



Our **vision** is to provide high-quality educational opportunities that inspire a community of learners

WELLNESS • EQUITY • ENGAGEMENT

Our **mission** is to develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships

Homework Policy

Deborah Bookis, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning

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Why a new Homework Policy?

ABRSD Mission

To develop **engaged, well-balanced learners** through collaborative, caring relationships



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Why a new Homework Policy?

Ready to Learn Survey, 2016

- *Anxiety/Stress Management*
- *Self-regulation*
- *Conflict Resolution*

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Why a new Homework Policy?

Student School Stress & Academic Worries	6-8	9-12
Often or always stressed by schoolwork	43%	78%
Schoolwork often or always kept them from having time with family and friends	34%	60%
Schoolwork often or always kept them from getting enough sleep	31%	67%
Felt forced to drop an activity because of the amount of schoolwork they have	34%	54%

Source: Stanford Survey of Adolescent Student Experiences, spring 2016

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Why a new Homework Policy?

Students' Perceptions of Effective School Changes

*Approximately 75% of students 9-12 and 60% of students 6-8 responded that improving the coordination among teachers **around homework load** and **coordinating or changing the test or exam schedule** would be quite or very effective.*

Source: *Stanford Survey of Adolescent Student Experiences, spring 2016*

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Homework Policy Review Process

October 2016 School Leadership Team & District Leadership Team

- Read research; reported on homework at each school; analyzed Challenge Success student surveys

February/March 2017 Planning Group

- Reviewed Leadership feedback for patterns and themes
- Identified further readings for Leadership; wrote first draft

March/April 2017

- Revised drafts multiple times; updated reports of homework in schools

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Homework Policy Review Process

May/June 2017 School Committee Policy Subcommittee

- Reviewed timeline and draft
- Discussed process for community feedback

May/June 2017 School Committee Meetings

- Announced draft to be read at June meetings
- Draft presentation; requested community feedback
- Draft emailed to all families
- Feedback shared and discussed

July 2017 School Committee Meeting

- Voted new homework policy 7.11.17

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Support student engagement in the classroom

District Core Value - Engagement

We provide engaging educational opportunities where students develop passion and joy for learning

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Homework Policy



Social-emotional wellness and balance in the lives of our students leads to better learning.

Better balance also allows students to engage in activities of their choice.

District Core Value - Wellness

We partner with families to prioritize social emotional wellness, which is necessary for learning and developing resilience

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Homework Policy



Information for any homework assignment should be clear and specific so that the student can complete the assignment independently.

Homework assignments should take into consideration individual student differences, needs and available resources.

District Core Value - Equity

We ensure all students have equitable access to programs and curricula to reach their potential

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Homework Policy Foundation



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Frequency of Homework

Provides district-wide parameters

Supports professional decision-making of our educators who will use the **intent** of homework as their guide.

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Frequency of Homework

Grades K-2: Students will have no homework except for an occasional activity that may include other people.

Grades 3-4: Students will occasionally have an assigned activity.

Grades 5-6: Students may expect homework more frequently, Monday through Thursday.

Grades 7-12: Students should expect homework in one or more subjects nightly.

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Vacations and Long Weekends

Vacations and Long Weekends will be homework free.

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Mid-Years, MCAS & Religious Holidays

Mid-years - high school only

MCAS testing

Religious Holidays

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Independent Choice Reading

Independent

Reading is not connected to any specific school curriculum, nor are students required to take any actions because they've engaged in the reading

Choice

Students to choose to read whatever interests them

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Independent Choice Reading

Goals

- grow students' intrinsic motivation to read without prompting, to read for the sheer pleasure and joy of it, to read to enter into new worlds because they choose to do so.
- partner with families to create environments for and a disposition toward reading that instills a lifelong love of reading

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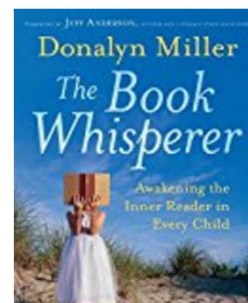
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Independent Choice Reading

What can families and caretakers do?

- Model the pleasure of reading
- Read with, next to and aloud to children
- Create reading time and space in your home/environment
- Read together at the same time
- Talk to children about what you're reading (in developmentally appropriate ways) and about what they are reading
- Take children to the library



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Independent Choice Reading

What are schools and the district doing?

Tweet from @BookChook

So perhaps our discussion should not be how do we hold kids accountable for their outside reading, but instead how do we create passionate reading environments in our schools?

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Independent Choice Reading

What are schools and the district doing?

Resources

- Supporting purchases for classroom libraries

Family Learning Series

- *Engaging Read-Alouds* with Pam Allyn (2015)
- *Why Summer Reading?* with Pam Allyn (2016)
- *What Parents and Caregivers Can Do to Nurture Lifetime Readers* with Dr. Steven Layne **November 7th!**

"THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS A KID WHO HATES READING. THERE ARE KIDS WHO LOVE READING, AND KIDS WHO ARE READING THE WRONG BOOKS."
JAMES PATTERSON

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Independent Choice Reading

Collaborations

- HGSE Saul Zaentz Early Childhood Initiative - PUP - only district in MA

Professional Learning

- Research Practice Seminars: Cultivating Lifelong Readers
 - The Book Whisperer*, by Donalyn Miller
 - Reading in the Wild*, by Donalyn Miller
 - In Defense of Read Aloud*, by Steven Layne (PL Day workshops)
 - Igniting a Passion for Reading*, by Steven Layne (PL Day workshops)
- Workshops with Literacy Consultants

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Independent Choice Reading



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Assigned Reading

We will continue to assign reading, and may even include **choice** within these assignments, for many reasons, including but not limited:

- to prepare for a class discussion
- to learn content
- to study for an assessment
- to answer questions about a book
- to journal about a book
- to complete a project connected to the reading

The difference is that this reading is intentional for some *other action* back in the classroom.

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An elementary teacher writes . . .

*I encourage kids to choose **what they want** to read. I **model** my reading life. I spend my **time talking** individually with students about books they are reading and learn how to support their literacy development by using these books as my teaching tools. I model how loving books and stories **helps understand** science, social studies, and math. I demonstrate how reading makes me **curious** and then how reading supports the pursuit of answers to my curiosities. I create **a place** where readers in our classroom community know what books fit them best. I model **emotions and making connections** using books my students love. We talk about reading goals, plans, and our reading lives.*

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