



In the Wake County Public School System, we are committed to maintaining rigorous performance and achievement standards for all students and to providing a fair and consistent process for evaluating and reporting student progress that is understandable to students and their parents and relevant for instructional purposes.

Homework

At West Lake Elementary School, both staff and our parent community have thoroughly reviewed the effects of homework. Based on comprehensive short- and long-term research, we have decided that WLES will not assign "typical" nightly homework beyond encouraging independent or shared family reading. By "typical" homework, we refer to school-related assignments intended for completion outside of school hours.

We believe that at-home learning should:

- Be meaningful and impactful.
- Enhance, extend, and reinforce school experiences through complementary home activities.
- Foster effort, independence, responsibility, and self-direction in our students.

To this end, our school community has redefined homework as follows:

Student's Daily Homework Expectations:

1. **Read** books that are appropriate for their level each night, with opportunities for parents to read to them as well.
2. **Engage in physical activity** outdoors (avoiding screen time).
3. **Have dinner with family**, contributing by helping prepare, setting the table, engaging in conversations, and assisting with cleanup.
4. **Prepare for the next school day** by selecting clothes, organizing their backpack, and ensuring they get a good night's sleep.

Our Two-Fold Homework Approach:

1. We emphasize the significance of reading and aim to foster a habit of daily reading through self-selected texts. This may include reading aloud to your child, reading together, listening to reading, or enjoying a family read-aloud. What matters most is that students are consistently engaged with literature and discussing what they read.
2. We value developing math fluency and encourage the review of skills taught during the school year in real-life applications (such as cooking, shopping, measuring, and building).

Parents are welcome to request additional enrichment or support activities from their child's teacher if desired. Current curriculum topics will be shared regularly with parents through the classroom newsletter.

Rationale for Homework Policy: Our elementary students deserve a balanced childhood filled with opportunities for activity and engagement. We join other elementary schools across the region and the country in adopting a limited homework approach, with the hope that eliminating routine assignments will enhance students' enthusiasm and curiosity for learning. Key considerations include:

- Research does not show a significantly high correlation between elementary-level homework and academic achievement.
- Homework may limit students' time to explore their personal interests which is very important at this age.
- Homework can impact family quality of life, with many families experiencing stress over homework completion.
- With students already engaged in a full school day, we do not see the need for additional "second-shift" assignments.
- Homework may, in fact, inhibit active learning by potentially diminishing students' natural interest in education.

Addendum for Upper Grades: In upper grades, students may occasionally be assigned brief check-for-understanding tasks in reading and/or math to reinforce learning, given the comprehensive nature of the curriculum. Teachers will provide more information by grade level as these needs arise within each unit of study.

This approach allows our students to be well-rounded individuals, balancing their school and home lives while nurturing a passion for learning.

The school's Homework Plan can be found on file in the school office and on the school website

Classwork & Assessments

At West Lake Elementary, we believe that classwork and assessments are integral to effective instruction. We are committed to ensuring that all classwork and assessments meet the following criteria:

- **Purposeful and meaningful**, providing relevant and valuable learning experiences
- **Aligned to appropriate standards**, connecting directly to grade-level expectations
- **Rigorous**, fostering critical thinking and problem-solving
- **Supportive of 21st-century skills**, such as collaboration, communication, and creativity
- **Complementary to classroom instruction**, reinforcing academic lessons and concepts

Teachers collaborate to provide a consistent level of quality in classwork and assessments across grade levels, ensuring an equitable learning experience for all students.

Expectations for Classwork and Assessments:

- **Sufficient time** will be allocated for students to complete assignments.
- **Frequent feedback** will be provided to support student progress toward learning goals.
- **Classwork and assessments are never used punitively** but rather as tools for growth and understanding.

In accordance with WCPSS School Board Policy 5520 and 5520 R&P, graded work and work samples will be sent home in Monday Folders. While some assessments will be retained in cumulative files at school, they are available for parent review at any time.

Missed Work

The following school-wide expectations apply to missed work:

- **Pre-Approved Absences:** If an absence is approved in advance and/or work is assigned prior to the absence, all make-up work—including tests scheduled for the day of return—is due upon the student's return to school. Teachers may exercise discretion and make exceptions in cases where the absence was unplanned, beyond the student's control, or when the nature of the absence would not allow immediate completion of work upon return.
- **Unassigned Make-Up Work:** For absences of one (1) to three (3) days, students will have one day for each day absent to complete make-up work. For absences of more than three (3) days, students may have up to two (2) days for each day absent. Extended absences due to injury or chronic illness will receive additional consideration.
- **Student Responsibility:** Students are responsible for submitting all completed assignments to their classroom teacher within the specified timeframe.
- **Limitations on Make-Up Work:** Certain classwork or assessments may not be replicable outside the classroom. Tasks that involve group collaboration, discussions, or interactive participation may not be available for make-up in the same format.

Prevention-Intervention Plan

At our school, we are committed to supporting students at risk of academic challenges through a comprehensive prevention and intervention system designed to promote mastery and successful completion of work. Details of our school-wide and grade-specific expectations are outlined below:

School-Wide Expectations for Prevention and Intervention Support:

- **Core instruction** remains the primary focus for the majority of students.
- **Support instruction** is provided by intervention/literacy teachers, ESL, AIG, and CCR teams through a pull-out model and/or co-teaching approach.
- **Differentiated instruction** is provided by K-5 teachers to address the unique needs of each student.
- **Multiple reassessment opportunities** are offered for core standards to ensure student mastery.

Grade/Subject-Specific Expectations for Prevention and Intervention:

- **K-5 Tier II Plans:** Teachers develop Tier II intervention plans for any student who does not meet reading and/or math benchmarks for two consecutive quarters, as indicated on report cards. Teachers monitor individual progress to support the growth of each student.
- **Grade-Level Professional Learning Teams:** Teams engage in "kid talk" to collaboratively develop intervention strategies tailored to at-risk students.
- **Continued Tier II Support:** Students showing progress on their Tier II plans will continue receiving support until they reach proficiency.
- **Literacy Coaching** is available to assist K-2 teachers with targeted instruction.
- **Intervention Teacher Support:** A dedicated intervention teacher provides additional support to students in grades 3-5 who demonstrate need.
- **MTSS Intervention Team Referrals:** K-5 students not demonstrating sufficient progress, as indicated by ongoing data, are referred to the school-based MTSS Intervention Team for further support.

This approach ensures a consistent, data-driven framework to support all students in reaching their academic potential.

Extra Credit

Extra credit is not applicable within a standards-based grading framework and, therefore, will not be offered. Enrichment opportunities will be embedded directly into classroom instruction to enhance learning and deepen student understanding.

Honor Code

Academic honesty is essential to excellence in education and is directly related to the Board's educational objectives for students to promote integrity and self-discipline in students. As all schoolwork is a measure of student performance, academic honesty facilitates an accurate measurement of student learning.

Each student, parent, family and staff member has a responsibility to promote a culture that respects and fosters integrity and honesty. Academic integrity and honesty require that all stakeholders share responsibility in the fulfillment of this policy.

In fulfilling these responsibilities:

- students will collaborate with their peers to foster a culture of academic integrity; refrain from participating, either directly or indirectly, in any form of cheating or plagiarism; and adhere to the honor code;
- parents and family will actively support the honor code by encouraging their child(ren) to foster and uphold a culture of academic integrity;
- staff will establish and annually teach expectations regarding academic integrity and honesty; and promote the honor code.

A. Prohibited Behavior

1. Cheating: Cheating is an academic deception where a student intends in some way to receive or attempt to receive credit for work not originated by the student, to give or receive unauthorized assistance, or to give or receive an unfair advantage on any form of academic work.

Cheating includes, but is not limited to:

- copying from another student's examination, assignment, or other coursework with or without permission;
- allowing another student to copy work without authorization from a teacher or administrator;
- taking an examination, writing a paper, or completing any other assigned academic task on another student's behalf;
- using notes or resources in any form, including written or online, without authorization;
- sharing or accepting from another, without authorization, any examination content, questions, answers, or tips on an assessment or assignment through the use of notes, scratch paper, social media, or any type of written, oral, or electronic communication.

2. Plagiarism: Plagiarism is using passages, materials, words, ideas, and/or thoughts of someone or something else and representing them as one's own original work without properly crediting the source.

Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to:

- copying text, images, charts, or other materials from digital or print sources without proper citation;
- intentional misrepresentation of work as your own by paraphrasing of items from digital or print sources without proper citation;
- using translation tools or resources to translate sentences or passages without permission;
- using a thesis, hypothesis, or idea obtained from another source without proper citation.

3. Falsification or Deceit: Intentional acts of falsification or serious deceitful misconduct that threaten the health, safety, or welfare of others, or that cause a substantial detrimental impact on school operations or other individuals are prohibited.

Falsification or deceit includes, but is not limited to:

- falsifying another person's name on a school-related document such as a test or report;
- buying or selling test questions or answers;
- copying secure test materials and providing the materials to others;
- paying for or receiving anything of value to complete a school assignment.

B. Violations

1) Staff will intervene and reeducate students to promote positive change in student behavior.

2) A student's grade may or may not be impacted by a violation. If the violation impacts a student's grade, the school may impose academic consequences according to the following criteria: (a) when reasonably possible, the student will be expected to complete the assignment or an alternative assignment as determined by the professional learning team (PLT) guidelines and will do so in an honest manner consistent with the honor code, and (b) the student may receive full, partial, or no grading credit for the assignment as determined by PLT guidelines approved by the principal. Guidelines will consider the age of the student, the student's performance on a repeated or alternative assignment, the student's number of violations of the Honor Code during the school year, and the gravity or level of the violation.

3) A violation of the Honor Code may or may not result in disciplinary consequences. Staff will address violations of this policy under Board Policy 4309, Student Behavior – Code of Conduct, Levels I-11 (Honor Code) and Level II-1 (Falsification or Deceit) as applicable.

Level I-11 (Honor Code) states: “All students are expected to adhere to the academic Honor Code. Disciplinary consequences for violations of this policy will typically be consistent with Level I violations.”

Level II-1 states that “Intentional acts of falsification or serious deceitful misconduct that threatens the health, safety, or welfare of others, or that cause a substantial detrimental impact on school operations or other individuals, are prohibited.” A further description of Falsification or Deceit is set forth above in this policy.

4) Violations of the Honor Code may impact eligibility for school privileges including but not limited to athletic participation, honors, or awards. Further, this policy does not prevent consequences from being imposed by other organizations or regulations.