Our View of Homework at the Lower Schools

We believe that homework should play an important but limited part of a student's day. Homework serves many purposes. It helps to develop executive functioning skills such as time management and follow-through. It also allows students to process what they have learned at their own speed, and to engage in repeated retrieval which reinforces learning. Most importantly, it allows parents to connect with their students as their primary instructors.

We also understand that in developing the whole child, we cannot ignore that homework competes with other good things like sports, playing an instrument, family time, unstructured play and sometimes sleep; which are also equally important to a child's development. We realize that homework can often be frustrating or overwhelming and can create tension in the home. It doesn't always give accurate feedback, depending on how much help the student received, and can contribute to a grade that does not accurately reflect what the student does and does not know. And there is no conclusive evidence that homework increases student achievement across the board.

If we are to limit the amount of homework that our students receive to a reasonable amount, we will need to make sure the homework we give is meaningful. Meaningful homework should reinforce what has been already learned. Students in 2nd-5th grade should be able to complete their homework independently with a good deal of success. It should be worthy work and should drive the instruction done in class. The most meaningful homework will include reading, math, and some memorization of poetry, phonograms, or math facts.