

FARRAGUT MIDDLE SCHOOL BUILDING LEADERSHIP TEAM

The purpose of this booklet is to clarify for parents, teachers and students what our expectations and goals are in relation to homework. This pamphlet was prepared by the BLT with input from the faculty and students.

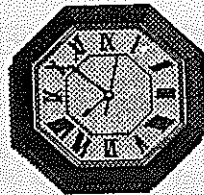
Homework is an integral part of every student's school experience. Its purposes are:

- *to reinforce and support classroom skills*
- *to help students develop and improve time management and organizational skills*
- *to provide the opportunity for creativity and critical thinking*
- *to help students become independent thinkers and workers*
- *to foster a positive work ethic*

Amount of homework

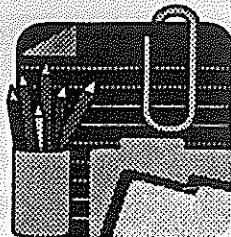
The amount of time spent on homework will increase as students progress through the Middle School. This includes time for reading and working on long term projects as well as completing daily assignments.

Please keep in mind that the same assignments will take different students different amounts of time. However, if a child is consistently working less than 30 minutes or more than 2 hours a night, we encourage parents to contact the teacher(s) involved.



Coordination of assignments and tests

- ◆ Calendars for grade level assignments and tests have been posted in the hallway near each of the cluster of 6 - 8 grade level classrooms. Teachers will use the calendars to record tests and long term assignments.
- ◆ Long-term assignments will be staggered so that they are not due at the same time. In addition, teachers will help students manage their time through these assignments by developing periodic checkpoints to monitor student progress.
- ◆ To the extent possible, no more than two major, full period tests will be scheduled for students on a single day.
- ◆ Teachers will make a concerted effort to balance the amount of work assigned. All subject areas will be included in this discussion in order to make sure that teachers are aware of all the tasks for which the students are responsible.
- ◆ The use of the agenda books will be emphasized in classes in order to help students develop appropriate time management skills and planning.



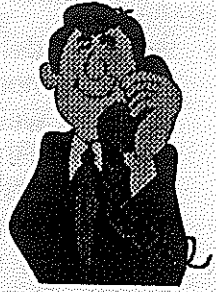
School holiday and weekend homework

- ◆ At the fifth grade written homework will not be given over the weekend except in special circumstances.
- ◆ At the sixth, seventh and eighth grades, homework may be given over the weekend.
 - ◆ Homework assignments will not be given immediately before school vacations and due immediately after vacations. However, assignments may be given over a long period of time which may encompass a vacation.
 - ◆ Tests will not be given on the first day back from a vacation.



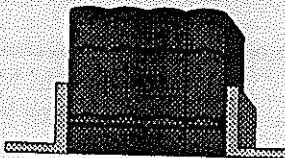
Parents' role

- ◆ Parents will be introduced to the agenda books at Back-to-School Night and encouraged to check their child's agenda periodically, particularly when there has been an indication that the student has not been completing assignments.
- ◆ Parents should contact the teacher(s) if the child is spending too much or too little time on homework on a regular basis (see "Amount of Homework").
- ◆ If a parent has a concern about a particular homework assignment, s/he should express that concern directly to the teacher who gave the assignment.
- ◆ We encourage parents to be mindful of the time their child normally devotes to homework when scheduling other activities for him or her.



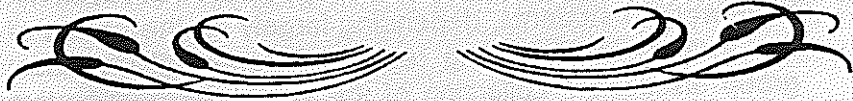
Homework logistics

- ◆ Homework will be made available to students in written form whenever possible including written assignments on the board or a calendar of assignments.
- ◆ Teachers vary in their weighting of homework. A course outline will be given out at the beginning of the school year which will spell out each teacher's policy on homework.
- ◆ Teachers use different methods to provide feedback on homework to students, depending largely on the nature of the assignment, including review of homework in class; group discussion; collection of the work; and cooperative group activities. It is expected that students will satisfactorily complete their homework.



Absences

- ◆ When students are out for only one day they should call a friend for homework. If they are out for longer than a day and are well enough to complete school work, parents should call the Guidance Office and ask for the assignments. Please request homework only if your child is feeling well enough to do it.
- ◆ Sometimes students are too sick to work at home. These students are expected to meet with their teachers when they return to school to determine what they will need to make up.
- ◆ "Homework buddies" are very useful. Students should select a responsible classmate in each class whom they can call for homework.
- ◆ It is not always possible to give detailed homework in advance to students who miss school because of family trips or other illegal absences. It is expected that these students will make up the homework missed when they return.
- ◆ Teachers will give students who have been sick or have another legitimate reason for not completing their homework a limited extension on assignments. The determination of what constitutes a legitimate reason and the length of the extension will be made by the teacher.



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