

As we move into the use of standards based grading with our kindergarten through third grade this year and fourth through eighth grade next year, it has been important for our school to assess our overall grading practices. Not only does this include creating assessments and rubrics, but also looking at how we are supporting students through the learning process. One of the areas that we would like to highlight is the role of homework in student learning. Homework is an important instructional tool. We believe the purpose of homework is to:

- check for understanding
- provide feedback
- prepare students for summative assessments
- Deepen students understanding and skills relative to content that has been initially presented to them
- Prepare students for new content and have them elaborate on content that has been introduced
- Help students develop good study habits and organizational skills
- Foster positive attitudes toward school
- Communicate to students that learning takes work at home as well as at school
- Communicate to parents/guardians what is being emphasized in class, what is expected of students, and how the students' work will be evaluated

Feedback assists students in identifying their strengths and weaknesses as well as target areas for growth. Teachers focus on assigning homework that is aligned with learning targets that support a student's individual learning needs and assists them in making instructional adjustments to help students in reaching standards based proficiency.

Students need an opportunity to “practice without penalty” so that they can focus on learning and their individual growth. Homework provides a venue for this type of learning to take place. Homework will be utilized for the above mentioned purposes, but it will not count towards a student's final evaluation of a standard. Homework may be shown in the gradebook so that students and families can see his/her student's progress, but it will be marked as “no count” so that it is not factored into the final evaluation of a standard.

We are excited with the work that has taken place as we transition into standards based grading at the various grade levels and are looking forward to our continued partnership with families to continue to provide an exemplary education for all of our students.