

SCHOOLWORK, HOMEWORK AND DISCIPLINE PRACTICES

TO THE TEACHERS:

We are one community. As in all communities, some rules and guidelines exist for the betterment of all and flexibility exists in order to allow certain strengths to shine and make the community better. So, too, here at Northside.

In circumstances where I believe that it is in the best interest of the children that we all adhere to the same guiding principle, I have established that principle. I ask your support and cooperation in understanding the need for a common approach.

I ask that you distribute this building's schoolwork and discipline practices to the parents at Back- to -School Night.

Northside Elementary School SCHOOL WORK PRACTICES

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- 1) It is in doing that children learn,
- 2) It is through doing that teachers learn what it is that children need to achieve, therefore,
- 3) Children need to complete guided and independent practice activities as carefully and as thoroughly as possible.
- 4) Children who do not complete activities stand a greater chance of not being successful.
- 5) Teachers bear the responsibility for teaching school curriculum.
- 6) Both teachers and parents bear the responsibility for enabling children to complete activities.

EVIDENCES That LEAD to the GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- Children will be given guided practice opportunities each day.
- Children will be given independent practice opportunities each day.
- Where needed, opportunities will be individualized so that the student can be successful.
NOTE – Curricular expectations aren't adjusted, only the paths to those expectations.
- Children will be provided re-teaching and pre-teaching when necessary to ensure successful independent practice.
- Children will be taught how to complete assignments and how to study for specific assessments. Those teachings will be shared with parents.
- Teachers will be monitoring practice and communicating to parents when success is at risk.
- Parents will be monitoring practice and summative assessments sent home, as well as homework, and will contact teachers when concerns exist.

WHEN CHILDREN ARE NOT COMPLETING SCHOOLWORK –

The following steps will be taken:

- 1) A conference with the child will take place to ascertain the issues.
- 2) Together, the teacher and the child will design a solution.
- 3) Should that solution fail, the teacher will contact the parent in order to further study the issues.
- 4) Together, the teacher, parent and child will design a solution.
- 5) Where needed, the psychologist will be called in to assist with solutions.
- 6) Solutions will be monitored for success. Anything less than success will require steps 4 & 5 to be revisited.

**At all times, a positive, enabling approach will be taken over a punitive, disciplinary approach.
Failure to complete assignments should not be considered an option.**

HOMEWORK SPECIFIC PRACTICES

Parents are expected to honor the homework process, as it is designed to help their child learn. Homework is independent practice or studying designed to be completed at home under the supervision of parents.

Teacher Homework Responsibility

- 1) Design the assignment to be one of independent practice, based on the child having successfully completed the approximation phase.
- 2) To teach the children (or child where individualization is needed) to be able to copy assignments and to organize the items needed to take home to complete the assignments.
- 3) To teach the children how to deal with confusion or frustration when doing homework.
- 4) To teach the children how to study for summative assessments, specific to each kind of assessment.
- 5) To encourage the child to embrace success.

Parent Homework Responsibility

- 1) Honor the homework process over recreational processes.
- 2) To provide a quiet environment where homework can be completed.
- 3) To provide homework structures – times, places, expectations, processes, etc.
- 4) To tell students that they can do it; remain positive and supportive.
- 5) To allow kids to make mistakes.
- 6) To seek advice when homework becomes an issue at home.
- 7) To be willing to teach toward independent success when necessary.
- 8) To check to see what the assignments are each day and that they are completed.
- 9) To expect that homework be completed by the child.

RESEARCH REGARDING HOMEWORK

- As students reach middle and high school, there is a correlation between doing homework and success in school. The elementary years are designed to teach kids to be independent homework doers.
- Forty percent of parents do the homework for the child in some way, shape or form. **THIS TEACHES THE CHILD THAT HE OR SHE IS NOT CAPABLE.**
- Fifty percent of parents do not monitor student homework in the elementary grades, which contributes to a nationwide 35% lack of proficiency for students.

THE BUILDING HOMEWORK CURRICULUM

Subsequent grades need to continue to expect the competencies established at each grade. A child must demonstrate proficiency for a set of grade level criteria before moving onto the next grade's homework curriculum.

Kindergarten

Teacher

- Children learn to bring homework folder to and from home
- Children learn to write the name on the paper
- Children learn to write legibly
- Design 15 minutes of homework per night

Parent

- Children learn that homework is honored
- Children learn about a homework place
- Children learn about a homework time
- Children learn to embrace being read to nightly (This should continue throughout elementary school)

First grade

Teacher

- Children learn to do multiple assignments for homework.
- Children begin to do writing for homework assignments
- Children practice copying their own homework assignment
- Design 20 minutes of homework per night

Parent

- Children learn to give their homework folder to the parent
- Children learn to ask for help
- Children learn to pack their own backpack after doing homework
- Children learn to put the backpack in the same spot each day so as to facilitate getting back to school
- Children learn to independently read each night to a parent.

Second grade

Teacher

- Children learn to successfully copy homework assignments
- Children learn to use organizations other than a homework folder
- Children learn to study for memorization (spelling words, fact families)
- Children learn to use writing to organize thinking as homework
- Design 30 minutes of homework per night

Parent

- Children learn to make decisions about what to do first for homework
- Children learn to organize their assignments
- Children learn to read independently to themselves each night. (This should continue throughout elementary school.)
- Children learn to show his/her parent the assignments and the work
- Children learn to redo homework that is unacceptable as pointed out by a parent

Third Grade

Teacher

- Children learn to organize multiple items and resources to go home
- Children learn to study brief teacher given notes
- Children learn to respond to independent reading with writing
- Children learn specific strategies for studying times tables
- Children learn the language of describing homework issues to the teacher
- Design 40 minutes of homework per night
- Children learn to establish homework buddies for homework reference.

Parent

- Children learn to initiate homework processes without parent reminder
- Children learn to utilize learned study techniques independently
- Children learn to advocate for themselves with teacher conversation when confusion or homework issues exist.
- Children learn to access a homework buddy.

Fourth Grade

Teacher

- Children learn to copy brief notes used for studying
- Children learn to analyze homework for improvements and to initiate the improvements
- Children learn to periodically practice State assessment type practice independently
- Children learn to make notes from notes as a means of studying
- Design 45 minutes of homework per night

Parent

- Children learn to prioritize homework over other things without parent reminder
- Children learn to initiate advanced study techniques taught
- Children learn to make homework a complete independent process, weaning the parent supervision for daily assignments

Fifth Grade

Teacher

- Children learn to take brief notes for study purposes
- Children learn to study from such notes
- Children practice planning long term homework
- Children learn to study from a printed resource (not whole chapters, but pieces of chapters)
- Design 50-60 minutes of homework per night

Parent

- Supervise the portion of homework that requires planning long term assignments
- Offer verbal studying help as studying becomes more complex
- Children learn to ask for study assistance

Northside Elementary School

Discipline Practices

Guiding Principles:

- 1) Children need to learn appropriate behaviors for different scenarios; appropriate behaviors give children access to opportunities.
- 2) Relationships and interdependence reduce inappropriate behaviors.
- 3) Children have the right to feel safe at school.
- 4) Children have the right to be taught appropriate behaviors.
- 5) Teaching, not punishment, is the foundation for influencing behaviors.
- 6) Influence, not control, breeds more success with altering behaviors.
- 7) The best consequences for unacceptable behaviors are those that are naturally occurring.
- 8) Elementary children are developing in their behavioral abilities. Influencing activities and behavioral consequences need to reflect age and developmental levels.

Evidences that Lead to the Guiding Principle:

- 1) Students will be spoken to in ways that preserve dignity at all times.
- 2) Classroom communities will be nurtured that promote interdependence.
- 3) Relationship building will take precedence over all other activities.
- 4) Children will be taught the acceptable behaviors necessary for all situations, void of judgments and evaluations.
- 5) Children that have not yet learned appropriate behaviors will not be permitted the rights and opportunities that require such appropriate behaviors.

Teacher Responsibility Regarding Discipline:

- Build an interdependent classroom community.
- Utilize “I” statements rather than “you” statements for praise and reprimand.
- Teach appropriate behaviors according to Cambourne’s “Conditions of Learning.” (see appendix)
- Give feedback to students about their behaviors.
- Employ a problem solving approach to altering behaviors
- Allow the natural consequences of an action for a student to take place.
- To be willing to deepen understanding about influencing child behavior
- To be willing to seek changed behavior rather than punishment and control as the goal.

Parent Responsibility Regarding Discipline:

- To be willing to deepen understanding about influencing child behavior
- To be willing to seek changed behavior rather than punishment and control as the goal.
- To be willing to be a partner in problem solving with the teacher regarding building acceptable, productive behaviors.
- To be willing to take effective action to achieve behavioral goals for their child

HIERARCHY TO PROMOTE APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

- 1) Build an interdependent community.
- 2) Teach appropriate behaviors utilizing Cambourne's "Conditions of Learning."
- 3) Utilize a problem-solving model when behaviors are an issue.
- 4) Engage parents in the problem solving process when needed.
- 5) Allow the naturally occurring consequences to happen.
- 6) Reduce opportunity until the behavior capacity matches the opportunity's need.

PROBLEM SOLVING MATRIX by Dr. Tom Gordon, author of Discipline That Works

- 1) Identify and define the problem using "I" messages for all involved.
- 2) Each involved generates alternative solutions.
- 3) Evaluate the alternative solutions.
- 4) Decision make.
- 5) Implement the decision.
- 6) Do a follow-up evaluation.

Conditions of Learning

IMMERSION

- lots of exposure to authentic uses and experiences
- 300-1000 hits in order for true learning
- Modeling we do in classrooms / remember when modeling was bad?
- What happens when kids come without it?

DEMONSTRATION

- learner needs to see exactly what you want me to do looks like, sounds like, etc.
- Visual memory precedes language

EXPECTATIONS

- a goal has to exist so I (the learner) know where I am going
- a clarification process has to exist to allow me to be clear
- a belief that I can get there is a fundamental piece message that comes from expectations
- YET, expectations that are too high result in shut down
- Is where culture is built

RESPONSIBILITY

- means that something has to be done and accomplished – nothing is not an answer (accountability)
- belief structures are connected to
- choice is overt for the learner

APPROXIMATION

- the learner needs to muddle their way through the process at least once alone before learning can be built
- this is where failure rates are honored

PRACTICE

- learner needs to do it over and over again
- intensive rather than extensive

RESPONSE

- learners need feedback for anything they do. Feedback, especially in failure is what drives us forward to success.
- Feedback then needs to be analyzed

ENGAGEMENT

- the learner needs to be actively engaged (see principles of engagement)

4 Principles of Engagement (Learners will engage in learning when...)

- you believe you are capable of doing what is demonstrated
- you value what you are learning
- if you are free from anxiety (overwhelmed/not too much)
- if learning is facilitated by someone with whom you can bond