Dear Families:

We hope your transition to a new school year is going as smooth at home as it is here at school. We are thrilled to introduce our updated homework policy; which focuses on critical and creative thinking along with flexible options for families. There has been a long debate among education policy makers regarding the value of homework. Some research shows that homework can be valuable for student development while other researchers have found that homework does little to student achievement. At McAuliffe, we value diversity, flexibility, and differentiation to meet the needs of all students by providing **meaningful** homework. In order to provide families with options, we have developed a tiered system. Each student is expected to complete the assignments in **Tier One**, which includes:

* 20 minutes of reading (for K-1 students this includes a combination of reading and being read to)
* A critical or creative thinking question in which students are encouraged to discuss their ideas/thoughts related to the question
* Family games; a list of games will be sent home to encourage families, friends, neighbors, and peers to play games that reinforce critical and creative thinking and reasoning skills. (Note: Video games are not included).

Additionally, if you would like for your student to engage in more traditional homework such as, math word problems or reading response journals your student will have the option to complete **Tier Two** homework. Tier Two includes:

* A monthly math calendar with activities to reinforce concepts learned in class.
* A monthly reading calendar with activities to promote reading and writing fluency.

Calendars should be turned in at the end of the month. Activities do not need to be turned in. This reinforcement provides opportunities for families to work together on concepts learned in school. **Tier Two** is optional.

Finally, we know that students today will have jobs in the future that will require critical and creative thinking. In order to challenge our students in unique ways, **Tier Three** homework includes:

* One challenge project per month.

Challenge projects will encourage students to participate in various learning experiences. The projects will include rigorous activities and STEM-centric (science, technology, engineering, and math) challenges designed to stretch students’ thinking. Information regarding the challenged projects will be sent home to all students. Completion is optional. The first challenge will be presented soon.

We are excited to offer options and provide opportunities for families. Additional information will be shared at Back to School Night.

The McAuliffe Staff