



## Outcome Based Grading and Reporting Position Paper Best Practices

**Title: Homework**

### **Definition:**

Within the teacher's professional judgment, students may need homework to support learning through pre-learning, checking for understanding and practice.

### **Beliefs:**

The purpose of homework is to support classroom learning. When classroom learning and homework are carefully planned, homework needs to consist of quality tasks. Homework can indicate whether a student has mastered a concept, or identify a learning problem that requires investigation, diagnosis and support.

### **Research Summary:**

Research shows that several tenets about learning exist that directly affect the practice of homework in anyone's classroom. The tenets listed below form the rationale for effective homework practices.

1. Quality teaching matters.
2. Skills require practice.
3. Time on task matters.
4. Task is as important as time.
5. Learning is individual.
6. Children differ in readiness and development level
7. Children differ in learning style.
8. Children differ in motivation, persistence, and organizational skills.
9. Frustration is detrimental to motivation and desire to learn.
10. Well-designed homework that students complete successfully can reinforce classroom learning.

### **BTPS Guidelines:**

#### **Responsibilities:**

**Teacher:** The teacher needs to clarify Essential Learning Outcomes or teacher identified outcomes, organize lesson content, scaffold learning, check for understanding and provide for quality tasks with timely feedback.

**Student:** The student(s) take opportunities and support, to help show evidence of competency of the Essential Learner Outcomes by completing homework in a reasonable and timely manner.

**Schools:** The school will provide support to staff and students to ensure that homework will be completed.

**Parents:** The parent should communicate regularly with the student and teacher.

**Procedures:**

The Ultimate goal of the teacher and the school Division (BTPS) is to have students achieve competency of the Essential Learner Outcomes.

**TYPES OF HOMEWORK**

**FORMS OF ASSESSMENT**

Pre-learning homework – <b>introduces</b> material presented in future lessons. Help the students learn new material when it is covered in class.	Formative
Checking for Understanding homework – <b>apply</b> skills that students ‘already have and have received sufficient instruction prior to the homework.	Formative
Practice homework – meant to <b>reinforce</b> learning and help students’ master specific skills. Students are encouraged to revisit daily, lesson material.	Formative
Processing homework - <b>apply many different skills</b> into a large task (book reports, science projects, creative writing)	Formative

*Based on the professional judgment of the classroom teacher homework can be assigned, but should follow the requirements in the chart listed above.*

*Specific and timely feedback is essential to support learning.*

Feedback: The Question and Feedback forms will be used to gather evidence of stakeholder support/concerns related to Homework. All papers gathered will be used to inform the Board of Trustees in their policy and procedures decisions related to Outcome Based Grading and Reporting.

**Questions and Answers:**

**Q. What is reasonable, timely feedback?**

A. The student needs to be able to connect the descriptive feedback from their homework with their progress toward the achievement of the Essential Learner Outcomes. Timeliness of the feedback will vary depending upon the complexity of the assessment.

**Q. What are some examples of school supports for incomplete homework assignments?**

- A. Some examples of support schools can provide include:
- Weekly homework time/period
  - Study hall

- Pyramid of Intervention
- Lunch and homework
- Recess and homework
- Scheduled non-academic time to complete homework
- Homework pullout option class

**Q. Is it reasonable for the teacher to expect homework to be attempted and/or completed by the student in a timely manner?**

A. Yes, because homework consists of quality tasks designed to help students reach the Essential Learning Outcomes. It is not busy work.

**Q. Can a teacher vary the homework assignment for each student?**

A. Yes, teachers have to consider each individual student's learning style, level of readiness, and factors external to the school when assigning homework to the student.

**Q. Can a teacher expect each student to complete the homework assignment to different degrees?**

A. Yes, in conjunction with Question #4, this decision is based on the professional judgement of the teacher. Determination may be done through pre-tests, by observation of the student's understanding during class, or from their performance on previous homework.

**Reference:**

Vatterott, Cathy. (2009) *Rethinking Homework. Best Practices That Support Diverse Needs.* Alexandria, VA: ASCD Press.