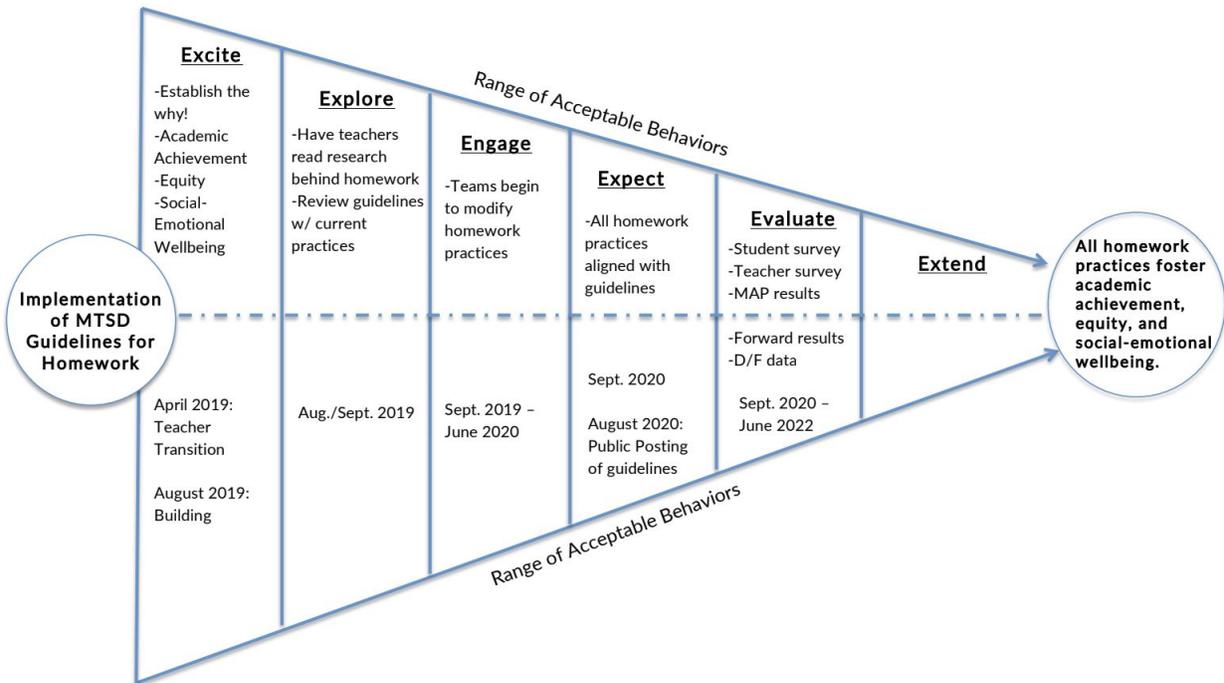


MTSD Guidelines for Homework

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We will evolve as an organization by transforming and aligning our homework practices to support our core beliefs associated with academic achievement, equity, and social-emotional wellbeing.



BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY #2610 - HOMEWORK

The following guidelines for homework in the Mequon-Thiensville School District are aligned with the Board of Education Policy #2610 - Homework.

Per policy #2610, **homework** serves “as adjuncts to and extensions of the instructional program of the schools with an overarching goal of increasing student achievement.” Furthermore, “**homework** is defined as an instructional assignment students undertake outside of dedicated class time that deepens comprehension and builds essential skills.”

INSTRUCTIONAL PHILOSOPHY:

As with all instructional programming in the MTSD, the use of homework must align with the following three core beliefs of education:

- **Academic Achievement:** All instructional practices and activities MUST enhance a student's comprehension and essential skills connected to the standards.
- **Equity:** "Educational equity means that every child ... gets whatever they need to thrive in school everyday" (Aguilar, 2016). In MTSD, we advance equity by ensuring that the financial considerations and access to support does not impede a student's ability to learn. Therefore, all of our instructional practices and activities MUST ensure that all students can participate and accomplish assigned academic tasks.
- **Social-Emotional Well-being:** All instructional practices and activities MUST take into consideration the needs of all students and help to develop and increase a student's social-emotional well-being.

We believe that the fundamental purpose of the school day is to provide a supportive and structured environment for students to learn and that students learn most effectively under the guidance of a certified teacher. In accordance with that belief, we strive to ensure instructional activities are conducted within the normal school day. The use of homework must support the work conducted during the school day and must not be used to "extend" the school day beyond a meaningful and manageable limit (see the **Be Manageable** section below).

EXPECTED HOMEWORK PRACTICES:

Created by Design: The assignment of homework must be the result of a thoughtful process where an at-home assignment is deemed critical for the learning process and only assigned when necessary.

1. **Have an Academic Purpose:** The teacher and student must be able to clearly identify the academic standard/s for the learning. The assignment should align to one of the following:
 - a. Preparation/Pre-learning: prepares the student for future learning
 - b. Practice/Check for Understanding: helps reinforce a learned concept and allows the student and teacher to evaluate the next learning steps
 - c. Extension/Processing: the student uses prior learning to reflect, apply, analyze, and/or synthesize
2. **Be Accessible:** The student must have been taught and been given the time to develop the skills and knowledge needed to successfully complete the assignment with a high degree of independence. The level of proficiency of an assignment must not be dependent upon the time/skill/resources that a student's family can bring to bear when completing the assignment. NOTE: Parental involvement is still encouraged.

3. **Be Appropriate for the Student:** The teacher must ensure the assignment continues to build the student's progress toward the academic standards. In general, not all students need the same practice and some students may need enrichment to ensure they are growing academically. If a student has demonstrated proficiency of a standard, homework may not be necessary.
4. **Be Cost-Free:** The teacher must ensure the student has the resources (materials, reasonable time and opportunity to access technology, etc.) to complete the assignment. Families must not be expected to purchase materials/resources to complete an assignment.
5. **Be Manageable:** Teachers must be mindful of the potential social-emotional impact of homework to students. When assigning homework, use the following guidelines:
 - a. 4K-8: "10-Minutes per Grade Level per Night Rule" For example, a student in 2nd grade would spend no more than 20 minutes a night on homework; 6th grade = no more than 60 minutes a night.
 - b. 9-12: be meaningful and manageable. Teachers must take into consideration the purpose of their assignments and must make an effort to understand the academic load of their students. Summer homework is highly discouraged.
 - c. Must NOT be assigned on holidays/vacations/major religious days.
 - d. Does NOT need to be assigned nightly.
 - e. Provide check-ins for long-term projects in an effort to help students' manage their time and plan accordingly for the successful completion of the task.
6. **Receive Feedback:** "The best feedback is objective, impartial, and delivered formally and informally by peers, parents or teachers, and the environment" (Ferriter & Cancellieri, 2017). Students must receive feedback on all homework assignments that affirms their understanding of the standard/purpose of the homework. Feedback does not mean grading. Group discussion and peer review may be appropriate feedback mechanisms.
7. **Be Graded as a Measure of Mastery:** Homework is only graded for progress toward the standard (i.e. correctness); students may not be awarded or deducted credit based on the completion of homework.

Additional Note: The practice of providing "extra credit" should not be implemented.

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