



# Frequently Asked Questions About Homework

Miami-Dade County Public Schools

## Q: What is Miami-Dade County Public Schools' approach to homework?

There has been much local and national discussion regarding the effectiveness and appropriateness of homework. Three years ago, the school district diligently worked with educators, administrators, parents and the Family and Community Involvement Advisory Committee to formulate an updated homework policy. It is both manageable and meaningful with an emphasis on quality over quantity and depth over length and repetition. The new policy addresses the whole child and provides students with ample time for their physical, cultural, social and emotional growth.

## Q: Why is homework necessary?

Successful homework assignments engage students in purposeful, relevant learning that meets their academic needs. Homework learning activities help students understand concepts, develop thinking skills, and focus on applying their new knowledge.

## Q: How much homework is necessary?

Educators have differing opinions on the amount of homework that is necessary for children. School Board policy recommends the following minutes that include assignments for all subject areas and teachers collectively per school day:

Grades K-1, 30 Minutes \* Grades 2-3, 45 Minutes \* Grades 4-5, 60 Minutes

Grades 6-8, 75 Minutes \* Grades 9-12, 120 Minutes

Guidelines suggest that students should also read for 30 minutes in addition to homework assignments.

Additionally, specialized programs such as performing arts, gifted, and/or International Diploma Pathways (i.e., International Baccalaureate (IB), Cambridge or Advanced Placement (AP) Capstone) may receive increased levels of homework due to rigorous course work or performing arts demand.

While our District believes in the importance of extended academic opportunities through meaningful and relevant homework, we should also be mindful that our ultimate goal is to educate and nurture the whole child. As such, we should provide students with ample time for the physical, social, emotional and cultural activities that are associated with this goal. Time with family and extra-curricular activities often provide students with these opportunities. During the spring and winter breaks, schools may assign home learning for students who would benefit from continuity.

## Q: Do teachers take into consideration the individual needs of students when assigning homework?

Homework assignments are aligned to standards and expectations for the grade/course of the students as well as their academic needs. Homework provides opportunities for students to reinforce what is taught in the classroom, teachers make the assignments based on learning outcomes that build students' conceptual understanding, develop thinking skills, and focus on the application of knowledge. Homework assignments engage students in purposeful, relevant learning that meets their academic needs, with assignments emphasizing quality and depth over length and repetition. Additionally, teachers will make homework instructions clear to ensure that students understand the assignment. Homework may vary depending on the grade level and specific programs such as SPED, Gifted, or International Diploma programs (IB, Cambridge, AP). Access to technology are taken into consideration. Assignments may be modified to accommodate students who do not have access.

## Q: Should parents assist students in completing their homework?

It is not the responsibility of parents to give significant assistance to students in completing homework, but they should encourage and support children in completing assigned homework in an environment that is conducive to studying. Additionally, parents or other family members should make every effort to read to students who cannot read on their own.

## Q: Why are changes made to the homework policy?

The homework policy is adjusted from time to time to accommodate changes in instructional methods and trends in education. The growth of "flipped" classrooms, where students learn independently outside the classroom and teachers use in-class time for active learning experiences, has brought changes to homework. Instead of spending their out-of-school time completing traditional homework assignments, students watch lectures and presentations via online videos and podcasts.

## Q: What should parents do if they feel their child's homework is excessive, too difficult or insufficiently challenging?

Parents should keep in touch with their child's teacher regarding homework assignments. If the assignments seem excessive, too difficult or insufficiently challenging, parents should communicate with the school leadership.