

VISTA CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

601 North Fairview Street
Santa Ana, CA 92703
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www.vistacharterpublicschools.org

Collin Felch, Ed.D., Superintendent
Karen Amaya, Assistant Superintendent



VCPS Homework Policy

Our vision is to close the achievement gap for our targeted population which is predominantly low-income and historically underserved students and to address the growing opportunity gap. Homework supports our vision by reinforcing concepts learned in the classroom, providing opportunities for individualized practice, and encouraging self-discipline and time management skills. It allows teachers to assess students' understanding and identify areas where additional support is needed, while also involving families in the learning process and promoting a collaborative approach to education. Through thoughtful and purposeful assignments, homework can help bridge gaps in understanding and reinforce the skills necessary for academic success.

What we believe:

- Best learning happens in school with the support of highly qualified teachers
- Homework can be an effective supplement to enhance learning
- Daily reading in order to develop strong literacy skills
- We are always learning
 - Learning does not and can not only happen between 8:00-3:00 and there are numerous opportunities to learn outside of/after school
- Homework supports college and career readiness
- Homework supports development of character values such as grit, accountability and growth mindset
- Homework must have a purpose and relevance
- Homework supports the development of global competence
- Homework should not be graded, as it is practice in order to demonstrate mastery
- Students should receive feedback on their homework
- Schools must provide opportunities for all students to be able to complete homework, even if there are barriers to accessing the internet at home. Such opportunities could include providing a time and venue at school (i.e. before or after school) to complete homework or options such as mobile internet hotspots.

Purpose

- Role of Homework
 - **Reinforcement of Learning:** Homework gives students the chance to practice and reinforce what they've learned in class. It helps solidify concepts and skills so that they can become more proficient over time.
 - **Developing Grit, Accountability and Growth Mindset:** When students manage their assignments outside of class, they develop important SEL skills like time management, organization, and self-discipline, which will serve them in both academics and life.
 - **Providing Additional Learning Opportunities:** Homework can offer an opportunity for deeper exploration of a subject, allowing students to go beyond what was covered in

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class. It may include research, problem-solving, or critical thinking tasks that help expand their knowledge.

- **Preparation for College and Beyond:** Homework helps students develop the ability to work independently and take ownership of their learning, skills that are necessary in college and beyond.
 - **Teacher Feedback:** Homework provides teachers another way to gauge students' understanding of the material. It gives them insight into where students might be struggling and where they need additional support.
 - **Communication with Families:** Homework can also act as a tool for families to understand what their children are learning in school and to be more involved in their education.
- **Role of Students**
 - **Reinforcing Learning:** The repetition of concepts through homework helps reinforce what was taught, ensuring better retention and understanding
 - **Applying Knowledge:** Homework helps students apply what they've learned in class. It encourages critical thinking and helps solidify new concepts.
 - **Building Discipline:** Homework teaches time management, responsibility, and self-discipline. It's an opportunity for students to learn how to manage their own learning and stay organized..
 - **Seeking Understanding:** If students encounter difficulty while doing homework, it's a chance for them to identify gaps in their knowledge, ask questions, and seek clarification from teachers or peers.
 - **Developing Problem-Solving Skills:** Homework often involves working through problems or questions independently, fostering problem-solving skills and creative thinking.
 - **Independent Learning:** It encourages students to take initiative in their learning, developing a sense of ownership and responsibility for their education.
 - **Role of Families**
 - **Create a Positive Homework Environment:** Families should provide a quiet, well-lit, and distraction-free space for their child to work. This helps set the tone for focusing and productivity.
 - **Encourage Time Management:** Helping kids establish a routine or schedule for when to start and finish homework is crucial. This teaches them responsibility and time management skills.
 - **Offer Emotional Support:** Homework can be stressful, and some children may struggle with certain tasks. Families should encourage persistence, offer praise, and help manage frustration when needed. This emotional support builds confidence and resilience.

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- **Be a Resource, Not a Problem Solver:** Families can guide their child through tough problems or concepts but should avoid doing the homework for them. The goal is to help the child think through challenges, not give them the answers.
- **Communicate with Teachers:** If there are consistent issues with homework, such as unclear instructions or excessive workload, families should feel comfortable reaching out to the teacher to seek clarification or discuss concerns.
- **Promote Independence:** The end goal is for children to learn how to complete homework on their own. Families should encourage independence and only step in when their child is truly stuck or needs guidance.
- **Promote a growth mindset:** Families should embrace the learning process and that mistakes present opportunities for learning and growth.

- Role of School/Teacher(s)

1. Assign Purposeful and Relevant Homework

- Homework should align with learning objectives and reinforce the lessons taught in class and help students deepen their understanding of key concepts.
- Homework should be appropriately challenging to students, matching the student's current level of ability and zone of proximal development.
- Homework should come in a variety of formats (e.g., reading, problem-solving, projects) to address different learning styles.

2. Provide Clear Instructions and Expectations

- Teachers should ensure that students understand the purpose of each assignment, the steps to complete it, and the expectations for how it should be submitted (e.g., due dates, format).
- Clarifying instructions can prevent confusion and reduce frustration for both students and families.

3. Encourage Time Management and Independent Learning

- Teachers can teach students how to plan their time effectively, breaking down assignments into manageable chunks.
- Assignments should encourage independent problem-solving and critical thinking, which helps students develop important skills for future academic and personal success.

4. Provide Feedback

- Timely and constructive feedback helps students understand what they did well and where they can improve. This can motivate them to keep working hard and learning.

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- Feedback also guides teachers in identifying areas where students may need additional support or instruction.

5. Monitor Homework Load

- Teachers and schools should be mindful of the total amount of homework assigned across subjects. Overloading students can lead to stress and burnout, while too little may not reinforce the material sufficiently.
- Schools should aim to strike a balance so students have time for extracurricular activities, socializing, and relaxation.

6. Communicate with Families

- Teachers should provide information about homework policies and encourage communication with families if problems arise (e.g., if a student is consistently struggling with assignments or if families are unsure how to help).
- Some schools also offer homework resources or suggestions to guide families in supporting their children without overstepping.

7. Adapt Homework for Individual Needs

- Teachers should be flexible, recognizing that each student's needs and circumstances are different. This might mean adjusting homework for students with learning disabilities or those facing challenges outside of school.

8. Promote a Growth Mindset

- Teachers can use homework as an opportunity to promote resilience and perseverance. Encouraging students to view mistakes as part of the learning process can make them more willing to engage with challenging material.

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VCPS Homework Policy One-Pager

Our vision is to close the achievement and opportunity gaps for our predominantly low-income, historically underserved students. Homework plays a crucial role in reinforcing classroom learning, providing individualized practice, and developing self-discipline and time management skills.

What We Believe

- Best learning happens in school with qualified teachers.
- Homework is a valuable supplement to enhance learning.
- Daily reading is essential for literacy development.
- Learning happens beyond school hours, contributing to growth.
- Homework supports college/career readiness and character development.
- Homework should have a purpose and be relevant.
- Homework should not be graded, but feedback is essential.

Purpose and Role of Homework

- **Reinforcement of Learning:** Solidifies concepts and skills.
- **Developing Grit, Accountability, and Growth Mindset:** Builds self-discipline and time management.
- **Additional Learning Opportunities:** Enables deeper exploration beyond the classroom.
- **Preparation for College and Beyond:** Fosters independent learning and responsibility.
- **Teacher Feedback:** Helps gauge understanding and provides insight for additional support.
- **Family Engagement:** Keeps families informed and involved in their child's education.

Role of Students

- **Reinforcing Learning:** Homework helps solidify class concepts.
- **Applying Knowledge:** Encourages critical thinking and application.
- **Building Discipline:** Teaches time management and self-organization.
- **Seeking Understanding:** Provides opportunities to identify and address learning gaps.
- **Developing Problem-Solving Skills:** Fosters independence and creative thinking.
- **Independent Learning:** Promotes responsibility for one's education.

Role of Families

- **Create a Positive Homework Environment:** Provide a quiet, distraction-free space.
- **Encourage Time Management:** Help set schedules for consistency.
- **Offer Emotional Support:** Encourage persistence and manage frustration.
- **Be a Resource, Not a Problem Solver:** Guide thinking without providing answers.
- **Communicate with Teachers:** Reach out for clarification or concerns.
- **Promote Independence:** Encourage self-reliance in completing tasks.
- **Support a Growth Mindset:** Reinforce that mistakes are part of learning.

Role of Schools/Teachers

1. **Assign Purposeful Homework:** Align assignments with learning goals.
2. **Provide Clear Instructions:** Ensure students understand tasks and expectations.
3. **Encourage Independent Learning:** Foster time management and critical thinking.
4. **Provide Feedback:** Offer constructive feedback to guide improvement.
5. **Monitor Homework Load:** Balance assignments across subjects to prevent overload.
6. **Communicate with Families:** Keep families informed about homework policies.
7. **Adapt for Individual Needs:** Customize assignments to support diverse learners.
8. **Promote a Growth Mindset:** Encourage resilience and perseverance through challenges.

Through purposeful, relevant, and supportive homework, we aim to empower students, involve families, and create a path to academic success for every Vista student.

We Transform the School Experience