

# **Fisher Middle School Homework Policy**

## *Guidelines for the Assignment of Homework and Responsibilities of Students, Staff and Parents*

### **I. Philosophy/Purpose:**

Homework contributes toward building responsibility, self-discipline and lifelong learning habits. It is the intention of the Fisher Middle School staff to assign relevant challenging and meaningful homework assignments that reinforce classroom learning objectives. As appropriate, homework grades are modified based on students' individual needs (i.e. IEP, 504 Plans). The main purposes generally associated with homework are as follows:

- To give students a chance to review and practice what they have learned
- To prepare students for the next day's lesson
- To provide opportunities to identify and learn to use resources such as the library, the Internet, reference books, and other community resources
- To allow for more in-depth exploration of topics than is possible during class time
- To help students develop time management, study, and organizational skills
- To provide parents with insights into what is being taught in the classroom and the progress of their children

### **II. Expectations**

Homework is most beneficial when teacher expectations are well communicated, students take responsibility for their homework, and parents support these efforts. As such, the responsibilities of teachers, students and parents with regard to homework are listed below:

#### **Teachers can help by:**

- Informing students and their parents of the purpose and benefits of homework
- Informing students and parents of the school's homework policy
- Assigning relevant, meaningful homework activities that reinforce classroom learning
- Ensuring that students are aware of what is expected of them, and how their work will be assessed
- Giving students sufficient time to complete their homework, taking into account homework set by other teachers
- Maintaining homework records and providing feedback to students and parents
- Regularly updating Powerschool and/or teacher websites to apprise parents of their child's progress

**Students can help by:**

- Being aware of the school's homework policy
- Asking questions when necessary to clarify the assignment
- Thoroughly recording homework directions and expectations
- Completing homework within the given time frame
- Informing parents of homework expectations
- Seeking assistance from teachers and parents if difficulties arise
- Ensuring homework is of high quality
- Asking for and completing homework assigned during an absence
- Working on homework independently whenever possible, so that it reflects students' ability
- Managing demands and activities to allow sufficient time for homework completion

**Parents can help by:**

- Setting a regular, uninterrupted study time each day
- Providing a suitable place for study
- Monitoring student's organization and daily list of assignments in their agenda
- Being aware of long term assignments and assisting students in learning to budget their time accordingly
- Assisting and correcting, but not doing the actual work
- Contacting the teacher if he/she observes an absence of homework
- Communicating with teachers any concerns about the nature of homework and their child's approach to the homework
- Alerting the teacher, in advance, when extenuating circumstances arise that may prevent homework from being completed on time
- Regularly access Powerschool to help monitor their child's progress

**III. Time**

Actual time required to complete assignments will vary with each student's study habits, academic skills, and selected course load. Enrollment in accelerated mathematics and/or a world language elective may increase the homework averages noted below. If your child is spending an inordinate amount of time on homework, you should contact your child's teachers. Generally, students in grade 7/8 will average approximately 1.5 – 2 hours per night, while students in grade 6 will average 1 – 1.5 hours per night.

**IV. Types of Homework****Category One**

Assignments that are generally of a lower point value and are needed for full participation in a lesson and/or assessment on the due date.

**Category Two**

Assignments that are generally of a greater point value and have extended timelines for completion.

## V. Late Work Penalties

Students are required to turn assignments in on time. Students who turn in late assignments face the following penalties:

**Category One** assignments must be turned in on time to receive full credit. Half credit may be assigned for any late assignment within this category. Work will be accepted until the end of the unit of study or the end of the quarter, whichever comes first.

**Category Two** assignments will be reduced one letter grade/10% of earned credit for each day late, not to exceed a 50% penalty of earned credit. Work will be accepted until two weeks after the original due date.

If, during this two-week period, the quarter ends, an incomplete will be issued. A final grade will be given at the end of the two-week period to reflect the appropriate earned credit for the assignment and class.

## VI. Incentives

- Each student will have the opportunity to use one **late work** pass for each class during each quarter.
- The **late work** pass may be used to turn in a completed Category One assignment, by the next class meeting, for full earned-credit.

**Important:** A **late work** pass does not excuse the assignment, it simply allows for one late turn-in without penalty, provided it is turned in by the next class meeting as noted above.

- Passes from one quarter may not be used in another.

## VII. Test/Assessment Make-ups

If the first day of the absence occurs on the day of the test, the student should be ready to take the test upon his/her return to school.

If the absence(s) is prior to and inclusive of the actual test date, the student will have an equivalent amount to time as allowed in the homework policy to prepare for and take the test. This should not exceed one week after his/her return.

## VIII. Grace Periods for Absences

### **Absences for Illness and/or Family Emergency (Category One)**

- Minimum of two days for each day of absence to complete missed work.
- More than three consecutive days of absence – Teacher and student will determine essential assignments and agree upon due dates.

**Absences for Illness and/or Family Emergency (Category Two)**

- In the event of a one-day absence, for which the work was assigned more than five days in advance, the original due date will be maintained.
- If the absence is more than one day, the grace period above applies.

**Planned Absences of More Than One Day**

- Absences of one day will follow the two-day grace period.
- If work is available before an absence, it is due upon return.
- If work is requested, but not available in advance, the student will have two days for each day of absence to complete the assignment.

**IX. Extenuating Circumstances**

The student will work with the teacher to make a plan to deal with extenuating circumstances. Examples of extenuating circumstances may include: family emergencies, injuries and extended illnesses.

**X. Extensions (Applies to Category Two assignments only)**

Extensions for students who have not been absent must be pre-arranged with the student, teacher, and parent. Students must:

- Complete an ***Extension Request Form***
- Obtain parent(s) signature to verify the information
- Submit the form to their teacher at least one day in advance of the original due date

***If approved***, the teacher and student will determine the appropriate extension time based upon the information provided.