

Dear Freshwater Parents and Guardians,

The teaching staff at Freshwater School has been reviewing and discussing our current homework expectations in an effort to keep homework a meaningful part of your child's education and to nurture the important and valuable part you parents and guardians play in the partnership with your child's teacher. Your involvement in your child's education is vital to his/her success, and we value the time you spend helping your children with their studies. We truly are in this together.

We are sensitive to the fact that, as children progress through the grades, the curriculum and assignments that accompany students' lessons progressively get more and more difficult...for the students as well as the parents who are helping them at home! It is becoming increasingly difficult for many parents with children in grades 5-8 to help their children, especially in Math.

In an effort to ease the frustration some parents feel when they are unable to help their children, and to ensure the partnership between parents, guardians and the classroom teacher remains healthy, we are offering this explanation of homework expectations and how we can all work together to make our students' educational experience meaningful and challenging.

- You can expect children in all grades to have regular and meaningful homework
 - Grades K-3 should average 20-30 minutes daily
 - Grades 4-6 should average 30-40 minutes daily
 - Grades 7 & 8 should average 40-60 minutes daily
- * Parents are not expected to "teach", but rather "help". Teachers will only send home assignments they are confident students can work on "independently", meaning they are certain your child has demonstrated in class he/she can complete the task with little or no help, especially Math.
- * Math assignments will be "differentiated", meaning assignments will be appropriate for your child's ability. Assignments will be aligned with grade-level standards your child needs to master and will be challenging, yet "doable" by students without parents having to "teach".
- * 7th & 8th grade teachers meet regularly to coordinate major projects and exams so students are not being overloaded at any given time. There will always be overlapping quizzes and weekly tests that your child should have plenty of advance notice to study for. Parents are encouraged to help their child learn to study and "manage their time", as these are valuable skills necessary for student success.
- * Students are expected to complete their homework assignments as assigned, but if you find you and your child cannot finish an assignment because of confusion with directions, a sincere lack of understanding or you hit the "frustration stage", please write a note on the assignment explaining to the teacher the circumstances, and your child will not be held accountable for what they are unable to do. "Not having time" because of sports or other activities is not an acceptable excuse, but a sincere lack of understanding how to do something is.

Please know we value the time and effort parents put into their children, and we are here for all of you. Please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher with any concerns or suggestions for improvement. Communication is the key to successfully working together.