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<b>Date of issue</b>	December 2023
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<b>Subject</b>	<b>HOMEWORK</b>
<b>References</b>	<a href="#">Policy 4106 – Homework</a> <a href="#">APM A1460 – Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting</a> <a href="#">Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting in Ontario Schools 2010</a>
<b>Contact</b>	Student Services

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## 1. Rationale

This administrative procedures memorandum (APM) assists with understanding the types of homework, the circumstances under which homework should/should not be assigned, and the purpose of homework in relation to both instruction and assessment.

The Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) values the diversity of students and is committed to supporting the achievement and well-being of all students while fostering a safe, inclusive, and accepting learning environment.

## 2. Definitions

- 2.1 Homework is defined as work that students do outside the instructional day to practice skills, consolidate understandings, and/or prepare for new learning.
- 2.2 The SCDSB recognizes three types of homework:
  - 2.2.1 homework that provides practice/consolidation of skills and concepts learned in class;
  - 2.2.2 homework that extends learning, including, but not limited to, projects and assignments, and/or applies learning in new contexts; and,
  - 2.2.3 homework that prepares students for new learning opportunities.

## 3. Homework guidelines

- 3.1 Conditions under which homework can be assigned
  - 3.1.1 Assigned homework must be purposefully planned, age and developmentally appropriate, differentiated, related to current classroom instruction, and directly connected to Ontario curriculum expectations.
    - 3.1.1.1 Assigned homework shall have very clearly understood success criteria that will provide evidence of progress towards the intended learning goal(s) and associated curriculum expectation(s).
    - 3.1.1.2 Students' age and stage of development matters. The younger the student, the less impact homework has on student achievement. Also, homework that has not been differentiated may reinforce students' beliefs that they are unable to accomplish the task. As such, homework is to be differentiated. The provision

- of choice provides entry points for students of different ability levels and/or different places on the path to demonstrating intended learning goals.
- 3.1.1.3 Homework differentiation must also consider the needs of students receiving special education supports as outlined in their Individual Education Plan (IEP), and multilingual learners (ML) as identified on the Steps to English Language Proficiency (STEP) tool.
  - 3.1.2 Homework, when assigned, shall be high quality, appropriately challenging, and have flexible deadlines.
    - 3.1.2.1 Homework shall be based on quality and not quantity.
      - 3.1.2.1.1 Homework in the primary and junior divisions will be judiciously assigned, mostly for the purpose of practice/consolidation of skills and concepts learned in class. At times, homework that is intended to extend learning may also be appropriate.
      - 3.1.2.1.2 Homework in the intermediate and senior divisions may be assigned more regularly and may include all homework types as outlined in section 2.2 of this APM.
    - 3.1.2.2 Assigned homework will be appropriately challenging, while still allowing all students to complete it independently with relatively high rates of success.
    - 3.1.2.3 Teachers shall be flexible in their deadlines and be responsive to individual student circumstances and needs, including accommodation for faith-based days of significance, extracurricular activities that are scheduled outside of the school day, and activities that support personal and family well-being.
  - 3.2 Conditions under which homework shall not be assigned
    - 3.2.1 Homework shall not be assigned as a matter of routine.
    - 3.2.2 Homework shall not to be used to teach new material.
      - 3.2.2.1 In junior, intermediate, and senior divisions, homework may be used to introduce ideas or set the context for learning, but then must be followed up by the teacher to explore students' understandings. Teacher involvement in homework is key to its success.
    - 3.2.3 No homework shall be assigned before holidays that is due immediately following holidays, or lengthier school breaks (e.g., Winter Break or March Break).
    - 3.2.4 In instances where students are assigned homework that requires resources or technology that they do not have access to at home, teachers are required to either provide an alternative assignment, or provide access to necessary technology and resources during the school day.
    - 3.2.5 Group work should not be assigned as homework. Instead, sufficient time should be provided for students to meet the intended learning goal(s) during the instructional day(s).
    - 3.2.6 Homework shall not be used as a punishment or penalty for poor performance or lack of engagement.
    - 3.2.7 Homework that does not include a plan for providing timely and specific feedback shall not be assigned.

- 3.3 Homework and assessment, evaluation, and reporting
  - 3.3.1 Purposefully planned homework that includes a plan for timely and specific feedback may be used as one of many sources for evidence of student learning to provide data about students' progress towards the intended learning goal(s) and associated curriculum expectations.
    - 3.3.1.1 If homework is marked for completion, the resulting assessment data shall only be used as evidence related to development of the Responsibility category of the learning skills and work habits.
    - 3.3.1.2 Feedback on homework may be as a result of self, peer, or teacher assessment.
    - 3.3.1.3 Feedback must provide precise information about what the student did well, what needs improvement, and what specific steps the student can take to improve.
  - 3.3.2 Homework, when assigned, will be used as part of assessment for learning. This assessment for learning data will be used by both teachers and students to improve achievement.
    - 3.3.2.1 Teachers will use assessment for learning data gathered through the assessment of homework to:
      - 3.3.2.1.1 plan and conduct follow up conversations to clear up misconceptions;
      - 3.3.2.1.2 generate effective questions and worthwhile tasks to extend learning; and,
      - 3.3.2.1.3 inform next steps in teaching.
    - 3.3.2.2 Students will use feedback on homework to:
      - 3.3.2.2.1 understand their progress towards the intended learning goal(s);
      - 3.3.2.2.2 set individual goals for improvement; and,
      - 3.3.2.2.3 focus their learning on what they still haven't mastered.

#### **4. Roles and responsibilities**

- 4.1 Administrators shall:
  - 4.1.1 review this APM annually with staff, the school community, and school council;
  - 4.1.2 ensure that educators are adhering to the homework guidelines outlined in this APM;
  - 4.1.3 reference relevant homework guidelines and the parent(s)/guardian(s) and student specific roles and responsibilities in student handbooks, agendas, and other means of home-school communication; and,
  - 4.1.4 encourage the use of the Ministry of Education's licensed and/or board-supported digital tools to support homework completion.
- 4.2 Teachers shall:
  - 4.2.1 establish a partnership with students and parent(s)/guardian(s) to promote timely and regular communication about assigned homework and the role it plays in supporting improved achievement;
  - 4.2.2 align instruction and assessment practices with the homework guidelines outlined in this APM; and,
  - 4.2.3 minimize the number of 'due next day' homework assignments.

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- 4.3 Parent(s)/guardian(s) are encouraged to:
    - 4.3.1 work in partnership with the teacher(s) to support homework completion;
    - 4.3.2 help the student(s) in their household to use available feedback to set goals and establish a focus for ongoing learning; and,
    - 4.3.3 communicate with the teacher(s) of the student(s) in their household with questions or concerns about the purpose, intended learning goal(s), and success criteria of the assigned homework.
  
  - 4.4 Students shall:
    - 4.4.1 clarify, during the instructional day, their understanding of the purpose, intended learning goal(s), and success criteria of assigned homework;
    - 4.4.2 use feedback as outlined in section 3.3.2.2 of this APM;
    - 4.4.3 use homework to assess personal progress related to their development of the Responsibility category of the learning skills and work habits;
    - 4.4.4 communicate with their teacher(s) about homework challenges they experience related to the assigned task and/or deadlines; and,
    - 4.4.5 submit homework based on the success criteria and agreed-upon timelines.

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