

Homework Policy and Procedures - Kindergarten to Grade 12

New Homework Policy and Procedures

In November 2008, the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board adopted a new board-wide homework policy and procedures for Kindergarten to Grade 12 to be implemented in September 2009. The policy and procedures approach homework from a Catholic perspective that recognizes the importance of family time and honours the bonds between school, family and parish. As a community, we recognize that 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 of Homework

The policy and procedures define homework 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

The policy and procedures do not require that homework be assigned daily. When homework is assigned, however, it must be directly related to what the student is learning in class and has the following characteristics:

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

Homework is not necessarily limited to pencil and paper tasks. It may include other tasks such as practising, observing, rehearsing, interviewing, researching and studying, for example.

Types of Commonly Assigned Homework

The table below is from the Dufferin-Peel homework policy and procedures. It describes the four types of commonly assigned homework and their intended outcomes.

TYPE	DEFINITION	INTENDED OUTCOME
Completion Homework	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
Practice Homework	Any work that reviews and reinforces skills and concepts learned in class	Helps students to develop newly acquired skills and consolidate new concepts
Preparation Homework	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 and performances, etc.
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

Specific Procedures

The table below is from Dufferin-Peel's homework policy and procedures. It outlines the specific expectations for each division with respect to the type and quantity of homework.

Kindergarten: <i>Research indicates a strong connection between family involvement and student achievement.</i>	
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 optional learning activities outside of the classroom (e.g. Snuggle Up books, etc.). Additional suggestions are available at http://www.gov.on.ca/children .	Homework shall not* be assigned to students in kindergarten.
Primary (Grades 1-3): <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>	
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 are available at http://www.gov.on.ca/children . In the late primary grades, homework may begin to take the form of independent work.	Daily homework shall be limited to 20 minutes on average , in total.
Junior (Grades 4-6): <i>Research indicates that homework provides benefits to students in the junior grades, particularly with respect to student attitude toward school and learning.</i>	
Homework in the junior grades may take the form of independent work.	Daily homework shall be limited to 40 minutes on average , in total.
Intermediate (Grades 7 & 8): <i>Research indicates that homework for students in the intermediate grades can contribute to improved achievement.</i>	
Homework shall be purposefully planned to avoid overload.	Daily homework for all subjects shall be limited to 60 minutes on average , in total.
Secondary Intermediate (Grades 9&10): <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>	
Homework shall be purposefully planned to avoid overload.	Homework shall be limited to 20 minutes on average per day per course.
Secondary Senior (Grades 11&12): <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>	
Homework shall be purposefully planned to avoid overload.	Homework shall be limited to 30 minutes on average per day per course.

Supporting Your Child with Homework

The following tips may help families in supporting their child with homework:

1. Set aside a specific time after school each day for your child to do homework.
2. Be available to help your child without doing the work for him or her.
3. Demonstrate interest in your child's learning by talking about his or her school day.
4. Read to and with your child from a variety of materials.
5. Demonstrate literacy and numeracy in your daily routines, for example, by reading newspapers, writing grocery lists, measuring or calculating costs.
6. Provide hands-on activities for young children such as preparing food, doing arts and crafts, and playing letter and word games.
7. Limit television and other "technology time", especially if your child is having difficulty completing school work.
8. Contact your child's teacher if you have concerns about your child's homework.

Additional Support

www.dpccdsb.org/homework offers an online copy of the homework procedures and supporting resources

<http://www.mississauga.ca/portal/residents/homeworklinks> offers online homework support resources

www.caledon.library.on.ca offers online homework support resources

www.orangeville.library.on.ca offers online homework support resources

www.ilc.org offers live, online homework help from a certified teacher