



## Warren Township Schools

*Shining Brighter Every Day*

December 9, 2016

Dear Warren Township Families,

Over the course of my first six months in the district, I have spent a great deal of time meeting with students, staff, Board of Education members, parents, and members of various community organizations. One of the common issues that has been brought to my attention is the amount of homework our students are asked to complete on a regular basis.

The principals of each of our schools have recently completed meetings with staff to discuss this topic and how to ensure that student wellness is a top priority without reducing our high expectations for student achievement.

In the short term we are taking two steps to support our students and staff on this issue:

1. We have reiterated the expectations set forth in Board of Education Policy #6154. The full document is attached for your reference. In summary, the policy indicates that elementary school students should typically be assigned homework two to four nights per week, and take between 30-60 minutes on any given school night with only occasional weekend homework. The expectations increase as students move through the middle school grades.
2. Winter and spring breaks will be homework free. Students will be encouraged to read for pleasure.

The purpose of these clarifications is to provide our students and their families with time to disconnect from the stress and pressures of school and to connect with one another, their communities, and leisure activities that can be difficult to schedule during the hustle and bustle of our regular routines.

The first tenet of the Whole Child approach to education states that *each student enters school healthy and learns about and practices a healthy lifestyle*. In the coming year, I intend to facilitate several opportunities for discussions around the role of homework within a healthy lifestyle that may lead to further recommendations to the Board of Education for revisions to this policy in the future.

I hope this information provides some relief and the ever-important gift of time for you and your families this holiday season and throughout the rest of the 2016-17 school year.

Sincerely,

Matthew A. Mingle

[Home](#) > [Board Office](#) > [Board Policies](#) > HOMEWORK/MAKEUP WORK

# HOMEWORK/MAKEUP WORK

[Schools](#)  
[Contact Information](#)  
[Calendar](#)  
[News](#)  
[Health Office](#)

**FILE CODE: 6154****Type: Policy****Monitored****Mandated****X Other Reasons**

The board of education defines homework as any learning-related activity assigned to be done at home. The board believes that homework, relevant to material presented in class, provides an opportunity to broaden, deepen or reinforce the student's knowledge. Homework also is intended to enhance a student's learning skills and work habits as well as strengthen a student's preparation for subsequent classes. Homework is not to be used for punitive reasons. Teachers must use discretion in deciding the types, number, and length of homework assignments. Also, it is expected that teachers will use the following guidelines when making decisions about homework:

In the elementary school homework should typically be assigned between two to four nights per school week, and take between 30-60 minutes on any given school night, including studying for tests, recognizing that homework time increases as students advance in grade levels. Weekend homework should be occasional and at the teacher's discretion.

Middle School is a key transition period, and it is expected that both classwork and homework will become progressively more demanding as students advance in grade levels. In eighth grade, many students are already taking high school level classes, and their homework will reflect that fact. Indeed, it is especially important that all middle school students be properly prepared for the demands of the high school curriculum.

At the outset of middle school, homework will typically be assigned between two to four nights per school week, and take between 30-60 minutes on any given school night, including studying for tests. By eighth grade, students typically will be assigned approximately 30 minutes homework per subject for an average of two to three hours homework several nights a week. Weekend homework is at the teacher's discretion.

Homework should be evaluated often for both correctness and effort.

Principals shall annually convey to staff members that the staff members' expectations of homework practices are to be submitted in writing to their students, and students' parents/guardians, and a copy to be kept on file with the principal.

## Make-Up Work

Students absent for any reason must make up assignments, classwork and tests within a reasonable length of time. In most cases, a reasonable length of time shall be the same number of school days as the days missed.

Students being excused for any reason, other than illness, must make arrangements with the teacher of the missed classes in order to make up the work missed. This must be done before the absence from class.

On the second day of absence, a parent may request his/her child's homework assignments by 8:30 AM. The homework assignments will be made available to the parent/guardian by the end of that day.

## Incompletes

When a student does not complete work missed for absence or other reasons, he/she will receive an "incomplete" for the marking period. Students will be given reasonable number of school days following the end of the marking period to make up the missed work.

If work critical to the student's understanding of the subject is not made up by the end of the next marking period, a failing grade may be earned for that subject.

If work is missing during the final marking period of the school year, the grade will be left to the discretion of the teacher. The teacher who has given an incomplete is responsible for reporting to the student the work he/she has missed and citing the consequences mentioned above.

**Date: April 14, 1997****NJSBA Review/Update: April 2008, September 2008****Readopted: October 27, 2008**

## Key Words

Homework, Makeup Work

N.J.S.A. 18A:11-1 General mandatory powers and duties

N.J.S.A. 18A:36-14 Religious holidays; absence of pupils on; effect

N.J.S.A. 18A:54-20 Powers of board (county vocational schools)

N.J.A.C. 6A:32-10.1 et seq. Summer School Sessions



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