

OAK PARK UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD POLICY

Series 6000

Instruction

BP 6154(a)

Homework/Makeup Work

The Governing Board recognizes that purposefully designed homework assignments can be a valuable extension of student learning time. Additionally, the Board recognizes that recent research indicates homework has very little or no benefits for elementary students, increased benefits for middle school students, and considerable benefits for high school students (Cooper, 1989, Cooper et al. 2006, Trautwein & Koller, 2003).

The Governing Board believes that academic work is only one part of a student's life. Time for play and the pursuit of personal interests, time with family, and time for rest are also important aspects of a child's development. This policy means to ensure that students are able to develop outside interests, spend time with family, and have adequate rest.

The Superintendent or designee shall collaborate with school administrators and teachers to develop and annually review guidelines for the assignment of homework and the related responsibilities of students, staff, and parents/guardians. Guidelines and expectations will be developed and regularly reviewed for each grade span (DK-5, 6-8, 9-12).

The Board recognizes that homework is an extension of a teacher's classroom instruction, and should therefore reflect aspects of the teacher's classroom instruction. (Epstein & Van Voorhis, 2001). Homework shall be developmentally appropriate, differentiated, and within a student's ability to complete independently. The Board expects that the number, frequency, and degree of difficulty of homework assignments will increase with the grade level and the maturity of students. In older grade spans (6-8 & 9-12), effective homework influences a student's ability to meet the district's academic standards.

The Board believes that teaching is a reflective practice. In planning homework assignments teachers will reflect on and consider individual student needs, an estimated time for completion, and a clear purpose.

Homework shall be assigned only when necessary to support specific learning goals, enable students to complete unfinished assignments, or review and apply academic content for better understanding in a way that cannot be accomplished during class time. Effective homework provides students the opportunity to develop academic and independent learning skills.

(cf. 6011 - Academic Standards)

No homework, which includes, but is not limited to, assignments, projects, reports, research, and reading, will be assigned over the Winter Break for any student at any school in grades K-12, commencing with the 2015-16 school year. Tests may not be scheduled within two school days of the return from Winter Break, which would require students to prepare for them over the break.

OAK PARK UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD POLICY

Series 6000

Instruction

BP 6154(b)

Additionally, no homework, which includes, but is not limited to, assignments, projects, reports, research and reading, shall be assigned to students in grades K-8 for the following breaks: Thanksgiving Week, Winter Break, Presidents' 4-Day Weekend, and Spring Break. Tests may not be scheduled within two school days of the return from any of these breaks, which would require students to prepare for them over the breaks.

Students should, however, be encouraged to read for recreation, visit museums, and other cultural institutions, attend events such as plays, musical performances, or any other activity that allows them to follow their passions. Students should also be encouraged to get outdoors and visit local, state, and national parks and recreation areas, and engage in physical activities, or explore new interests.

The District may offer training in designing relevant homework assignments that reinforce classroom learning objectives.

(cf. 4131 - Staff Development)

Developmentally appropriate instruction will be incorporated into the curriculum to help students allocate their time wisely, meet deadlines, and develop good personal study habits.

At the beginning of the school year, homework expectations will be communicated to students and their parents/guardians. Homework guidelines also shall be included in student and/or parent handbooks and posted on the school's website. These communications shall include the manner in which homework relates to achievement of academic standards and course content, the impact of homework assignments on students' grades, any school resources and programs that are available to provide homework support, and ways in which parents/guardians may appropriately assist their children.

Although it is the student's responsibility to complete assignments independently, parents/guardians may serve as a resource and are encouraged to ensure that their child's homework assignments are completed. Students are expected to complete their homework in a distraction-free environment. When a student demonstrates a pattern of not completing his/her homework, the teacher will notify the student and parents/guardians through direct communication or through use of district communication tools (i.e. online student gradebook) within a reasonable amount of time to allow corrective action to be taken.

(cf. 5020 - Parent Rights and Responsibilities)

(cf. 6020 - Parent Involvement)

To further support students' homework efforts, the Superintendent or designee may establish and maintain homework help websites, provide access to school library media centers and technological resources, and/or provide before-school and after-school programs where students

OAK PARK UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD POLICY

Series 6000

Instruction

BP 6154(c)

can receive homework assistance from teachers, staff, volunteers, and/or student tutors. The Board encourages the Superintendent or designee to design class and transportation schedules that will enable students to make use of any available homework support services.

(cf. 1240 - Volunteer Assistance)
(cf. 1700 - Relations between Private Industry and the Schools)
(cf. 3541 - Transportation Routes and Services)
(cf. 5148 - Child Care and Development)
(cf. 5148.2 - Before/After School Programs)
(cf. 6112 - School Day)
(cf. 6142.4 - Service Learning/Community Service Classes)
(cf. 6163.1 - Library Media Centers)

Completed homework should be reviewed to ensure that the goal of the assignment has been met or to assess the student's understanding of academic content and provide timely feedback to the student.

Makeup Work

Students who miss school work shall be given the opportunity to complete assignments and tests that can be reasonably provided. The Board recognizes that not all lessons or assignments can be duplicated following a student's absence. As determined by the teacher the assignments and tests shall be reasonably equivalent to, but not necessarily identical to, the assignments and tests missed during the absence. Students shall receive full credit for work satisfactorily completed within a reasonable period of time.

(cf. 5113 - Absences and Excuses)

The Superintendent or designee shall notify parents/guardians that no student may have his/her grade reduced or lose academic credit for any excused absence when missed assignments and tests are satisfactorily completed within a reasonable period of time, in accordance with BP 5121. Such notification shall include the full text of Education Code 48205. (Education Code 48980)

(cf. 5121 - Grades/Evaluation of Student Achievement)
(cf. 5145.6 - Parental Notifications)

The teacher of any class from which a student is suspended is encouraged to require the student to complete any assignments and tests missed during the suspension. (Education Code 48913)

(cf. 5144.1 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process)

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

8420-8428 21st Century High School After School Safety and Enrichment for Teens
8482-8484.65 After School Education and Safety Program

OAK PARK UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD POLICY

Series 6000

Instruction

BP 6154(d)

8484.7-8484.9 21st Century Community Learning Centers 48205 Absences for personal reasons
48913 Completion of work missed by suspended student
48980 Parental notifications
UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20
7171-7176 21st Century Community Learning Centers

Management Resources:

CSBA PUBLICATIONS

Research-Supported Strategies to Improve the Accuracy and Fairness of Grades, Governance Brief, July 2016

WEB SITES

CSBA: <http://www.csba.org>

California State PTA: <http://www.capta.org>

Research References:

Cooper, H. (1989). *Synthesis of research on homework*. Educational leadership, 47(3), 85-91.
Cooper, H., Robinson, J. C., & Patall, E. A. (2006). *Does homework improve academic achievement? A synthesis of research, 1987–2003*. Review of Educational Research, 76(1), 1-62.
Epstein, J.L. & Van Voorhis, F.L. (2001). *More than minutes: Teachers' roles in designing homework*. Educational Psychologist, 36(3), 181-193.
Trautwein, U., Koller, O. (2003). *The relationship between homework and achievement- still much of a mystery*. Educational Psychology Review 15(2), 115-145.

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