

Homework at C.P. Smith Elementary School

November, 2016

This fall C.P. Smith Elementary School teachers researched and discussed the role of homework in supporting student learning. Does homework make a difference in student performance? We also consulted with parents to learn about the impact of homework on families. After reviewing a variety of research articles and the practices of other area schools, we have come to a common view that:

- Research *does not* show that homework positively impacts student performance at the elementary level.
- Homework can become a battle for some students and parents at home, sometimes causing stress, anxiety, and a dislike of learning.
- Many students do not have enough time to do homework as they stay after school until after 5:00 and/or engage in after-school learning and sports.
- Having more time for students and families to enjoy afternoon and evening activities together in a more relaxed way provides other important learning opportunities.
- Some families do want their children to engage in homework at home.
- Promoting reading outside of school *does* promote student achievement.

Therefore, C.P. Smith Elementary School is adopting a new homework policy on a trial basis for the remainder of the 2016-17 school year. Parents, teachers, and students will be asked to provide feedback on the policy several times during the school year so adjustments can be made as needed.

The C.P. Smith Elementary School Homework Policy for 2016-17 is as follows:

- Students will not be assigned required homework in Grades K-4. In Grade 5, some homework assignments will be phased in to support transition to middle school learning.
- Instead, students will be asked to read at home on a daily basis. Some classes may ask students to complete on an optional basis a reading log to help keep track of and reflect on their reading.
- Reading at home includes students reading independently, reading to family members, or listening to family members read to them. Students can read all sorts of reading materials such as books, recipes, instructions, and letters.
- We recommend that students read each day:
 - Grades K-1: 10-15 minutes
 - Grade 2: 15-20 minutes
 - Grade3: 20-30 minutes
 - Grades 4-5: 25-35 minutes
- Students will have the opportunity to sign out at least two books at the C.P. Smith Library to take home and read each week. Some classes including 5th grade may have suggested reading assignments to expand their reading opportunities.
- Students and families who would like optional learning resources and activities for home will have access to a wide variety of suggestions from teachers on the school web page.
- Parents are invited to open a school library account to sign out books for the home.
- The school will set up a Book Exchange where students and families can donate books, and students can take books or exchange books they have read for new books .

Research articles on homework reviewed by teachers have been posted on the school web page at www.smith.bsdt.org under Parent Resources. Questions or comments? Please email Principal Amy Mellencamp at amellenc@bsdt.org or call 864-8479.