

Challenges

How do I motivate my younger children when they are tired?

Work doesn't end at 5:00 pm. Some nights it might be 11:00 pm before we start homework.

## Homework: Challenges and Strategies that Work

The New York State Migrant Education Program (NYS-MEP) hosted a Statewide Parent Advisory Council (State PAC) meeting in May 2022. At the meeting, parents discussed challenges and shared strategies that have worked for homework. See if one of these tips might help your homework time go a little more smoothly.

### ***STRATEGIES THAT WORK: Set a routine for homework***

Many State PAC Parents agree that having a routine for completing homework worked for their families. For example:

- Children start homework when they get home.
  - Children eat a snack first, then start their homework before engaging in other activities.
- One State PAC parent asked to change her work schedule so she could pick up her children from childcare and be home by 5:00. This means her children start their homework earlier than when she worked her original schedule.
- All the children work on their homework together so they can help each other.
- Parents check their child's backpack every night for homework and school information.
- When the homework for the whole week is sent home on Monday, one State PAC Parent breaks up the work, so her child works on part of the homework each night.

## Challenges

The homework is in English and hard to understand.

Feeling forced into using the “school’s technology,” such as email and/or programs on the school’s website.

The internet is important, but some places don’t have internet access. When there is internet, it doesn’t always work.

## STRATEGIES THAT WORK: Resources that can help

Resources the State PAC Parents found useful include,

- **Translation apps and/or web browsers**
  - Parents use a translation app like *Google Translate* to translate the homework assignments into their home language.
  - One State PAC Parent likes that her children’s school uses “*Talking Points*.”

*Talking Points* is a program a teacher or school can set up to send messages in English and the parent receives in their home language. Parents can reply with their home language and the teacher or school receives the message in English.

- **The school’s information and communications technology on the school website and/or email.**
  - One State PAC Parent says that as her children get older it is more difficult to help them, but she can use the school’s program to help her children stay on track with their schoolwork.
- **Child’s knowledge and skill to use computers**
  - One State PAC Parent asks her son for help to access and use their school’s technology.
- **The public library** has free Wi-Fi, computers, and printers that students and families can use.
- One State PAC Parent recommends changing the internet service, if there is a better one available.

## Challenges

Education is different for my 8-year-old than it was for my older child.

Math is hard.

## ***STRATEGIES THAT WORK: Resources that can help***

The State PAC Parents agree that the internet is key to getting information to help children with their homework.

### **High School Math**

One METS staff member at the May 2022 State PAC meeting says that her high school students and families watch a *YouTube* series called, “*Matemáticas Profe Alex.*” It explains Algebra and other high school math concepts in Spanish.



Use the web link below or scan the QR code to check it out.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCanMxWvOoiwtjLYm08Bo8QQ>

### **Khan Academy**

One State PAC Parent recommends using the “*Khan Academy*” website.

- It is free, and uses short videos
- There is a math course for every age, and other subjects

***Select a web link below or scan the QR code:***

**Start in English with –**

<https://www.khanacademy.org>



**Start in Spanish with –**

<https://es.khanacademy.org>

***For other languages:***

- Start with the English link and scroll to the bottom of the page.
- Click on the words, “Language English,” to select a different language.

## Challenges

My child *tries* to do the homework, but has difficulty finishing every night.

My child refuses to do the homework and we end up arguing.

How do I motivate my older children now that they need the phone to do their homework?

I can't use the phone for a reward/motivation to finish their homework anymore.

## ***STRATEGIES THAT WORK: People who can help***

Parents can work with people to find solutions for individual students and situations.

- ***At the School***

- Parents can let their child's teacher or guidance counselor know when they have concerns.
- Parent feedback helps teachers and guidance counselors work with families to find solutions.

- ***Other Parents***

- One State PAC Parent suggests using an app like *WhatsApp* to create a group chat with other parents to help and support each other.

- ***The Migrant Education Program***

- State PAC Parents agree that it is a good idea to stay in contact with their child's tutor from the migrant education program.
- One State PAC Parent sends a picture of the homework to her child's tutor when she has a question about the homework.



## **STRATEGIES THAT WORK: Spend Quality Time with Children**

Several State PAC Parents recommend that parents find 10 to 20 minutes to spend quality time with their children. For example:

- ***Read with your child every day***
  - Listen to your child read
  - Talk about the story together
- ***Practice math facts and skills every day***
- ***Use your home language with your children***
  - One State PAC Parent finds activities she can do in Spanish with her child
  - One State PAC Parent reads in Spanish to her son and listens to him read in English
- ***Ask your child how their day was. Different ways to ask might include,***
  - *What did they eat for lunch?*
  - *Did they go outside?*
  - *What was their favorite part of the day?*
  - *What was their least favorite part of the day?*
  - *Did anything exciting happen?*



*Note: State PAC Parents at the October 2022 State PAC meeting evaluated the challenges and strategies.*

*This copy has been updated with their edits and suggestions.*