



7-8

PROMOTION, RETENTION, ACCELERATION & GRADING HANDBOOK 2024-2025



**Superintendent
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Mission Statement:

Our mission is to provide extraordinary educational opportunities to every learner.

Deer Valley Unified School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability in admission to its programs, services, or activities, in access to them, in treatment of individuals, or in any aspect of their operations.

Deer Valley Unified School District no discrimina por motivos de raza, color, origen nacional, género, edad o discapacidad en la admisión a sus programas, servicios o actividades, en el acceso a ellos, en el tratamiento de las personas, o en cualquier aspecto de sus operaciones.

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Foreword

Deer Valley Unified School District (DVUSD) is committed to fostering the continuous development of each student. The purpose of this handbook is to serve as a comprehensive resource on student promotion, retention, and acceleration, as well as to delineate grading and reporting guidelines for teachers and administrators. The guidelines outlined herein align with the requirements set forth by the Arizona Revised Statutes and DVUSD policies and regulations.

Grading serves as the means through which teachers assess student learning and progress toward mastering the Arizona College and Career Ready Standards and the Arizona K-12 State Standards. Reporting, on the other hand, facilitates the communication of pertinent information to parents/guardians regarding student's mastery of taught subject matter and skills.

This handbook undergoes an annual review by a dedicated Handbook Review Work Team, ensuring its relevance and accuracy. As statutes may change during the legislative session, updates to this handbook will be promptly made and accessible via the electronic version found on our district website: <https://www.dvUSD.org/handbooks>.

We trust that this handbook will serve as a valuable reference for educators, parents/guardians, and stakeholders in our ongoing commitment to student success and academic excellence.

Arizona State Statutes

The statutory authority to retain or promote a student in an elementary grade or to pass or fail a student in high school is set forth in A.R.S. § 15-701.

A.R.S. § 15-342(11) Discretionary powers states:

The governing board of a district may:

Review the decision of a teacher to promote a pupil to a grade or retain a pupil in a grade in a common school or to pass or fail a pupil in a course in high school.

While the teacher has the primary responsibility to make these decisions, it is the Governing Board that has the authority to prescribe standards or criteria for promotion that may be in addition to those prescribed by the State Board of Education. (A.R.S. § 15-701.C and 701.01.C). However, once these criteria are set, a school district cannot delay graduation for a student who has achieved the necessary credits. (Ariz. Att'y. Gen. Op. 189-095).

A.R.S. § 15-516 Teacher immunity states:

A full-time teacher who is employed by a school district or a charter school is immune from personal liability for all acts done and actions taken in good faith in evaluating or grading any student.

A.R.S. § 15-521 Duties of teachers' states: Every teacher shall:

1. Make student learning the primary focus of the teacher's professional time.
2. Hold pupils to strict account for disorderly conduct.
3. Take and maintain daily classroom attendance.
4. Make the decision to promote or retain a pupil in grade in a common school or to pass or fail a pupil in a course in high school. Such decisions may be overturned only as provided in section 15-342, paragraph 11.
5. Comply with all rules and policies of the governing board that relate to the duties prescribed in this section.

A.R.S. § 15-701 Common school; promotions; requirements; certificate; supervision of eighth grades by superintendent of high school district; high school admissions; academic credit (2a) states: A requirement that *a pupil not be promoted from the third grade if the pupil obtains a score on the reading portion of the Arizona instrument to measure standards test, or a successor test, that demonstrates that the pupil's reading falls far below the third grade level.*

A school district or governing board MAY choose to promote a pupil who earns an AASA score that falls far below the third grade level for the following reasons:

1. A good cause exemption if the pupil is an English learner or a limited English proficient student as defined in section 15-751 and has had fewer than two years of English language instruction.
2. A child with a disability as defined in section 15-761 if the pupil's individualized education program team and the pupil's parent/guardian agrees that promotion is appropriate based on the pupil's individualized education program.

A.R.S. § 15-701 Common school; promotions; requirements; certificate; supervision of eighth grades by superintendent of high school district; high school admissions; academic credit states:

E. A teacher shall determine whether to promote or retain a pupil in grade in a common school as provided in section 15-521, paragraph 4 on the basis of the prescribed criteria. The governing board, if it reviews the decision of a teacher

to promote or retain a pupil in grade in a common school as provided in section 15-342, paragraph 11, shall base its decision on the prescribed criteria.

A.R.S. § 15-821 Admission of children; required age states:

A. Unless otherwise provided by article 1.1 of this chapter or by any other law, all schools shall admit children who are between the ages of six and twenty-one years, who reside in the school district and who meet the requirements for enrollment in one of the grades or programs offered in the school. A school may refuse to admit a child who has graduated from a high school with a recognized diploma. B. If a preschool program for children with disabilities is maintained, a child is eligible for admission as prescribed in section 15-771 C. If a kindergarten program is maintained, a child is eligible for admission to kindergarten if the child is five years of age. A child is deemed five years of age if the child reaches the age of five before September 1 of the current school year. A child is eligible for admission to first grade if the child is six years of age. A child is deemed six years of age if the child reaches the age of six before September 1 of the current school year. The governing board may admit children who have not reached the required age as prescribed by this subsection if it is determined to be in the best interest of the children. For children entering the first grade, such determination shall be based upon one or more consultations with the parent, parents, guardian or guardians, the children, the teacher and the school principal. Such children must reach the required age of five for kindergarten and six for first grade by January 1 of the current school year.

DVUSD Governing Board Policy

The following are Deer Valley Unified School District Governing Board policies and regulations that are important for all stakeholders to know with the use of this handbook.

IHBHD	ONLINE/CONCURRENT/CORRESPONDENCE COURSES (7 th /8 th Grade Math)
IKA	GRADING / ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS
IKAB	REPORT CARDS / PROGRESS REPORTS
IKACA	PARENT/GUARDIAN CONFERENCES
IKB	HOMEWORK
IKD	HONOR ROLLS
IKE	PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS
IKE-RA	PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS
IKE-RB	PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS: Competency Requirements for Promotion of Students from Third Grade
IKEA	MAKE UP OPPORTUNITIES
IKEA-R	MAKE UP OPPORTUNITIES
IKEB	ACCELERATION

Guidelines

Promotion, retention, acceleration, and grading guidelines are designed to establish a procedure for providing an appropriate academic intervention and/or enhancement program for each student in Deer Valley Unified School District. It is every teacher's professional responsibility to recognize and assist struggling students or challenge academically capable students at each grade level. This handbook provides an overview of professional responsibilities for classroom teachers, local school administrators and district level administrators. In each case, an in-depth examination of student needs should be conducted by all appropriate professionals.

For a student who is in the process of being evaluated for special education and/or Section 504, there should be a high level of caution for any retention consideration.

Intervention in Education

Developing an instructional intervention involves a series of coordinated steps undertaken by collaborative teams to assist a student in improving a specific area of need. These interventions are tailored to address a targeted skill, identified through data, gathered from a common formative assessment. Interventions provide dedicated time for the student to re-engage with the targeted skill and offer opportunities for reassessment.

To ensure equitable access to the curriculum for all students, Tier II and Tier III academic interventions are established across all grade levels. Parents/guardians and students can expect timely communication in the spring semester of 6th grade regarding a student's enrollment in Tier III academic interventions as they transition from middle grades to high school.

Standards

If a parent/guardian disagrees with a teacher's decision regarding promotion or retention, as outlined in A.R.S. §15-521.10, they may formally request that the Governing Board review the decision made by the site intervention team. Upon receiving notification from the school regarding the intention to retain or promote their child, parents/guardians have five days to submit a retention appeal form or promotion appeal form to the school principal or school secretary in writing (**Promotion Appeal Process pg. 16; retention appeal process - pg. 22**).

For a student who is in the process of being evaluated for special education and/or Section 504, there should be a high level of caution for any retention consideration.

Definitions for Grades 7-8

504 Plan	The 504 Plan is a plan developed to ensure that a child who has a disability identified under the law and is attending an elementary or secondary educational institution receives accommodations that will ensure their academic success and access to the learning environment.
Acceleration:	The early promotion of individual students to the next grade or higher (based on their academic achievements or readiness for higher level work or advancing them in one or more content areas).
Accommodations:	Accommodations are supports provided to help a student access the general education curriculum and validly demonstrate learning. They assist students in learning the same material and content, allowing them to meet the same expectation as their peers.
Advanced Middle School Classes	At the middle school level, advanced-level courses are designed to provide a more rigorous curriculum and higher expectations for student performance. Schools offer advanced language arts, and many times science, and social studies as well. Students can take a placement test in order to participate in accelerated Math.
ELD	English Language Development is the teaching of English language skills to students who are in the process of learning English. It is distinguished from other types of instruction, e.g., math, science, social studies, in that the content of ELD emphasizes the English language itself.

EL	Students whose first language is not English, and encompasses both students who are just beginning to learn English (often referred to in federal legislation as “limited English proficient” or “LEP”) and those who have already developed considerable proficiency is considered an English Learner “EL”.
Exclusions and Exemptions From School Attendance Agreement	This is an instructional agreement for students with chronic health conditions. The agreement provides an exemption from school attendance only, not from required school assignments and assessments that may occur.
Exclusions and Exemptions from School Attendance – Medical Certification	This is a companion document that provides a licensed Physician's medical certification of students with chronic health conditions.
Gifted Cohort	The Gifted Cohort is a full day gifted service model. Gifted identified students are placed into one, self contained gifted class at their grade level. The classes are taught by a teacher (or teachers) who have or are working on earning their Gifted Endorsement and are supported by the school Gifted Specialist. The Gifted Cohort model is available for grades 1-12.
Grade Enhancement for High School Courses	Grade enhancement is a process by which a final course grade that a student earns is raised, usually by one level, due to the student demonstrating proficiency in the content standards as measured by an assessment sanctioned by the district for grade enhancement.
High School Credit Classes	In certain instances, middle school students may take high school level, Honors and Advanced Level courses prior to entering high school. Grades for high school courses taken at the middle school level become part of the student’s high school transcript.

Iowa Acceleration Scale:	The Iowa Acceleration Scale (IAS) is a tool for use by a team of school professionals when whole grade acceleration (grade skipping) is being considered. The IAS was designed for use with students in grades K-8. The IAS provides a systematic and defensible way to generate recommendations and guidelines that will help make educated and appropriate placement decisions for students who demonstrate high ability and who have the capacity to process greater amounts of information and knowledge than they are able to acquire in their present learning environments.
Light’s Retention Scale:	The Light’s Retention Scale (LRS) is a powerful tool that assists school professionals when making sensitive and often difficult decisions about promoting or retaining a child. LRS provides opportunities for dialogue between parents/guardians and educators and assures all involved that the decision is based on thoughtful, professional findings. (Academic Therapy Publications)
Modifications:	A modification is an instructional adaptation that fundamentally alters or lowers the standard. Modifications should only be used to adapt the instruction for students that take the alternative state assessment.

MTSS:	Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) is a structured and thorough approach to student learning. It involves collaborative communities using a tiered framework to address various needs and ensure high-quality, personalized instruction, enrichment, and intervention for all students, both academically and behaviorally. In DVUSD, the aim of MTSS is to empower every student to achieve at high levels, with the ultimate goal being 100% success.
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MyHours Online Attendance	<p>In compliance with ASRS-15-901 and ASRS-15-808, all students enrolled in Aspire, Deer Valley's Online Academy (AOI) are required to submit weekly attendance time logs for each course. The Arizona Online Instruction (AOI) Program, established in A.R.S. §15-808, enables approved school districts and charter schools to develop online instructional systems, expanding educational opportunities statewide. District AOI programs are approved by the State Board of Education.</p> <p>To meet state attendance requirements and maintain enrollment in the program, AOI students must adhere to the following minimum weekly hours:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Kindergarten: 10 hours ● Grades 1-3: 20 hours ● Grades 4-6: 25 hours ● Grades 7-8 (per course): 5 hours ● Grades 7-8 Fast Track (condensed course, per course): 9 hours ● Grades 9-12: 9 hours per course <p>Attendance hours encompass various activities such as computer work, research, reading, writing, reviewing, and completing assignments.</p> <p>Failure to log attendance for more than 10 consecutive days in the MyHours system or to participate in coursework on Canvas for 10 consecutive days will result in the student being dropped or withdrawn from the Aspire - Deer Valley's Online Academy.</p>
Promotion:	Meeting the criteria for moving to the next grade level.
Promotion to High School:	Students must meet competency requirements in the adopted standards for promotion of students from the eighth (8 th) grade as determined by the State Board of Education in the areas of reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies. An 8 th grade certificate of promotion meets this requirement.
Reassignment:	Not meeting all criteria for promotion at a grade level (7/8) but progressing to the next grade contingent upon successful completion of summer school.
Renaissance:	All-day self-contained learning experience addressing the individual needs of highly gifted students in grades 1-8. Full application process.
Retention:	Not meeting the criteria for promotion and remaining at the same grade level.
SPARK:	Supporting Potential and Achievement in Remarkable Kids (Enrichment Program). SPARK is an ongoing enrichment-learning program that addresses the unique needs of gifted, high achieving, and high potential students at our participating schools. Students attend certain days during the week, depending on the schedule of the school, during RTI periods in grades 7-8. Qualification based on gifted identification score of 90 th percentile or higher or using the Gifted Matrix.
Targeted Language Instruction	Targeted Language Instruction is the teaching of English language skills to students who are in the process of learning English. It is distinguished from other types of instruction, e.g. math, science and social studies, in that Targeted Language Instruction emphasizes the language proficiency standards (ELPs). This instruction focuses on reading foundational skills, as well as productive, receptive and interactive communication.

Walk-Up to Math:	Qualifying students walk up (usually as a group or cluster) to the next grade level's gifted cluster math class. The school's Gifted Specialist works with the Gifted Cluster Teacher to help instruct students in the classroom and pull out small groups of students as needed. Students are pre assessed for the content and are able to go to the grade level that is appropriate for their individual needs in grades 2-8. Qualification based on rubric.
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Placement of Transfer Students New to the District or Entry of Home Schooled Students

Home schooled students or students entering without a current grade report should be placed in the age appropriate grade level for the district's academic school year. Observation and evaluation over a period of three weeks will determine appropriate placement. Evaluation will include reading, writing, math and social consideration. After three weeks, the school will determine if the data supports maintaining age appropriate placement or if the data supports a change in grade level.

The principal will determine whether there should be any change in the grade-level placement of the student. In making such determination, the principal will refer to the teacher recommendations and consultation with the parents/guardians. (DVUSD Policy JG-R)

A student's class assignments are the principal's responsibility. The principal will consider the student's grade level assignment, the prerequisite completion, the student's achievement, and classroom limitations or class size guidelines. (DVUSD Policy JG-R)

Home Schooled Student Participation in DVUSD Extracurricular Activities

Students who are home schooled at the K-8 level may participate in special area and/or exploratory classes and/or after-school sports at their home DVUSD school. All registration paperwork is required, including immunization records, proof of residence, etc. If sports participation applies, athletic paperwork is required. If a homeschooled student wants to participate in special area and/or exploratory classes at a DVUSD school that is not their home school, open enrollment must be completed and all open enrollment rules and procedures will be followed for placement in the school and class. **A copy of the Affidavit of Intent for Homeschooling filed with Maricopa County is required.**

Students who are recipients of the Empowerment Scholarship Account (ESA) must notify DVUSD of their ESA status and are required to pay tuition for DVUSD elective-only courses. The tuition fees for ESA are \$1200 per elective course, per year for grades K-6 and \$600 per elective course, per semester for grades 7-8.

Students attending a charter school may not participate in DVUSD exploratory classes or athletics. (A.R.S. § 15-802.01:Homeschool students' eligibility to participate)

Online Options

Individual 7th & 8th Grade Courses

Students are permitted to enroll at dvusd.org/online for **Aspire**, Deer Valley's Online Academy, as a full-time student. For unique situations, select online courses are available to be taken in conjunction with campus-based courses. This option requires campus administration approval on a case-by-case basis and course availability in the Aspire school. Students who require health accommodations or have extenuating circumstances are typically approved, such as:

- Walk-Up to Math student at a K-6 campus moving into 7th grade or higher math class. As part of the student's gifted mandated services, the school's Gifted Specialist is to help coordinate with campus-based and online teachers as well as to provide support to these students during the school day as needed.
- Advanced student athlete or student artist in need of early dismissal
- Student with a medical or mental health need
- Student in need of a full-time online schedule
- Students are allowed to participate in their boundary school's extra-curricular activities with administrator approval

7th and 8th grade students who fail a core course during the school year, and are in need of promotion, are given the option to register for the Middle School Summer School Blended Grade Recovery program. The summer school fee is \$200 per subject (Math, Social Studies, Science, Language Arts). This program runs each June.

For more information go to DVUSD.org/aspire, email aspire@dvusd.org, or call [623-445-4992](tel:623-445-4992).

Online Students: Starting High School Transcripts

Middle School students are permitted to take online high school courses with Aspire campus administrator approval. Families request this flexible learning option for a variety of reasons:

- Student is ready for the next level of math (most common)
- Student transferred into DVUSD with advanced core subjects and is ready for the next level.

Once there is campus administrator approval, and the campus team is certain online is a successful option, then the administrator will email the Aspire, Deer Valley's Online Academy at aspire@dvusd.org to provide the student's information and online course request.

Students exiting 8th grade transitioning to "Incoming Freshman" status the summer before high school do not need middle school administrator approval to register for summer school courses. It is common for Entering Freshman to take two summer school courses in order to make room in their schedules for signature programs on campus during the school year. Entering Freshman are able to take PE & Health online or other elective high school courses available to freshman students. The summer school fee is \$200 per subject (Math, Social Studies, Science, Language Arts). This program runs each June.

For more information go to DVUSD.org/aspire, email aspire@dvusd.org, or call [623-445-4992](tel:623-445-4992).

Process for Requesting Online Courses

The process for requesting online courses is as follows:

1. The parent/guardian requests a meeting with the campus administrator
2. The parent/guardian and campus administrator discuss scheduling options
3. If moving forward, the campus administrator emails the **Aspire**, Deer Valley's Online Academy Specialist at aspire@dvusd.org and copies the Director of Online and Virtual Programs with the updated student schedule.

Promotion and Retention Parent/Guardian Information

(From the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook)

The Statutes

The statutory authority to retain or promote a student in an elementary grade or to pass or fail a student in high school is set forth in **A.R.S. 15-701, Common school; promotions; requirements; certificate; supervision of eighth grades by superintendent of high school district; high school admissions; academic credit.**

A.R. S. 15-701 states:

E. A teacher shall determine whether to promote or retain a pupil in a grade in a common school on the basis of the prescribed criteria. The governing board, if it reviews the decision of a teacher to promote or retain a pupil in grade in a common school as provided in section 15-342, paragraph 11, shall base its decision on the prescribed criteria.

Parental/Guardian Rights A.R.S. 15-102 states:

Procedures by which parents/guardians may learn about parental/guardian rights and responsibilities under the laws of this state, including the following:

(e) The promotion requirements prescribed in section 15-701.

A.R.S. 15-342 states:

11. Notwithstanding Title 38, chapter 3, article 3.1, the governing board shall review the decision of a teacher to promote a pupil to a grade or retain a pupil in a grade in a common school or to pass or fail a pupil in a course in high school in executive session unless a parent/guardian of the pupil or the pupil, if emancipated, disagrees that the review should be conducted in executive session and then the review shall be conducted in an open meeting.

7-8 Special Education Promotion and Retention

Guidelines for students receiving special education services should be the same as those for general education students. The IEP team should not be used to retain a student who, by general education standards, would not otherwise be retained.

7-8 English Learner Promotion and Retention

The decision to retain a student who qualifies for English language support may not be related to the student's

acquisition of the English language.

7-8 English Learner Promotion and Retention Appeal Process

Process for Parents/Guardians

If a parent/guardian choose to contest the teacher's decision to retain or promote a student:

1. Within five days from the notification of intent to retain or promote, parent/guardian will complete a Retention Appeal Form (*page 60*) or Promotion Appeal Form (*page 59*), submit it to the school secretary and schedule a meeting with the principal.
2. The appeal process will start immediately upon the parent/guardian's completion and submission of an appeal form.
3. The teacher must fill out a Teacher Promotion or Teacher Retention Justification Form and attach the required documentation.
4. The principal collects all forms, with the required documentation, and forwards the packet to the Deputy Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment for review.
5. If warranted, the Deputy Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment will then schedule a hearing conference with the Governing Board.

The Light's Retention Scale is a powerful tool that assists school professionals when making sensitive and often difficult decisions about promoting or retaining a child. LRS provides opportunities for dialogue between parents/guardians and educators and assures all involved that the decision is based on thoughtful, professional findings. (Academic Therapy Publications)

PROMOTION

According to A.R.S. § 15-521.10, each teacher shall make the decision for promotion or retention of students. All recommendations for promotion must be documented by the teacher. Recommendations that do not comply with the stated criteria must be substantiated by the teacher.

7-8 Promotion Procedures

Student progression in grades 7-8 is determined by a variety of indicators, as defined by state standards and district expectations, which are aligned with the Arizona College and Career Ready Standards (AZCCRS) and the Arizona K-12 State Standards. These expectations include specific levels of student performance on locally determined assessments, including universal screenings and ongoing progress monitoring, and results of statewide assessments.

Promotion from one level to the next is based upon each student's progress toward the accomplishment of high standards that are both challenging and achievable. The evaluation of each student's progress will be based upon the student's classroom work, observations, tests, district and state assessments, and other relevant information.

Promotion Criteria for Grades 7-8 include:

At the 7-8 level, it is the teacher's responsibility to notify parents/guardians through the report card of the intent to promote to the next grade.

A. Achievement: The minimum requirement for promotion to the next grade level is a D or higher in the final grade in **ALL** subjects.

- A student must pass all subjects in order to qualify for promotion to the next grade. Within specified guidelines, schools shall have the authority to "place" a student who does not meet promotion requirements based on the best educational interest of the child.

B. Attendance: The minimum attendance standard for the Deer Valley Unified School District is 90% of the days of the school year per A.R.S. §15-802 and A.R.S. § 15-803. Extenuating circumstances will be considered on an individual basis. Students who are absent 10% of the school year, or 18 days, may need to be retained.

- If a teacher notices a pattern of absences and/or tardies that is affecting student performance, the teacher may contact the parents/guardians. Student absences for each grading period are to be recorded on the report card. If the absences are a reason for low grades, the teacher may wish to write a comment on the report card. Attendance issues may not be the sole criterion for retention.
- According to Arizona State Law, A.R.S. §15-802, students who are identified as having chronic health problems must have the opportunity to keep up with class work through homework assignments.

Comprehensive Considerations in Promotion or Retention Decision-Making:

The decision-making process for promotion or retention considers not only a student's academic achievement and cognitive abilities but also takes into account their physical and social characteristics. Schools will utilize the *Light's Retention Scale* to gather and assess student data comprehensively.

7-8 Promotion Appeal Process

Parent/guardian

Within five days from the notification of intent to promote:

If the school has determined that a student has qualified to be promoted to the next grade but the parents/guardians are wanting the student to be retained, the parents/guardians have the right to appeal that decision.

1. Complete a Promotion Appeal Form (*page 59*) and submit it to the school principal or secretary.

2. Notify the school principal to schedule a meeting.

NOTE: The appeal process will start immediately upon the parent/guardian's completion and submission of a Promotion Appeal Form.

Teacher –

Fill out a **Teacher Promotion Justification Form** and attach the following required documentation (in this order):

1. Promotion Appeal Form from parent(s)/guardian(s)
2. Copies of report cards
3. Copy of the student's attendance record
4. Test results from district assessments (Reading or math assessments, NWEA [Northwest Evaluation Association] MAP [Measure of Academic Progress], Common Formative Assessments, etc.) and state mandated assessments
5. Examples of the student's work and examples of an average student's work (be sure to remove the average student's name from the papers)
6. Copy of the student's Intervention Plan or documentation collected by the campus MultiTiered System of Support (MTSS) team
7. Records of communication with the student's parents/guardians (telephone logs and copies of written/electronic communication)
8. Verification of conferences with parents/ guardians (signed forms with a list of items discussed)
9. *Light's Retention Scale* Rating

Principal –

1. Meet with parents/guardians.
2. Sign the Teacher Justification Form.
3. Collect all forms, with the required documentation, and forward the packet to the Deputy Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment for review and decision.

NOTE: If warranted, the Deputy Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment will then schedule a hearing conference with the Governing Board.

RETENTION and REASSIGNMENT

According to A.R.S. § 15-521.10, each teacher shall make the decision for promotion or retention of students. All recommendations for promotion must be documented by the teacher. Recommendations that do not comply with the stated criteria must be substantiated by the teacher.

Retention Procedures

When considering retention, it is Deer Valley Unified School District's belief that the school staff must make a concerted, proactive effort to provide the learning opportunities and support systems that meet students' needs for success. Conducting a campus Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) team meeting to determine the appropriate academic and behavioral interventions for potential retainees is necessary. It is important for teachers to document instructional strategies used as interventions for underachieving students.

Students who were retained or had delayed kindergarten entry are more likely to drop out of school compared to students who were never retained, even when controlling for achievement levels. The probability of dropping out increases with multiple retentions. Even for single retentions, the most consistent finding from decades of research is the high correlation between retention and dropping out. A recent systematic review of research exploring dropping out of high school indicates that grade retention is one of the most powerful predictors of high school dropout.

Promoting students annually is desirable. However, it is recognized that under certain circumstances retention must be considered for some students. Retaining middle school students shall conform to the following:

Every effort shall be made to identify potential retainees as early as possible during the school year and to work with the students' parents/guardians to improve academic performance. Attendance regulations set forth by Arizona Department Education ARS 15-803 shall be enforced.

At the 7-8 level, it is the responsibility of the teacher and/or counselor to inform parents/guardians of the intention to consider retention for a student. The staff responsible for this notification must also provide a copy to the principal. While the teacher ultimately decides on retention using the *Light's Retention Scale*, it is essential to engage in consultation with the principal, as well as other relevant staff members. In addition, before making any decision regarding retention, it is imperative to have a conversation with the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) team to discuss possible interventions and alternatives. Involving parents/guardians at every stage of the retention process is crucial. **No decision for retention shall be made without parent/guardian involvement.**

If parents/guardians feel retention is not in the best interest of the child they should:

1. Meet with the child's teacher to share concerns.
2. Complete a Retention Appeal Form and submit it to the child's teacher.
3. Schedule a meeting with the school principal to review school and home documentation and the retention process.
4. The appeal process will start immediately upon the parent/guardian's completion and submission of a Retention Appeal Form.

7-8 English Learner Retention

A team consisting of the principal, EL Teacher Specialist, EL CIAS/Coordinator, and the classroom/core teacher will determine retention of an English Learner. The decision to retain a student in DVUSD who qualifies for English Language services can be made if the student has received English Language Targeted and Integrated instruction if the reason to retain is not related to the student's acquisition of the English language.

In order to retain an English Learner, teachers must:

- Demonstrate a student's inability to meet grade level curriculum with scaffolded classwork and documentation of these EL scaffolds and academic progress.

- Implement a Written Individual Compensatory Plan*.
- Show that the student has not made appropriate gains on district or state assessments with appropriate accommodations.

The classroom/core teacher does not have the sole right or responsibility to promote or retain EL students. Teachers must follow the process of retention as determined by DVUSD.

*Written Individual Compensatory Plans (WICPs)

Compensatory instruction means instruction given in addition to regular classroom instruction, such as individual or small group instruction, extended day classes, summer school or intersession school. In accordance with the Flores vs. Arizona Consent Decree and House Bill 2010, compensatory instruction shall be provided for English Learners (ELs) and exited ELs who are not making adequate grade level progress. Before English Learners or exited English Learners can be considered for retention, a WICP must be written and in place for a minimum of one grading period. The classroom teacher, Teacher EL Specialist, and parents/guardians will collaborate to design instruction to support student mastery of state standardized core content. In order to document the scope and type of services that will be provided for the EL student, the WICP (Written Individualized Compensatory Plan) will be implemented. If the parent/guardians is unable to attend the WICP meeting, the parent/guardians will be notified in writing and will receive a copy of the WICP form. Interpreters will be utilized as necessary. The teacher of compensatory instruction shall incorporate research-based strategies and methods for helping English Learners acquire English and achieve adequate academic progress.

Retention Criteria for Grades 7-8 Include:

- A. Achievement: The minimum requirement for promotion to the next grade level is a D or higher for the final grade in ALL subjects and 4 quarters exploratory/elective areas. *The chart below provides specific guidance for promotion, reassignment and retention.*

7th and 8th GRADE PROMOTION, REASSIGNMENT AND RETENTION

Action	Academic Grades	Notes
PROMOTION + PROMOTION CEREMONY (8 th Grade students only) <i>Meeting the criteria for moving to the next grade level.</i>	Must earn D or higher or P as the final grade for ALL subjects. This includes ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies, Electives*, and Exploratories**. *Average grade of Electives taken during the year. **Average grade of Exploratory courses taken during the year.	Students will receive a promotion certificate and will have the privilege of participating in the promotion ceremony. PROMOTION LETTER PROVIDED (8th Grade students)
PROMOTION ONLY <i>Meeting the criteria for moving to the next grade level.</i>	Must earn a D or higher or P as the final grade in ALL Core subjects. This includes ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies. If an elective and/or exploratory is Failed, based on an average for the year, the student will still be promoted to the next school grade level. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average grade of Electives taken during the year. • Average grade of Exploratory courses taken during the year. 	8 th Grader will receive a promotion certificate. However, students will not have the privilege of participating in the promotion ceremony and activities due to either academic (failing an exploratory or elective course) or due to behavior concerns. PROMOTION LETTER PROVIDED (7th and 8th Grade students)

<p>REASSIGNMENT</p> <p><i>Not meeting all criteria for promotion at a grade level (7/8) but moving to the next grade.</i></p>	<p>Must earn a D or higher as the final grade in the four core academic courses (ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies)</p>	<p><u>Exceptions:</u></p> <p>If not passing any of the four core academic courses, a student may still be reassigned if the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student is in 7th grade and will be 15 years old during the upcoming school year or attended 7th grade for 2 years; student reassigned to 8th grade. • Student will be 16 years old during the upcoming school year or will have attended grades 7 and 8 for 3 years; student will be reassigned to high school. • Student participated in summer school and earned a passing grade from the program. <p>• REASSIGNMENT LETTER PROVIDED</p>
<p>RETENTION</p> <p><i>Not meeting the criteria for promotion and remaining at the same grade level.</i></p>	<p>Failure to earn a D or higher as the final grade in all four academic courses (ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies) and does not meet the exceptions listed above for Reassignment.</p>	<p>Grades are averaged on a 4 point scale or percentages for all four quarters. Please refer to the End-of-the-year Grade (Y1) Calculation Procedures.</p> <p>RETENTION LETTER PROVIDED</p>

B. Attendance: The minimum attendance standard for the Deer Valley Unified School District is 90% of the days of the school year per A.R.S. §15-802 and A.R.S. § 15-803. Extenuating circumstances will be considered on an individual basis. Students who are absent 10% of the school year, or 18 days, may need to be retained.

- If a teacher notices a pattern of absences and/or tardies that is affecting student performance, the teacher may contact the parents/guardians. Student absences for each grading period are to be recorded on the report card. If the absences are a reason for low grades, the teacher may wish to write a comment on the report card. Attendance issues may not be the sole criterion for retention.
- According to Arizona State Law, A.R.S. §15-802, students who are identified as having chronic health problems must have the opportunity to keep up with class work through homework assignments. The family need to submit an Exceptions and Exclusions form filled out by the doctor. This form can be obtained from the school nurse.

Comprehensive Considerations in Promotion or Retention Decision-Making:

The decision-making process for promotion or retention considers not only a student's academic achievement and cognitive abilities but also takes into account their physical and social characteristics. Schools will utilize the *Light's Retention Scale* to gather and assess student data comprehensively.

7-8 Retention Notification Timeline:

Following the end of 1st quarter:

- Parents/guardians are notified of possible retention
- Teacher will notify and conference with administration regarding concerns
- Use *Grades 7 and 8 - First Quarter Letter*
- **MTSS Team meets to review pertinent data, determine targeted intervention strategies, and make plans for monitoring and reviewing student progress will be conducted**
- Information in Powerschool log entries entered by counselors

Following the end of 2nd quarter:

- Parents/guardians are notified of possible retention
- Use *Grades 7 and 8 - Second Quarter Letter*
- Update information in PowerSchool
- **MTSS Team meets to review pertinent data, determine targeted intervention strategies, and make plans for monitoring and reviewing student progress**
- Information in Powerschool log entries entered by counselors

Following the end of 3rd quarter:

- Parents/ guardians are notified of possible retention
- Use *Grades 7 and 8 - Third Quarter Letter*
- Update information in PowerSchool
- **MTSS Team meets to review pertinent data, determine targeted intervention strategies, and make plans for monitoring and reviewing student progress**
- Information in Powerschool log entries entered by counselors

At the end of 4th quarter, upon documentation of teachers' final grades, parents/guardians are notified of retention. Use *Grades 7 and 8 End of Year – Retained/Reassigned letter*.

Within five days of the date of notification of retention, parents/guardians may appeal the decision to retain by completing the *Grade K-8 Retention Appeal Form (page 60)*.

Reassignment Criteria for Grades 7-8 include:

- A. Achievement: The minimum requirement for reassignment to the next grade level is a D or higher for the final grade in **ALL** four core academic subjects. Students who fail a core academic subject must pass that subject in summer school in order to be reassigned. Summer school is at parent/guardian's expense. The district does not provide transportation. Informational including registration link for summer school can be found at: dvusd.org/online

Reassignment is not an option for students who do not meet this minimum standard except for the following situations:

- Seventh grade students who will be 15 years old during the upcoming school year and/or will have attended grades seven and eight for three years will be reassigned to the 8th grade. Students who will be 16 years old during the upcoming school year and/or will have attended grades seven and eight for three years will be reassigned to the high school.

B. Attendance: The minimum attendance standard for the Deer Valley Unified School District is 90% of the days of the school year per A.R.S. §15-802 and A.R.S. § 15-803. Extenuating circumstances will be considered on an individual basis. Students who are absent 10% of the school year, or 18 days, may need to be retained.

- If a teacher notices a pattern of absences and/or tardies that is affecting student performance, the teacher

may contact the parents/legal guardians. Student absences for each grading period are to be recorded on the report card. If the absences are a reason for low grades, the teacher may wish to write a comment on the report card. Attendance issues may not be the sole criterion for retention.

- According to Arizona State Law, A.R.S. §15-802, students who are identified as having chronic health problems must have the opportunity to keep up with class work through homework assignments. Social & Emotional Component:

The student's academic achievement level and cognitive ability are important, but physical and social characteristics are also determining factors. Schools will use the *Light's Retention Scale* for student data.

7-8 Reassignment Notification Timeline:

Following the end of 3rd/4th fourth quarter, parents/guardians of students who are now passing but were previously recommended for retention are notified of promotion to the next grade level. *Use Grades 7 and 8 "Reassignment" Letter.*

At the end of 4th quarter, parents/guardians of 7th grade students who are recommended for retention and will be 15 years old during the upcoming school year are notified that their child will be reassigned to 8th grade. *Use 7th Grade Retention /15 Years Old Letter.*

At the end of 4th quarter, parents/guardians of 8th grade students who are recommended for retention and will be 16 years old during the upcoming school year are notified that their child will be reassigned to high school. *Use 8th Grade /16 Years Old Letter.*

7-8 Retention Appeal Process

Parent/guardian

Within five days from the notification of intent to retain:

1. Complete a Retention Appeal Form (*page 60*) and submit it to the school principal or secretary.
2. Notify the school principal to schedule a meeting.

NOTE: The appeal process will start immediately upon the parent/guardian's completion and submission of a Retention Appeal Form.

Teacher –

Fill out a **Teacher Retention Justification Form** and attach the following required documentation (in this order):

1. Retention Appeal Form from parent(s)/guardian(s)
2. Copies of report cards
3. Copy of the student's attendance record
4. Test results from district reading and math assessments, NWEA [Northwest Evaluation Association] MAP [Measure of Academic Progress] assessment, and state mandated assessments
5. Examples of the retained student's work and examples of an average student's work (remove the average student's name from the papers)
6. Conduct a MTSS Team meeting to review pertinent data, determine targeted intervention strategies, and make plans for monitoring and reviewing student progress

7. Records of communication with the student's parents/guardians (telephone logs and copies of written/electronic communication)
8. Verification of conferences with parents/guardians (signed forms with a list of items discussed)
9. *Light's Retention Scale* Rating

Principal –

1. Meet with parents/guardians.
2. Sign the Teacher Justification Form.
3. Collect all forms, with the required documentation, and forward the packet to the Deputy Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment for review and decision.

NOTE: If warranted, the Deputy Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment will then schedule a hearing conference with the Governing Board.

ACCELERATION

In accordance with DVUSD Governing Board policy IKEB the final decision to accelerate a student rests with the Superintendent.

Acceleration Information

DVUSD Board Policy I 7300 IKEB states:

When circumstances indicate that acceleration in grade placement is in the best interest of the student, close cooperation between the parents/guardians and all school personnel involved is imperative. Each student's placement will be considered individually and decisions will be made only after a careful study of facts relating to the student's growth and development. The student's academic achievement level and cognitive ability are important, but physical and social characteristics are also determining factors. A decision should be based on sufficient data collected over a period of time and motivated by a desire to place the student in the school program where the greatest success will result.

The final decision to accelerate a student rests with the Superintendent. Parental/guardian involvement in all steps of the process is vital. Parental/guardian consent to the acceleration of a student should be in writing.

If parents/guardians do not approve of a decision regarding the acceleration of the student, they may appeal the decision to the Superintendent. Further appeal, if necessary, may be made to the Board.

What is Acceleration?

Acceleration is one of the most effective ways to meet high achieving and/or gifted students' educational needs. While DVUSD wants acceleration opportunities to be accessible to students whom it will benefit, we also acknowledge that decisions to accelerate must be well-reasoned and evidence-based. The decision to accelerate changes the path of a child's education and should be made carefully.

Grade Based Acceleration (see Whole Grade Acceleration – Grade skipping on next page) shortens the number of years a student spends in K-12 schooling. Students are placed by factors other than age and are given opportunities to master content faster. This also includes early entrance.

Forms of grade-based acceleration include:

- Early admission to Kindergarten and 1st grade
- Whole-grade skipping
- Early entrance into middle or high school

Content Based Acceleration (see Single-subject Acceleration below) provides students with content, skills, or understanding that is beyond their grade level or age. Students can work on the advanced content either within their current grade level, in a content replacement pull-out class for gifted identified and talented students (i.e. – SAGE) or in a classroom above their age grade level. Opportunities for content-based acceleration include:

- Single-subject acceleration
- Curriculum compacting *
- **Aspire**. Deer Valley Online Academy courses

***Curriculum compacting** -- Standard curriculum is compressed into a shorter period of time, allowing the gifted student to study related material while classmates master standard content.

Acceleration Procedures

Whole Grade Acceleration (Grade Skipping)

When a student displays significant academic, emotional, and social maturity, the child's age-grade might not be the optimal placement. Parents/guardians, school staff, and the child can initiate consideration for grade skipping in grades K-8.

The Iowa Acceleration Scale (IAS) will be used by all schools when considering grade skipping in grades K-8. It is a tool commonly used to guide decisions about whole-grade acceleration. The IAS provides a systematic, objective process by using data to inform the decision. It uses factors such as ability, motivation, attitude, and peer relationships in addition to ability, aptitude, and achievement. The result is a prediction of success with grade skipping, and a recommendation for or against whole-grade acceleration.

If parents/guardians feel whole-grade acceleration is in the best interest of the child they should complete a Request for Whole Grade Acceleration form and submit it to the principal. The principal will send the original, signed parent request form to the Manager of Gifted & Advanced Academics to start the acceleration review process. The Manager of Gifted & Advanced Academics will provide the IAS materials and will guide the principal and school team through the process upon receipt of the signed Request for Whole Grade Acceleration Form.

Timeline for Requesting Whole Grade Acceleration:

Parents and schools requesting whole grade acceleration for the current school year must complete the Whole Grade Acceleration Process before the end of the 1st quarter. Parents/guardians and schools requesting whole grade acceleration must do so before the end of the 3rd quarter to be considered for skipping a whole grade level in the next school year. Once a parent/guardian completes the Request for Whole Grade Acceleration form and it has been received by the school principal, the principal will set up a meeting with the parents/guardians and the student's teacher(s) to discuss the request. If the decision is to proceed with the acceleration process, the school will have 30 school days (unless an extension is required) to go through the review process and submit the team's decision (to accelerate or not accelerate the student) to the Gifted Services Coordinator. Principals may not be able to consider summer requests until the necessary school staff returns from summer break.

Whole Grade Acceleration Process:

If it is determined that the acceleration process is necessary, the principal will:

1. Request the Iowa Acceleration Scale (IAS) and Summary and Planning Record from the Gifted Services Manager.
2. Form an Acceleration Team that includes the following people:
 - a. Principal
 - b. Current teacher
 - c. Receiving teacher
 - d. Parents/guardians
 - e. Counselor and/or school psychologist
 - f. Any specialists who work with the child (gifted, EL, special education, etc.), if applicable
3. Gather available assessment data including: Ability, Aptitude, and Achievement (required for the IAS)

completion). Options for each area include but are not limited to:

- **Ability-** Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT), Woodcock Johnson Tests of Cognitive Abilities (WJ-Cog); these assessments may be administered by a gifted teacher or school psychologist. Parents/guardian may provide a report completed by a private psychologist if it meets the State of Arizona's criteria for gifted identification
- **Aptitude-** DVUSD benchmark exams given above grade level (at the level being considered for placement)
- **Achievement-** State standardized assessments, Woodcock Johnson Tests of Achievement (WJ-ACH); these tests may be administered by a school psychologist or qualified teacher

4. Schedule testing for any areas (ability, aptitude, and achievement) where scores are not already available. School psychologists, gifted specialists/teachers, and other qualified staff may administer the assessments.

5. Meet with the Acceleration Team to complete and discuss the IAS.

- The team will review the required data to complete the IAS including ability, aptitude, and achievement scores. Using the IAS, the team will make a recommendation for or against whole grade acceleration and the principal will contact the Manager of Gifted & Advanced Academics.
- The team will use the IAS Summary and Planning Record to outline subsequent steps to ensure success. This process is detailed below.
- Should the team not find 30 school days enough time to acquire the data to make an informed decision (i.e. the student is showing potential, but it is too early in the school year or a student is new to the school), the team will meet with the parents/guardians and recommend pausing the process and restarting after the grading period has ended and more data can be collected.
- If the team recommends whole grade acceleration, the principal will forward the IAS Planning Record to the Manager of Gifted & Advanced Academics for review.
- The Manager will then meet with the Deputy Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment to review the documentation collected by the school's assessment team. The Deputy Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment will forward the recommendation to the Superintendent, who will make the final recommendation for or against acceleration. Further appeal, if necessary, may be made to the DVUSD school Board.
- If the recommendation is to accelerate, the goal is to make placement changes at the end of the current grading period, and allow the student to begin the next level in the new grading period.
- If the decision is made not to skip a whole grade, the team should consider single subject acceleration. See the Single Subject Acceleration (Content Replacement) section below.

Planning and Monitoring for Success:

After a decision for whole grade acceleration, the Acceleration Team will complete the IAS Summary and Planning Report. This document summarizes all of the important information from the IAS and outlines:

- a step-by-step plan of the program change
- a transition plan to support student success
- a monitoring plan to ensure acceleration is beneficial

Each member of the Acceleration Team should receive a copy of the IAS Summary and Planning Report. One must be placed in the student's cumulative file, and one must be sent to the Gifted Services Manager.

A follow-up meeting with the Acceleration Team should take place within eight weeks of the grade change. At this time, the team may establish a need for continued monitoring or other interventions to ensure success. A whole grade accelerated student may need a semester or longer to fully adjust to the new placement. During this time, staff should closely monitor the student for gaps in academic understanding or social difficulties. Should problems arise, factors other

than the placement change may be contributing to the problem. Be sure to examine all issues and possible related factors before making further decisions.

Whole Grade Acceleration When Moving to Another Building (MS to HS)

For a 7th grade student accelerating over 8th grade into high school, parents/guardians and school will follow the identified acceleration process found on the preceding pages. However, the team should include all current core content teachers and a counselor and administrator from both schools. The team should identify a contact person at the receiving school who will monitor the student's transition for the first semester and will coordinate interventions, if necessary.

Special Circumstances:

Acceleration in Dual Language Immersion (DLI) Programs (Mandarin and Spanish)

Students are encouraged to enroll in the Mandarin or Spanish Immersion program in kindergarten and first grade. If there is a request for a student to enroll in the program after first grade, parents/guardians can make a request to the principal for enrollment.

The principal will form a team that includes the following people:

- Principal
- Current teacher
- Receiving DLI teacher
- DLI coordinator or DLI mentor teacher
- Any specialists who work with the child (gifted, EL, special education, etc.)
- Parents/guardians

The team will look at pertinent data, including but not limited to the state achievement test, grade level content, DVUSD Benchmark exams, and grades from the current class. The team will consider any gaps that may exist or develop because of skipped language content and create a plan to fill them. Additionally, the team will develop a transition plan to support the student with social and emotional factors and to monitor success throughout the remainder of the school year. It is recommended that the student demonstrate a strong desire to be in the program and have a willingness to study at home.

After nine weeks, the team will reconvene to discuss the student's progress, achievements, and challenges. In collaboration, the team will make a recommendation regarding the student's continued participation in the program. The final decision rests with the school principal.

If the decision is made for the student to continue in the program, the DLI teacher will continue to monitor the student's progress and inform the parents/guardians if any remediation is needed to ensure the student's success.

Renaissance Highly Gifted Academies

The Renaissance Highly Gifted Program is a combination of enrichment and acceleration provided to meet the unique needs of highly gifted students. Students are typically learning at levels one to two grades above their current grade level. Because of this, **whole grade level acceleration is not available either into or within the Renaissance program.**

For students in a Renaissance program transitioning to a new school, Deer Valley generally offers the full range of gifted services. While this is typically the standard practice, there may be exceptions. It's important to note that students typically remain in Renaissance programs; however, in cases where a student leaves a Renaissance placement due to severe anxiety or similar concerns, it may not be in their best interest to be placed in an accelerated class or grade level.

Single Subject Acceleration (Content Replacement)

In the Deer Valley Unified School District, we recognize the importance of catering to the diverse learning needs of our students, including those who demonstrate advanced proficiency in specific subjects. To address this, our district offers a comprehensive approach to single-subject acceleration across various grade levels and subjects.

For mathematics, we provide opportunities for acceleration at all grade levels, allowing students to progress at a pace that matches their abilities.

Additionally, our district offers acceleration in English Language Arts (ELA) specifically tailored for Renaissance students, ensuring that their advanced language skills are nurtured and challenged.

Furthermore, we understand the benefits of early exposure to foreign languages. Hence, we offer high school Spanish courses to motivated 7th and 8th-grade students, allowing them to start their language learning journey ahead of schedule.

In subjects where single-subject acceleration may not be feasible or appropriate, such as social studies or science, we employ various methods to support advanced learners. This includes enrichment activities designed to deepen their understanding and stimulate their curiosity, as well as access to our gifted program services, which provide specialized instruction and support. Additionally, in many schools, advanced courses are available to 7th and 8th grade students seeking further academic challenges, ensuring that they are continuously engaged and encouraged to reach their full potential across all subject areas.

Through this multifaceted approach, the Deer Valley Unified School District is committed to fostering the academic growth and success of all our students, including those with exceptional abilities and talents.

The final decision to accelerate a student in a single subject grade level rests with the school principal.

Online Learning Opportunities through Aspire, Deer Valley's Online Academy:

Online Classes- dvusd.org/online

The school administrator/counselor/designee contacts **Aspire**, Deer Valley's Online Academy to begin the registration process for online classes. ***Access to technology and the internet is a requirement to be in an online class.*** Although online learning provides flexibility, there are weekly due dates that must be met. The Aspire - Deer Valley's Online Academy provides ongoing support as needed to ensure success for the online teacher and the online students and families.

Online High School Courses

When a student begins courses for their high school credit, by taking online courses, the family must register for classes during the open registration windows. Students complete an orientation and the course within a 14-week timeframe within the semester. The condensed time frame requires 8-10 hours of work each week, per class. The final exam is given in-person at the end of the semester, which the student must pass with a 60% or better to earn credit for the course. Registration and general program information can be found at dvusd.org/online. If the student takes more than 6 courses, there is a \$200.00 fee per .5 high school semester credit.

GRADING & REPORTING

A.R.S. § 15-516 states:

A full-time teacher who is employed by a school district or a charter school is immune from personal liability for all acts done and actions taken in good faith in evaluating or grading any student.

A.R.S. § 15-521 states:

Every teacher shall:

1. Make student learning the primary focus of the teacher's professional time.
2. Hold pupils to strict account for disorderly conduct.
3. Take and maintain daily classroom attendance.
4. Make the decision to promote or retain a pupil in grade in a common school or to pass or fail a pupil in a course in high school. Such decisions may be overturned only as provided in section 15-342, paragraph 11.
5. Comply with all rules and policies of the governing board that relate to the duties prescribed in this section.

Grading & Reporting

DVUSD Beliefs about Grading and Reporting

All students must graduate from high school prepared for postsecondary success in college, careers and citizenship. Learning standards define what students must know and do to be college and career ready. The purpose of grading and reporting is to communicate students' academic progress toward meeting learning standards.

Effective communication between school and home is a contributing factor to academic success. A positive, productive teacher-parent/guardian relationship contributes to cooperative efforts toward a student's academic achievement. The following means of communication are used to keep parents/guardians informed of their children's progress.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

To be college-, career-, and community-ready, students in the Deer Valley Unified School District are expected to demonstrate academic integrity. Academic integrity is all about being honest and fair in your schoolwork. It means doing work that is entirely your own and giving credit to others (including generative Artificial Intelligence tools) through proper citation when you use their ideas or words.

Academic dishonesty refers to any action that compromises the integrity of academic work or evaluation processes. This includes but is not limited to:

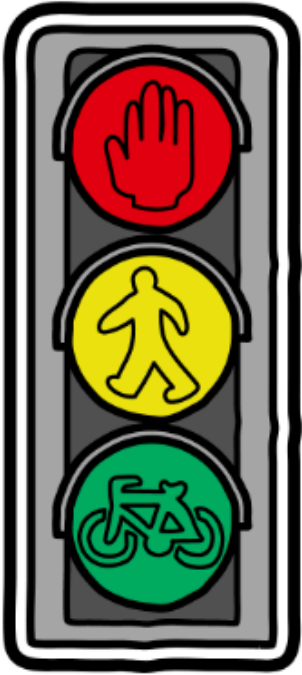
- Copying or stealing another person's work or data (plagiarism);
- Allowing another person to copy one's work;
- Doing another person's classwork;
- Creating more than one copy of one's work for distribution;
- Providing another person with the answers on tests or quizzes;
- Noncompliance with teachers' test-taking procedures;
- Unauthorized copying or development of software; and
- Unauthorized use of generative Artificial Intelligence.

Consequences for instances of academic dishonesty range from a conference and loss of credit (student will be given another opportunity to show mastery of learning) up to a 5-day suspension and loss of credit.

In the Deer Valley Unified School District, we are committed to providing our students with the best possible education while ensuring their safety, privacy, and well-being. As part of our ongoing efforts to enhance learning experiences, teachers may incorporate generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the classroom for students.

Students must adhere to the specific guidelines provided in the assignment details. If no guidance around the use of generative AI is provided, students should follow the "restrictive" level (see chart below). Teachers should direct students to contact their teacher before submitting classwork if the student is unsure if the tool or website they are using is permitted on a specific assignment.

Levels of Student AI Use



Level	Description	Example Instruction
Restrictive No!	AI tools are prohibited for the assignment, and all work must be the student's original creation.	"Do not use AI tools for this assignment. All content must be original, and any use of AI will be treated as plagiarism."
Moderate Whoa!	Students can use district-approved AI tools for specific parts of their assignments, such as brainstorming or initial research, but the core content and conclusions should be original. Proper citation is required for any AI-generated content.	"You can employ AI tools to assist brainstorming or initial research, however, the main content, arguments, and conclusions should be your own."
Permissive Go!	Students can utilize district-approved AI tools to assist in their assignments, such as generating ideas, proofreading, or organizing content. Proper citation is required for any AI-generated content.	"You may use AI tools as you see fit to enhance your assignment and demonstrate your understanding of the topic."

Timely Reporting of Grades

Part of a teacher's professional responsibility is the timely reporting of grades and feedback. Teachers must grade student assignments as soon as possible. Timely reporting of grades and feedback to students is crucial for their academic growth and development. When students receive prompt feedback on their assignments and assessments, they can identify their strengths and weaknesses, understand the areas that require improvement, and address any misconceptions before they become deeply ingrained. Additionally, prompt grading and feedback fosters a sense of accountability and motivation in students, encouraging them to stay on track and actively engage with the course material.

Parent Communication

Deer Valley Unified School District strongly values a parent/guardian's role in a child's education. It is through communication that teachers can help parents/guardians stay involved. In addition, ongoing communication helps parents stay informed about their child's academic progress. Parent/guardian contact or attempt to contact parents/guardians by phone, conference, or email should be kept on file by the teacher. Records should include the date, student name, parent/guardian name, phone number, and notes concerning the contents and results of the conversation. For more information, contact your campus administrator.

Review of Student Grades in PowerSchool

Deer Valley Unified School District provides parents/guardians with a means of staying up-to-date with their child's progress. PowerSchool is a secure website used by classroom teachers to input and maintain student grades electronically. All parents/guardians and students have the opportunity to use PowerSchool to access attendance, activities, assignments, and grades (both current and historical) throughout the school year.

Progress Reports

Teachers will maintain ongoing communication with parents/guardians regarding academics, behavior, grading practices and procedures. It is part of the district standard that parents/guardians are provided a report of student progress each quarter. Student grades can be accessed at any time during the school year on Powerschools. In an effort to "go green", all progress reports will be available digitally unless specifically requested in hard copy from the teacher.

Parents/guardians will receive a reminder via email, newsletter, or School Messenger to check grades on PowerSchool no later than halfway through the grading period. As well, parents/guardians can request a hard copy of their child's progress report from the school office. Some schools will provide a hard copy of student progress mid-quarter.

Grade Expectations for Athletic Participation

All students participating in District sanctioned athletic events must maintain a passing grade in all classes. Teachers' academic records will be surveyed each week and a failing student will receive notification of "pending ineligibility". A student failing two consecutive weeks will be ineligible to participate, unless a subsequent check after one week indicates a passing grade.

Special Program Reporting

Grade reporting for students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), 504 Plan, or English Learner (EL) accommodations must be issued with the same frequency as those for general education students. Additionally, updates on IEP goal progress must be sent home quarterly, aligning with the grade reporting schedule.

Conferences

Conferences between parents/guardians and teachers are encouraged. These interactions promote involvement of both the home and the school, fosters mutual understanding of the student's progress, clarifies the student's strengths and needs, and allows for the exchange of information and ideas needed to strengthen and reinforce student performance. Conferences may be in person or on Zoom.

An alternative that many schools and/or teachers use is student-led conferences that engage students in their own learning and allow them to be an active part of the conference between a teacher and parent/guardian. While both formats take some time and effort, research is clear on the importance of parental/guardian involvement to student success. **Four early release days have been built into the DVUSD K-8 calendar to provide teachers with an opportunity to meet with parents/guardians.**

Canvas

DVUSD uses Canvas to support student learning by digitally providing access to content resources along with facilitating the student submission and teacher review of student work. Designed with consideration for the needs of K-12 teachers and students, Canvas is an easy-to-use, cloud-based learning management system (LMS) that connects digital tools and resources teachers use into one simple place. It integrates seamlessly with learning apps, empowering teachers and students with streamlined access to tools that make teaching and learning easier and more engaging. Canvas provides a secure way for teachers to support ongoing learning, provide students access to course materials, monitor student learning progress, provide performance feedback, and transmit scores for select assignments to the PowerSchool gradebook.

Additional information about the Canvas LMS is available on the DVUSD website at <https://www.dvUSD.org/canvas> - including how parents & guardians can create a Canvas account to track student progress, view assignment scores, and receive teacher announcements.

Details on course grade display settings are available in [this Canvas tip sheet](#).

Role of Professional Learning Community (PLC)

A professional learning community is a group of educators that meet regularly and work collaboratively to improve teaching practices and the achievement of students.

The questions that drive the work of PLC's are:

- What do we want all students to know and be able to do?
- How will we know if they learn it?
- How will we respond if some students do not learn?
- How will we extend the learning for students who are already proficient?

Multi School/Grade Level Teams Teams are responsible for collaborating to establish general consistency among the following:

- Creating Learning Progressions, Learning Intentions, Success Criteria, and Assessment Opportunities in relation to grade-level essential standards.
- Developing proficiency level rubrics based on Success Criteria.
- Designing Common Formative Assessments tied to Learning Progressions.
- Coordinating the skills, method, and schedule for re-engagement opportunities. (Tier 2)
- Determining the date and procedure for reassessment.

Gradebook Guidelines

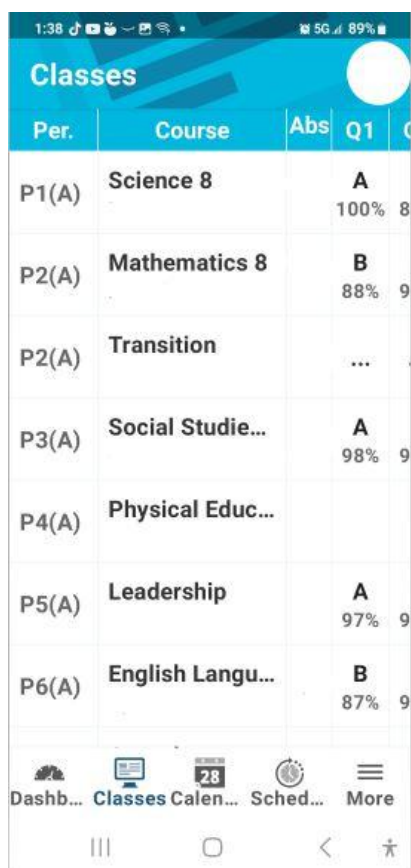
- 7th- 8th grade teachers are to maintain final grades for the school year and are to be maintained in the student's cumulative permanent record.
- Teacher grade books are auditable documents and are maintained digitally by network services. Every effort should be made to record a minimum of one grade per week, be it a learning progression or assessment, for each content area. Gradebooks are to be updated on a weekly basis (e.g. weekly assessments or project name and due date for multi-week summation projects).
- Teachers should take no more than five (5) school days (with exceptions only for major projects and essays) from the assignment due date to enter its grade.
- Teachers should encourage students to take ownership and be proactive when it is appropriate to ask for an extension on a due date. This teaches and reinforces the life skill of knowing how, why and when it is appropriate to ask for an extension on a due date. It also encourages students to take ownership, be proactive and advocate for oneself.

How PowerTeacher Pro Gradebook Calculates Grades

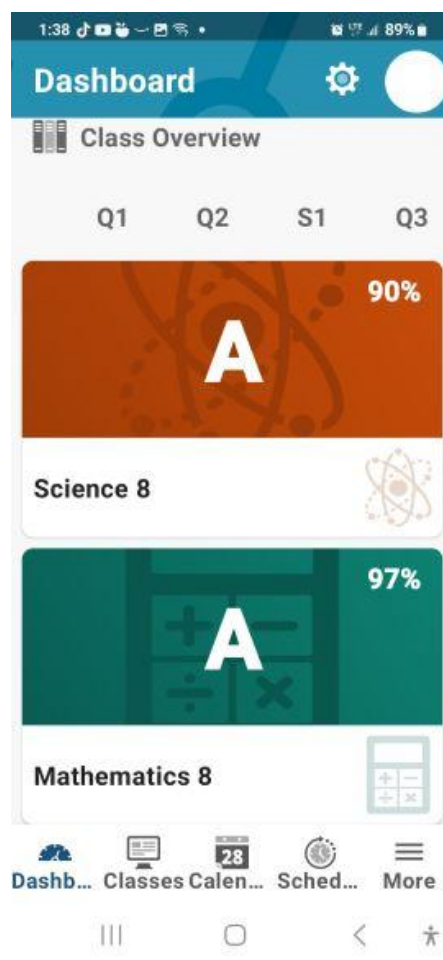
The internal working of PowerTeacher Pro Gradebook calculates grades based on total points, taking into consideration any category weight. PowerTeacher Pro Gradebook displays the percentage for informational purposes only. The bottom of the report shows a breakdown of each Category Summary.

Viewing student PowerSchool (PS) information on the App.

1. Download the Gradebook app: **PowerSchool Mobile App**. Parents need to use the district code of JZFD to access Deer Valley's PowerSchool account.
2. Parents use their PS parent username and password to access the App. If they do not have their login information, they should contact their students' school to access the login information.
3. Students can follow the same process using their student-specific login information to see their own grades.
4. Once a parent is logged into the PowerSchool Mobile App, they have the ability to navigate to icons that will allow them to see attendance, assignment scores, standards, and course grades. From the dashboard icon parents can view the most current course grades for the student. To view individual assignment information, parents would click on the grade for a specific course, and assignment information will populate. The Class icon offers a comprehensive view of class, absences, and grades by period. Parents can view by grid, S1 or S2. The Schedule icon offers a view of the student's daily schedule. Clicking on the More icon, parent can manage notifications, and manage student profiles. If parents encounter problems with the app, it is best to remove it from their device, and reinstall.



Per.	Course	Abs	Q1	Q2
P1(A)	Science 8		A 100%	8
P2(A)	Mathematics 8		B 88%	9
P2(A)	Transition		...	
P3(A)	Social Studie...		A 98%	9
P4(A)	Physical Educ...			
P5(A)	Leadership		A 97%	9
P6(A)	English Langu...		B 87%	9



Viewing student PowerSchool (PS) information on the PowerSchool website

1. The website has additional features that the parent/guardian can access that are different from the PS App. **Go to the following link:** <https://ps.dvusd.org/public/home.html>.
2. Using their username and password credentials parents can access students schedule, grades, attendance, their DVUSD grade history, and teacher and school communications.
3. They can also email the students' teachers from the PS website.
4. To look at assignment scores or additional grading points parents will click on the grade in the grade column.
5. To access the standards measured during the grading term, once logged into PowerSchool, click on the Standards Grades tab and click on the course name to expand to the standards and their scores for each term.

PowerSchool SIS Welcome | Help | Site Map | Sign Out

Navigation

- Grades and Attendance
- Grade History
- Attendance History
- Teacher Comments
- School Bulletin
- Class Registration
- My Schedule
- School Information

Grades and Attendance:

Grades and Attendance Standards Grades

Exp	Last Week					This Week					Course	Q1	Q2	S1	Q3	Q4	S2	Absences	Tardies
	M	T	W	H	F	M	T	W	H	F									
P1(A)	Q	4	Q		5			Q			Science 8 Email Rm: 907	A 100 S	B 80		A 92 S	A 90		5	4
P2(A)		4			5					A	Mathematics 8 Email Rm: 905	B 88 E	A 99		A 98	A 97		5	1
P2(A)		4			5					A	Transition Email Rm: 414					[1]		7	0
P3(A)		4			5					A	Social Studies 8 Email Rm: 904	A 98 S	A 99 S		A 98 S	A 100		6	0
P4(A)		4			5					A	Physical Education II Email Rm: 511					A 100		8	0
P5(A)		4			5						Leadership Email Rm: 603	A 97 E	A 95 N		A 92 N	A 98		7	0
P6(A)		4			5						English Language Arts 8 Email Rm: 902	B 87	A 95		A 93	C 71		7	0
AM-PM(A)	Q	4	Q		5			Q			Attendance Email Rm: 907					[1]		10	5
P8(A)											Advocacy Email Rm: 611					[1]		0	0
Attendance Totals																		55	10

Show dropped classes also

PowerSchool SIS Welcome | Help | Site Map | Sign Out

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- Grades and Attendance
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Standards Grades:

Grades and Attendance Standards Grades

Year 23-24

Expand All Collapse All

Current Classes

P1(A) Science 8- 23-24

Standards	Q1	Q2	S1	Q3	Q4	Y1	S2
Sci.8.P1U1.1 Develop and use a model to demonstrate that atoms and molecules can be combined or rearranged in chemical reactions to form new compounds with the total number of each type of atom conserved. 8.P1U1.1	--	--	--	4	--	4	--
Sci.8.P1U1.2 Obtain and evaluate information regarding how scientists identify substances based on unique physical and chemical properties. 8.P1U1.2	4	--	4	--	--	4	--
Sci.8.P4U1.3 Construct an explanation on how energy can be transferred from one energy store to another. 8.P4U1.3	--	--	--	4	--	4	--
Sci.8.E1U1.6 Analyze and interpret data about the Earth's geological column to communicate relative ages of rock layers and fossils. 8.E1U1.6	4	--	4	--	--	4	--
Sci.8.L3U1.9 Construct an explanation of how genetic variations occur in offspring through the inheritance of traits or through mutations. 8.L3U1.9	--	--	--	2	--	2	--

P2(A) Mathematics 8- 23-24

P2(A) Transition- 23-24

P3(A) Social Studies 8- 23-24

P4(A) Physical Education II- Q4

DVUSD Grading Practices: Philosophy and Goals

Ensuring fair and credible evaluation of student learning from classroom to classroom and school to school will directly impact and improve student learning. Students should be held accountable for their learning. We also recognize that grading practices can contribute to long-term student success. An emphasis on the evaluation of content standards and timely, constructive feedback are cornerstones to grading that reflect student growth and development.

DVUSD Grading Goals

Grading practices in DVUSD will encompass the following goals:

- Grades are equitable, accurate, specific, and consistent.
- Grades reflect academic learning and are not used as a punitive tool.
- Grades report the status of academic learning, not behavioral conduct.
- Assessment and grading provide actionable feedback to inform student learning.
- Grading takes into account that learning is a process that takes place over time and at different speeds for different students.
- The grading system is coordinated and consistent among common courses.

GRADING PRACTICES: PROCEDURES

Meaningful Grade Entries

Teachers are expected to enter a meaningful grade for each student in the electronic gradebook on a regular basis so that students, parents, and support staff can better monitor student progress. A meaningful grade is a grade entry for an assessment or coursework that measures learning standards. The frequency of entering meaningful grades is as follows:

- Classes that typically meet **4-5 days per week** = at least 1 meaningful grade each week
- Classes that typically meet **2-3 days per week** = at least 1 meaningful grade every other week
- Classes that typically meet **1 day per week** = at least 1 meaningful grade every 3rd week

At least one meaningful assessment/assignment grade entry must be entered each week, but an entry that impacts the course grade must be entered at least every 2 school weeks (every 3rd week for classes meeting once per week). Teachers should take no more than five (5) school days (with exceptions of two additional days only for major projects and essays) from the assignment due date to enter its grade.

GRADING PRACTICES: GRADE SCALES

7-8 Grade Scale

Students in 7th and 8th grades will receive marks for their proficiency toward the grade level standards in core content and special area classes using the following scale.

- 4 = Highly Proficient
- 3 = Proficient
- 2 = Partially Proficient
- 1 = Minimally Proficient

Students in 3rd through 12th grades will receive marks for their overall performance in core content and special area classes in each course of study using the following letter grade scale.

- A = 90-100%
- B = 80-89%
- C = 70-79%
- D = 60-69%
- F = 0-59%

Grades of “D” and above are passing marks. A final course grade of “F” indicates that the student has failed the course.

GRADING PRACTICES: GRADE CALCULATIONS

Overall Standards Grades

Overall standards grades will be determined by the average of the most recent three proficiency level marks a student receives for each standard.

All teachers are required to tag and enter proficiency levels for standards for gradebook entries in the assessment category.

7-8 Overall Course Grades

Overall course grades for students in grades 3-12 are calculated from the average of the student’s assignment scores (assessments, coursework).

Teachers will enter scores for assignment entries in the gradebook based upon student performance of the standards.

Highly Proficient A 100%–90%			Proficient B 89%–80%		Proficient C 79%–70%	
100–97	96–94	93–90	89–85	84–80	79–75	74–70
All 4’s on standards	All 4’s except for one 3	Mostly 4’s with some 3’s and/or 2’s	Mostly 3’s with some 4’s All 3’s on standards	Mostly 3’s and 4’s with a 2	Mostly 3’s with some 2’s	Mostly 2’s with 3’s and/or 4’s
Partially Proficient D 69%–60%			Minimally Proficient F 59%–50%			
69–65		64–60	59–56		55–50	
Mostly 2’s and 3’s with a 1		All 2’s on standards	Mostly 2’s and some 1’s		All 1’s on standards	
No Evidence						
49% – 0%						

Grade Categories

All 7th-8th grade teacher gradebooks will utilize the following categories in the gradebook.

ASSESSMENT: This category includes all items used to measure a student's proficiency toward the learning standards once the student has had sufficient practice and at a specified point in time. This category can include tests, performance assessments, reports, unit or module assessments, quizzes, long-term projects, short-term projects, presentations, capstone projects, research papers, and lab reports.

COURSEWORK: This category includes formative work that provides students with the opportunity to learn content and skills and to receive feedback on their learning. Coursework is assigned to provide meaningful, independent practice, reinforce learning targets, and extend learning. This category can include in-class assignments, exit tickets, checks-for-understanding, and daily activities.

PRACTICE: This category includes student work that a student completes while in the process of learning specific skills. Student work that is done inside and outside of the classroom, such as classwork and homework, falls into this category.

Weights

All 1st-12th grade teacher gradebooks will utilize the following weights for each category in the gradebook.

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY	80%
COURSEWORK CATEGORY	20%
PRACTICE CATEGORY	0%

Procedures for Incomplete Grades – Grades 7-8

If incomplete grades are to be issued in academic or special area classrooms, there must be:

- Prior approval from the principal
- Documentation from the teacher with a completion plan
- A reasonable timeline set, generally not to exceed 10 school days, for the student to complete all required coursework as outlined in the completion plan

It is the responsibility of the teacher to notify the Registrar and parents/guardians of the changed grade and communicate with the parent/guardian about the new grade. Teachers should include the reason for the grade change, new percentage, and letter grade. Communication to parents about the changed grade is the responsibility of teacher, not the Registrar.

NOTE: Every effort should be made so a DVUSD student does not have the option to choose to fail by not completing work or turning in assignments. It is the expectation that all possible interventions will be implemented to assist students struggling with these expectations. Campus procedures should reflect a specific process for identifying and supporting these students per the determined intervention process. Parents/guardians should be a part of this process.

DVUSD Report Cards

The purpose of the student report card is to communicate formally to parents/guardians their student's performance on the grade-level instructional objectives taught during each of the four nine-week grading periods. The DVUSD report cards (grades 7-8) are to reflect each student's individual growth and acquisition of the Arizona College and Career Ready Standards.

- Progress in Grades 7-8 is indicated through Academic Letter Grades (A-F) and Performance Levels (1-4).

In addition to the overall percentage and letter grades reported on the middle school report card, parents/guardians will also find performance levels. Performance levels on the DVUSD 7-8 report card indicate a student's level of proficiency in relation to grade level standards and content. Performance levels are not correlated with traditional letter grades such as A, B, C, D.

The following descriptors can be used to interpret performance levels on the report card.

Students in 7th and 8th grades will receive marks for their proficiency toward the grade level standards using the following scale.

- 4 = Highly Proficient
- 3 = Proficient
- 2 = Partially Proficient
- 1 = Minimally Proficient

Grade Changes After Grades Are Stored

Once grades are stored and archived in PowerSchool, teachers have 10 days to make changes to the grades by contacting the school registrar. Teachers must ensure that the gradebook is updated as well. After 10 days, grades may be changed for the following reasons only.

- 1 = Calculation Error
- 2 = Course Extension
- 3 = Grade Enhancement

GRADING PRACTICES: ESSENTIAL ACADEMIC BEHAVIORS AND SOCIAL SKILLS

Citizenship

Citizenship marks in grades K-8 will continue to use the E/S/N/U scale in the 2024-25 school year.

- E = Excellent
- S = Satisfactory
- N = Needs Improvement
- U = Unsatisfactory

Grade Penalties For Behaviors

DVUSD uses grades to indicate academic performance. Behavioral skills and attitudes are an important part of a student's development. Behavioral issues will be handled through other means, such as assigning consequences, conferences, loss of privileges, or disciplinary measures. In order to accurately reflect a student's academic performance level, deductions of scores or grades will not be applied for student misbehaviors.

Extra Credit

Just as imposing grade penalties for poor behavior distorts academic grades, so does awarding higher grades or extra credit for good behavior. Extra credit renders an academic grade less accurate since it is not based upon performance of the standards, but rather on compliant behaviors. **No extra credit will be awarded.**

Terms Defined

Missing Work: An assignment is considered as missing work when it is not submitted by the due date.

Late Work: An assignment is considered late work when the assignment is not submitted by the due date that was established, but is submitted within the late work timeframe listed below.

Classwork: An assignment expected to be submitted within the class period. Teachers may adjust assignments from being considered classwork to the designation as homework for all students or specific students.

Homework: An assignment expected to be completed fully or partially at home independently. Homework can also be a learning activity assigned as practice to be completed outside of class.

Long Term Project Assignment: A project/assignment due more than 1 week after the date assigned is considered a long-term project assignment. Long term project assignments cannot be submitted late, unless an arrangement has been approved by the teacher.

Learning is a journey that is often not linear. Some students learn content and skills quickly, while others may require more time or feedback to learn. In order to accurately reflect a student's academic performance level, teachers will accept late work for full credit if the specified parameters are met.

Missing work will be treated as such:

- The assignment will be marked with the "Missing" special code in the gradebook
- A zero ("0") will be entered as the score for the assignment in the gradebook (grades 3-12)
- No Evidence (NE) will be entered for the standards attached to the assignment
- If the work is submitted as Late Work (see terms below), the zero ("0") assignment score will be changed to reflect the student's actual score with no deductions or penalties
- If the work is not submitted as Late Work or does not meet conditions for Late Work, the score for the assignment can be changed from a zero ("0") up to a 49%, dependent upon the school's processes, by the end of the term.

In order for **Late Work** to be accepted, students must meet the following parameters:

- Assignment is not due within the class period
- Assignment is not a timed activity (such as a Quick-Write Essay)
- Assignment is not a Long-Term assignment (over multiple weeks)
- Assignment is turned in within the following time frame
3-8 Grades: Within 5 school days after the end of the unit of learning/project/assignment
9-12 Grades: By the end of the unit

If a student meets the above criteria, he/she will be issued full credit for the work submitted (no added penalties or caps on the grade that can be earned). The teacher will mark the student's assignment with the "Late" special code. If the assignment is an assessment, the proficiency level of the standards attached will be entered.

Please note: Accommodations included in a student's IEP, 504, or EL plan may supersede the above Late Work procedures. Consult with the student's Service Coordinator, counselor, or the student's support team.

Reassessment

Terms Defined

Retake: The student completes another assessment of the same learning targets. The assessment to be retaken may be in the same format or a different format. The higher of the two scores will be entered in the gradebook.*

Reperformance: The student will be reassessed on the same learning target later in the marking period as part of the instruction cycle, thus providing an additional measurement of the learning. All reperformance scores related to the learning target will be entered in the gradebook.

Retakes or reperformance of essential skills is important to support learning of critical skills and filling gaps in learning. Retakes are allowed for assessments in which scores are entered into the gradebook, for full credit, if reperformance opportunities will not be available during the marking period or in addition to reperformance opportunities during the marking period.

In order to earn a retake opportunity, a student must complete all of the following:

- Complete all formative coursework related to the content/skill assessed
- Consult with the teacher
- Submit a reassessment plan or application, if required by the teacher

A reassessment plan must be scheduled within the following time frames:

- 7th and 8th Grades: Within 10 school days after receiving the assessment score
- 9-12th Grades: With 5 school days of receiving the assessment score, the student must communicate with the teacher to create a reassessment plan

*Retakes are not allowed for district and state assessments, Test Outs and Proficiency Exams, final assessments, end of term capstone projects and performance assessments, and screening tests.

Grading in Special Programs

English Learners

A student's progress in the content area will be measured according to the students' English proficiency level. Using the content area/ELP crosswalk, the classroom teacher can determine the appropriate measure of mastery for the content area standard using the ELP performance indicators outlined within the ELP standards. ELP Standards and their Performance Indicators (PI) will be embedded into the content curriculum. It is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to ensure EL students learn the content through the use of English Language strategies.

Pre-Emergent/Emergent

Identification and Placement:

Pre-Emergent/Emergent students, identified through the AZELLA Placement test, who are new to the country and/or in their first full academic year in an English Learner (EL) program, may be graded on core course content using a Pass/Fail grading system.

Notification Requirement:

Parents of Pre-Emergent/Emergent students must be notified of the intention to place the student on the Pass/Fail grade book. This notification should clearly outline the reasons for the Pass/Fail grading approach and provide an understanding of the process.

Scaffolding Support:

All Pre-Emergent/Emergent students, regardless of their grading status, will receive documented scaffolds to support their learning. These scaffolds are designed to provide additional assistance and guidance tailored to the individual needs of the student.

Duration of Pass/Fail Grading:

Students placed on the Pass/Fail grade book may remain on this system for up to one full academic year. Alternatively, they may transition out of Pass/Fail grading once they meet the requirements outlined in the transition rubric.

Transition Rubric:

The transition rubric is based on EL proficiency standards and is assessed by Teacher EL Specialists/SEI Teachers. Once a student meets the requirements outlined in the transition rubric, they will transition from the Pass/Fail grade book to a traditional gradebook.

Grading by EL Specialists/SEI Teachers:

Grades assigned by EL Specialists/SEI Teachers will be based on a traditional gradebook format. This ensures that students receive comprehensive and accurate assessments of their academic progress in alignment with EL proficiency standards.

Basic (B)

Students as identified by AZELLA placement or reassessment can be held accountable to core content standards with documented scaffolds. Core content standards are those that have been identified by PLCs as essential in order to be prepared for the next grade or content level.

Intermediate (I)

Students as identified by AZELLA placement or reassessment can be held accountable to core content standards with documented scaffolds, as needed. Core content standards are those that have been identified by PLCs as essential in order to be prepared for the next grade or content level.

Students should be assessed based on their proficiency level as indicated by the AZELLA. Depending on the purpose of the assessment, assessments for EL students may be scaffolded to allow the student to demonstrate content knowledge regardless of English language skills. Expectations must remain high for EL students.

When a student is not demonstrating grade level understanding, general education teachers will meet with the EL Specialist on their campus to develop a plan of EL scaffolds and strategies to be implemented in the classroom to help the student access the content. EL scaffolds and strategies are utilized to facilitate student participation and comprehension of course work. If the student is still not progressing academically, then the EL scaffolds or strategies need to be revisited with the

support of the Teacher EL Specialist or EL CIAS. As is true with any student, ELs can fail to demonstrate mastery of grade level standards and content. However, general education teachers must provide evidence of student progress monitoring and documentation of the scaffolds that have been *consistently* implemented to make content accessible for the EL student. This ensures that the student's language proficiency level is not the reason for the grade assignment.

Monitor Students

Students who have scored proficient on the AZELLA and exited the EL program within the last four academic years can still receive EL scaffolds, and grades can be a reflection of scaffolded assignments when needed.

ELD Classes 7-8

Students participating in ELD/SEI 2 hour block programs are to be held accountable for the content area courses they attend during the day. English Language Proficiency (ELP) standards are aligned to grade level ELA standards and will be reflected in the course grade for the Reading and Writing content areas. Students in the 2 hour block will receive a letter grade at all levels of proficiency.

Gifted Students

- Ensure grade level material is learned.
- If students are doing enrichment material only, the grade still represents mastery of on-grade level material. A teacher may choose to use an addendum to the report card, such as a rubric, to provide feedback on advanced material. Feedback may also be given in the comment section of the report card. This typically applies to gifted cluster classrooms.
- If the course name indicates advanced material (Algebra I Honors, IB MYP, Advanced Science, English 1-2), then teachers grade against those advanced standards.
- If the student has been accelerated (in a content area) by one grade level or more, he or she will be graded against the same standards as his/her older classmates. (e.g. SAGE, Walk-Up Math, or Walk-Up ELA/Reading)

Adapted from Wormeli, R (2007-2008). *Fair Isn't Always Equal: Assessment and Grading in the Differentiated Classroom*.

Students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP)

All students with an IEP receive grades based upon grade level standards. If a student is taking the alternate assessment and receives modified instruction, the teacher of record enters a letter grade and checks the appropriate performance level from 1-4. The teacher of record will then check the "Modification" box. For all other students with disabilities, the teacher of record will enter the grade, check the appropriate performance level from 1-4, and check the "Accommodation" box.

The teacher of record for a student with an IEP is the one who delivers core instruction aligned with grade-level academic standards. Only properly certified teachers are authorized to assign grades for students with an IEP.

Homebound Students

For homebound students, the teacher of record is always the campus teacher. Homebound or hospitalized means a student who is capable of profiting from academic instruction but is unable to attend school due to illness, disease, accident, or other health conditions. This is a student who has been examined by a medical doctor and who is certified by that doctor as being unable to attend on-campus classes for a period of not less than three school months during the school year. This also includes a student who is able of profiting from academic instruction but is unable to attend school regularly due to chronic or acute health problems, who has been examined by a medical doctor and who is certified by that doctor as being unable to attend campus classes for an intermittent period of time

totaling three school months during a school year.

A.R.S.15-761 and Arizona school code 1995 15-901.

Homebound Teacher Responsibilities

- Homebound Instructor will contact the counselor/Special Education Strategist at the student's school to assist in coordinating the student's initial services meeting within one school day of contact from the school.
- The Homebound Instructor is responsible for providing quality instruction, utilizing appropriate materials and techniques to keep student working at his/her assigned grade level. This will be done in unison with the classroom teacher. Completed assignments will be returned to the classroom teacher on a weekly basis.
- The Homebound Instructor will work with the classroom teacher to submit grades for the student at the end of each quarter so the student's transcripts/records will accurately reflect his/her grades and performance. The Homebound Instructor will provide assignments, assessments, and documentation to the classroom teacher to support the final grade.
- The Homebound Instructor is responsible for the coordination of administering classroom, state, and district assessments.
- The Homebound Teacher will ask for a meeting with appropriate school staff and the parent/guardian if the process is not working or the student is not progressing with passing grades.

Classroom Teacher of Record Responsibilities

- The classroom teacher determines the plan of action for assignments missed prior to the initiation of homebound services, in conjunction with the parent/guardian, as homebound does not go backwards and cover work prior to the initiation of services start date.
- Teachers must adhere to the 504 plan or IEP accommodations/modifications.
- The classroom teacher(s) must attend an initial services meeting and additional meetings related to homebound instruction.
- The classroom teacher will ensure that the student has the appropriate textbooks, materials and assignments. Classroom teachers will provide hard copies of assignments, power points, assessments etc., in lieu of electronic copies except when the student is enrolled in Deer Valley Online courses.
- The school is responsible for providing technology to enable the student to access the curriculum.
- The classroom teacher is the teacher of record and will provide the homebound instructor a basic outline of concepts covered, materials, notes, answer keys and tests on a weekly basis.
- The classroom teacher works closely with the homebound instructor to provide a final grade to the student.

Accommodations/Modifications/Acceleration

Accommodations are changes to the way a child is expected to learn or how he/she is tested. Accommodations eliminate obstacles that would interfere with a student's ability to perform or produce at the same standard of performance as all general education students.

Accommodations do not change the curriculum or content. Accommodations change how students access and express knowledge on a daily basis. All students may receive accommodations, including students in general education, students in the MTSS process, those on a 504 plan and students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Accommodations:

- Are changes in instruction that enable children to demonstrate their abilities in the classroom or assessment/testing setting

- Are intended to reduce or even eliminate the effects of a student's academic or behavioral deficits
- Do not reduce learning expectations

Accommodations can be provided for:

- Instructional method and materials
- Assignments and assessments
- Learning environment
- Time demands and scheduling
- Special communication systems

Examples of Accommodations:

- Reading a test to a student (with no additional help). This does not apply to reading or state testing such as AzSci or Math state assessment (unless noted on IEP).
- Allowing extra time to take the same test or complete the same assignment
- Signing an assignment book
- Breaking down work into smaller segments, but still expecting all elements to be completed
- Staying after school for homework help
- Preferential seating
- Providing an extra set of books at home
- Home-School communication journal
- Provide audio recordings of lectures or books on tape
- Provide copies of teacher's lecture notes
- Use large-print books, braille, or books on CD (digital text)
- Provide answers to essay-type questions by speaking, rather than writing them down; allowing answers to be given orally or through dictation
- Use of a calculator for math assessments when calculation skills are not being assessed

Modifications are changes to what a child is expected to learn. Modifications are changes that actually lower the standards of performance. In order to provide modifications, modifications must first be identified on a student's Individual Education Program (IEP).

Modifications should be marked only for students with a significant cognitive disability who qualify to take the alternative state assessment in accordance with their IEP. The essential learnings for students who receive modifications are known as Core Content Connectors and can be found at

https://wiki.ncscpartners.org/index.php/Core_Content_Connectors.

Modifications:

- Are substantial changes in what the student is expected to demonstrate
- May be changes in instructional level, content, and performance criteria, and may include changes in test form or format or alternative assignments
- Can increase the gap between the achievement of students with academic/behavioral deficits and expectations for proficiency at a particular grade level

Examples of Modifications:

- Reading a reading test to a student
- Reading a test and rewording/re-explaining questions on the test

- Tests created at the student's reading level
- Tests created including pictures or other visual aids
- Construction of test items at the student's cognitive level of development
- Shortening a spelling test or other assignment

Acceleration

Content Acceleration provides students with content, skills, or understanding that is beyond their grade level or age. Students can work on the advanced content within their current age grade level, in a content replacement pull-out class, or in a classroom above their age grade level.

Students can be accelerated either by skipping to a higher grade or by receiving accelerated instruction in a single subject. On middle and high school report cards, there is no box to check for acceleration. Instead, accelerated placement is reflected in course titles.

Grading Procedures – Grades 7-8

General Information

Teachers will maintain ongoing communication with parents/guardians regarding academics, behavior, grading practices and procedures. It is part of the district standard that parents/guardians are provided a progress report each quarter. In an effort to "go green", all progress reports will be available digitally unless specifically requested in hard copy from the teacher. Parents/guardians will receive a reminder via email, newsletter, or School Messenger to check grades on PowerSchool no later than halfway through the grading period.

Before marking a citizenship (conduct) concern on a report card, parent/guardian contact must be made.

Report cards are required for new students who have attended a DVUSD school for at least 10 days during the quarter and may reflect grades from the previous school.

Special Populations

On the report card, when describing acceleration, accommodation, modification as they relate to student instruction it is appropriate to write *"The curriculum has been accelerated, accommodated, or modified to meet student needs"*. **Do not refer to a student as an English Learner (EL), having an Individualized Education Program (IEP), etc. as this information could lead to discrimination when report card information is disseminated to entities outside of the parents/guardians and school district.**

Achievement in Academic Subjects

Mastery of grade level standards may be assessed in a variety of ways. It is not necessary for all grades to be comprised of written paper work, nor is it always necessary to receive a grade for every paper produced. Although the teacher should monitor and provide feedback to students for activities and assignments, the feedback does not have to be in the form of a single grade.

The individual achievement grade takes into consideration mastery of standards and skill development. Grading should be fair, consistent, reliable, and comprehensive. All grades should be supported by appropriate documentation (e.g., anecdotal notes, work samples, checklists, portfolios, rubrics, projects, tests, performance assessments, etc.). The grade a student receives on any assignment will reflect an accurate assessment of the student's performance on the assessment.

Students in 7th and 8th grades will receive marks for their overall performance in core content and special area classes in each course of study using the following letter grade scale.

A = 90-100%

B = 80-89%

C = 70-79%

D = 60-69%

F = 0-59%

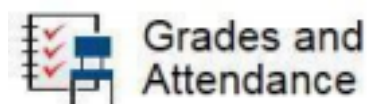
Grades of “D” and above are passing marks. A course grade of “F” indicates that the student has failed the course.

Grade Eligibility

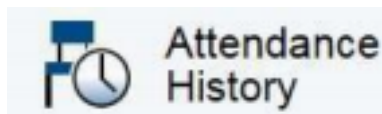
In accordance with the State of Arizona’s regulations and DVUSD Governing Board Policy JJJ (Extracurricular Activity Eligibility), only those students deemed academically eligible may participate in extra or co curricular activities. Athletic eligibility will be determined every week by the administration and Athletic Coordinator at each school. For additional information on this topic, please refer to the following website on eligibility: <http://www.dvUSD.org/Page/11430>

Parents/guardians View of Current and Historical grades

Parents may view their student(s) current grades and current year stored grades in their parent/guardian portal by logging into power schools at <https://ps.dvUSD.org/public/>. Your student(s) information will be located under Grades and Attendance on the left side of the screen.



Parents/guardians may view historical grades for all years under Grade History.



Transfer Procedures for Grades 7 and 8

Grades for 7th & 8th

Transfer grades for completed grading periods:

The school registrar will enter these grades into PowerSchool Historical grades, indicating the school in which these grades were earned. The school registrar will share these transfer grades with school counselors and classroom teachers.

Transfer grades during a current grading period:

The school registrar will give grades to the school counselor and classroom teachers.

Classroom teachers will calculate the transfer grade into the current grading period.

Classroom teachers will need to create an assignment(s) to average this transfer grade in accordingly to their “grade setup/category weighing.”

Students transferring with less than 10 days in the current grading period will receive the grades from their previous school. If these grades are not available, the student will receive an "I" until those grades are available, at which time they will be entered in PowerSchool and a new report card will be issued with the previous school listed. Classroom teachers should exempt these students from any assignment that might fall prior to their placement in that classroom during this grading period regarding Procedures for Incomplete Grades – Grades K-8)

Report cards are required for students who have attended a DVUSD school at least 10 days during the quarter; the DVUSD report card may reflect grades from the previous school.

Grades Different from DVUSD Grading System

When a student brings in course grades that do not match the DVUSD grading system, the following will be used:

<u>Standards Based Grades</u>	<u>Letter</u>	<u>Grading Numerical</u>
Exceeds	A	4
N/A	B	
Meets	C	3
Approaches	D	2
Falls Far Below	F	1

Final End-of-the-Year Grade (Y1) Calculation Procedures – Grades 7-8

Procedure One:

An average of the four quarter grades will produce the final, year-end grade. PowerSchool will do this.

Procedure Two:

If a student has received an F in at least one quarter, teachers are required to calculate a student's final grade based on grade points using the following four-point scale. **Students are required to earn a minimum of three points over four quarters in each class to promote to the next grade level.**

A = 4 points

B = 3 points

C = 2 points

D = 1 point

F = 0 points

In the case that a student might be missing specific quarter grades, the teacher will check with their school registrars to make sure they have grades from previous schools, take the grades they have received and average for a final Y1 grade. The final grade will then be assigned based on the average of the points using the above scale.

Year End Grade Setup in PowerTeacher Pro Gradebook

Teachers (7th/8th) will be responsible to configure their Grade Setup for Y1 in PowerTeacher Pro Gradebook in order for the Y1 grade to be stored correctly. **Prior to grades being stored, teachers/counselors would verify all students are in compliance with the grading and transfer procedures outlined in this handbook.**

The exception to this is the actual average of 0.5. If this is the average, the teacher must then average the percentage from each quarter. The averaged percent will then determine the final grade.

Citizenship (Conduct)

Teachers will assign one conduct grade E, S, N, U for each subject which will reflect the student's attitude, level of learning, enthusiasm, responsibility, and participation in learning. **Citizenship (conduct) grades do not affect inclusion on Honor Roll or Principal's List but could impact the ability to participate in extracurricular sports and activities.**

High School Courses in Middle School

Upon course approval, a middle school student may take a district approved high school course either on their campus if offered or with **Aspire** - Deer Valley's Online Academy. These approved high school courses will follow the same enrollment guidelines as if the student was taking the class during their high school years.

All high school courses will be reflected on the student's high school transcript with credit earned toward graduation requirements with a passing grade. Honor courses are weighted into the student's grade point average (GPA) with an added value of 1, which will be reflected on the transcript. A middle school student withdrawing from a high school class will have a WP or WF grade posted on the student's high school transcript, but not factored into GPA or class ranking (see below Procedures for Course Withdrawal).

The high school course offered at the middle school utilizes high school curriculum, assessments and grading criteria of the high school course. All courses will be given a letter grade.

Students who transfer into a DVUSD middle school with a high school course (e.g. Algebra 1-2) will be placed in the course that is most similar to that course.

Students who have earned high school credit will be provided with a Deer Valley Unified School District transcript.

Course Level Placement Changes

Students who request an honors level high school course are accepting the rigor that comes with the high school academic course. Once the student and parents/guardians agree to the requirements, the student will be enrolled in the high school honors course. Only a teacher can recommend students for a placement change in an advanced academic class. The teacher will only consider students for a placement change whose effort is consistent with the expectation yet show limited success in the class.

Procedures for Course Withdrawal

Any student, regular, (H), (AP), or (IB), who withdraws from a class after the first fifteen (15) days of the semester, but before the end of the tenth (10) week, will receive a grade of WP or WF. Requests for class withdrawals will not be processed after the tenth (10) week of the semester. WP or WF grades will be posted on a student's transcript but not factored into GPA or class ranking. (See DVUSD Academic Planning Guide page 11.)

Transfer Procedures for High School Courses

Students who transfer into a high school course at a middle school campus after the fifth week of school (25th day of the class) can complete a placement assessment, proficiency test, high school course test out exam to show mastery of prerequisite course material for the placement in the course.

Promotion Ceremony Procedures

In order to participate in the Promotion Ceremony, Deer Valley Unified School District promotion and retention

procedure states that students must receive a final year end passing grade of a D average or better in each of the following courses: Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, PE, and Exploratory. All Exploratory course grades will be averaged for a final year end grade. Behavior may also be a determining factor.

Home Practice

DVUSD Board Policy IKB, Homework, states:

The Board recognizes that development of study skills and self-discipline are integral and indispensable elements of a quality educational process.

Homework should be assigned on a routine and systematic basis consistent with the maturity, special needs, potential, and achievement level of the individual student. The student should learn that he/she has a responsibility for actively pursuing knowledge without immediate supervision outside of as well as within the classroom.

It is critical that all students, regardless of their intellectual capacity, understand that mastery of skills is not always possible within the time constraints of the classroom. All students should exit the system with a firm foundation for pursuing knowledge and developing skills on an independent* basis.

Homework should not carry the stigma of punishment. Its assignment should be specifically addressed to the objectives outlined herein.

The Superintendent is responsible for procedures that will achieve the following objectives through homework:

- Elevation of deficient performance to acceptable standards
- Reinforcement and mastery of critical skills and concepts. Special emphasis will be placed on mastery of basic skills.
- Challenge through exploration of concepts and skills that complement and elaborate those introduced in the classroom.
- Feedback from the teacher through correction and clarification of all outside assignments.

Home Practice Philosophy

Home practice, sometimes referred to as homework, is essential for increasing and reinforcing student learning and achievement for course standards. Through home practice, teachers provide students opportunities to increase their understanding of essential knowledge relating to course standards. Home practice means a student is engaged in applying new learning in order to get to as close to mastery of a standard as possible. Teachers should assign home practice work that extends course learning in a manner that is appropriate to a student's age, grade level, and achievement level. Home practice work may also be differentiated to meet an individual student's learning needs to help increase student mastery of skills. Student participation is critical in order to receive specific feedback on how to improve and become successful in meeting course standards. In addition to increasing student achievement, home practice also provides the student opportunities to develop critical, independent* study skills and self-discipline for their own educational journey.

The three main types of homework are:

1. **Practice exercises** – providing students with opportunities to apply new knowledge, or review, revise and reinforce newly acquired skills, including:
 - Finishing class work, physical activities, projects and assignment tasks (classwork sent home should not

need the direct supervision of the teacher and can be completed independently* by the student)

- Consolidation exercise e.g. math problems
 - Practicing for mastery e.g. spelling words
 - Reading for pleasure
 - Completing writing tasks
2. **Preparatory homework** – providing opportunities for students to gain background information on a unit of study so that they are better prepared for future lessons, including:
- Background reading
 - Discussion of topics with parents/guardians
 - Researching topics for a class unit or work
 - Collecting items e.g. geometric shapes
 - Preparing and practicing public speaking notes
3. **Extension assignment** – encouraging students to pursue knowledge individually, including:
- Writing e.g. a book review
 - Making or designing something e.g. an artwork
 - Investigations e.g. science, social science
 - Researching e.g. history, local news
 - Information and retrieval skills e.g. using a home computer to find material on the Internet

*Homework is independent practice which reinforces the lesson and is directly related to the lesson. When the student can perform the skill or process without major errors, then s/he is ready to develop fluency by practicing without the availability of the teacher. The parent/guardian should not need to monitor the practice as the student is doing it, but should check the finished product.

Home Practice Guidelines and Procedures

Research provides strong evidence that, when used appropriately, home practice benefits student achievement. To make sure that home practice is appropriate, follow these guidelines:

Time Guidelines

- Carefully assign home practice so that it is appropriate to students' age and achievement levels. Also, be careful that home practice does not take too much time away from other home activities (Marzano & Pickering, 2007).
- Home practice directly related to the standards-based instructional objectives can be assigned using the following time guidelines:
 - Grades 7-8: Up to 120 minutes per night across all content areas
- Content areas need to collaborate on how much work is given each evening.
- Larger projects or assignments should be split up over multiple days.
- Home practice times can be differentiated for the needs of each student.

Assigning Home Practice

- Assign purposeful work for students to practice at home. Focus on giving students home practice tasks such as practicing a skill that has been addressed in class to deepen the students' understanding and knowledge, providing students opportunities to extend their learning through independent* investigation, or allowing for differentiation that allows students to explore topics of their own interest (Marzano &

Pickering, 2007).

- Create home practice opportunities that maximize chances for student completion and success. Ensure home practice is the appropriate level of difficulty for each student so that they may complete the assignments with success independently*. Home practice should also be challenging enough to make it interesting and valuable as a learning tool (Marzano & Pickering, 2007).
- When evaluating home practice, the teacher will provide students valuable feedback on their learning in a variety of ways. Feedback is critical for improving student achievement. If weighting categories is utilized by the school site, home practice should be no more than 5% of the grade.

Parental/Guardian Involvement

- Parental/guardian involvement in home practice should be supportive of student learning without the expectation that parents/guardians are teachers at home or are there to police the students' homework completion, possibly have parents/guardians assist by listening to their students summarize their learning. It is important to recognize that each student has a different support system at home and that successful home practice should be possible for each student in each different home environment (Marzano & Pickering, 2007).
- Parent/guardian access to the PowerSchool portal, ps.dvusd.org, can assist in reviewing assignment due dates, emailing teachers and viewing current grades. Please see the front office staff for login information.

Reference: Marzano, R. & Pickering, D. (2007). The Case for and Against Homework. *Responding to Changing Demographics*, 64(6), 74-79.

Retrieved from: <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/mar07/vol64/num06/The-Case-For-and-Against-Homework.aspx>

Make Up Opportunities

DVUSD Board Regulation IKEA-R (I-7261):

When a student is absent from school, teachers shall provide an opportunity for the student to make up work for any absence in order to close learning gaps from time away from school. A student who is absent from school misses a valuable part of the benefit of in-school education and may experience challenges in understanding content and curriculum that was missed which may put the student at risk from meeting content standards. Adjustments may be made when it is in the best interest of the student(s).

- Each teacher will provide the student's assignment(s) and any handout or materials necessary for accomplishment of such assignment(s), allowing a minimum make up period of one (1) day for each day absent. Teachers may adjust time based on the individual needs of the student or assignment.
 - *Aspire online students have 7 days to complete 5 days of course work, extra time due to absences is not needed as it is already built into a student's schedule.
- School sanctioned and/or approved events should not negatively impact a student's grade.
- Students who miss school work because of unexcused absences or suspensions will be given the opportunity to make up missed work for credit. Teachers shall assign such make up work as necessary to ensure academic progress, not as a punitive measure.
- When age appropriate, the student is responsible to go to his/her teacher(s) the first day back from an absence to find out what work was missed and to develop a plan to make up those assignments. This would include, but is not limited to, such things as notes, homework, tests, laboratory assignments, performances, and projects.
- If the teacher is unable to supply the student with a make-up assignment, the student will not be held responsible for that make up assignment.
- Daily Assignments vs. Long-Term Projects: There is an important distinction between daily/formative

assignments and long-term/summative projects. Make-up policies regarding long-term/summative projects are at the discretion of the individual teacher based on the timeframe of the student's absence and the requirements of the long-term project.

- In situations where the student will be absent for more than (3) three days, due to illness, or when the parent/guardian notifies the office that the student will be absent more than one (1) week for other reasons, teachers may provide required assignments in advance or send assignments with the student.
- In the case of school absences for up to three months due to chronic health conditions certified by a doctor, procedures in DVUSD board regulation, Exclusions and Exemptions from School Attendance (JHD, J-1961) will be followed for student make-up work.

Academic Recognition Grades 7-8

In order to be eligible for academic recognition, students must have full-time status.

Principal's List

All A's (including special area and other elective courses)

No Incompletes

Honor Roll

A's or B's (including special area and other elective courses)

No C's, D's, or F's (including special area and other elective courses)

No Incompletes

NOTE: High school course grades will be reflected in Principal's List and Honor Roll for quarter 2 and quarter 4 grading periods.

Committee Members

The Promotion, Retention, Acceleration & Grading Handbook was revised in order to align the state regulatory statutes and district guidelines for the schools and the district stakeholders. Thank you to the following committee members:

Name	Position	School Location
Gayle Galligan	Deputy Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment	District Office
Kathryn White	Director of Academics and Assessment	District Office
Christine Miller	SSS Representative	District Office
Bernadette Richardson	CIAS / EL	District Office
Jennifer Louis	CIAS / ELA Literacy	District Office
Danell Stephenson	CIAS / ELA High School	District Office
Denise Darre	Lead Counselor	DVHS
Jeff Jasinek	Middle School Counselor	Deer Valley Middle
Sharon Weiser	Principal	Terramar
Paul Strauss	Principal	Mountain Ridge HS
Melissa Sepuka	Principal	Esperanza
JoAnn Schwarting	Principal	Inspiration Mountain
Laura Victor	Principal	Aspire
Tina Marone	Principal	New River
Molly Gillett	Principal	Desert Mountain
Theresa Milks	Principal	Norterra Canyon
Tyler Bachler	Assistant Principal	Desert Sky Middle
Liz Keith	Teacher	Norterra Canyon
Saher Afzal	Teacher	Stetson Hills
Jessica Carr	Teacher	Union Park
Heather Walsh	Teacher	Union Park
Selina Gonzalez	Teacher	
Lari Roque	Lead Registrar	IS&T
Tina Binns	Administrative Assistant	District Office

Notification Letters/Forms

Parent/guardian letters and forms referred to in this document begin on page 51. District letters and forms are sent electronically to administrators, school secretaries, and counselors. These forms include K-8 acceleration, promotion, and retention forms, 7-8 retention/reassignment forms, and a checklist for early entry.

Promotion, Retention, Acceleration & Grading 7-8 Handbook Appendix – School Letters & Forms

Acceleration

<i>K-8 Parent/Guardian Request for Whole Grade Acceleration Form*</i>	Page 57
<i>K-8 Parent/Guardian Request for Single-Subject Acceleration Form*</i>	Page 58

Appeal

<i>K-8 Parent/Guardian Promotion Appeal Form*</i>	Page 59
<i>K-8 Parent /Guardian Retention Appeal Form*</i>	Page 60

<i>Grades 3-8 Walk-Up Math Commitment Form</i>	Page 61
<i>DVUSD Renaissance Highly Gifted Academies Parent/Student Contract</i>	Page 62



Parent/Guardian Request for Whole Grade Acceleration K-8

School _____

Student Name _____ Date of Birth _____ Grade _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian Name _____ Parent/guardian

Phone _____

When circumstances indicate that acceleration in grade placement is in the best interest of the student, close cooperation between the parents/guardians and all school personnel involved is imperative. Each student's placement will be considered individually, and decisions will be made only after a careful study of facts relating to the student's growth and development. The student's academic achievement level and cognitive ability are important, but physical and social characteristics are also determining factors. A decision should be based on sufficient data collected over a period of time, and motivated by a desire to place the student in the school program where the greatest success will result.

If parents/guardians feel grade acceleration is in the best interest of the child they will:

1. Complete this form and submit it to the school's principal
2. Provide academic data that indicates the student has exceeded achievement as measured by Arizona state standards and district expectations for the current grade level.

The principal will meet with parent/guardian and acceleration team as defined in the "Acceleration" section of the "Promotion, Retention, Acceleration and Grading Handbook," and will forward the Iowa Acceleration Scale Summary and Planning Record to the Superintendent for review. The final decision to accelerate a student rests with the Superintendent. Parental/guardian involvement in all steps of the process is vital.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Principal Signature _____ Date _____

Superintendent's Decision:

- ☐ Acceleration request approved
☐ Acceleration request not approved

Comments:

Superintendent Signature _____ Date _____



Parent/Guardian Request for Single-Subject Acceleration K-8

School _____

Student Name _____ Date of Birth _____ Grade _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian Name _____ Parent/guardian

Phone _____ Requesting acceleration in (content area)

When circumstances indicate that acceleration in a single subject is in the best interest of the student, close cooperation between the parents/guardians and all school personnel involved is imperative. Each student's placement will be considered individually and decisions will be made only after a careful study of facts relating to the student's growth and development. The student's academic achievement level and cognitive ability are important, but physical and social characteristics are also determining factors. A decision should be based on sufficient data collected over a period of time, and motivated by a desire to place the student in the school program where the greatest success will result.

If parents/guardians feel single-subject acceleration is in the best interest of the child they will:

1. Complete this form and submit it to the child's teacher
2. Provide the team with academic data that indicates the student has exceeded achievement as measured by Arizona state standards and district expectations for the current grade level.

The principal will meet with parent/guardian and acceleration team as described in the "Acceleration" section of the "Promotion, Retention, Acceleration and Grading Handbook" to determine the best placement for the student. The final decision to accelerate a student in a single subject rests with the principal. Parental/guardian involvement in all steps of the process is vital.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Principal's Decision:

- ☐ Single-subject acceleration request approved for school year
- ☐ Single-subject acceleration request not approved

Comments:

Principal Signature _____ Date _____



K-8 Parent/Guardian Promotion Appeal Form

School _____

Student Name _____ Date of Birth _____ Grade _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian Name _____ Parent/guardian Phone _____

Address _____

Parent/guardian Email _____

1. Within five days from the notification of intent to promote, parent/guardian will complete a Promotion Appeal form, submit it to the school secretary and schedule a meeting with the principal.
2. The appeal process will start immediately upon the parent/guardian's completion and submission of an Appeal form and all documentation.
3. Parent/guardian appeals to the Governing Board will be reviewed in June.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Please state your position as factually as possible using the space below. If additional sheets are required, please attach them to this form. Gather all pertinent data and documentation to support your appeal and attach to this form.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____



K-8 Parent/Guardian Retention Appeal Form

School _____

Student Name _____ Date of Birth _____ Grade _____ Date _____

Guardian Name _____ Parent/guardian Phone _____

Address _____

Parent/guardian Email _____

1. Within five days from the notification of intent to retain, parent/guardian will complete a Retention Appeal form, submit it to the school secretary, and schedule a meeting with the principal.
2. The appeal process will start immediately upon the parent/legal guardian's completion and submission of an Appeal form and all documentation.
3. Parent/guardian appeals to the Governing Board will be reviewed in June.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Please state your position as factually as possible using the space below. If additional sheets are required, please attach them to this form. Gather all pertinent data and documentation to support your appeal and attach to this form.

Parent/guardian Signature _____ Date _____



DEER VALLEY
Unified School District

(Grades 3-8) Walk-Up Math Commitment Form

(*Return a signed copy of this Commitment Form to your child's homeroom teacher.)

Student Name: _____ Student ID Number: _____ Grade: _____

DVUSD encourages all students to appropriately challenge themselves and participate in rigorous courses of study. We are pleased to offer Walk-Up Math for third through eighth grades to your child. Students will progress quickly through and "skip" grade level content, learn above grade level standards, and apply these standards through hands-on, project-based formats. Your child was selected for the Walk-Up Math Program due to their high achievement on mathematics related assessments and teacher input.

Benefits of participation in Walk-Up To Math classes include:

- Accelerated mathematics curriculum
- Building a firm foundation for higher mathematics throughout middle and high school
- Enjoyment of mathematics learning
- Challenging curriculum focused on mastery and application
- Development of strong study skills and scholarly habits

While your child demonstrates the academic skills necessary to succeed in this program, other factors are directly correlated to a student's success. Therefore, you and your child should review the list of expectations and sign the agreement form (below).

Required Student Expectations:

- Actively participate in class
- Finish homework on time
- Show respectful and positive behaviors with classmates and teacher
- Attend class regularly
- Participate in higher level thinking and application in the area of mathematics
- Maintain overall proficiency and performance in class

These commitments will be reviewed along with grades and classroom behavior to determine if continued placement in the Walk-Up To Math class is appropriate at the end of each quarter.

Select ONE of the Following Responses to Accept -OR- Decline Walk-Up Math Placement:

_____ **YES. I ACCEPT.** My signature below indicates I have read this Commitment Form, wish to participate and will make every effort to take full advantage of the Walk-Up Math program at my school.

(Student Signature)

(Parent/Guardian Signature) / _____
(Date)

_____ **NO. I DECLINE.** I do not wish to participate in Walk-Up Math.

(Student Signature)

(Parent/Guardian Signature) / _____
(Date)

Revised 3.2.2023 Gifted Taskforce



DVUSD Renaissance Highly Gifted Academies (2024-2025 Parent/ Student Contract)

Deer Valley Renaissance Highly Gifted Academies are designed for high-achieving, highly gifted students. As a specialized program that attempts to meet the learning needs of a small and specific group of gifted students, the DVUSD strives to ensure that the most appropriate placements are made based on student need. A contract specifying the participation criteria of this program has been developed with the goal of establishing a learning environment that leads to success in this highly advanced and accelerated program.

As a parent of a child in the Renaissance program, I understand that students are expected to act in accordance with all policies of the Deer Valley Unified School District, in accordance with the school's expectations. The five components described here establish the guidelines that determine my child's eligibility to participate in Renaissance Highly Gifted Academies. As a parent of a student in this program, I realize the importance of my child continuing to meet the expectations of the program and understand that his/her continuation in the program will be determined based on the following criteria:

I. Academic Achievement – Renaissance provides a highly specialized, learning environment that is tailored to meet the academic needs of students 1-2 years above grade level. Students participating in the program should demonstrate appropriate academic progress that is commensurate with student potential and is reflective of teachers' expectations.

II. Personal Conduct – Renaissance teachers are trained to meet the affective needs of highly gifted learners. Teachers will employ a variety of strategies to nurture students' fullest potential. At the same time, students participating in a Renaissance Program are expected to demonstrate ethical use of technology and maintain respectful behavior with classmates and teachers.

III. Interpersonal Communication – Communication between home and school is a key component of student success. Parents and students are encouraged to approach the teacher with concerns and/or questions as they arise. Each Renaissance teacher will utilize their preferred communication tool to promote a positive learning environment.

IV. Attendance – Attendance is a crucial component of student academic success. Significant absences often lead to gaps in learning and a decrease in student academic success. Students participating in a Renaissance Program will maintain a reasonable attendance record.

V. Work Ethic – Classroom assignments within a Renaissance environment are designed to promote higher levels of critical thinking and academic discourse. Renaissance students complete a multitude of projects each year they participate in the program. Assignments are expected to be completed in a timely manner. Submitted assignments should reflect evidence of student effort in producing quality work. Students are expected to demonstrate academic integrity in all classes. All assignments should reflect students' personal level of knowledge and academic ability.

I agree that if my child's conduct is not in accordance with the above criteria, then the following interventions will occur:

1. **First Meeting** – Teacher, student, and parent(s) will meet to set student goals. Documented goals will include specific timelines and steps my child is expected to make and interventions the teacher will make.
2. **Second Meeting** – Teacher, student, parent(s), and principal will meet to evaluate progress and re-evaluate student goals. Students who meet success resume Renaissance Programming.
3. **Probationary Period** – If adequate progress has not been achieved, written notification of Probationary Status will document specific criteria that need to occur for continuation in the program.
4. **Removal from Program** – If adequate progress has not been achieved, an alternative placement in another DVUSD Gifted Program will be recommended.

Parent Signature/ Date

Student Signature/ Date

Student Name (Please Print)

**Revised 2/24/2023 Gifted Services*