Homework Two-Way

**Two-Way Communication**

**A Definition:** Information about student learning is shared reciprocally between home and school. Schools share with families and families share with schools.

**Homework**

**A Definition:** Tasks are assigned for “out-of-school” time in order to expand, reinforce, and coordinate learning. Homework can be supported in different settings and by various adults in a student’s life – such as before and after school programs, community resource centers, extended family member’s homes, and family work places. Homework is a key, everyday connection between home and school. Homework completion is a measure of engaged learning, a component of student school success.

* At the beginning of the term, “assign” students to discuss the homework process with family members and request written, email, and/or verbal confirmation/feedback from family members; follow up personally if you don’t hear back.
* Share homework information with families in multiple venues such as website, emails, notes home, handbooks, and phone calls.
* In your homework description, explain the following: your commitment to every student’s success; specific homework philosophy and purpose; explicit teacher, student, family responsibilities; time expectations and any individualized procedures; expectation of early family-school two-way communication if problems occur; explanation of shared problem-solving process to resolve concerns; availability of school and community resources.
* Emphasize the importance of families supporting learning at home, every day; tell families that discussing school learning, encouraging efforts, and providing time for homework are home practices that improve achievement.
* Include a family comment component in homework assignments so home sharing is invited; students can see the family-school partnering in action; respond to family feedback.
* Develop “interactive homework” assignments where students and families work together in learning; this can be students teaching families or shared activities; inform families; do regularly; require family feedback for each assignment; share that you don’t expect perfection; proactively problem solve for barriers such as illiteracy or language differences.
* Provide easily accessed, individualized “homework help” for students or families when either might be struggling independently or together; include models and examples; it is all about student success.
* Keep data on homework completion; respond regularly and proactively to students and families; jointly celebrate successes and address concerns.

Adapted from Lines, C., Miller, G.L., & Arthur-Stanley, A. (2011). *The power of family-school partnering (FSP): A practical guide for school mental health professionals and educators.* New York: Routledge.