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A Survey on Homework with a View Towards Developing District Guidelines for the Elementary School

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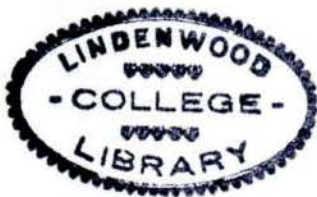
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A SURVEY ON HOMEWORK WITH A
VIEW TOWARDS DEVELOPING DISTRICT
GUIDELINES FOR THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

BY
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for the Master of Science in Education degree
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	1
Chapter	
I. INTRODUCTION	3
Scope and Purpose	3
Problem and Hypothesis	4
Definitions	4
II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE	6
Historical Trends	6
Research to Date	11
Homework Surveys	17
Opinions on Homework	20
Parents' Views	20
Students' Views	23
Teachers' Views	24
Administrators' Views	24
Advantages and Disadvantages of Homework	25
Developing a Homework Policy	28
Notes	33
III. SURVEY	36
Introduction	36
Purpose	36
Hypothesis	36
Methodology	37
Design and Procedure	37
Sampling	38
Questionnaires	39
Analysis of Data	50
Sample Survey	51
Tables	52
Recommendations for Future Research	65
Notes	66
IV. APPENDIXES	67
Charts and Graphs	68
Sample Homework Policies	71
Ideas for Creative Homework Assignments	94
V. BIBLIOGRAPHY	105
VI. VITA	108

ABSTRACT

This researcher has been interested in the subject of homework for some time and has felt the pressure from parents to provide more homework for students. Many school districts do not provide homework policies or guidelines for teachers. The purpose of this study was to find answers to such questions as: 1) What has research found about the effectiveness of homework in the elementary schools? 2) What are the opinions of parents, students, and educators on the subject of homework? 3) What are the advantages and disadvantages of homework? 4) How can a homework policy be developed for a school district? 5) Does community input in policy making improve attitudes of parents, teachers, students, and administrators about homework?

A secondary purpose of this study was to develop a survey which could be used to determine the opinions of parents, teachers, students, and administrators on the subject of homework. By using this survey and the methods presented, a school district would be able to develop a worthwhile, well publicized, statement of homework policy for elementary schools.

Since Model I students at Lindenwood College are

not required to carry out the survey, there will be no results or conclusions in this study. If the survey were carried through, the results would be used to help determine homework policy and to survey community attitudes before and after implementing the new homework policy.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Scope and Purpose

Teachers, parents, students, and administrators today are being faced with the complex issue of homework. What type, how much, and at what grade level to begin are just a few questions each school district must decide.

Teachers need to be prepared with information about the homework policy of the school district in which they teach and be able to justify homework practices in their own classroom. If a parent questions the homework policy, the teacher should be knowledgeable enough to defend his or her position on the subject.

Many school districts do not have written homework policies for the elementary grades and the ones that are in existence are often too vague and general to be of much guidance to the teachers. This researcher believes it is important for a school district to provide a written statement of policy regarding homework in the elementary schools and to establish this policy on a sound basis of research, education, and community input. The district should then publicize the policy, evaluate the effects, and make necessary

revisions. The significance of this study is to survey the attitudes of the community regarding homework and to support the idea that a written policy is necessary.

Statement of the Problem and Hypothesis

The problem to be researched in this paper is: Will a well-publicized written homework policy for elementary schools, developed with community input, improve community attitudes toward homework? One could hypothesize that: Parents and teachers who are aware of district homework policy will have a better attitude toward homework than parents and teachers who are unaware of homework policy.

To test this hypothesis, this researcher will devise a survey to determine the knowledge of the current homework policy and the opinions on the value of homework. This survey will be given to a sample population with the results compiled in tabular form. In addition, suggestions will be given on how to conduct the survey on a district wide scale.

Definition of Terms

Homework - tasks that students are assigned to do on their own time, after school hours, as an extension of their classroom work. It is usually distinct from the multitude of extracurricular activities or intellectually stimulating activities undertaken voluntarily by students.¹

Policy - a judgement derived from some system of values and some assessment of the local situation, which operates as a general plan for guiding administrative decisions.²

Community - refers to the parents and students being served by; and the teachers and administrators employed by a particular school system.

Attitudes - opinions expressed evidenced by answers to the questions provided on the survey included in this paper.

Elementary school - grades kindergarten through six.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Historical Trends

One of the major controversies in the schools today is the question of homework. The Encyclopedia of Education lists homework as one of ten contemporary issues in education.³ Homework, as an issue of heated debate, has been around since the beginning of the twentieth century. An article published in the Ladies' Home Journal, 1913, complained of the excessive, repetitive nature of homework being assigned at that time.⁴ This article was unusual for its time since most people in the early 1900's had faith in homework as a means of developing character. The most general type of homework assigned for that period was memorization exercises. Individualized instruction was unheard of in most classes at the turn of the century, thereby, homework of the same kind and amount was given to the entire class without regard to individual differences.

Parents and educators of the 1920's and 1930's began to question the practice of rote memorization in homework. New research at that time was stressing the importance of individual differences in learning styles. Teachers began to consider students' interests when

handing out homework assignments. Rather than rote exercises, teachers were beginning to try to stimulate the creativity of the students. Some school districts at this time set up a no-homework policy, while others began to put more thought into their homework practices. More creativity was being brought into the classrooms and educators believed this practice of creative lessons should extend into the home. Drill was still used in the 1930's but it was recommended that the drill be purposeful; that students understand the material and processes in which they were being drilled. It was also generally recommended that not all students receive the same amount or kind of homework.

During the 1940's advocacy for the discontinuance of homework continued. Educational philosophy during the late 1940's was against overlong assignments, rote tasks, using homework as punishment, excessive parental help and the abuses of copying. As Glasser notes in his book Schools Without Failure, "The assignment of excessive homework is primarily a post-World War II phenomenon." 5

By 1950 there was a new emphasis on student initiative and responsibility in the effective use of school time. Due to this new emphasis it was evident that homework was here to stay. Homework was to stress individual creativity and independent study. Mass

performance by an entire classroom was abandoned. The following is a description of a homework policy for the elementary grades adopted by Greenwich, Connecticut, in 1954:

At the elementary grade level (through Grade VIII) , there would seem to be four general reasons for the assignment of school-work to be done at home:

1. As a means of "making up" work incomplete because of absence.
2. To meet the need for extra study in an area where a pupil is having difficulty.
3. To permit work that can be done more effectively at home than at school.
4. In order that a pupil may progressively acquire home study techniques and some ability for the type of independent work essential for high school.

It is assumed that the regular school day should be of sufficient length so that pupils will be able to meet the standards of achievement with a minimum of home study. It is also assumed that the best place to do schoolwork is in the school under the expert direction of a teacher. It is essential that schoolwork be done there to insure the proper techniques of study which are most effective and efficient for learning. To be more effective, homework should be individualized in amount and kind for the same reasons that we individualize classroom instruction. This policy is established on the basis of these objectives and assumptions. ⁶

As can be concluded from this policy statement of 1954, the district declared that some type of homework was necessary for the effective transition of elementary students to high school, but the assignments must be purposeful and individualized. This policy was formulated by the teachers, principals, and supervisors

of the Greenwich School District. It was printed in the local school bulletin and distributed to each family in the district. This policy is reflective of the views and philosophy of the early 1950's.

The launching of Sputnik in 1957 dramatically changed American homework philosophy. Now the trend was back to subject matter homework. The Americans wanted to catch up with the Russians and one way to do this was to extend the school day by giving homework after school.

By the 1960's the homework controversy was again continued in full force. The mental health of the students was being questioned. Many students were under pressure to succeed in school and the homework demands were quite heavy. By the mid 1960's educators were generally in favor of homework but were again questioning the amount and kinds being assigned. Typical of the attitude in 1968 is this statement by Wildman as quoted in an article by Knorr.

For mental health children and young people need to engage in worthwhile out-of-school tasks suited to their individual capacities. Homework should supply such tasks and reasonable freedom in carrying them out. Whenever homework crowds out social experience, outdoor recreation, and creative activities, and whenever it usurps time devoted to sleep, it is not meeting the basic needs of children and adolescents.

Wildman concludes that for a child to be mentally healthy and socially adjusted, he must be given the

opportunity to pursue leisure activities. By the late sixties and early seventies there was less concentration on academics and more on social and emotional adjustment.

In the past decade, as a result of declining test scores and high illiteracy rates, there has been a cry for "back to basics". Part of the "back to basics" philosophy is that homework results in greater achievement and should be an integral part of the school policy. Some parents today equate the quality of education and good teachers with the amount of homework assigned. George J. Smith has described this current parental attitude concerning homework as follows:

Our attitude on homework is like our attitude on spinach, 'Here eat some, we say, It's good for you'...If homework is good, more homework must be better. ⁸

Due to these parental attitudes, many teachers, and school districts have responded by piling on the homework. We see in education today a pendulum which swings from teachers who give a lot of homework to teachers who give none. The current policy towards more homework at an earlier age is escalating without the research to support it. Smith observes that we shouldn't discontinue homework until such time research tells us that it is effective, but teachers should use some judgement when considering the amount and kind of homework to assign.⁹

This look at the history of homework trends from the early 1900's to the present show a fluctuation by

homework advocates from rote, noncreative assignments to a more individualized homework policy and back again as a result of the "back to basics" movement. One question that needs asking is: On what educational research have these historic philosophies and trends been based? This question will be reviewed in the next section of this paper.

Research to Date

While doing research on the relationship of homework to pupil success, Gray found that The Education Index lists over 500 titles on the general subject of homework in the forty year period 1928-1969.¹⁰ Hedges published a graph showing articles on homework by decades from 1900-May, 1964. In updating Hedges' work, this researcher continued the investigation and found 129 articles published from June, 1964-1981. (See Appendix A, Figure 1 for a graph of these findings). Gray observes that most of the reports he found are opinions and only nine could be classified as experimental studies of the effects of homework in the first six grades of the elementary school.¹¹ Knapp and Harding have outlined only eight research studies since 1965 which deal with the elementary grades.¹² (See Appendix A, Figure 2 for a chart outlining this information).

Margaret Epps, Research Assistant for the Research Division of the National Education Association, observes:

Research that has been done on homework does not lead to any definite conclusions. Very few experimental studies have been conducted, and those who have investigated homework research have found most existing studies to be poorly designed and limited in scope. ¹³

The following studies, listed in chronological order, are the ones this researcher has found to be the most worthwhile and interesting of the ones reviewed:

The Steiner Experiment

In 1934 Steiner examined a single seventh grade class in Ingram, Pennsylvania. Half the students had compulsory homework in math for one semester while the other half had no homework. His results indicate that regular homework led to gains in arithmetic achievement. ¹⁴ As can be seen, this study is very limited because the predictions were based on one class and on a time period of only one semester.

Columbia, Missouri Experiment

In 1936 Rosenstengel and Turner arranged twenty-six matched pairs of pupils in a sixth grade health education unit in Columbia, Missouri. The no-homework group had an additional fifteen-minute supervised study period daily. The final test scores showed greater gains when using supervised study than when using homework. ¹⁵

The Di Napoli Experiment

Di Napoli's experiment was published in 1937. It is one of the most frequently quoted sources cited by critics of homework. Even though this is an old study, it was carefully designed and one of the few that has dealt with the elementary grades. Di Napoli divided his groups into those that did voluntary homework and those that did compulsory homework. On the basis of his research, Di Napoli recommends the abolition of compulsory homework in favor of voluntary homework.¹⁶

The El Segundo Study

This study, conducted by Carmichael, is one of the few that lasted over a period of years rather than weeks. Children in the El Segundo Grammar School in California were given the Stanford Achievement Test in grades five through eight for three years during which time regular homework assignments were in force. For the next three years, compulsory homework was abolished and the same test given at the end of this time. The findings showed that there was a slight difference favoring the homework groups. An interesting follow-up study by Carmichael showed that the no homework group received lower achievement test scores in high school. He speculates that "differences in attitudes or habits of work may have been responsible."¹⁷

The Vincent Study

Vincent did a study in 1937 in which he abolished homework in selected subjects for a period of 20 weeks. There was a slight increase for the homework group but Vincent states: "Considering all the work and worry involved in giving and correcting homework, the final conclusion in this experiment would follow that the gain is negligible as a whole and that probably it does not pay to require homework from all children in grades five and six." ¹⁸

The Cookeville Tennessee Study

This study, conducted in 1939, was based on data of 156 pupils in grades five and six. Matched groups were set up with one group having regular homework assignments of one to one and a half hours daily; the other group had no homework but half of each school period was devoted to supervised study. The results of this study conclude that no value was achieved by home study.¹⁹

The Schain Study

In 1954, Schain did an experiment in a social studies class. He found that the students with a high IQ did well with or without homework, but did slightly better with homework. The average students did much better on daily quizzes and on essay tests when they had regular homework assignments. Schain stated that students with low IQ's also did better with homework and seemed lost without it. ²⁰

The Koch Experiment

In 1965, Koch studied the effects of homework in grade six arithmetic. He had three treatment groups. One group had 30 minutes of homework a day, a second group 15 minutes and a third group had no homework. Koch concluded from his experiment that homework of the reinforcing type can increase arithmetic achievement and that 30 minutes per day is better than 15. Koch's experiment is one that is often cited by persons having a positive view of homework. ²¹

The Allison and Gray Experiment

In 1971, Gray and Allison did an experimental study to show the relationship of homework to pupil success in the computation of fractions. They found that regularly assigned homework serves no advantage for elementary school children. ²²

The Maertens Study

Maertens did a study in 1972 on the effects of arithmetic homework upon the achievement of fourth, fifth, and sixth grade pupils. He established three groups one of which received no assignments, the second normal homework, and the third a stated number of pages in the text. Maertens concludes the following from his research:

Clearly research indicates that arithmetic homework as normally assigned and completed, does not significantly effect pupil performance. ²³

The majority of the research on homework was done in the 1930's and was concerned mainly with the question of homework versus no homework. Research limited to the elementary grades has been relatively scarce. Most of the research deals with one subject area and does not take into account the nature of the homework given. These research studies that have been presented here are of short term duration and leave many unanswered questions about types of homework, amount of time to be allotted, and grades to begin homework assignments. Ruth Strange in her review on homework for the Association of Classroom Teachers reported:

Many of the researchers can be criticized from the standpoint of design, unclear description of procedures, inadequate measuring instruments and failure to explain different results for subgroups within the sampling. 24

The research conducted in the past 40 years does not warrant the elimination or continuance of homework. There has been no evidence of adverse psychological effects resulting from homework. Although research has not shown the effectiveness of homework, it has not shown cause for the abolition of it. At the present time, it would be wise for school districts to use a systematic approach when devising a statement of homework policy.

Due to the lack of sound research in the area of homework, it is often necessary to rely on questionnaire

findings. A representation of these survey-type studies will be presented in the next section of this paper.

Homework Surveys

A policy set forth by a school district should have input from the community it serves. There have been many surveys conducted concerning homework and homework policy. Some of these surveys are discussed as follows:

A survey of New England School superintendents, principals, teachers, and parents was conducted by John F. Savage in 1966. The major purpose of this study was to determine opinions relative to the value of homework in the middle grades of the elementary school. Eighty school systems were chosen with a total of 8,400 questionnaires mailed, of which 4,414 (52.2%) were returned. The conclusions from this survey are as follows: Homework was favored by 85 percent responding, however, few school districts had a definitely stated homework policy.²⁵ Savage suggests that closing the communication gap is essential and that school boards must reach agreement on what homework is supposed to accomplish.²⁶

Bond and Smith did a study of homework policy of 77 New York school districts. The authors' conclusions are presented as follows:

1. Current homework practices did not harmonize with research related to sound principles of teaching and learning.
2. Differences among individual pupils are ignored. Half of the districts reported giving the same assignments to each student in the class regardless of his individual ability or capacity.
3. Half of the districts gave reading assignments as homework, a practice that is opposed to the recommendations of almost every U.S. reading specialist.
4. Homework involving research and independent study was assigned by 29 percent of the districts.
5. In only one-third of the districts did teachers systematically correct, grade, and return assignments to pupils. ²⁷

In 1966, John F. Check did a study using 1,016 questionnaires administered to parents, students, and educators. There was an almost 100 percent return.

Check's conclusions are as follows:

1. Of 205 parents who responded, only seven rejected any form of homework. About half questioned the nature and amount of homework given.
2. Of 90 teachers who responded, only one wanted no homework at all. Half of the teachers showed concern over the type of homework assignment.
3. Generally, elementary school, junior high school, and senior high school students felt that homework was necessary. Twenty percent were against homework. ²⁸

A teacher opinion poll conducted in 1961 by the NEA Research Division showed that 83.5 percent of the elementary school teachers were in favor of homework. The teachers favoring homework were also asked how long they thought these assignments should be. (See Appendix A, Figure 3 for the distribution of replies of the teachers surveyed) ²⁹

These are just a few of the surveys conducted on homework. Most surveys have shown that there tends to be a lack of communication regarding homework policy. Many of these surveys were conducted in the 1960's and since public opinion changes it is important that each district surveys its own community and not rely on surveys conducted elsewhere. Many districts do not have written policies and the policies that do exist are general and vague in nature. Knorr's opinions, resulting from an extensive research into the surveys done on the subject of homework, are as follows:

The results of surveys on homework practices are spotty because each one asks a different set of questions. It is the opinion of this writer that the proper place for meaningful homework research is within the school and local district. If local communities value homework, they need to explore why. They need to clarify their purposes for homework. But this alone is not enough...Local homework policies should be developed and modified on a sound base of local research. ³⁰

Although it is informative to review surveys conducted at other times and in other places, it

should be advised that these surveys do not take the place of local research.

In addition to research and surveys done in the area of homework, interest in this subject has been rising as evidenced in opinion articles written for popular magazines and journals. Everyone seems to have an opinion on this controversial subject. The next section of this paper will discuss opinions by parents, students, teachers, and administrators which have appeared in articles over the past few years.

Opinions on Homework

Parents

Surveys have shown that the majority of parents favor homework. According to Savage, from 80 to 90 percent of parents say "yes" to homework in the elementary grades.³¹ Homework is the one part of the school that effects parents most directly. This is the area in which school and home can be brought closer together and, as such, needs to be a positive experience.

Parents have different viewpoints concerning the type and amount of homework given. This difference of opinion can be a source of conflict to a classroom teacher. At parent-teacher conference it can be heard from one parent, "My child spends hours each evening doing homework"; and from another "My child never has homework." Parents do put pressure on the schools for

more homework. A report prepared by the National Council of State Consultants in Elementary Education summed up this problem in the following quote:

Excessive homework is rarely the fault of the school, it comes about because of parental pressure on the school. While strongly in favor of public interest in the schools, we deplore those parents who constantly (and loudly) voice such sentiments as, "I want my child to have homework, so I can see that he is working and making progress." Teachers have explained that mere "busy work" does no good at all, and may even be detrimental; yet parents still favor even unnecessary homework. Then, these same parents will turn around and complain that too much homework is given... 32

Some of this parental pressure could be alleviated if the parents are made aware of the homework policy at the beginning of the year.

As for the types of assignments favored by parents, Savage found that "parents favor combinations of regular nightly written assignments and regular nightly reading assignments." 33 He also concluded from his survey that parents were the most demanding of all the groups he surveyed regarding the amount of time that should be spent on nightly homework. 34

In a study conducted by Ruth Modlin, many interesting observations by parents were concluded as follows:

Fifty-eight percent of the parents reported helping their children sometimes and 22 percent of the parents reported helping them

daily. Sixty percent of the parents helped their children solve problems and 59 percent checked answers. Parents estimated time spent by children ranged from none to more than two hours daily. About one-third of the parents reported that children spend one hour daily in preparing homework assignments. About the same number of parents reported they spend twenty minutes daily helping children. Most parents felt that thirty minutes per day, per subject, should be adequate for their children. ³⁵

As can be concluded from Modlin's survey, parents disagree on the amount of help to give their child. Some maintain it is the child's responsibility, while others see it as their duty to help when there are problems. Some parents check the homework, while a few do the whole assignment. It might be worthwhile if teachers give parents some guidance on how to help their children with homework. Epps found that "97 percent of the parents in a recent survey reported that they were willing to help their child by working with the teacher." ³⁶

Some parents complain that homework is an inconvenience and interrupts chores and leisure time needed together as a family. ³⁷ As for the types of homework assignments, parents agree that "busywork" and punishment type assignments should be avoided. ³⁸

According to the literature reviewed, most parents see homework as beneficial to their child's academic program. Whatever the parents viewpoint, they do need

to be informed as to the homework policy of the school district at the beginning of the year. Parental awareness of what is expected and communication with the teacher can help to avoid conflict.

Students

Based on questionnaires found in the literature reviewed by this researcher, most elementary students agree that some forms of homework are necessary and help improve grades. Many students feel that homework develops a sense of responsibility, helps review for tests, and improves grades. Students agree that homework should be definite, interesting, meaningful, and well explained. Schiller, in 1954, sent out a questionnaire to 117 students. These suggestions were made on how to make homework more useful and relevant:

1. Homework assignments should be shorter.
2. Homework assignments should be more interesting and worthwhile.
3. Homework assignments should be carefully explained when assigned.
4. Homework assignments should not be used as busywork. 39

In 1966 Kerzig gave a questionnaire to 748 sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students. These students stated that they wanted a clear understanding of the assignment, materials necessary, and a quiet place to do the work. They also stated that the reasons for not completing assignments were lack of interest,

interruptions at home, and television.⁴⁰ Students are in general agreement that homework is necessary but they don't want busywork or homework assigned for punishment.

Teachers

Teachers are often the ones caught in the middle of the homework controversy. Most teachers feel homework aids in academic achievement, but the burden of planning individual, worthwhile assignments-not to mention grading them-is overwhelming. In many districts, teachers have no guidelines to follow and feel parental pressure to provide homework for the students. Savage states that most teachers are concerned about the type of assignment given. He also found as a result of his survey that teachers feel that homework is a way to bridge the communication gap between the home and school. Teachers are generally in favor of a written homework policy and appreciate guidelines concerning types and lengths of assignments to be given.⁴¹

Administrators

According to an opinion poll by The Nation's Schools, many administrators value homework as a character builder.⁴² Since public relations is a matter of concern for administrators, it is important that homework be a positive rather than negative determiner of public opinion. Some administrators were reluctant to have a written homework policy

because they feel it would interfere with the individual needs of their students. Since a teacher is in closer contact with the students it should be left up to the individual classroom teacher to determine the homework needs based on the individual learning style of his or her students. The survey conducted by Savage in 1966 showed that of all the groups surveyed, homework was most highly valued by principals.⁴³ Although most administrators see the value of homework, many have not formulated guidelines for the teachers to follow.

The literature written on homework often cites advantages and disadvantages on this subject. The next section of this paper will deal with that aspect:

Advantages and Disadvantages of Homework

The following lists of advantages and disadvantages of homework has been compiled by this researcher using the articles listed in the bibliography of this paper:

Advantages

1. Homework develops a sense of responsibility.
2. It brings schools and homes closer together.
3. It reinforces what is learned at school.
4. The school day is not long enough to impart all the knowledge needed.
5. Homework provides constructive use of time.
6. It develops self-discipline.

7. It prepares the elementary child for high school.
8. It teaches a child organization and to follow directions.
9. It can be a challenge to faster students.
10. It gives the child time to think over creative assignments.
11. It can be a source of enrichment.
12. It gives the child a chance to use the community as a resource center.
13. It may lead to permanent leisure interests by leading students in new directions.
14. It allows the teacher to adjust classroom instruction to individual differences.
15. It gives the student time to complete unfinished assignments and make up work when absent.
16. Homework allows for children to preview work to be done in the future and review for tests.
17. Homework can develop study skills a child needs for obtaining knowledge on his own.
18. Homework that is creative in nature provides interest in school.
19. Homework allows students to realize that education does not just take place in a school building.

Disadvantages

1. Homework assignments are often boring and repetitive.
2. The school day is long enough.
3. Children are often encouraged to cheat by copying homework from other students.
4. Parents sometimes do the work instead of the child.
5. It can be a source of conflict between parent and child.

6. Children develop poor attitudes about school if homework assignments are disagreeable.
7. Children are tired after school.
8. Parents often are not qualified to supervise homework and thereby confuse the child.
9. Research has not shown that homework improves academic achievement.
10. Homework is sometimes impossible for the child because homes do not always provide suitable study conditions.
11. Children need leisure time for recreational activities.
12. Teachers often do not grade or follow-up on assignments given thus student attitudes toward school are damaged.
13. Homework may be a source of conflict between teacher and student if the work is not submitted on time.
14. Homework is sometimes unfair to many because individual differences among pupils are often ignored when assigning homework.
15. Homework is usually geared to the average child, thus making it difficult for some and boring for others.
16. Homework may disrupt family life.
17. Teachers sometime use homework as a source of punishment.
18. Teachers are burdened with extra work to grade.
19. The workload assigned to students is often inconsistent thus on some nights the students spend hours on homework while on other nights they might not have any.
20. Homework may be a source of public relations problems.

These lists are not meant to be exhaustive but are expressive of good arguments both for and against home-

work. Since research on this subject has not added knowledge to support or reject homework, educators should be aware of this when determining homework policy. Many of the disadvantages listed above, including types of assignments, length, evaluation, and expectations, could be turned into advantages if guidelines were established and explained to parents at the beginning of the school year. A homework policy is necessary to help alleviate the problems homework sometimes creates when it is left up to everyone to do their own thing. The next section of this paper will review what literature has to report on the subject of establishing a district homework policy.

Developing a Homework Policy

A written statement of homework policy serves several purposes according to Burchfield in an article written for Teacher's Encyclopedia. "It helps the staff reach common understanding and agreement. It places the faculty in a better position to provide professional leadership. They can speak then with renewed conviction,...It can clear the air at home and keep parents informed." 44

Not all districts have written policies. Some have policies, but not written, while others have a very general policy consisting of a few words. (See Appendix B for a sampling of policies submitted to this researcher from schools in the St. Louis area).

In 1971, the Bureau of Curriculum Development and Evaluation, Pennsylvania Department of Education sent a letter to 465 school administrators asking, "Do you have a written philosophy on homework?"; 89 percent replied. Of the 416 who replied, 62 percent said "no". The results of this survey also showed that the majority of the homework policies were written to cover grades K-12, and were general in nature.⁴⁵ From the results of this study, the Bureau of Curriculum Development and Evaluation recommended that school districts who believe in homework, should develop a written policy and provide suggestions for creating meaningful homework.⁴⁶

Writing for the American School Board Journal

Savage states:

The only way to make objectives of homework clear to administrators, teachers, children, and parents is to draw up a comprehensive homework policy that reflects differing purposes. Teachers must have a policy to guide them in their assignments. Children need to know what to expect, and parents have the right to guidance from the school on the Whys and Wherefores of homework.⁴⁷

If a school district decides a homework policy is needed, there are certain steps to follow that can help this endeavor succeed. The following is one procedure that can be used as a guideline:

1. Community Input - Involve the community in

deciding what should be included in the written homework policy. This can be done through questionnaires sent to parents, teachers, administrators and students. (See the questionnaires in the Survey Chapter of this paper for one type of format to use). Another method of gaining community input is to form committees made up of PTA members. Input by the community can help to insure cooperation in implementing the policy once it is established.

2. Policy Format - The policy statement may have any desired format. It may be a mimeographed sheet, a commercially printed leaflet, or presented in the form of an item in the school newsletter. The main idea is to publicize it so all members of the community have access to it.

3. Research - Those involved in making the policy statement should review pertinent research written on the subject. The bibliography of this paper has an extensive source of material which will provide much information on the topic. The policy should be based on an educational, informed, basis of knowledge as well as taking into consideration the views and opinions of the community.

4. Flexibility - Policies should be flexible enough to take into consideration individual differences of students, parents, and teachers, but not so general as to render them meaningless. They should serve as guide-

lines but not be restrictive.

5. Content - Policies often are concerned with stating general goals and purposes of homework. Suggestions for maximum amounts that should be assigned at each grade level are sometimes included. Policy-makers should take the following list of topics into consideration and select what they wish to include in their statement:

- a. Purposes of homework
- b. Types of assignments such as written, reading, drill, long-term, research, individualized, etc. (See Appendix C for some ideas for creative homework assignments).
- c. Scheduling of homework (daily, weekly, long-range, on weekends, on holidays, etc.)
- d. Amount of homework children should be expected to do at each grade level. (See Appendix A, Figure 3 for a suggested time schedule).
- e. Evaluation of homework assignments and to what extent homework should be used to determine report card grades.
- f. Development of units on study skills into the curriculum to help assure that students know how to study independently.
- g. The grade level at which homework should begin.

6. Public Relations - After the policy has been written and distributed, it should be explained to the parents and students. Parents should feel free to come

to the teacher at any time during the school year with homework problems.

7. Evaluation - After the policy has been in effect for one year, the community should be surveyed again to evaluate the success or failure of the policy.

8. Revision - Policies should be revised when the need arises. They should not be put in a file and forgotten, but evaluated and **revised** periodically. The best written, well thought out, and thoroughly researched policy will not be effective unless it is kept current.

Keeping these steps in mind, a valuable homework policy can be written and used effectively. For districts deciding on a no-homework policy this too should be communicated to the community along with the rationale substantiating this decision. The next chapter of this paper will include a questionnaire survey which could be used or modified for individual needs in order to determine policy for a specific school district.

Notes

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²Ibid. , p. 47.

³William D. Glenn, "Homework," The Encyclopedia of Education, p. 479.

⁴Avrom Goldstein, "Does Homework Help? A Review of Research," Elementary School Journal, (January, 1960) p. 213.

⁵William Glasser, Schools Without Failure (New York: Harper and Row, 1969), p. 72.

⁶Victor Leonard, "Greenwich Adopts a Homework Policy," American School Board Journal 130, (February 1955) p. 63.

⁷Cynthia L. Knorr, "A Synthesis of Homework Research and Related Literature," (ERIC Document Reproduction Service, ED 199 993, 1981) p. 27.

⁸George J. Smith, "Establishing a Homework Program," Elementary School Journal, (December 1965) p. 139-142.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Roland F. Gray and Donald E. Allison, "An Experimental Study of the Relationship of Homework to Pupil Success in Computation with Fractions," School and Science , (April, 1971) p. 340.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Knorr, "A Synthesis of Homework Research and Related Literature," pp. 36-37.

¹³Margaret Epps, "Homework," National Education Association, (1966) p. 4.

- 14 Ibid.
- 15 Goldstein, "Does Homework Help? A Review of Research," p. 217.
- 16 Ibid.
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- 28 J.F. Check, "Homework-Is it Needed?," Clearing House, 41, (November 1966) p. 145.
- 29 "Teacher Opinion Poll," NEA Journal, 50, (September 1961) p. 278.
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31 Savage, "Homework: Put Your Policy Where Your Aims Are," p. 27.

32 "Homework: The Home's Part; The Schools Part," Service Bulletin Mo. 9-A, Association for Childhood Education International, (1963) p. 5.

33 Savage, "Homework: Put Your Policy Where Your Aims Are," p. 26.

34 Ibid.

35 Ruth Modlin, "The Assigned Homework In the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Grades," (Ph.D. dissertation abstract, George Peabody College for Teachers 1958) p. 3252.

36 Epps, "Homework," p. 5.

37 Grace Langdon and Irving W. Stout, Homework (New York: The John Day Co., 1966) p. 43.

38 Ibid. , p. 40.

39 Knorr, "A Synthesis of Homework Research and Related Literature, p. 33.

40 Ibid. , p. 24.

41 Savage, "Homework: Put Your Policy Where Your Aims Are," p. 26.

42 "Homework Opinion Poll," Nation's Schools, 61 (March 1958) p. 51.

43 Savage, "Homework: Put Your Policy Where Your Aims Are," p. 25.

44 Maurice Burchfield, "Making Study and Homework Assignments Meaningful," Teacher's Encyclopedia, 1966 p. 275.

45 Epps, "Homework," p. 6.

46 Knorr, "A Synthesis of Homework Research and Related Literature," p. 43.

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CHAPTER III

THE SURVEY

Introduction

Purpose

This study is designed to survey the attitudes of parents, teachers, students, and administrators regarding homework in their respective school districts. The questionnaires are prepared to ascertain the following information: (1) Is there a written homework policy in existence?, (2) Are the respondents aware of and satisfied with the existing homework policy if there is one?, (3) What changes need to be made in the current district homework policy?, (4) What are the current community attitudes on homework?

The results of this survey could then be used as input for committees or administrators when establishing homework policy. This survey is not designed for a particular school district, but is established with the view that it could be used or modified for any district.

Hypothesis

This researcher hypothesizes that parents and teachers who are aware of the district homework policy will have a better attitude towards homework

than parents and teachers who are unaware of the district homework policy. A survey will be devised to obtain information concerning the awareness of a district policy and the attitudes regarding the academic value of homework. These results will be reported in tabular form.

Methodology

Design and Procedure

Four questionnaires were designed as the instruments for gathering attitudes about homework. The first of these questionnaires is for parents. This form is set up in two parts. The first part requests a yes, no, or undecided reply to the questions. The questions are designed to gather knowledge about the following:

1. The value of homework
2. Amount of time spent on homework
3. Awareness of district policy
4. Satisfaction with district policy
5. Problems with homework
6. When to give homework

The second part of this form consists of multiple choice questions and is designed to determine the following:

1. Amount of time spent on homework
2. Types of homework considered most valuable
3. Grade level at which to begin homework
4. Subjects best suited to homework
5. Complaints about homework
6. Other pertinent information regarding homework

The second questionnaire is designed for fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students. The questions for

this form were made to correspond closely to the type of questions asked on the parent forms. The wording of the questions, however, is adapted to the reading level of this age child. This questionnaire is also divided into two parts.

The third questionnaire is designed to be given to elementary teachers. Categories on this survey are similar to those on the parent form.

The fourth questionnaire is for administrators. This form is also arranged in two parts. The items correspond closely with those presented on the parent, student, and teacher questionnaires.

Sampling

To use this survey on a district wide scale, the following stratification of the population is recommended:

1. Parent Survey - This form is to be sent to every household in the district. Since these opinions are being used to develop a district policy, every parent should have an opportunity to respond.

2. Student Survey - These forms are to be given to a random sample of fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students. This population should include a sampling from each elementary school in the district.

3. Teacher Survey - These forms should be given to each elementary school teacher in the district.

4. Administrator Survey - These forms are to be distributed to the superintendent, each assistant

superintendent, and each elementary principal and assistant principal in the school district.

Questionnaires

The questionnaires to be used in this survey were devised by this researcher using examples from Savage¹ and Burchfield.² The questions were chosen to measure attitudes about the following:

1. Value of homework
2. Amount of time to be spent on homework
3. District homework policy
4. Evaluation of homework
5. Types of homework
6. Subjects best suited for homework
7. Grade level to begin
8. Homework for punishment
9. Homework on holidays and weekends

These questionnaires are presented on the following pages.

HOMWORK QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARENTS

Part I.

These questions are about homework. Please give your opinion to the questions by circling your answer to the left:

- | | | | | |
|-----|----|-----------|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| YES | NO | UNDECIDED | 1. | Do you believe homework is necessary for the academic growth of your child? |
| YES | NO | UNDECIDED | 2. | Do you feel your child spends too much time on homework? |
| YES | NO | UNDECIDED | 3. | Do you feel your child spends too little time on homework? |
| YES | NO | UNDECIDED | 4. | Do you believe your school district should have a written homework policy? |
| YES | NO | UNDECIDED | 5. | Are you aware of your school district's homework policy? |
| YES | NO | UNDECIDED | 6. | Do you feel homework interferes with your family life? |
| YES | NO | UNDECIDED | 7. | Do you help your child with his or her homework? |
| YES | NO | UNDECIDED | 8. | Do you feel able to help your child with homework? |
| YES | NO | UNDECIDED | 9. | Should homework be given for punishment? |
| YES | NO | UNDECIDED | 10. | Should homework be assigned on holidays or weekends? |
| YES | NO | UNDECIDED | 11. | Should homework be used to determine report card grades? |

Part II. Please put a check next to your response(s) to the following questions:

1. How much time, on the average, each night is necessary for your child to do his or her homework?
0-10 min _____ 10-20 min _____ 20-30 min _____
30-45 min _____ 45-60 min _____ 60-Up min _____
2. How much time do you believe a child should spend on homework each night?
0-10 min _____ 10-20 min _____ 20-30 min _____
30-45 min _____ 45-60 min _____ 60-Up min _____
3. At what grade level do you think homework should begin?
Kindergarten _____ Third _____ Sixth _____
First _____ Fourth _____ Jr. High _____
Second _____ Fifth _____ High School _____
4. In which of the following subjects do you feel homework is valuable?
Social Studies _____ Reading _____ Health _____
Handwriting _____ English _____ Math _____
Spelling _____ Science _____ Other _____
5. What kinds of homework do you consider most valuable?
Answering questions _____ Projects _____
Using the library _____ Writing _____
Drills _____ Reading _____
6. Have you complained about homework this year?
Yes _____ No _____
7. If you answered yes to question six, to whom did you complain?
Other Parents _____ Teacher _____
Principal _____ Friends _____
Other _____

HOMWORK QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

Part I. These statements are about homework. Please give your opinion to the statement by circling your answer to the left:

- | | | | |
|-----|----|-----------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| YES | NO | UNDECIDED | 1. Homework is necessary. |
| YES | NO | UNDECIDED | 2. I like doing homework. |
| YES | NO | UNDECIDED | 3. My school is fair in the amount of homework it gives. |
| YES | NO | UNDECIDED | 4. Homework improves my grades. |
| YES | NO | UNDECIDED | 5. My parents help me with my homework. |
| YES | NO | UNDECIDED | 6. Homework interferes with the time I need to have fun. |
| YES | NO | UNDECIDED | 7. Homework is sometimes used for punishment. |
| YES | NO | UNDECIDED | 8. Sometimes I copy homework from other students. |
| YES | NO | UNDECIDED | 9. Homework causes trouble at home. |
| YES | NO | UNDECIDED | 10. I should receive grades on my homework. |

Part II. Please put a check next to your response(s) to the following questions:

1. How many minutes do you usually spend on homework each night?
- 0-10 min _____ 10-20 min _____ 20-30 min _____
- 30-45 min _____ 45-60 min _____ 60-Up min _____

2. How much time do you believe should be spent on homework each night?

0-10 min _____ 10-20 min _____ 20-30 min _____

30-45 min _____ 45-60 min _____ 60-Up min _____

3. In which subjects does homework do the most good?

Social Studies _____ Reading _____ Health _____

Handwriting _____ English _____ Math _____

Spelling _____ Science _____ Other _____

4. What kinds of homework do you like best?

Answering questions _____ Projects _____

Using the library _____ Writing _____

Drills _____ Reading _____

5. Have you ever complained about homework this year?

Yes _____ No _____

6. If you answered yes to question five, to whom did you complain?

Principal _____ Teacher _____

Parents _____ Friends _____

Other _____

7. Do you have anything else you would like to say about homework?

My age is _____ years

I am in _____ grade

HOMWORK QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

Part I. These questions are about homework. Please give your opinion to the questions by circling your answer to the left:

- | | | | | |
|-----|----|-----------|-----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| YES | NO | UNDECIDED | 1. | Do you believe homework is necessary for the academic growth of your students? |
| YES | NO | UNDECIDED | 2. | Do you assign work that results in home study? |
| YES | NO | UNDECIDED | 3. | Do you grade homework assignments on a regular basis? |
| YES | NO | UNDECIDED | 4. | Do you believe your school district should have a written homework policy? |
| YES | NO | UNDECIDED | 5. | Are you aware of the homework policy of your district? |
| YES | NO | UNDECIDED | 6. | Do you believe homework interferes with the student's family life? |
| YES | NO | UNDECIDED | 7. | Do you expect parents to help with homework? |
| YES | NO | UNDECIDED | 8. | Do you believe homework should be given for punishment? |
| YES | NO | UNDECIDED | 9. | Do you believe homework should be assigned on weekends or holidays? |
| YES | NO | UNDECIDED | 10. | Do you believe homework should be used to determine report card grades? |

Part II. Please put a check next to your response(s) to the following questions:

1. How much time, on the average, each night is necessary for most students to complete your assignments?
0-10 min _____ 10-20 min _____ 20-30 min _____
30-45 min _____ 45-60 min _____ 60-Up min _____
2. How much time do you think students should spend on homework each night?
0-10 min _____ 10-20 min _____ 20-30 min _____
30-45 min _____ 45-60 min _____ 60-Up min _____
3. At what grade level do you think homework should begin?
Kindergarten _____ Third _____ Sixth _____
First _____ Fourth _____ Jr. High _____
Second _____ Fifth _____ High School _____
4. In which of the following subjects do you feel homework is valuable?
Social Studies _____ Reading _____ Health _____
Handwriting _____ English _____ Math _____
Spelling _____ Science _____ Other _____
5. What kinds of homework do you consider most valuable?
Answering questions _____ Projects _____
Using the library _____ Writing _____
Drills _____ Reading _____
6. Have you had complaints about your homework policy this year?
Yes _____ No _____
7. If you answered yes to question six, from whom have you received complaints?
Principal _____ Parents _____ Students _____
Other _____

8. Do you have additional comments or suggestions relative to homework?

What grade level do you teach? _____

70	30	UNDESIGNED	1. Do you believe homework should be used to determine what you know and understand?
71	30	UNDESIGNED	2. Do you believe that homework should be used to reinforce what you have learned in class?
72	30	UNDESIGNED	3. Do you believe that homework should be used to extend learning beyond the classroom?
73	30	UNDESIGNED	4. Do you believe that homework should be used to assess student learning?
74	30	UNDESIGNED	5. Do you believe that homework should be used to provide practice for students?
75	30	UNDESIGNED	6. Do you believe that homework should be used to encourage students to take ownership of their learning?
76	30	UNDESIGNED	7. Do you believe that homework should be used to provide a challenge for students?
77	30	UNDESIGNED	8. Do you believe that homework should be used to provide a means of communication between you and your students?
78	30	UNDESIGNED	9. Do you believe that homework should be used to provide a means of communication between you and your colleagues?
79	30	UNDESIGNED	10. Do you believe that homework should be used to provide a means of communication between you and your community?

HOMWORK QUESTIONNAIRE FOR
ADMINISTRATORS

Part I. These questions are about homework. Please give your opinion to the questions by circling your answer to the left:

- | | | | | |
|-----|----|-----------|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| YES | NO | UNDECIDED | 1. | Do you believe homework is necessary for the academic growth of students? |
| YES | NO | UNDECIDED | 2. | Has homework been an issue of controversy for you as an administrator during the last year? |
| YES | NO | UNDECIDED | 3. | Do you believe homework should be used to determine report card grades? |
| YES | NO | UNDECIDED | 4. | Do you believe school districts should have written homework policies? |
| YES | NO | UNDECIDED | 5. | Do you believe the teachers in your district are aware of the homework policy? |
| YES | NO | UNDECIDED | 6. | Do you believe the parents in your district are aware of the homework policy? |
| YES | NO | UNDECIDED | 7. | Do you feel each individual teacher should make decisions concerning homework for his or her classroom? |
| YES | NO | UNDECIDED | 8. | Do you believe homework should be given for punishment? |
| YES | NO | UNDECIDED | 9. | Do you believe homework should be assigned on weekends or holidays? |

Part II. Please put a check next to your response(s) to the following questions:

1. How much time, on the average, do you believe students should spend each night doing homework?

0-10 min _____ 10-20 min _____ 20-30 min _____

30-45 min _____ 45-60 min _____ 60-Up min _____

2. At what grade level do you think homework should begin?

Kindergarten _____ Third _____ Sixth _____

First _____ Fourth _____ Jr. High _____

Second _____ Fifth _____ High School _____

3. In which subjects do you feel homework is valuable?

Social Studies _____ Reading _____ Health _____

Handwriting _____ English _____ Math _____

Spelling _____ Science _____ Other _____

4. What kinds of homework do you consider most valuable?

Answering questions _____ Projects _____

Using the library _____ Writing _____

Drills _____ Reading _____

5. Have you received complaints from anyone this year concerning homework policy?

Yes _____ No _____

6. If you answered yes to question five, from whom did you receive complaints?

Other Administrators _____ Teachers _____

Students _____ Parents _____

Other _____

7. Do you have additional comments regarding homework?

Analysis of Data

It is the purpose of the remainder of this chapter to provide a method for analyzing data in order to draw conclusions from the responses to the survey. The data will be analyzed to answer the following questions regarding the respondents' opinions:

1. Which kind of homework is most valued?
2. How much time should be devoted to homework nightly by children in elementary school?
3. Are respondents aware of district homework policy?
4. At what grade level should homework begin?
5. Is homework of academic value?
6. Should homework be used to determine grades?
7. Which subject areas are considered best for homework assignments?
8. Should homework be assigned on weekends or holidays?
9. Should homework be used for punishment?
10. Do teachers and parents who are aware of district policy have a more positive attitude about homework than teachers and parents who are unaware of the homework policy?
11. Have you complained or received complaints about homework?
12. Are you aware of district policy?

For the purpose of analysis, the results of this survey will be reported in tabular form. The tables

will correspond to each of the questions listed above. Below each table will be presented a suggestion on how the information could be used to help formulate a written homework policy for the school district.

Sample Survey

The primary purpose of this paper is to suggest a way to devise a homework policy for a school district, but for the purpose of analysis a sample survey was given to a population of 18 participants. This small survey was given to provide sample data for the tables and to field test the questionnaires for legibility and clarity.

The data collected from the sample survey and presented in the tables was obtained from five teachers, five students, three administrators, and five parents from the Francis Howell School District, located in St. Charles, Missouri. No conclusions will be made from this data since it is such a small sampling. The following pages show the results of the sample survey. The format of the tables follows guidelines presented by John Savage.³

TABLE I

Question: Do you believe homework is necessary for academic growth?

RESPONSES REGARDING THE VALUE OF HOMEWORK

Response	Parents		Students		Teachers		Adminis- trators		Total	
	No	Per- cent	No	Per- cent	No	Per- cent	No	Per- cent	No	Per- cent
Valuable	3	60	3	60	5	100	1	33.3	12	66.7
Not Valuable	1	20	1	20	0	0	2	66.7	4	22.2
Undecided	1	20	1	20	0	0	0	0.0	2	11.1
TOTAL	5	100	5	100	5	100	3	100	18	100

Table I should be used to interpret the opinion of the community as to the value of homework. If a majority of the population does not consider homework valuable, further research should be conducted before homework policies are established advocating the use of homework in the elementary grades.

TABLE II

Question: How much time should be devoted to homework each night?

OPINION ON TIME WHICH SHOULD BE DEVOTED
TO HOMEWORK

Time in Minutes	Parents		Students		Teachers		Adminis- trators		Total	
	No	Per- cent	No	Per- cent	No	Per- cent	No	Per- cent	No	Per- cent
0-10	-	--	-	--	-	--	-	----	-	----
10-20	1	20	-	40	-	--	1	33.3	2	11.1
20-30	3	60	2	20	3	60	1	33.3	9	50.0
30-45	1	20	1	40	2	40	-	----	4	22.2
45-60	-	--	2	--	-	--	1	33.3	3	16.7
60-Up	-	--	-	--	-	--	-	----	-	----
TOTAL	5	100	5	100	5	100	3	100	18	100

Table II could be used to set guidelines for time to be spent on homework. The time factor in a homework policy should be general enough to allow for flexibility. The time will fluctuate depending on grade level and the ability of the student. This should be taken into consideration if time factors are to be included in a homework policy.

TABLE III

Question: Are you aware of your school district's homework policy?

AWARENESS OF DISTRICT HOMEWORK POLICY

Response	Parents		Teachers		Total	
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
Aware	1	10	5	50	6	60
Unaware	4	40	-	--	4	40
Undecided	-	--	-	--	-	--
TOTAL	5	100	5	100	10	100

Table III indicates how many teachers and parents are actually aware of the homework policy of their school district. If the majority of respondents are unaware or undecided about homework policy, an effort should be made to communicate and publicize the policy. It can be distributed by means of a written report or discussed at PTA meetings or parent-teacher conferences.

TABLE IV

Question: At what grade level do you think homework should begin?

OPINIONS ON GRADE LEVEL HOMEWORK SHOULD BEGIN

Grade	Parents		Teachers		Adminis- trators		Total	
	No	Per- cent	No	Per- cent	No	Per- cent	No	Per- cent
Kindergarten	-	--	1	20	2	66.7	3	23.1
First	-	--	2	40	-	----	2	15.4
Second	-	--	-	--	-	----	-	----
Third	2	40	-	--	1	33.3	3	23.1
Fourth	2	40	2	40	-	----	4	30.7
Fifth	-	--	-	--	-	----	-	----
Sixth	-	--	-	--	-	----	-	----
Jr. High	1	20	-	--	-	----	1	7.7
High School	-	--	-	--	-	----	-	----

Table IV indicates the most favored grade level in which to begin homework. Based on the results, the homework policy could include a statement determining grade level. It may be decided to make the assignments more informal at the earlier grade levels.

TABLE V

Question: In which subjects do you feel homework is valuable?

RESPONSES REGARDING SUBJECTS CONSIDERED MOST VALUABLE

Subject	Parents		Students		Teachers		Adminis- trators		Total	
	No	Per- cent	No	Per- cent	No	Per- cent	No	Per- cent	No	Per- cent
Social St.	3	60	2	40	4	80	2	66.7	11	61.0
Reading	2	40	-	--	3	60	1	33.3	6	33.3
Writing	-	--	-	--	1	20	1	33.3	2	11.1
Health	-	--	1	20	1	20	1	33.3	3	16.7
English	2	40	-	--	1	20	1	33.3	4	22.2
Math	5	100	-	--	5	100	2	66.7	12	66.6
Spelling	3	60	1	20	3	60	2	66.7	9	50.0
Science	1	20	3	60	2	40	1	33.3	7	38.9
Other	-	--	1	20	-	--	1	33.3	2	11.1

The data received as a result of Table V should be used to determine which subjects are considered most valuable in regard to assigning homework. The homework policy could state which subjects might be excluded from homework assignments and which subjects to be stressed. If there is no significant difference in the results shown in the table, this category could be excluded from mention in the homework policy.

TABLE VI

Question: Should homework be used to determine report card grades?

RESPONSES REGARDING USING HOMEWORK TO
DETERMINE REPORT CARD GRADES

Response	Parents		Teachers		Adminis- trators		Total	
	No.	Per- cent	No.	Per- cent	No.	Per- cent	No.	Per- cent
Yes	3	60	3	60	1	33.3	7	53.9
No	2	40	-	--	2	66.7	4	30.7
Undecided	-	--	2	40	-	----	2	15.4
TOTAL	5	100	5	100	3	100	13	100

A homework policy should establish guidelines on how homework is to be used to evaluate students. Table VI will give some indication on how the community feels on this subject.

TABLE VII

Question: What kinds of homework do you consider most valuable?

RESPONSES REGARDING TYPES OF HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS

Types of Homework	Parents		Students		Teachers		Adminis- trators		Total	
	No	Per- cent	No	Per- cent	No	Per- cent	No	Per- cent	No	Per- cent
Using the Library	-	--	3	60	-	--	1	33.3	4	22.2
Writing	2	40	-	--	-	--	-	----	2	11.1
Drills	2	40	-	--	4	80	1	33.3	7	38.9
Projects	4	80	2	40	4	80	3	100	13	72.2
Answering Questions	-	--	-	--	2	40	1	33.3	3	16.7
Reading	3	60	1	20	2	40	-	----	6	33.3

The types of homework to give elementary students should be varied. If the results of Table VII fall into one particular type, the guidelines of the homework policy should explain the rationale behind a multi-sensory approach to homework.

TABLE VIII

Question: Should homework be assigned on holidays or weekends?

RESPONSES REGARDING ASSIGNING HOMEWORK ON HOLIDAYS OR WEEKENDS

Response	Parents		Teachers		Adminis- trators		Total	
	No.	Per- cent	No.	Per- cent	No.	Per- cent	No.	Per- cent
Yes	2	40	1	20	1	33.3	4	30.8
No	3	60	4	80	2	66.7	9	69.2
Undecided	-	--	-	--	-	----	-	----
TOTAL	5	100	5	100	3	100	13	100

Table VIII indicates the community attitudes regarding the assignment of homework on holidays and weekends. This is usually one area of concern for families and should be mentioned in homework guidelines.

TABLE IX

Question: Should homework be given for punishment?

RESPONSES REGARDING GIVING HOMEWORK FOR PUNISHMENT

Response	Parents		Teachers		Adminis- trators		Total	
	No.	Per- cent	No.	Per- cent	No.	Per- cent	No.	Per- cent
Yes	-	---	-	---	-	---	-	---
No	5	100	5	100	3	100	13	100
Undecided	-	---	-	---	-	---	-	---

Giving homework for punishment gives the student a negative view of homework and of school in general. The majority of educators advise against using homework in a punitive manner. A homework policy should indicate this philosophy in its guidelines. If the majority of respondents indicate yes on Table IX, a rationale should be included in the policy statement indicating why homework should not be used for punishment.

TABLE X

Hypothesis: Parents and teachers who are aware of district homework policy will have a better attitude toward homework than parents and teachers who are unaware of homework policy.

AWARENESS OF POLICY

Response	Parents Aware		Parents Unaware		Teachers Aware		Teachers Unaware	
	No	Per-cent	No	Per-cent	No	Per-cent	No	Per-cent
Homework is Valuable	1	20	2	40	5	100	-	--
Homework is not Valuable	-	--	1	20	-	---	-	--
Undecided	-	--	1	20	-	---	-	--

Table X is designed to test the hypothesis stated in this paper. According to the sample survey, twenty percent of parents who were aware of the policy and forty percent of the parents unaware of the policy had a positive attitude toward homework. Twenty percent of parents unaware of the policy had a negative attitude toward homework. Twenty percent of the parents unaware of the policy were undecided about the value of homework.

One hundred percent of the teachers who were aware of the policy had a positive attitude toward homework. None of the teachers surveyed were unaware of the policy. All the respondents who were aware of the homework policy found homework valuable.

Due to the small sample used for this survey, no conclusions can be drawn from the data to support or reject the hypothesis.

TABLE XI

Question: Parents and Students - Have you complained about homework this year?

Teachers and Administrators - Have you received complaints about your homework policy this year?

COMPLAINTS REGARDING HOMEWORK

Response	Parents		Students		Teachers		Administrators		Total	
	No	Per-cent	No	Per-cent	No	Per-cent	No	Per-cent	No	Per-cent
Yes	1	20	1	20	1	20	-	---	3	100
No	4	80	4	80	4	80	3	100	15	100
Undecided	-	--	-	--	-	--	-	---	-	---
TOTAL	5	100	5	100	5	100	3	100	18	100

Table XI can be used to help indicate the current attitude toward homework. If the respondents are voicing complaints about homework, the current policy should be reviewed and evaluated to try to discover the source of these complaints.

TABLE XII

Question: Do you believe your school district should have a written homework policy?

RESPONDENTS OPINIONS REGARDING THE
NECESSITY OF A WRITTEN HOMEWORK POLICY

Response	Parents		Teachers		Administrators		Total	
	No	Per- cent	No	Per- cent	No	Per- cent	No	Per- cent
Yes	4	80	4	80	-	---	8	61.5
No	-	--	-	--	3	100	3	23.1
Undecided	1	20	1	20	-	---	2	15.4
TOTAL	5	100	5	100	3	100	13	100

Table XII can be used as an indicator of community attitudes regarding the advisability of some type of guidelines for homework.

Recommendations for Future Research

1. Construct a homework policy based on the opinions held by the respondents of the survey presented in this paper.
2. Conduct an experiment regarding student achievement in districts having homework compared to those that do not assign homework.
3. After a homework policy has been in effect for one year, do a follow up study to determine if community attitudes have improved resulting from the policy.
4. Survey districts on a nation wide scale to determine what types of homework policies are in existence throughout the country.

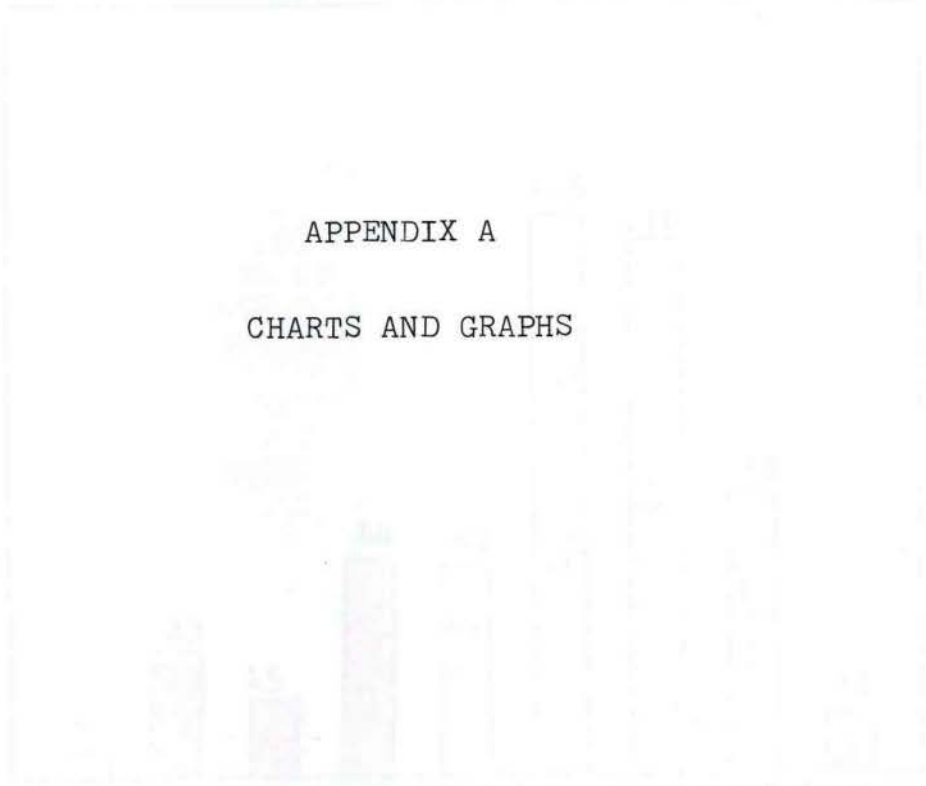
NOTES

¹Maurice D. Burchfield, "Making Study and Homework Assignments Meaningful," Teacher's Encyclopedia, (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Printice Hall, 1966), pp. 255-281.

²John F. Savage, The Opinions of New England School Superintendents, Elementary Principals, Teachers, Parents, and Children Relative to the Value of Homework In the Middle Grades of the Elementary School, (Ph.D. dissertation, Boston University School of Education, 1966), pp. 155-165.

³Ibid. , 64-131.

150
140
130
120
110
100
90
80
70
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10
0



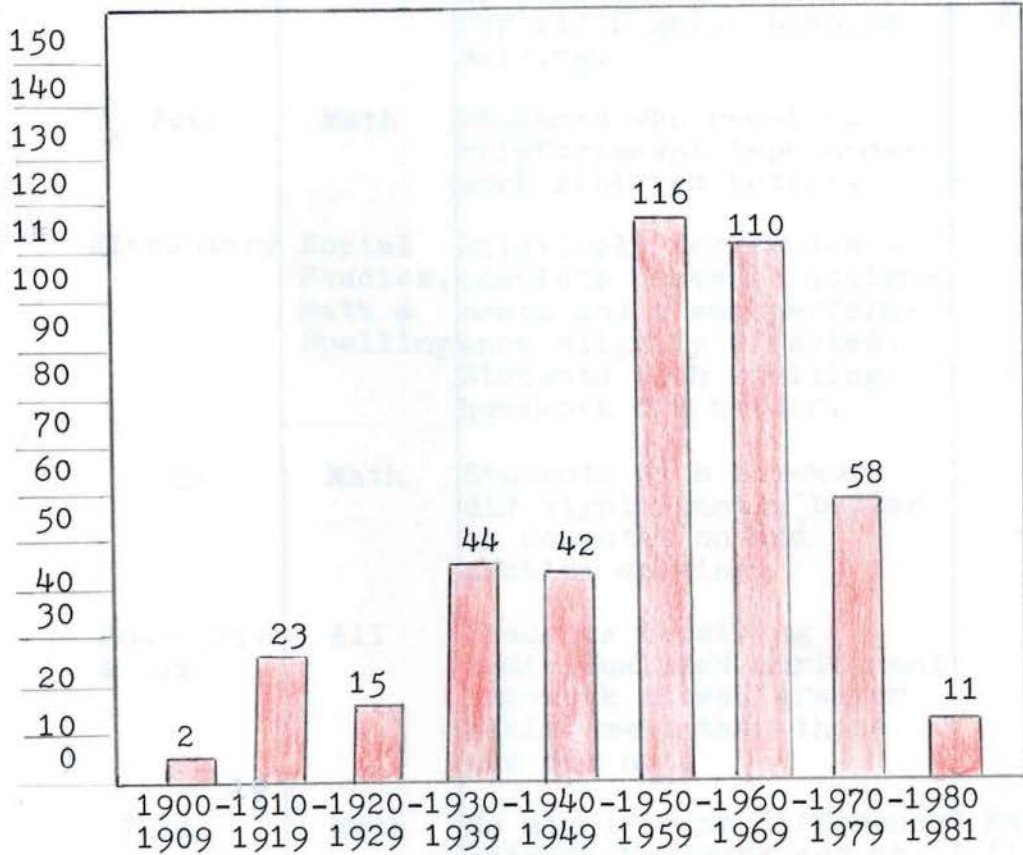
APPENDIX A
CHARTS AND GRAPHS

1970-1971-1976-1977-1978-1979-1980-1981-1982-1983-1984-1985-1986-1987-1988-1989-1990-1991-1992-1993-1994-1995-1996-1997-1998-1999-2000-2001-2002-2003-2004-2005-2006-2007-2008-2009-2010-2011-2012-2013-2014-2015-2016-2017

1970-1971-1972-1973-1974-1975-1976-1977-1978-1979-1980-1981-1982-1983-1984-1985-1986-1987-1988-1989-1990-1991-1992-1993-1994-1995-1996-1997-1998-1999-2000-2001-2002-2003-2004-2005-2006-2007-2008-2009-2010-2011-2012-2013-2014-2015-2016-2017

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PUBLISHED ARTICLES ON *
HOMEWORK BY DECADES...



1900-May 1964- Compiled by Hedges
June 1964-1981-Compiled by Kinion

*W.D. Hedges, "Guidelines of Developing a Homework Policy," The National Elementary Principal, XLIV (2), pp. 44-47, November 1964.

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH*

Grade	Subject	Findings	Researcher
Six	Math	Drill homework may be unrelated to growth in computational skills.	Gray & Allison (1971)
Four, Five & Six	Math	Homework groups did significantly better than no homework groups except for fifth grade problem solving.	Maertens & Johnson (1972)
Four	Math	Students who received reinforcement type homework achieved better.	Doane (1972)
Elementary	Social Studies, Math & Spelling	Relatively few students complete homework assignments and class performance slightly affected. Students with spelling homework did better.	Harris (1972)
Six	Math	Students with homework did significantly better in computation and problem solving.	Koch (1965)
Four, Five & Six	All	Students receiving individualized enrichment homework showed greater achievement than those who did not.	Singh (1970)
Three	Math	No significant difference between homework and no homework groups for achievement in Math.	Maertens (1968-1969)
Six	Math	Regularly assigned homework serves no positive advantage for highly anxious elementary school children.	Allison & Gray (1971)

*Cynthia L. Knorr, "A Synthesis of Homework Research and Related Literature," (ERIC Document Service, ED 199 993, 1981) p. 36-37.

Figure 2

RESULTS OF NEA TEACHERS' OPINION POLL
1962

"What Should be the Maximum Homework Time Required of Pupils in Elementary Grades?"

Hours Per Week	Grades 1-3	Grades 4-6
None	27.4%	0.0%
1	14.3%	13.9%
2	22.0%	22.2%
3	23.4%	15.0%
4	3.7%	26.9%
5	7.4%	7.5%
6	0.7%	3.3%
7	0.7%	2.2%
8	0.4%	9.0%

Figure 3

A letter requesting sample copies of homework policy was sent to twenty St. Louis area school districts. These schools were selected to include a sampling of both private and public schools. The schools selected are as follows:

Public

Clayton School District
 Ladue School District
 St. Louis City Public Schools
 Rockwood School District
 St. Charles School District
 Orchard Farm School District
 Francis Howell School District
 Brentwood School District
 Hazlewood School District
 Jennings School District
 Pattonville School District
 Lindbergh School District
 Parkway School District
 Kirkwood School District

Private

Rossmann School
 Conway School
 Country Day School
 St. Elizabeth Ann Seton
 Academy of Sacred Heart
 Christ Community Lutheran

Responses

Number returned 13

Number returned having a homework policy 9

Number returned indicating no policy 4

The following pages contain the sample policies received as a result of this survey.

Farkway

March 5, 1982

2729 Stonewall Station
St. Charles, MO 63301

Dear Sir:

I am a graduate student attending Lindenwood College, where I am currently writing my master's thesis. The topic of my thesis is district homework policy for the elementary grades. I am collecting samples of district policies from area schools to be used as examples in my paper.

If your school district has a written policy statement regarding homework for the elementary grades, would you please respond by sending a zerox copy of the policy statement. An enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope is provided for your reply.

Thank you so much for your cooperation in this matter. Your response will be very helpful to me and I appreciate the time you take to reply.

Sincerely yours,

Ginger Kinion

Ginger Kinion

Advisor:

Nancy Palitte
Assistant Professor
of Education
Lindenwood Colleges

Parkway SCHOOL DISTRICT

455 NORTH WOODS MILL ROAD • CHESTERFIELD, MISSOURI 63017

314-851-8100

March 15, 1982

Mrs. Ginger Kinion
2729 Stonewall Station
St. Charles, Missouri 63301

Dear Mrs. Kinion:

In response to your letter of March 5 regarding homework, our policy is as follows:

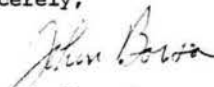
Homework

Homework may be necessary in order that the full benefits of education may be realized by the student. Assignments when made should be based on the individual needs of the pupil.

Since more time is provided for supervised study in elementary classrooms, there is less need for the formal assignment of homework at this level than at the junior and senior high school levels. Themes or similar assignments shall not be given as punishment for disciplinary infractions.

I hope this information will help you with your master's thesis.

Sincerely,



John C. Borsa
Manager of Elementary
Curriculum and Instruction

efs

PATTONVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	EPS Code: IKB
	District Code: New

HOMEWORK

Homework is that extension of classtime effort required to attain the goals of a curriculum. Homework is a learning activity which should increase in complexity with the maturity of the pupil. With increased maturity, learning should become an independent activity. This should be established through consistent assignment, which encourages students to investigate for themselves, and to work independently, as well as with others.

The purpose of homework is to:

1. Stimulate independence, responsibility and self-direction commensurate with the student's age
2. Supplement, support and reinforce the school experience
3. Acquaint parents with their child's achievement and experience in school, and to invite their involvement
4. Provide for the continuation of learning outside the confines of the classroom
5. Provide teachers with additional information on a student's comprehension.
6. Produce a lifetime learner

Adopted: June 30, 1981

SCHOOL. IT IS ASKED THAT SPECIAL NOT BE EXPECTED.

ment weather or an emergency, tions KMOX, KXOK, WIL, KIRL, and

e radio announcement in the morn-call the school before leaving 7. HOWEVER, we ask that parents calling the evening before. Except ision to close school will be made e decision be made the evening ed on the radio. PHONE CALLS AT NNECESSARY AND NOT APPRECIATED.

ather conditions could develop Parents driving car pools are cisions in this regard depending s in their own area. Please call y dismissal.

also be announced on the above addition, Class Representatives st in contacting by telephone after been made by the school. Parents the day, should make plans now with relatives or friends when- cessary.

cted to wear the complete school lay and at school performances. washed frequently.

ing should be clearly marked with

o wear her uniform or part of the from home is necessary.

uniforms:

The boys have two uniforms:

- daily uniform
- dress uniform

Notification of when the dress uniform or white dress is to be worn will be made through the monthly calendar and/or a flyer sent home with your child.

Parental support of these uniform policies is a re-affirmation of your choice of school for your child.

Study and Homework Policies

The faculty assigns homework to assist the student in developing strong study habits necessary for future learning Preparation of daily assignments is consistent exercise in the development of personal responsibility. It serves as a check for the teacher to determine the extent of knowledge absorbed and skills mastered. It can also serve as a review for the student.

All students are expected to:

- complete assignments on time
- be attentive in class
- work on a level consistent with ability
- cooperate with teachers and other students
- make up work missed when absent

Approximate study time set for each grade level:

- First Grade-----20 minutes
- Second Grade-----30 minutes
- Third Grade-----45 minutes
- Fourth Grade-----1 hour
- Fifth Grade-----1½ hours
- Sixth, Seventh, Eighth Grades----2 hours

The older children are taught that homework does not mean only written assignments to be turned in. It means studying for weekly spelling tests, studying notes for chapter tests, working on long-range assignments, polishing compositions, and memorizing and drilling factual material.

As the student matures and develops good study habits, doing homework becomes a way of life.

In case of absence, homework assignments will be given only upon return to classes. We ask that parents not request these assignments from the Coordinators or teachers when the child is not in attendance.

FROM PARENT HANDBOOK

ACADEMY OF THE SACRED HEART
ST. CHARLES, MISSOURI

Conference Guidelines

In order to assist you in having a successful conference, please keep in mind the following:

1. Conference time is limited.
2. You will want to get as much information as possible, so if you have any specific questions, make sure they are conveyed to the teacher ahead of time in order that he/she may gather all pertinent information.

Feedback and Homework

It is our responsibility to keep you informed of what your child is doing at school; however, a large part of this task belongs to the student. He/she knows what has to be accomplished each day, should be able to explain this to you, and should bring home those items given to him/her to show you. Each teacher has a procedure for sending the work home. The work will usually be sent home on a regularly scheduled basis.

Promotion/Retention

Promotion or retention is considered on an individual basis. No minimum number of subjects which must be passed is established. Students with consistently poor scholarship may be considered for retention at the end of the school year. This applies to all students in kindergarten through fifth grade.

STUDENT CONDUCT

The behavior of students should demonstrate the high standards of citizenship necessary for any democratic organization to function successfully. In order to prevent the behavior of a few students from interfering with the education of the majority, we feel the students should:

1. Respect the rights of others.
2. Respect and obey school authority, including the rules governing the daily operation of school business.
3. Have high standards of courtesy, dress, honesty and other personal traits indicative in wholesome interpersonal relationships.
4. Take advantage of the opportunity given to them in order to achieve success in their educational experiences.

Each student is an individual and, therefore, the control and correction of student misconduct will be handled on an individual basis. The following procedures may be taken in correcting student misbehavior:

1. The classroom teacher will take disciplinary actions as he/she see fit within the Orchard Farm Elementary School's policy.

6154(a)

InstructionHomework/Make-Up WorkElementary School

It is highly desirable that the school work or curricular activities of elementary-age children be extended into their after-school hours, particularly in their homes. In fact, this extension is essential, if the maximum effectiveness of the school's impact on the individual child is to be realized. For whether it be a first-grader reading to his/her parents from a book just completed at school, a fourth-grader reviewing multiplication facts with the family at the dinner table, or a sixth-grader discussing major ideas and sources of information with his/her parents for a special report related to class work, each student needs the support provided by the interest and enthusiasm and, sometimes, help of his/her parents.

Whatever the purposes of child, parent, and school in a particular homework activity, these objectives should be compatible to the fullest possible extent, particularly in emphasizing high quality performance and in developing positive attitudes toward intellectual endeavor. When the child is primarily interested in getting done, the parents in having the child kept busy and the school in satisfying parental demands, such compatibility does not exist.

Homework should be arranged so that the unique needs of individual students are met and in such a way as to foster the continually growing independence of each youngster in making use of his/her talents and skills. These goals require differentiated assignments and/or flexibility in the performance of assigned tasks and, of course, the closest possible communication between home and school.

Homework may result then, from the initiative of child, parent or teacher. In all cases, close contact should be maintained among all parties involved. The school may assign or suggest homework for these purposes:

1. To make up work missed during absence from school.
2. To finish tasks which were not completed at school for good and just reasons.
3. To provide opportunity for practice or drill to meet particular needs of individual students.

6154(b)

Homework/Make-Up Work (continued)Elementary School (continued)

4. To meet the desires of students and/or parents following consultation with the school to elaborate on the curricular offerings or to pursue individual research.
5. To train students in the technique and discipline of independent home study.

The amount of time that should be spent on homework will be completely a function of the particular individual at a given time in specific circumstances; that it will vary widely should be obvious. Generally speaking, there will be more to do in later elementary school years than at lower grade levels. The principals are responsible for the coordination of homework activities within and between grades and should it seem desirable, may together with the teaching staff of individual buildings, develop a more detailed regulation within the framework of the above and based upon the needs of a particular school.

Secondary Schools

Home assignments should be in the nature of completing a lesson already begun under the direction of the teacher, looking up additional material on a topic being studied in class, watching a television program recommended by a teacher, working on a project related to a course of instruction, making up work missed by absence due to illness or other justifiable cause.

Every secondary student is expected to do some homework every afternoon or evening before a school day. Of course, the homework will vary considerably according to the individual student's schedule. As a rough rule, students with four academic subjects should devote at least twelve (12) hours a week, in addition to what can be accomplished in a study hall, to their classroom preparation; students with five academic subjects, at least fifteen (15) hours a week.

Make-Up Work

When a parent calls for homework, the teacher is informed and at the earliest possible free period may get homework ready. This is usually sent home by a neighbor child or the parent may stop at school.

Administrators are asked to caution teachers not to make homework assignments that require references which do not exist.

6154(c)

Homework/Make-Up Work (continued)

Parents may be asked to collect books needed in connection with homework assignments. Parents should be informed that it is not possible to get assignments while classes are in session during the day.

Regulation approved:

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF CLAYTON
Clayton, Missouri

400.100 1. Student Affairs, cont.

N. Transfer of Students

- (1) Every student must attend the school in their attendance area as prescribed by the Board of Education. Exceptions to this rule are stated in (3) below. (10-18-78)
- (2) Students who transfer within the district shall be counted only in the first school attended, when the accumulated enrollment is determined.
- (3) When a student moves from one school area to another he/she will have to enroll in the new school unless the superintendent makes an exception, such as: last few months of the senior year in high school; a few weeks to the end of the semester; or, in the best interest of the student and the District. (1-18-78)

O. Homework

Homework means many things. It can range from finding pictures illustrating objects whose names begin with "d" to working page 96 in the arithmetic text; from collecting colored leaves in the fall to memorizing a poem; from interviewing a neighbor about his/her business to drilling on addition combinations; from watching a pertinent television program to rewriting spelling words ten times.

Homework is given for many reasons, and the reasons vary with the age of the child, the teacher, and the child's needs. For these reasons, any attempt to draw up hard and fast guidelines in terms of quantity, time, or pages, is pointless. There are, however, some guiding principles which are consistent with current educational philosophy, with principles of learning psychology and with demands upon the time of today's children, which should be of help to teachers.

There are five general reasons for assigning homework which are most often suggested by teachers and which can be supported by research and principles of educational psychology.

- (1) After a child's extended absence, there may be work which can be done at home to provide learning experiences which were missed at school.
- (2) Sometimes it is necessary for children to finish at home work they failed to complete during the school day because of inefficient use of time or because of extra activities such as band lessons.

STUDENTS400.100 1. Student Affairs, cont.

O. Homework, cont.

- (3) Occasionally children can profit from activities which cannot be done at school. Examples are: Finding appropriate newspaper and magazine pictures and stories to accompany a topic being studied; interviewing a person about a business, profession, or hobby; collecting items for science study such as leaves, insects, etc.; family discussion to determine parents' viewpoint on a national issue.
- (4) Home study can often enrich the school program through the reading of library books, watching selected television programs, research on a topic of the pupil's individual interest, selecting family photographs of trips taken to points being studied, and reading the daily newspaper.
- (5) At times extra drill is needed on routine fundamentals. This could be practice on spelling words, memorizing multiplication combinations, additional oral reading, etc.

NOTE: there are potential pitfalls in each of the above reasons. No amount of homework can fully replace the experiences missed during an extended absence. If the regular classroom program is well planned and vital, the typical routine busy work which can be assigned as "make-up" is the least significant aspect of the missed work.

When teachers require work to be done at home because it is not done at school, they must be careful. Sometimes children do not do their work at school because they do not know how. Rather than profess ignorance, they pretend not to care, and do not do the work. Some children do not do work at school so they may take it home and get help from parents or fellow students. It is not unusual for two or more children to cooperate on an assignment, thus cutting down the amount each has to do.

Assigning work to be done at home which cannot be done at school either as an integral part of the program or an enrichment is probably the easiest to defend. Here, too, though the teacher must make sure that certain conditions exist, time and resources must be available. There must be conditions in the home which permit home study. Children must fully understand the assignment and have the necessary skills to complete it.

100.100 1. Student Affairs, cont.

O. Homework, cont.

Assigning additional drill is often justified. Here, too, the teacher must use considerable care and judgment. The teacher must make sure the drill is needed, that it is correct, and that the child has the proper pre-requisite skills. After all, it is as possible for drill to reinforce erroneous understanding as it is for correct knowledge.

Guidelines: With the preceding ideas in mind, the following are suggested as guiding principles for assigning homework:

- (1) A homework assignment should be educationally justifiable. The work assigned should be of real benefit to the child by helping the child develop additional facility with a skill already understood, or increasing the child's knowledge of a pertinent topic. It does not help a child to drill on skills not understood.
- (2) A homework assignment should be given only if it is known that the necessary resources are readily available to the child. It is true that many children do have access to good home libraries, but many do not. Also, little or any good is accomplished by requiring a child to complete home assignments, if conditions in the home do not permit serious study.
- (3) A homework assignment must be clearly understood by pupils. This is even more crucial with in-school assignments because there is no opportunity for the teacher to correct misunderstandings. Most assignments which are to be completed at home should be presented carefully, discussed with pupils, and the actual work begun in class. Asking children if they understand the assignment is of little value.
- (4) In general, most homework assignments should be of a nature that they can be done better at home than at school. This includes enrichment and research type assignments discussed above. Many teachers follow the practice of assigning extra reading and studying of weekly news magazines for home study, and providing time for work requiring closer supervision to be done at school where incorrect work can be noticed.

STUDENTS400.100 1. Student Affairs, cont.

O. Homework, cont.

- (5) It should be possible to complete homework assignments in a reasonable amount of time. This time is admittedly difficult to define. Work that will require thirty minutes for one child will require two hours for another. Some teachers ask children to keep a record of the time they spend on homework. If many children consistently report excessive amount of time, assignments are too long.
- (6) Other commitments on children's time should be considered. Many upper grade children need time for after-school sports; music and dancing lessons and practice; Scouts, Campfire Girls, and other youth organizations; Hebrew School; play; watching television; family obligations; and many other activities. Generally, children should have two evenings a week and most of the weekend free for non-school activities. Wise teachers even consider the time of the year when assigning homework. They remember that in the fall and spring darkness comes late and children often play outdoors later than in the winter.

Whenever possible, there should be considerable flexibility in required homework. Often it is possible to make an assignment due some time in the future. This permits children to use some discretion about the work and permit time for activities listed just above. It should be possible for a child to be excused from a homework assignment with a note from a parent stating that other obligations interfered. This does not mean that the child should not be responsible for the work but that additional time be permitted.



Rossman School

12660 Conway Road
St. Louis, Missouri 63141
Phone: 434-5877

Jeffrey C. Thompson
Headmaster

Revised 1981-1982 Homework Guidelines

Junior Kindergarten:	None
Senior Kindergarten:	None
First Grade:	None to 15 minutes
Second Grade:	15 minutes to 30 minutes
Third Grade:	30 minutes to 60 minutes
Fourth Grade:	30 minutes to 60 minutes
Fifth Grade:	60 minutes to 90 minutes
Sixth Grade:	60 minutes to 90 minutes

It will remain the responsibility of the homeroom teacher to monitor on a daily basis the amount of homework. When there is a conflict between a specialty course assignment and a homeroom subject assignment, the homeroom assignment always comes first.

School District of the City of Ladue

9703 CONWAY ROAD
ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI 63124

March 17, 1982

TELEPHONE
994-7080

John T. Shaughnessy, Jr.
Assistant Superintendent
for Administration

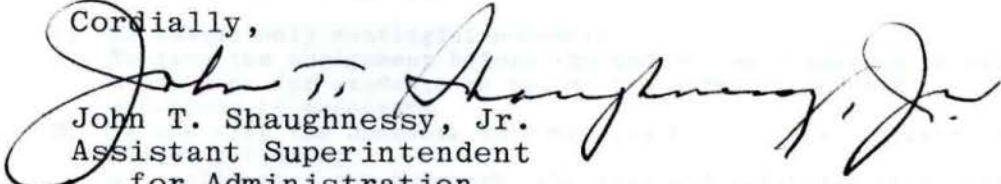
Ms. Ginger Kinion
2729 Stonewall Station
St. Charles, Missouri 63301

Dear Ms. Kinion:

Thank you for your recent letter requesting material for your thesis.

I am enclosing a statement regarding homework which is part of the Ladue Teacher Handbook. I hope you will find this information to be helpful in your research. If you have questions, please feel free to contact me.

Cordially,


John T. Shaughnessy, Jr.
Assistant Superintendent
for Administration

Z

Enclosure

5.8 HOMEWORK

5.8.1 LADUE GUIDELINES REGARDING HOMEWORK

While homework is assigned on a regular basis at the junior and senior high schools, homework is not considered to be a regular part of the elementary school program. Generally, blanket assignments are not to be given to an entire class as homework.

It is recognized, however, that on occasion an elementary class might be requested to do a homework assignment. Appropriate examples of this may be to watch a particular TV program, to listen to a special radio program, or to look up current material in connection with class activities. It is expected that these occasions would be rare and usually occur only at the upper elementary level.

Homework should never be assigned to students without a clear explanation of how the work is to be done. For instance, if he is to watch a TV program or look for current material, the purpose should be understood by the student.

The following suggestions to encourage regular completion of homework assignments have been made by the administration.

Responsibility of Teachers:

1. To assign only meaningful homework.
2. To give the assignment before the end of the classroom period. Allow time for students to record the homework and ask questions if necessary.
3. To see that the homework is completed by one or a combination of the following:
 - a. collecting the homework, checking and returning it to the student,
 - b. walking around the room at the beginning of the class period to inspect the homework and record or mark unsatisfactory homework,
 - c. ask the students to show their homework at the beginning of the class period,
 - d. giving a pop quiz over homework.
4. To be familiar with a student's cumulative record folder and results on standardized tests prior to assigning homework.

Additional suggestions which teachers have found helpful if a student is not doing his homework include the following admonitions:

Phase I

1. Check homework regularly.
2. Grade homework.
3. Record homework in grade book.

4. Record "incomplete" or "no homework" in grade book.
5. Require incomplete homework to be finished.
6. Confer with the student and/or parent about unsatisfactory homework during class, after class, after school, or independent study.
7. Have the student show completed homework before school.
8. Have the student do homework during independent study under teacher supervision.
9. Have the student stay after school to do the homework.
10. Have the student do the homework in the room before the first period.

Phase II

1. Read the cumulative record folder again to become familiar with the student's past record.
2. Confer with the counselor and/or parent to work out a corrective program.

Phase III

1. Send home progress reports.
2. Send home incomplete homework paper.
3. Telephone the parent or suggest the parent call.
4. Have conference with the parent.
5. Follow up any conferences with a progress report.

Phase IV

Confer with the principal, assistant principal, or counselor to work out a corrective program. The school psychologist, director of student personnel services or other individuals perceived as being helpful might also be consulted including a subject area coordinator if one particular subject area is the problem.



kirkwood school district r7

1110 SOUTH GLENWOOD LANE

KIRKWOOD, MISSOURI 63122

(314) 966-5700

9 March 1982

Mrs. Ginger Kinion
2729 Stonewall Station
St. Charles MO 63301

Dear Mrs. Kinion:

Enclosed is a copy of the Kirkwood R-7 District's Homework Guidelines, as approved by the Board of Education in March 1981. Please note that they are guidelines, and not policy, per se.

I hope these will help you and best of luck with your thesis.

Sincerely,

Ann E. Schukai, Director
Public Information/Community Relations

KIRKWOOD R-7 SCHOOL DISTRICT HOMEWORK GUIDELINES

- DEFINITION:
- . Homework is that extension of classtime effort required to attain the goals of a curriculum.
 - . Homework is appropriate for all students: every student should receive homework on a regular basis--the amount to depend on the grade level and course load of the student.
 - . Homework is not appropriate to all courses. Some subjects do not lend themselves to the assignment of regular homework. Nevertheless, it is advisable for each teacher to regularly review his/her program to determine whether it might not benefit by the addition of homework assignments or the renovation of current homework procedures.

WHY IS HOMEWORK NECESSARY?

- I. In-school time does not suffice to cover material in most academic courses
- II. Many learning activities (reading, practicing skills) can and should be done independently, reserving class time for matters demanding the teacher's instruction.
- III. Varying aptitudes dictate that all students do not learn the same amount in the same time

WHAT ARE THE OBJECTIVES OF HOMEWORK?

- I. To stimulate independence, responsibility and self-direction commensurate with the student's age
- II. To supplement, support and reinforce the school experience
- III. To acquaint parents with their child's achievement and experience in school and to invite their involvement
- IV. To provide for the continuation of learning outside the confines of the classroom
- V. To provide teachers with additional information on student's comprehension
- VI. To produce a lifetime learner

HOW CAN PARTICIPANTS CONTRIBUTE TO THESE OBJECTIVES?

I. Parents can contribute by:

- A. Keeping apprised of child's course requirements
- B. Intervening when extra-curricular activities or jobs interfere
- C. Turning off TV during homework hours
- D. Extending help with assignments when needed

II. Students can contribute by:

- A. Assuming responsibility, appropriate to their age, for their own learning efforts
- B. Listening to instructions; asking questions to eliminate misunderstanding of either the purpose or process of an assignment
- C. Organizing time for homework
- D. Completing assignments as directed

III. Teachers can contribute by:

- A. Advising students and parents of his/her expectations regarding amount of time to be spent on homework
- B. Offering appropriate and relevant assignments
- C. Reviewing the homework--providing student with some form of feedback
- D. Giving clear instructions
- E. Tailoring assignments so that amount of time needed for completion is reasonable

WHAT FORMS MIGHT HOMEWORK TAKE?

- I. Work assigned as homework and completed during class time
- II. Completion of work begun at school
- III. Extra drill on routine fundamentals
- IV. Make-up work following absence
- V. Long-term assignments
- VI. Activity which broadens the classroom experience
- VII. Reading
- VIII. Work done after hours with school equipment



FRANCIS HOWELL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Route 2 • St. Charles, MO 63301 • (314) 441-0088 (314) 447-1133

Dr. William T. Rebore
Superintendent

March 10, 1982

Mrs. Ginger Kinion
2729 Stonewall Station
St. Charles, MO 63301

Dear Mrs. Kinion,

It was nice talking to you yesterday by telephone concerning your masters thesis at Lindenwood. This note is written to reiterate what I advised by telephone. We, in the Francis Howell School District, currently have no written policy regarding district homework for the elementary grades. Each of the district principals is encouraged to work with his faculty in determining the appropriate amounts of homework to be assigned and the circumstances under which that homework is given.

We trust that this information, although somewhat limited, will help you in your research work for your thesis.

As earlier stated, it was good to talk with you again. Best of luck to you in your continuing education.

Cordially,


Jim Grimes

JG/ms

Assistant Superintendents

Jim D. Grimes
Curriculum

Wayne E. Oetting
Business

Dr. Roger E. Russell
Personnel

Dr. Richard G. Schuppan
Planning, Research and Evaluation

Administrative Assistants

Hugh A. Kinney
Special Education

John R. Oldani
Secondary Education

Dr. Patty Williamson
Community Relations



DIVISION OF
INFORMATION SUPPORT SERVICES

April 1, 1982

Ms. Ginger Kinion
2729 Stonewall Station
St. Charles, Missouri 63301

Dear Ms. Kinion:

RE: Your inquiry regarding homework policy for the elementary grades.

Since the St. Louis Public Schools do not have a written district policy on your inquiry I am referring you to the administrators in the four area offices in the system - they may be able to help you.

Administrator

Rufus Young	Area I	5234 Wells Ave., 63113	361-6358
Julius Dix	Area II	1517 S. Theresa, 63104	865-4550
David Mahan	Area III	1004 N. Jefferson, 63106	241-9321
Anne Price	Area IV	721 Pendleton, 63108	535-3874

Sincerely,

TED M. SMORODIN, Director
Information Support Services

TMS/ts

The appendix is intended to help the student...
helping students learn about their own...
learning. It is divided into two sections: the first
section, "Self-Reflection", and the second
section, "Creative and Critical Thinking".

Self-Reflection

1. How do you experience the world around you?
2. How do you experience your own learning process?
3. How do you experience your own thinking process?
4. How do you experience your own emotional process?

APPENDIX C

SUGGESTIONS FOR HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS

1. Ask questions of the text. What are the main ideas? How do they relate to each other? How do they relate to your own life?
2. Make a concept map of the text. How do the ideas relate to each other?
3. Write a paragraph summarizing the text. How do you feel about it? How do you think it will be useful to you?
4. Write a paragraph explaining the text. How do you think it will be useful to you? How do you think it will be useful to others?
5. Write a paragraph evaluating the text. How do you think it will be useful to you? How do you think it will be useful to others?
6. Write a paragraph creating a new idea based on the text. How do you think it will be useful to you? How do you think it will be useful to others?
7. Write a paragraph critiquing the text. How do you think it will be useful to you? How do you think it will be useful to others?
8. Write a paragraph defending the text. How do you think it will be useful to you? How do you think it will be useful to others?
9. Write a paragraph applying the text to your own life. How do you think it will be useful to you? How do you think it will be useful to others?
10. Write a paragraph applying the text to the world. How do you think it will be useful to you? How do you think it will be useful to others?

This appendix is compiled to aid the teacher in helping students reach their full potential regarding homework. It is divided into two sections: The first being some "do's" concerning homework, and the second suppling some creative homework assignments.

Do's concerning homework

1. Have an objective for each homework assignment.
2. Help students understand the objective behind each assignment.
3. Follow up on homework assignments in class.
4. Explain to parents the homework policy at the beginning of the year.
5. Let parents know how much help you need from them.
6. Make provisions for students who are unable to complete assignments due to unfavorable home environments.
7. Make homework meaningful and not just busywork.
8. Avoid giving homework at the end of the day just as the bell rings.
9. Avoid assigning homework of the same type and amount to the entire class without taking into account individual differences.
10. Be aware of what other teachers have assigned on a given night so as not to overload the students with homework.
11. Put variety in your homework assignments.
12. Make sure students have ample time to complete the assignments.
13. Try to tie in homework with out-of-school interests.
14. Correlate homework with classwork.

15. Make sure students have access to materials needed to carry the assignment through to completion.
16. Keep track of progress and provide encouragement especially if the assignment is of a long-term nature.
17. Allow students to occasionally share assignments and help each other get started.
18. Be aware of time limitations of parents.
19. Try to involve parents with their children.
20. Encourage help from the students' grandparents, or other relatives if the parents are unable to participate in a project.
21. Use a multi-sensory approach when assigning homework.
22. Avoid assignments where parents must do the teaching.
23. Consider special school activities, weekends, and holidays when assigning homework.
24. Avoid using homework as punishment.

Creative Assignments

Not all homework need be of the drill or review variety. The following pages contain some suggestions designed to stimulate other creative ideas from teachers when assigning homework. These suggestions are geared for the middle grades, but can be modified to other grade levels and subject areas.

Math

1. Have students make a list of all the ways their family uses arithmetic in their daily lives. The students may bring the list to school and discuss it with the class.
2. Give students a list of unusual objects to measure or devise the list through a session of class brainstorming. Examples: Length of your dog's legs, width of your bed, area of your room, etc.
3. Have students copy one of their mother's favorite receipes. They should then double the receipe. (This is an excellent way to show practical application of fractions). The receipes could then be compiled into a class cookbook to be decorated and given for a mother's day present.
4. Give students a mimeographed sheet of a simple graph. Have students complete the graph at home, showing the family's favorite television shows.
5. Have students survey the neighborhood for items such as house colors, garages, television

antennas, etc. They can then make graphs indicating the results of their survey. Encourage the students to come up with ideas of their own to include in the survey.

6. Have students use both metric and standard measurement to measure their driveway and find the area of their front yard.

7. Have students measure the diameter and circumference of the largest and smallest tree in their yard. Compare the results by averaging or graphing.

8. Have the students find the average weight, height, and age of everyone living in their home. (include the pets!).

Social Studies

1. Suggest that students go to work with a member of the family and find out what they do. They could then write down all the reasons they would or would not like that job.

2. If it isn't possible to go to the job, the students could interview someone about their job. Here is one example of an interview questionnaire the students could use:

Questionnaire

What is the title of your job?
 How many years have you been on the job?
 Do you work for someone else?
 What is the starting pay?
 How much is the maximum pay?
 Are you paid for overtime?

What happens if you miss work?
Do you get paid vacations?
Is there any risk involved in
your job?
How old must you be to get this
job?
What kind of education do you
need to get this job?
Do women, men or both usually
do this kind of work?
Why are you doing this kind of
work?
Is there another job you would
like better?

3. Have students use a tape recorder to interview someone about an issue in the news? Share interviews with the class.

4. Begin an "Adopt a Grandparent" program. Students can be assigned a foster grandparent at a neighborhood nursing home. This can be arranged with cooperation from the nursing home social director. The student can keep a journal as he or she visits the nursing home at regular intervals throughout the year. All encounters and activities could be logged in the journal along with photographs if possible. The journal would then be shared with the class at the end of the year.

5. Send home a mimeographed sheet of a blank family tree and have the students fill it in. Follow up by having a family history day for each child so he or she can relate their information. Supply a classroom map so the students can put a flag on the country of their origin.

6. Have the students interview a senior citizen about the changes that have taken place since they were in elementary school. The student could then make a "before and after" chart depicting the changes. (Example: From walking to riding a bus, from ink wells to Erasermates, etc.).

7. Have the students write an essay or a diary on how their family celebrates a particular holiday.

8. Have students make a time line of all the important events in their life. They can use parents and the family photo albums as resources for the early years.

Language Arts

1. Start a "Read Aloud" program where each evening for a short time the student reads orally to a member of the family.

2. Provide each student with a new word for the week. The student should define the word, write the pronunciation and part of speech. The child should then try to find the new word in print. For each word brought to school, the child would receive a point. The students may compete individually or in small groups for this contest.

3. Have students make a food from a recipe found in the newspaper. Bring the food to school for

a taste test. The students could then make a journal describing their tasting experiences.

4. Have students find examples of advertising on television or in the newspaper. The students could then rewrite the advertisement changing all the adjectives.

5. Have students make a photographic essay depicting some aspect of their lives. Sample topics: "When I Was a Baby," "My Pets," "Food I Love," "My Favorite Sport," "How I See My Life in the Future". The pictures may be from magazines, drawn, or from family photographs. Each picture should have a caption.

6. Have students bring in examples of misspelled words or incorrect grammar that they find in print.

7. Have students visit a neighborhood cemetery and carry out some of the activities described in "The Cemetery As An Outdoor Classroom", Teacher, October, 1975. This is an excellent unit and one that can be done individually or in small groups.

8. If a student is going to miss school due to a vacation, there are learning activities that can be incorporated. Suggest that the student keep a travel diary, including daily entries about trip happenings and personal feelings. Suggest that the student share travels by writing letters to the class.

Help the student make up some interview questions to use in interviewing interesting people encountered on the trip.

9. Have students begin a "Books I Can't Wait to Read" booklet. The students should survey their friends regarding their favorite books. This information could be kept in a booklet. An example of one format to use is as follows:

<u>Title</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Who Recommended</u>	<u>Comment</u>
Superfudge	Blume	Betty Jones	Funny!

These booklets may be as simple or as complex as the individual student wishes to make it. Some students may want to include a book report on each book read while others prefer to keep a simple list as described above. Some may wish to write a thank you note to the person recommending the book including personal reactions to the story. The purpose of this activity is to read books and share the enjoyment with others.

10. Have students keep a tally of grammar mistakes they hear in a twenty-four hour period of time. (Examples: ain't, double negatives, incorrect pronoun usage, etc.) The results could be used to make a bulletin board display or made into a class graph.

11. Create a telephone chain where each student in the room calls another. The teacher begins by phoning the first child on the list and delivering a short message. Each child calls another until the chain

is complete. The next day the last child on the list delivers the message to the class and compares it with what was said in the original message. This is a good lesson in oral communication, phone use, and avoidance of rumors.

Science and Health

1. Provide students with a small magnet. Have them make a list of all the things in their home on which the magnet will stick. Have the students compare lists and compile results into a joint class list.
2. Have students read their home electric and gas meters and try to calculate home bills based on the readings. Employees of the Gas and Electric companies are usually willing to visit the school to show students how to do this.
3. Have students make a list of ways electricity is used in their homes and ways to save on the electric bills. This also makes for a good poster activity.
4. Have students plant a tree or flower in their yard and begin a photographic diary of the "Life of My Plant". A graph may also be prepared to show the growth patterns.
5. Start a "Beautify the Neighborhood" campaign by having students collect glass, paper, etc.

Students could keep a record of what they did to improve the environment.

6. Have students keep a record of accidents that happen at home or gather accounts of accidents found in the newspaper. Students can then write safety tips on how to prevent future accidents of the same type. These safety tips could then be compiled into a class booklet on safety.

7. Have students keep a one week chart of the food they eat. The students could then use a table of minimum daily food requirements to determine if their diet is adequate. Another activity would be to calculate the calorie intake during the week.

8. Have students plant vegetable seeds in their back yard. They should keep track of the growth in graph form and record the care they take of the plants. When the vegetables are ready to be eaten, the student can bring them to class to share.

9. Have students bring in a "box snack" in which they include a food from each category on the food chart. Exchange boxes and have students list the four food groups and what food they ate from each one.

10. Suggest that students bring in an ice cube which has been insulated the best way they can devise. At the end of the day have students see which ice cubes are still frozen. This activity provides a good lead in to a discussion of insulation and energy.

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