

# MHS HOMEWORK POLICY - GUIDELINES

## Homework and Makeup Work Policy

### Malibu High School Homework Guidelines

The teachers and administrators at Malibu High School believe that learning whether at home or in the classroom is an essential part of student education and achievement. The purpose of these homework guidelines is to assist teachers, parents and students in ensuring that homework is meaningful and supports the learning experience for all students.

### Rationale for Homework

As a school community, we have a collective commitment to ensure that students' develop a set of higher order thinking skills and increase their level of cognitive engagement through activities that meet the standards of DOK level 3 and 4. We want students to have opportunities to think deeply, to foster independent inquiry, experience pride in their work, and to encourage engagement in and development of students' proficiency with all aspects of content required to make connections across all curricula. Homework helps students by reinforcing, complementing, and extending the learning of the educational experience at MHS. According to the US Department of Education, homework can help students:

- Review and practice what they've covered in class
- Get ready for the next day's class
- Learn to use resources, such as libraries, reference materials and computer websites to find information about a subject;
- Explore subjects more fully than classroom time permits;
- Extend learning by applying skills they already have to new situations; and
- Integrate their learning by applying many different skills to a single task, such as book reports or science projects.

### Teacher Guidelines

*Teachers should strive to:*

#### *DESIGN MEANINGFUL/PURPOSEFUL HOMEWORK:*

- Create assignments with a purpose. Teachers and students should understand the desired outcome of the activity. Reflect on the purpose of a homework assignment and how it ties back to the enduring understandings or the big ideas of a given unit, and make this clear to students.
- Make assignments focused and clear. Explain homework assignments/expectations/due dates/timelines to the students prior to and during the assignment period. Teachers are encouraged to use GoogleClassroom to help foster communication with students and parents.
- Create assignments that challenge students to think strategically while integrating both new and previously taught information.
- Vary types of activities you are asking students to engage in outside of the classroom setting. Consider allowing for student choice in homework tasks. Consider letting them choose which problems to do, or which topics to write on, or allowing them to stop when they believe, and can demonstrate, they understand the concept.
- Make sure homework is developmentally appropriate, differentiated, and able to be done independently.
- Match assignments to the skills, interests, needs of students or to current events.
- Provide timely, constructive feedback on homework tasks. Providing feedback and opportunities for correction help develop a deeper understanding. Consider alternative grading strategies to allow for homework to be about the content and not just the grade.

## **BE MINDFUL OF STUDENT LOAD:**

- Predict the amount of time homework might take. Both the teacher and student should monitor and track actual time spent and make adjustments accordingly.
- Whenever possible, communicate and coordinate assignments with your grade level colleagues so that students do not receive an overload of homework.
- Having students get started on homework in class may help teachers assess whether or not it is do-able and appropriate.
- Teach techniques that can help students allocate their time wisely, meet their deadlines, and develop good personal study habits.
- Find ways to increase the engagement factor and to allow students choice and voice in their homework assignments.
- Communicate ways in which parents can best assist/support their children in doing homework independently.
- Identify the access that students will have to materials for projects and other homework assignments.

## **Parent Guidelines**

*Parents should try to:*

- Act as cheerleaders and supporters, not homework police. Ideally, the child should be able to do the homework alone, without help from parents. Instead of checking, editing, or doing the work for the student, parents should provide necessary supplies and show an active interest in the content the student is learning.
- Work with your child to determine a healthy schedule of activities that will allow time to complete homework, work on projects, and study for tests – while still getting adequate sleep and time for play, family time and downtime.
- Teach techniques that can help children allocate their time wisely, meet their deadlines, and develop good personal study habits.
- Encourage your child to self-advocate for themselves by working directly with their teachers if issues arise.
- Encourage teachers to work with both you and your student to create effective homework policies. Start by communicating with your own child's teacher about issues or homework challenges your child is facing.
- Recognize that a missed or poorly done homework assignment every now and then is not going to hurt your child in the long run. Parents can help students organize their time or prioritize assignments, but when parents regularly deliver forgotten assignments to school or step in to rescue a child at the last minute, they may be denying the child the opportunity to develop resilience.
- Monitor work completion and progress using the Illuminate Parent Portal.
- Communicate with teachers at the earliest possible opportunity once the child has demonstrated consistent inability to complete homework. If necessary, parents shall attempt to reach accommodation with their child's teachers regarding homework.
- Contact the principal or designee if you cannot reach accommodation with a teacher regarding homework.

## **Student Guidelines**

*Students are to:*

- Demonstrate a commitment to completing all homework as assigned.
- Record homework when assigned in class by the teacher or monitor assignments through GoogleClassroom.
- Seek clarification from teachers when unclear about homework.
- Use class time provided for completing classwork and/or starting homework.
- Self advocate for yourself by working directly with your teachers if issues arise.
- Communicate with your parents and teachers when you feel overwhelmed and/or unable to complete assignments.

- Seek assistance from teachers, staff, and peers when demonstrating an inability to complete homework.
- Ensure all work is your own. Adhere to the MHS Academic Honesty Policy when completing all tasks.
- When selecting classes, think through amount of time needed for work, research, reading and balance with other time commitments.

### **Homework Tips for Students**

- Record homework in the same location each day. Know, record and monitor due dates.
- Ask clarifying questions of teachers and staff to be sure the expectations on your assignments are clear.
- Have a quiet space with basic materials for homework completion.
- Make homework part of your daily after school routine.
- Utilize support period to get help and to complete assignments.
- Take a break when tired - drink water, stretch, move, eat a snack; then resume work.
- When you have questions about the homework, place a note next to it and ask the teacher the next day.
- Remember that eating well, appropriate rest and physical activity are important for one's overall well-being.

### **Scheduling and Time Parameters**

High school homework may be given Monday through Thursday. Teachers should consider providing little to no homework on weekends or during vacations, when at all possible. However, appropriate weekend and vacation homework may be given, but should not exceed the time allotments shown. Weekends, holidays, and vacation time should be used for family, play, downtime, and extracurricular activities.

To optimize student learning and well-being, high school homework assignments shall be designed so that the typical student can complete homework for all classes, including course-related reading, studying, working on special projects and preparing for exams, within the time allotments shown.

Grade 9	90 minutes daily (approx. 20 minutes per class)
Grade 10-12	120 minutes daily for college preparation courses (approx. 25 minutes per class)
Grade 10-12	150 minutes daily for honors and AP courses (approx. 45 minutes per class)

No course is to exceed 3 hours of homework per week.

Students shall be encouraged to allot time to read for pleasure. Reading for pleasure, independent studying, and instrument practice times are not included in the time parameters shown.

### **Assistance for Homework**

It is recommended that students seeking assistance with homework:

- Speak and work directly with their teachers as they will be able to recommend strategies for improving success with homework.
- Utilize Support Period effectively.
- Speak directly with teachers to determine which teachers host regular tutoring hours or to arrange individual tutoring sessions. Many teachers are available before and after school, students are encouraged to use that time to seek assistance.

In addition, students may get assistance on homework through the programs or strategies listed.

- Support Period - Wednesday and Thursday - 12:10-1:05 - Classrooms
- Drop-In Tutoring - Monday – Thursday 3:15 – 4:15 - Library
- The Club – Power Hour Monday – Friday 3:00 – 4:30 - The Club

### **Sharing of Concerns**

Teachers and parents are encouraged to communicate with each other at the earliest possible opportunity once the student has demonstrated consistent inability to complete homework. Teachers and parents may request a Student Success Team (SST) meeting to further investigate resolutions if needed.

### **Makeup Work**

Students who miss school work because of an excused absence shall be given the opportunity to complete all assignments and tests. As determined by the teacher, the assignments and tests shall be reasonably equivalent to, but not necessarily identical to, the assignments and tests missed during the absence. Students shall receive full credit for work satisfactorily completed within a reasonable period of time.

Students who miss school work because of unexcused absences may be given the opportunity to make up missed work for full or reduced credit. Teachers shall assign such make up work as necessary to ensure academic progress, not as a punitive measure.

Students suspended from school shall be given assignments to complete. The teacher of any class from which a student is suspended may require the student to complete tests missed during the suspension.

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