



16 September 2016

Planning Ahead

Thursday, 29 September – Parent-Teacher Fellowship, 7:00 p.m., FJS top floor.

Friday, 30 September – Fall Celebration, 12:30-2:45, Highland Park.

Monday, 10 October – Columbus Day, NO SCHOOL.

Thursday-Friday, 20-21 October – MACSA/ACSI Teacher’s Convention, Lancaster, PA. NO SCHOOL.

Remember to check the “School Calendar” on the website for all of the special days this year.

Getting Your Kids to Do Homework

Regular homework has been a part of school life for centuries, and this continues to be true at FJS. As reported at the Parent Orientation, middle and high school students in particular can expect anywhere from 1-3 or more hours of homework a night. However, students frequently come to school complaining that they weren’t able to do their homework at home or they ask teachers to stay after school so that they can do their work here.

Dr. Ralph Kerr in *The Good News*¹ suggests several guidelines for getting homework done at home.

- 1) **Schedule enough time for your children to do their homework.** While they are in school, this is their “job.” Video games, TV time, and social media all come AFTER homework!
- 2) **Supervise computer and internet use.** While teachers may permit some assignments to be done on the computer, or request students to do internet research, especially in high school, it is easy for students to get distracted and start looking at other things or playing games rather than doing homework (actually, this is true for teachers, too!). We suggest having the computer where parents can see the screen rather than in a child’s bedroom unsupervised.
- 3) **Be available to answer questions and provide help,** but DO NOT do the child’s homework for them. If parents or older brothers and sister do the homework, the student may get a better homework grade, but is much more likely to fail the test and also fail the class because they didn’t learn what they were supposed to learn from the homework. If your child needs help that you can’t provide, contact the teacher. Contact information is on the back of large month-on-a-page school calendar available from the office.
- 4) If you have concerns about the amount of homework your child has, **feel free to talk with your child’s teacher.** It is possible that your child may need additional help with some subjects, or it may be true that your child is not using his/her time well at school, a problem you and the teacher can solve together.
- 5) **Some children need help organizing their homework.** Some students write their assignments on a piece of paper instead of in their assignment book, then lose the paper. Other take all of their class notes mixed together in the same notebook, then can not easily find the notes for a specific class. Their teacher can help with this, but you can, too. Ask to see their assignment book and expect their homework to be written in it. Suggest to them that they get different notebooks for different classes or a 3- or 5-subject notebook and use a different section for each class.
- 6) **Some students need more help than they can get from their teacher,** so a tutor may be helpful. Several individuals have indicated that they may be available to do tutoring for a reasonable fee. Contact Jen in the office for more information.
- 7) **Get enough sleep!** Less sleep means lower grades and more tardiness. Studies have demonstrated that students who get the right amount of sleep – 8-9 hours per night, especially for teens – feel better about themselves, get better grades, and have better social interactions.

Let’s work together to help our students succeed this year. Working together as partners, we can make sure that our children have every opportunity to achieve all that they are capable of.

Partners together with you,
James E. Gochnauer, Principal

¹ adapted from Kerr, Dr. Ralph, “Homework Needs for Students,” *The Good News*, Fall 2016, p. 7.