The verb ἀποδίδωμι has a basic meaning ‘give back’.1 Greek lexica also list a host of other uses such as ‘assign’, ‘render’, ‘concede’, ‘deliver’, ‘define’ and ‘return’,2 but none of these matches the way this word is used in the school scenes of the Colloquia of the Hermeneumata Pseudodositheana, a bilingually-composed text originally designed as an easy reader to help Roman schoolchildren learn Greek.3 In these texts ἀποδίδωμι, consistently paired with reddo in the Latin, usually refers to recitation from memory, as in passages 1 and 2:

1. ἐκμανθάνω  edisco  I learn thoroughly
    τὰ γραπτά μου.  scripta mea.  my [assigned] writings.
    εἰ ἑτοῖμός εἰμι,  si paratus sum,  If I am ready,
    εὔθυς ἀποδίδωμι  statim reddo;  I recite at once;
    εἰ δὲ μὴ,  sin autem,  but if not,
    πάλιν ἀναγιγνώσκω.  iterum lego.  I read [them] again. (C 30b)

2. ἐκμανθάνω  edisco  I learn thoroughly
    ἑρμηνεύματα,  interpretamenta,  the bilingual texts,
    ἀπέδωκα.  reddidi.  I recited [them]. (ME 2j)

The verb cannot, however, simply mean ‘recite from memory’, for in a few passages that meaning does not work. In passage 3, the third example of this verb appears to refer to handing in a tablet containing a written assignment:

3. καὶ οὕτως ἠρξάμην  et sic coepi  And thus I began
    ἀποδοῦναι  reddere  to recite,
    καθὼς εἰλήφειν  quomodo acceperam just as I had received [the
    ἀναλήμματα:  ediscenda:  to be learned:
    στίχους  versus  verses
    πρὸς ἀριθμὸν  ad numerum  rhythmically

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1. ἀποδίδωμι
2. Greek lexica also list a host of other uses such as ‘assign’, ‘render’, ‘concede’, ‘deliver’, ‘define’ and ‘return’, but none of these matches the way this word is used in the school scenes of the Colloquia of the Hermeneumata Pseudodositheana, a bilingually-composed text originally designed as an easy reader to help Roman schoolchildren learn Greek. 
3. In these texts ἀποδίδωμι, consistently paired with reddo in the Latin, usually refers to recitation from memory, as in passages 1 and 2:
καὶ στιγμὸν et distinctum and with proper pauses for full stops
cαὶ ὑποστιγμὴν, et clausulam, and for commas/ends of sentences,
μετὰ προσπνεύσεως cum aspiratione with the sound h pronounced
δοπο συνέφερε, ubi oportebat, where it should be,
kαὶ μετάφρασιν. et metafrasin. and [giving] a paraphrase.
enuous ἀποδίδωμι dum reddo While I was reciting,
<ἐδιορθώθην> <emendatus sum> <I was corrected>
ὑπὸ τοῦ καθηγητοῦ, a praeceptore, by the teacher,
ἵνα καὶ φωνὴν ut et vocem so that I would also develop
ἐτομασάμην praeparem a faculty of speaking
ἐγγυτέραν. propiorem. closer [to the standard].
προσῆλθον, accessi, I came forward,
ὑποτεθείσης χειρὸς et posita manu and having put down [my] hand
dέλτον tabulam I handed over my tablet
ἀπέδωκα reddidi, my tablet
<καὶ ἀπέδωκα> <et reddidi> <and I recited>
μνήμη memoria from memory
ὑπογραφὴν subscriptionem an outline
αὐτῶν ὅπου ἔπραξα. eorum ubi egeram. of the things I had done. (S 13a–15b)

In passage 4, ἀποδίδωμι/reddo appears to refer simultaneously to two groups of students: one group that engages extemporaneously in the activity it designates and another group that does the same thing after careful preparation. (The Greek offers two alternative ways of phrasing both these situations: σημερινὸν ‘of today’ and the hapax legomenon ἀποχρονισμόν both equated with Latin extemporalem ‘unpremeditated’, and the two hapax legomena ἀποφρονισμένον and ἐπιμελήτατον both equated with Latin accuratum ‘carefully performed or prepared’.) Corruption is possible; a line could be missing between the first four lines and the last four, containing a different verb for the first half. But if the text is correct as it stands, our verb must refer here to reading aloud, translation, or explanation of the passage.

4. λαμβάνω τόπον, accipio locum, I receive a passage,
kαὶ ἄλλοι μετ’ ἑμοῦ et alii mecum and others along with me
σημερινόν  extemporalem  read/translate/explain(?) it extemporaneously
(ἀποχρονισμόν), (extemporalem), (extemporaneously);
oi λοιποί  ceteri  the rest read/translate/explain(?) it
ἀποφροντισμένον  accuratum  after careful preparation
(ἐπιμελήτατον)  (accuratum)  (after careful preparation).
ἀποδιδοῦσι.  reddunt.  (C 33a–b)

In many other passages the exact meaning of ἀποδίδωμι is not clear; it could be recitation from memory, reading aloud, or some other task. Passages 5, 6 and 7 are examples.

5. ἀποδιδοῦσιν ὧνόματα reddunt nomina  They recite/read(?) names/
nouns
καὶ ἑρμηνεύματα, et interpretamenta, and bilingual texts,
γράφουσιν <ἀνάγνωσιν>. scribunt lectionem. they write a lesson. (C 40c)

6. ἔλαβον accepi  I received [an assignment]
cαὶ ἀπέδωκα et reddidi and handed it in(?)
πάλιν. iterum. again. (LS 6a)

7. εἶπον αὐτῷ· dixi ei:  I said to him,
Ἀπόδος πρῶτον. Redde primo. ‘You recite/read/translate/
explain(?) first!’
καὶ εἶπέν μοι· et dixit mihi: And he said to me,
Ὀκ εἰδεῖς, Non vidisti, ‘Didn’t you see,
ὅτε ἀπεδίδουν cum redderem when I recited/read/trans-
lated/explained(?)
πρότερον σου; prior te?  before you did?
καὶ εἶπον· et dixi: And I said,
Ψεύδῃ, Mentiris, ‘You’re lying;
oὐκ ἀπέδωκας  non reddidisti. you did not recite/read/
translate/explain(?)’
Οὐ ψεύδομαι. Non mentior. ‘I’m not lying!’ (ME 2k–l)

Putting all these passages together, it is likely that the meaning of ἀποδίδωμι/reddo in school contexts was ‘demonstrate that one has
successfully completed a school assignment’. Memorization was a very common school task in antiquity, hence the predominance of passages in which the verbs seem to refer to recitation from memory, but the meaning of ἀποδίδωμι/reddo was more general than that of the verb used specifically of recitation, ἀναγορεύω/recito.5

How did this meaning arise? It is not an obvious development of the other meanings of ἀποδίδωμι, but it fits very well with some other meanings of redden, which the Oxford Latin Dictionary defines with ‘reproduce, repeat’ (7, cf. 5b), ‘utter in reply’ (6), ‘pay, render (any other thing considered as a debt, obligation, compensation, etc.)’ (9), and ‘hand over, deliver (a letter, parcel, etc.)’ (12) as well as the basic meaning ‘give back’. This suggests that the development of ἀποδίδωμι as a technical school term was a contact-induced semantic extension caused by redden.6 Semantic extensions are common in ancient scholarly terminology, but usually the influence goes from Greek to Latin, as for example when casus ‘fall’ came to mean ‘grammatical case’ under the influence of πτῶσις, which meant both ‘fall’ and ‘grammatical case’.7 In this case, however, the influence is more likely to have gone from Latin to Greek, not only because redden offers a more plausible source for the school meaning, but because in Greek that meaning seems to be confined to the bilingually-composed texts of the Colloquia, whereas in Latin it also occurs in monolingual texts, such as passages 8 and 9.8

8. alter in obsequium plus aequo pronus et imi
derisor lecti sic nutum divitis horret, sic iterat voces et verba cadentia tollit, ut puerum saevo credas dictata magistro reddere vel partis minum tractare secundas. (Horace, Epistle 1.18.10–14)
   ‘The one, too prone to obsequiousness and like a jester on the lowest-ranked dining couch, so trembles at the rich man’s nod, so repeats his sayings and collects his words as they fall, that you would think him a boy reciting lessons to a harsh teacher, or a mime actor practising the second part.’

9. In praelegendo grammaticus et illa quidem minora praestare debebit, ut partes orationis reddi sibi soluto versus desideret et pedum proprietates, quae adeo debent esse notae in carminibus ut etiam in oratoria compositione desiderentur. (Quintilian, Inst. 1.8.13)
   ‘In teaching particular texts, the grammarian will also need to handle less advanced matters: he should ask the pupils to parse the verse and explain(?)
to him the parts of speech and the features of the metre, for metrical features should be observed in poetry to such an extent that the pupil also feels the need for them in rhetorical composition.’

Most of the language of the Colloquia belongs to the imperial period, when the different versions were rewritten and expanded, usually in the Greek East. Very few actual words can be shown to go back to the original composition of the Colloquia in Republican Rome – but ἀποδίδωμι/reddo is one of them, for it occurs in one of the rare passages for which the original version can be reconstructed.9

10. ἄλλοι alii Others,
πρὸς τὸν ὑποδιδακτήν ad subdoctorem in front of the teaching assistant,
tάξει ordine recite/read/translate/explain(?) in order;
ἀποδιδοῦσιν, reddunt, names and bilingual translations
ὁνόματα nomina they write,
καὶ ἑρμηνεύματα et interpretamenta a lesson
γράφοντις scribunt, or verses they wrote,
ἀνάγνωσιν lectionem
ἡ στίχους ἔγραψαν aut versus scrips-
erunt.

It is likely, therefore, that the semantic extension creating the school meaning of ἀποδίδωμι comes from the schoolrooms of Republican Rome. The new meaning may have been created specifically for the Colloquia, whose bilingual format must have made it very tempting to create a Greek equivalent of reddo, but it may also have had a previous existence of which the Colloquia now provide the earliest evidence. In either case it offers a rare glimpse into the world of Republican schooling and to a more flexible and less puristic attitude to Greek than is often visible in the educational materials of later periods.
NOTES

1 I offer this morsel to Ruedi with affection and admiration.


4 Dickey (op. cit. n. 3) vol. 1 p. 144, cf. vol. 2 p. 217.

5 This pair ἀναγορεύω/recito occurs in school contexts in Colloquium Stephani 20a and 39a, and in Colloquium Celtis 28a, 31b, 39c, 39d, 40b; cf. ἀναγόρευσις/recitatio for ‘recitation’ in Colloquium Celtis 25a, 37d, 70f.

6 Semantic extension is a common contact phenomenon, in which a word in one language extends its meaning under the influence of a word in another language that already matches some of its meanings; see e.g. D.R. Langslow, Medical Latin in the Roman Empire (Oxford 2000) 140–205. The same phenomenon is sometimes called ‘semantic loan’; see e.g. P. Durkin, The Oxford Guide to Etymology (Oxford 2009) 136–137. The most complete treatment of this phenomenon in Greek and Latin is that of C. Nicolas, Utraque lingua: le calque sémantique: domaine gréco-latin (Louvain 1996), who uses the term calque sémantique.

7 See e.g. Nicolas (op. cit. n. 6) 93–117.

8 See Thesaurus Linguae Latinae (Leipzig 1900–) s.v. reddo 11.2.493.23–32, reddunt discipuli magistro (though the TLL has a different classification of our passage 9: see 492.38–39).

9 See Dickey (op. cit. n. 3) vol. 1 pp. 145–146. The reconstruction is based on passages in three different colloquia (ME 2n, LS 8b, C 40b–c), all of which contain both ἀποδιδοῦσιν and reddunt.