

Tool:	Agenda Book/Assignment Book
Category:	School
Urban Specialist:	Vicke Pyles
School Level:	Upper Elementary (4-8)
Target Audience:	Novice teachers, In-service teachers, mentoring teachers
References:	<p>Hopkins, Gary (1998). Beat the Clock! – Lessons in Time Management for Middle Graders. Retrieved October 17, 2001 from: http://www.education-world.com/a_lesson/lesson084.shtml</p> <p>Dodge, Judy (1995). Parents Can Be Homework Partners. Retrieved November 10, 2001 from: http://www.nj.com/education/instructor/homework.html</p> <p>Harakas, Margo. (1997, October 11). Don't Leave Home Without It. Sentinel</p>

Rationale: There is a need for middle school students to be better organized due to their ever-changing maturity levels. The agenda book is a concept used in the Knox County schools to enhance organization, increase communication between school and parents, and to help self-regulate student behaviors. The importance of the book is to help equip students to become proactive, independent achievers. Parents and teachers are encouraged to utilize the book as a communication tool and to communicate academics and student behavior during the learning process.

Description: A group of teachers were interested in the success of the agenda as an organization and communication tool among students, parents and teachers. With this state of mind, the teachers utilized the agenda book program to its fullest potential the first six-weeks. This required students to write the assignment every day in the appropriate space and requiring parent signatures each day. The teachers spent at least five minutes each class period checking for parent signature and accuracy of the written assignment. Communication between parent and teacher were advocated through written notes in the agenda, mid-term progress reports and unit test scores were placed on labels and adhered to the book. Students were given points as part of their course grade for accuracy and consistent use and for having their parents sign it. When a student was displaying little or no effort in the usage of the agenda, the teacher would communicate to the parent the importance of the agenda in the success of the student's academic performance.