. Additional suggestions may be found at: http://www.gov.on.ca/children.</p>	<p>Homework shall not be assigned to students in kindergarten.</p>
<p>Primary (Grades 1-3)</p> <p><i>Research indicates a strong connection between student achievement and reading to or with students in the primary grades every day in English or in the family’s first language.</i></p>	
<p>Homework in the early grades shall more often take the form of reading, playing, discussing, listening, viewing, and interactive activities such as building and cooking with the family. Additional suggestions may be found at: http://www.gov.on.ca/children. In the late primary grades, homework may begin to take the form of independent work.</p>	<p>Daily homework shall be limited to 20 minutes on average, in total.</p>
<p>Junior (Grades 4-6)</p> <p><i>Research indicates that homework provides benefits to students in the junior grades, particularly with respect to student attitude toward school and learning.</i></p>	
<p>Homework in the junior grades may take the form of independent work.</p>	<p>Daily homework shall be limited to 40 minutes on average, in total.</p>
<p>Intermediate (Grades 7 & 8)</p> <p><i>Research indicates that homework for students in the intermediate grades can contribute to improved achievement.</i></p>	
<p>Homework, as outlined in Table A, shall be purposefully planned to avoid overload.</p>	<p>Daily homework for all subjects shall be limited to 60 minutes on average, in total.</p>
<p>Secondary Intermediate (Grades 9 & 10)</p> <p><i>While research indicates that the benefits associated with homework are greatest in the secondary grades, evidence also suggests that homework-related stress is particularly prevalent among this group of students.</i></p>	
<p>Homework, as outlined in Table A, shall be purposefully planned to avoid overload.</p>	<p>Homework shall be limited to 20 minutes on average per day per course.</p>
<p>Secondary Senior (Grades 11 & 12)</p> <p><i>While research indicates that the benefits associated with homework are greatest in the secondary grades, evidence also suggests that homework-related stress is particularly prevalent among this group of students.</i></p>	
<p>Homework, as outlined in Table A, shall be purposefully planned to avoid overload.</p>	<p>Homework shall be limited to 30 minutes on average per day per course.</p>

Reporting of Homework

The Learning Skills section of the elementary and secondary provincial report cards describes skills which are foundational to student success. Homework, as a learning skill, is reported in this section, separate from achievement of curriculum expectations. Late, missed, and incomplete homework will impact the Learning Skills section of the report card.

In secondary schools, homework is factored into the grade only where it is a specific expectation for that particular course (e.g. GLE / GLS10 Learning Strategies).

Homework during Extended Absences

Teachers shall not be expected to provide detailed homework assignments to students who are away for extended periods of time as a result of family initiated absences, although a general overview may be provided. For absences due to extended illness, parents should contact the school administration to discuss available options.

Note: During suspensions, curriculum course work will be provided for the suspension period, as per *Catholic Code of Conduct – Suspension Guidelines, 2008*.

Roles and Expectations

Administrators are expected to:

- (i) ensure school-wide understanding and consistent implementation of the homework procedures;
- (ii) coordinate school-wide resources and practices that support homework, e.g. use of agenda, academic support programs, etc.;
- (iii) provide information to parents about the homework procedures through a variety of venues, e.g. newsletters, open houses, websites, etc.;
- (iv) provide information to parents about accessing community supports that will assist in the homework process.

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Teachers are expected to:

- (i) share homework expectations with students and families early in the school year;
- (ii) ensure open communication between teacher, student, and family to support the homework process;
- (iii) encourage practices, as appropriate, to assist students and families in the homework process (e.g. use of agenda);
- (iv) ensure that homework assigned is directly related to classroom learning and consists of clear, purposeful, and engaging activities;
- (v) teach the skills, including time management skills, necessary for students to successfully complete assigned homework;
- (vi) differentiate homework, as appropriate, to meet student learning needs including those outlined in Individual Education Plans (IEPs);
- (vii) ensure that homework is reviewed in a timely manner;
- (viii) ensure that homework assigned reflects the specific time allotments as outlined in Table B;
- (ix) consider barriers to completion, such as access to materials or resources, that may exist for some students.

Students are expected to:

- (i) manage time and priorities to ensure a healthy balance between homework, extra-curricular activities, part-time employment, and leisure time;
- (ii) ensure that they clearly understand the homework assigned and ask for clarification or assistance from the teacher when homework assignments or the expectations are not understood;
- (iii) complete assigned homework on time;
- (iv) complete assigned homework to the best of their ability;
- (v) record homework in their agenda or student planner;
- (vi) ensure that required materials and resources are taken home and returned, as necessary.

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Families are expected to:

- (i) provide a healthy balance between homework, extra-curricular activities, and family commitments;
- (ii) communicate with their child about school and homework;
- (iii) read with their child in English and / or the family's first language in kindergarten, the primary grades, and subsequent grades, as appropriate;
- (iv) provide an environment in the home or in an alternative setting for homework to be completed;
- (v) provide encouragement and support without doing the homework for the child;
- (vi) contact the teacher if their child is consistently unable to complete the homework assigned.