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December 18, 2018

TO THE HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE:

Approval of Revisions to High School Homework Policy

- Recommendation: That the School Committee approve the revisions to the High School Homework Policy as detailed in the attached document.
- Description: This is a second reading of the proposed High School Homework Policy.
- Supporting Data: Attached redline of revisions to Cambridge Public Schools High School Homework Policy.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "KS", written over a faint circular stamp.

Kenneth N. Salim, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Cambridge Rindge and Latin School
High School Homework Policy

1. Homework assignments via on an online platform:
 - a. ~~Assignments posted online must be shared or discussed in class the same day~~ If homework assignments are posted online, then these assignments ~~are~~ posted online. Online platforms must be used in a manner that facilitates homework assignment and collection, not in a manner that replaces in person communication between teacher and student. For example, if a teacher were to post an assignment in an online platform on google classroom, regardless of time of day, without telling their students about it in class, they could not expect it to be completed.
 - b. All assignments distributed on an online platform must be posted no later than 3pm the day they are announced in class; otherwise, students cannot be expected to turn in that assignment the next day. For example, if a teacher posts the homework assignment at 5:00 pm on a Tuesday night the homework cannot be due until class on Thursday.
 - c. Posting an assignment is defined as introducing all material necessary for the assignment. For example, if a teacher announces a problem set in class and says they will post the list of problems later, that will not be considered an assignment until the list of problems is posted.
2. Teachers assigning homework over a school vacation period must give adequate time either before or after the vacation period for the work to be completed. This applies to the following vacations: Thanksgiving Break, Winer Break, February Break, and April Break.
 - a. An assignment due during the first two days after a break must be assigned by three school days before. For example, if a break lasts from Friday to Monday, an assignment due on the Monday after the break must be assigned by the Wednesday prior to the break. Also, an assignment due the Tuesday after the break must be assigned by the Thursday before the break.
 - b. A teacher can give an assignment on the Thursday before a break, as long as it is due the Friday before the break, and a teacher can assign work on the Monday following the break regardless of its due date.
 - c. Teachers cannot give a test within two days after coming back from a break.
 - d. One-semester AP classes are exempt from this provision.
3. Teachers will ensure equity by assigning projects, assignments, and homework with sufficient time for all students to complete such assignments with regards to religious holidays celebrated and recognized by students.

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- a. If a significant portion of the class population celebrates the holiday: homework assignments must be assigned more than one school day prior to the holiday, and the deadline to turn in and/or complete work must be more than one school day after the holiday. The same policy applies to projects and tests.
- b. If a small percentage of the class population celebrates the holiday: students may speak with teachers in order to arrange an alternative assignment or extension, and will not lose credit for the assignment. Parents may also contact teachers and arrange for accommodations.

4. Homework may not be assigned or collected on snow days. This provision, however, should not be construed to prohibit the Superintendent of Schools from approving the use of "blizzard bags" in the event of extended inclement weather. If a teacher assigns a homework assignment the day before a snow day, the assignment must be due the day students return to school.

5. All assignments must be due during the period in which the class meets.

6. Extra credit assignments cannot require extra time spent at school.

- a. Teachers cannot hold meetings outside of class time that students can attend for extra credit.
- b. Also, teachers may not ask students to bring in gifts or classroom supplies for extra credit.

7. Assignments cannot require the student to spend money beyond the basic school supplies, unless there is financial help for students in need.

8. Students cannot be penalized for not attending a field trip and cannot be required to do extra work beyond what they could be expected to complete during the class period when the rest of the class is attending the field trip.

9. Teachers must administer quarterly exams on the assigned date if given during the exam week. If the exam is given over multiple days, teachers should schedule them so that only one of the two main testing dates are included. Teachers may work with their department coordinator to give their quarterly exam earlier than exam week.

10. When a student is struggling to complete homework as assigned, they should first speak with their teacher about the issue. If the issue is not resolved, the student should speak to their guidance counselor, special education liaison, or dean for additional support.

The high school principals may promulgate school-based rules regarding homework that is consistent with this policy.