

**GRADING,  
REPORTING,  
AND  
GRADUATION  
GUIDE**



**DVUSD  
SUPERINTENDENT  
CURTIS FINCH, PH.D.**

**2026-2027**

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**2026-2027**

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## Table of Contents

### Introduction

Statement and Purpose of Guide	5
DVUSD Beliefs about Grading, Reporting, and Graduation	5

### General Policies and Procedures

Registration Requirements	7
Student VISAS	7
GED Recipients	7
Homeschooled Students	8
Cohort Year	9
State Achievement Testing	9

### Transfer of Credits

Transfer Credits from Accredited Institutions	10
Arizona Online Instruction (AOI) Credit Transfer	10
College Concurrent Enrollment Credits	10
High School Credits Earned in Middle School	10
Proficiency Exam Procedures (Math Only)	11

### Course Scheduling

Education and Career Action Plan (ECAP) Course Selection	11
Science Pathways (Course of Study)	12
Student Course Loads	12
Auditing Courses	12
Student Athlete Course Selection	13
Loss of Credit Due to Absences	13
Course Level Placement Changes	13
Early Departure and Earned Credit	14
Textbook/Materials	14
Course Level Placement Changes	14

### Services Available

Counseling Services	14
English Language Acquisition Services	14
Homebound Services	14
Special Education Services	14
Translation Services	15

Gifted and Advanced Learning	15
Honors Courses	15
Advanced Placement (AP)	15
Dual Enrollment (DE)	15
International Baccalaureate (IB)	15
NAF Academies	16
Project Lead The Way (PLTW)	16
<b>Homebound Students</b>	17
Homebound Teacher Responsibilities	17
Classroom Teacher of Record Responsibilities	17
<b>Intervention</b>	18
<b>Student Athletes - No Pass/No Play</b>	18
<b>Parent-Teacher Communication</b>	19
Parent Portal in PowerSchool	19
Parent Observation of Canvas Course	21
Home Practice	22
<b>Grading</b>	
DVUSD Grading Philosophy	24
<b>Meaningful Grades</b>	25
<b>High School Grade Scales</b>	26
Overall Standards Grades	26
Overall Course Grades	26
Categories and Weights	27
Role of PLC Teams in Grading	28
<b>Behavior and Academic Grading</b>	28
Absence Work	30
Late And Missing Work	31
Reassessment	32
Extra Credit	34
Academic Integrity	34
Incompletes	35
Final Assessments	35
Test Outs Grade	36
Dual Enrollment Grades	36
Grade Enhancement	37
Grade Improvement	37
Credit Recovery	37

<b>Grading Special Populations of Students</b>	38
Differentiation, Scaffolding, Accommodations, Modifications	38
Grading Students with Modifications	39
Grading Students with English Language Learning Supports	40
IB MYP Grades	42
<b>Grade Appeal</b>	43
<b>Reporting</b>	
PowerTeacher Pro Setup	45
PowerSchool Access - Students and Parents/Guardians	45
Timely Reporting of Grades	45
Report Cards	46
Grade Changes After Grades Are Stored	46
Transcripts	46
Transcript Translation Request	46
Grade Point Averages (GPA)	47
Class Ranking	48
<b>Graduation</b>	
Graduation Requirements	50
Civics Assessment	51
Cardio-Pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) Requirement	51
Early Graduation	51
Late Graduation	51
Graduation Ceremony	52
Academic Recognitions	53
University and College Entrance Requirements	56
<b>Appendix</b>	
Letters and Forms	59
AZ State Statutes	59
AZ Administrative Code	59
DVUSD Governing Board Policies	60
Glossary	62

# Introduction

## Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this Grading, Reporting, and Graduation Guide is to clarify and communicate policies and procedures at all high schools, in order to ensure transparency, consistency, and accountability to reach the following goals.

- Ensure grades are based on student achievement, knowledge, and skill proficiency demonstrated in the classroom and are separated from work habits
- Promote consistency in grading across teams, departments, and schools
- Promote practices that encourage continuous engagement in learning
- Provide parents and students with ongoing, credible, and useful feedback that conveys the expectations and achievement of identified standards of knowledge included in the curriculum
- Ensure alignment of curriculum, instruction, and assessment
- Provide relevant data necessary for awarding credit, recognitions, and graduation

In order to increase consistency among teachers and schools, teachers are expected to adhere to the procedures outlined in this Grading, Reporting, and Graduation Guide.

## DVUSD Beliefs about Grading, Reporting, and Graduation

The purpose of grading and reporting is to communicate students' academic progress towards meeting learning standards. 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. All students will graduate from high school prepared for postsecondary success in college, careers, and citizenship.

# **GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

# General Policies and Procedures

## Registration Requirements

To register at a Deer Valley USD high school, there are several requirements that must be met. **Parents/guardians will need to present the following items at registration:**

- Transcript or report card, current grades (if in progress), and withdrawal from previous school
- Birth certificate or certified copy
- Proof of guardianship (legal guardians are required to provide the school with proof of guardianship or have filed a petition for appointment of temporary or permanent guardianship)
- For students less than 16 years old who are new to DVUSD, and registering for 9<sup>th</sup> grade for the first time, proof of promotion from the 8<sup>th</sup> grade is required (promotion certificate or evidence of competency in 8th grade standards)
- Proof of current residency required (e.g. utility bill, rent receipt, lease agreement, escrow document, etc.)
- Per ARS 15-872, immunization records must be provided in order for the student to attend school unless the student has provided full disclosure of the requirements for exemption

## Student Visas

F-1 Student Visa is issued to international students wishing to pursue academic studies in the United States. A student on an F-1 Visa is required to have a TOEFL paper score of at least 450 or a TOEFL iBT score of at least 60, showing proficiency in reading and speaking English, or an ELTiS score of at least 200. A student on an F-1 Visa is limited to 12 months of public education and must pay tuition (the full, unsubsidized, per capita cost of providing the education).

J-1 Exchange Student Visa is issued to international students to participate in a program of study specifically designed through the United States Department of State. J-1 exchange students are not required to participate in the state EL exam. J-1 exchange students are considered foreign exchange students and do not pay district tuition. Participating high schools are limited to accepting two tuition-free J-1 Exchange Students per participating campus. I-94 (Arrival-Departure Record) are official travel documents that foreign citizens coming to the United States must have in their possession to show their country of citizenship and legal status in the U.S.

Both F-1 and J-1 international students will be enrolled as a junior and placed into junior level courses. International students must be enrolled for a full year, not a partial year or semester, and must be in attendance at the school by the 20th day of the school year. International students will not be eligible to earn a DVUSD diploma nor participate in the graduation ceremonies. F-1 and J-1 international students are not required to participate in the state EL exam.

## GED Recipients

Students who have received a GED are considered to have completed high school requirements and are not permitted to enroll.

## Homeschooled Students and ESA Program Students

Parents of homeschooled students ages 6-16 are required to file a notarized Affidavit of Intent to Homeschool with the County School Superintendent within 30 days of starting to homeschool (A.R.S. 15-802). To be granted approval to homeschool, the student may not be enrolled in a virtual charter school/public school online or participate in the Empowerment Scholarship Account Program (ESA). Students taking courses with an online educational institution are not deemed homeschooled.

### Enrollment in a DVUSD School - Termination of Homeschooled Status

- To end homeschool instruction and enroll in a public school, the parent will need to notify the County School Superintendent within 30 days of termination of homeschool. It is recommended to do this step in writing.
- Homeschooled students who are terminating homeschool status and requesting to enroll in 9th grade who are less than 16 years of age will be tested to determine educational placement in high school (A.R.S. 15-745).
- High School credits earned through homeschooling will not be accepted as transfer credits. Transferring credits must be earned through an accredited school (see Transfer of Credits). Students may request a Test-Out exam of 9th and 10th grade level core courses.
- Students who are recipients of the ESA (Empowerment Scholarship Account) must notify DVUSD of their ESA status and are required to pay tuition for DVUSD elective only courses.

### Enrollment in a DVUSD School or Program – Continuation of Homeschooled Status

- Homeschooled and ESA program students may take elective courses only with a DVUSD high school or Aspire Deer Valley's Online Academy providing space is available and prerequisites have been met. All registration paperwork is required, including immunization records, proof of residence, etc. Homeschooled students must also submit a copy of the notarized Affidavit of Intent to Homeschool. Students who are recipients of the ESA (Empowerment Scholarship Account) must notify DVUSD of their ESA status and are required to pay tuition for each semester of an elective course.
- Homeschooled and ESA recipient students may participate in an after school program, such as Band or Choir, if the program is a direct extension of an elective course the student is enrolled in. If the program operates strictly as a club or extracurricular activity independent of an elective during the school day, homeschooled and ESA students are not eligible to participate.
- Homeschooled students may enroll in a West-MEC program without enrolling in a public school.
- Homeschooled students may not earn a diploma from a DVUSD school.
- Only students enrolled at a DVUSD school in grades 9 through 12, inclusive, are eligible for interscholastic competition, team practices and tryouts. However, homeschooled students may be eligible to participate in DVUSD athletics and extracurricular activities without enrolling in a DVUSD school if said student is in compliance with A.R.S.15-802.01(A). The parent must present a notarized copy of the Affidavit for Intent to Homeschool and submit the required athletic participation paperwork and fees.

## Cohort Year

Upon promotion to 9<sup>th</sup> grade **AND** enrollment in their first state accredited high school class, a student is assigned a cohort year. This year designates their anticipated graduation year, calculated as four years from their initial high school entry. For instance, students entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade in the fall of 2030 are designated as the 2034 cohort. This cohort assignment remains the same throughout the student's high school tenure.

## State Achievement Testing Information

The American Civics Act (HB 2064) requires each student to pass a civics test in order to graduate from high school. The test will be available to students at DVUSD schools beginning in the 8th grade through 12th grade. Once a student achieves a passing score, the student will not be required to take the test again. All students in 9th grade must take the ACT Aspire Test and all students enrolled in 11th grade must take the ACT and the AzSCI assessments. Although passing the ACT Aspire, ACT, or AZSCI tests are not a requirement for graduation, test results may be used for placement in intervention programs and/or used for grade enhancement. The assessment results also allow parents and educators to see how the students are progressing in school and whether or not they are on track for postsecondary success.

## Transfer of Credits

The following are the guidelines for transfer of high school credit. High school credit is usually earned when a student regularly attends and satisfactorily completes the requirements of a DVUSD course. Courses that meet daily for a semester represent 0.5 credits (a minimum of 80 hours). Those that meet daily for an entire school year represent 1.0 credit (160 hours). It is necessary to standardize other ways by which a student may earn high school credit and satisfy graduation requirements. **Honors courses completed in another district must correlate with DVUSD honors courses in order for weighted credit to be awarded.**

A transfer credit may or may not:

- Count towards the number of credits required for graduation
- Fulfill a subject area graduation requirement
- Be used to calculate grade point average
- Be weighted or not be weighted for high school purposes, but not be weighted for college admission
- Meet the entrance requirements for Arizona universities

*No core credit transfers automatically. All transfer credits are subject to review by site and district staff, regardless of issuing institution. Transferring core courses must be provided by an accredited school. DVUSD does not accept religious-based courses for transfer.*

## Transfer Credits from Accredited Institutions

Transfer credits from accredited institutions will be granted when a transcript evaluation has been completed and courses are equivalent to the courses listed in the Academic Planning Guide. If the school site disputes a transferred credit, the student must provide the course description from the institution and a copy of the final course assessment in order to evaluate equivalency. Final appeals may be brought to the District.

## Arizona Online Instruction (AOI) High School Course Credit Transfer

Students who take an AOI course not pre-approved by a DVUSD school counselor and receive credit for the course through the AOI organization will have the credit accepted as elective credit only unless a Test-Out is taken and passed successfully for core credit. The Test-Out score will be the grade recorded for the core class on the DVUSD transcript.

All out-of-district course credits must be approved by a counselor prior to enrolling in the course. A maximum of three (3) concurrently earned credits (over a student's four years) may be accepted from a non-DVUSD high school or external AOI institution.

Students who transfer in from an AOI after the 20th day of the semester may be enrolled in DVUSD courses; however, any courses taken may be on an audit basis for that semester.

***Please note: Students receiving online instruction are not deemed home schooled.***

## College-Concurrent Enrollment Credits

Only pre-approved courses may be accepted from a college for high school credit. This approval must be done through high school counselors. Only courses level 100 and above and 3 college credits or more may be transferred. Courses earning 3-5 college credits transfer as .5 high school credits, except MAT187, MAT188, MAT221 AND MAT231 which transfer as 1.0 high school credits with the college course grade posted for both semesters of the high school credit. Students must provide official transcripts from the college to be granted credit. Please note the college will not send transcripts to the high school without payment and written approval from the student.

## High School Credits Earned in Middle School

Credits earned in middle school may be submitted for high school credit only when the credits appear on an official high school transcript. The course implemented must utilize the curriculum, assessments, and grading criteria of the high school course. All high school courses must be given a grade, which is posted on a high school transcript. A student may take a Test Out exam for a high school course taken in middle school that does not appear on an official high school transcript. Advanced Placement (AP) courses do not require a Test Out exam for middle school transfer students as long as the course is posted on the student's report card (with or without AP marked) and the student has a valid AP exam score for the course.

## Proficiency Exam Procedures (Math Only)

The purpose of a proficiency exam is to accurately place a student in a high school math course if that student has not taken the traditionally named sequence of math courses as defined by DVUSD (Algebra 1-2, Geometry, Algebra 3-4). Students who believe they have taken a similar course to a DVUSD high school math course may request a proficiency exam up to the first 10 days of class or prior to enrollment. If a student successfully completes the proficiency exam with a score of 80% or higher, the student will be placed in the next course in the district's math sequence. If a student attempts the proficiency exam and fails, he/she may not repeat the proficiency exam. The Algebra 1-2 Proficiency exam places students into Geometry 1-2 and the Geometry 1-2 Proficiency Exam places students into Algebra 3-4 (these are the only high school proficiency exams available in math).

Students will not receive high school credit for a proficiency exam. Students must take a Test-Out to receive credit for a high school math course. Students are welcome to schedule a Test-Out after completing the proficiency exam; however, the proficiency exam is not required to qualify for a Test-Out.

The district does not provide study guides, textbooks, or other types of assistance for proficiency exams or Test Outs.

## Course Scheduling

### Education and Career Action Plan (ECAP)

An Education and Career Action Plan (ECAP) reflects a student's current plan of coursework, career aspirations, and extended learning opportunities in order to develop the student's individual academic and career goals. Every student in grades 9-12 shall develop an ECAP in consultation with a school counselor and parent or guardian. The student ECAP may be revised throughout high school to ensure that the student has the opportunity to study careers of the student's choice. Parents and students may review the student's ECAP on the MajorClarity platform by selecting "My Career Plan." MajorClarity is accessed using the DVUSD Clever Portal.

### Course Selection

For course descriptions and other information about courses and programs available to high school students, see the DVUSD Academic Planning Guide (APG). Students and parents/guardians can access the Academic Planning Guide on the DVUSD website (dvusd.org) by clicking on the "A-Z Guide" tab and selecting "Handbooks."

## Science Pathways (Course of Study)

In Arizona, students are required to take 3 credits of high school science aligned to standards in physical, earth and space, and life sciences to meet graduation requirements. Every high school student must learn all high school essential standards regardless of the 3-credit course sequence that they take. Essential High School Science Standards are designed to provide opportunities for students to develop an understanding of all 14 core ideas across three credits of high school science. DVUSD has established course pathways for students to ensure they receive instruction in all of the essential standards during the first three years of high school in preparation for the state assessment in 11th grade. All science course pathways require students to take either Biology or Biology Honors.

## Student Course Loads

Freshmen, sophomores, and juniors must be enrolled in six DVUSD credit classes which may include on campus, Aspire Deer Valley's Online Academy courses, and West- MEC programs. Senior year students must be enrolled in a minimum of four courses, which may include DVUSD courses, Aspire Deer Valley's Online Learning Academy, or West-MEC courses (some West-MEC courses may count for more than one course). In addition to DVUSD and West-MEC courses, students may also take courses with in-state community colleges or universities if pre-approved as part of a special high school program with the expectation that they submit their transcripts to the DVUSD campus to include on their high school transcript. Full time Aspire students will graduate from Aspire and full-time college students are not eligible to enroll with DVUSD.

Seniors deficient in credits to graduate must be enrolled in up to six DVUSD credit-bearing courses which may include on campus, off-site CTE programs, Aspire, approved in-state community college courses, and West-MEC Programs.

If a student does not graduate due to credit deficiency, the student can:

- Complete deficient credit(s) during the summer before September 1st to receive a DVUSD diploma from the previous school year
- Take a minimum of one class on home campus and/or with Aspire Deer Valley's Online Academy the following semester to receive a DVUSD diploma

## Auditing Courses

Audits are primarily for students who enter school after the 20th day. Approved audits are official agreements and will be noted as an "N" on the student's transcript. Under no circumstances will an audit request be granted in order to avoid the consequence of a grade.

## Student Athletes - Course Selection Notice

Students who plan to play athletics in college for a NCAA D-I or D-II level school should review requirements at the NCAA Eligibility Center at [www.eligibilitycenter.org](http://www.eligibilitycenter.org). Also, students interested in playing championship sports at NAIA colleges need to register and receive an eligibility determination at <http://www.playnaia.org/>. All credit recovery or credit improvement courses need to be approved by a counselor. Core courses offered through Aspire Deer Valley Online Academy has been approved by the NCAA. Potential NCAA athletes should not sign up for any Aspire Deer Valley Online Academy courses designated as "credit recovery" courses. Additional information can be found by referencing: [http://fs.ncaa.org/Docs/eligibility\\_center/Quick\\_Reference\\_Sheet.pdf](http://fs.ncaa.org/Docs/eligibility_center/Quick_Reference_Sheet.pdf).

## Loss of Credit Due to Absences

Research shows that regular attendance is an important factor in student achievement, so it is important that students are present and ready to learn each day. Arizona State Statute (A.R.S. 15-843) and DVUSD Governing Board Policy (JE-RB) dictates that a student must be in class for a minimum amount of time to earn credit for any course. Twelve (12) absences per semester are allowed for illness, disease, accident, family emergencies, or religious purposes. A student with more than 12 absences in a course may have credit for the course withheld. A student may appeal the twelve (12) absence limit if additional absences are due solely to illness, disease, accident, family emergencies, and religious purposes. Written verification by the appropriate person, doctor, licensed health professional, parent, or clergyman may be required for additional absences.

When credit is withheld, a student earning an "F" at the end of the grading term will have an "F" posted on the transcript with zero credit awarded. A student earning a passing grade at the end of the grading term will have **No Credit (NC)** posted on the transcript with zero credit awarded.

Students taking online or blended courses in DVUSD are required to complete online attendance logs ([MyHours.dvUSD.org](http://MyHours.dvUSD.org)) each week or the student is subject to being dropped or withdrawn from the online course.

## Course Level Placement Changes

Students who request an Honors course, AP course, or IB course are accepting the rigor that comes with these advanced academic courses. Once students and parents agree to the requirements, they will be enrolled in an advanced academic 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 shows limited success in the class. Students may request a level change from a regular level course to an honors level course within the first 15 days of the semester, provided there is sufficient data that such a change is merited.

## Early Departure and Earned Credit

Under emergency situations (deemed by administration), a student who has been attending school may be allowed to be absent or withdrawn from school and earn credit for the semester in which the emergency occurred. Upon administrative approval, a completion of credit plan will be put in place by the school team consisting of the student, parents/guardians, teachers, counselors, and administration to assure that the student satisfies all course requirements with options considered. If course requirements are not met, the student will not be awarded credit.

## Textbook/Materials

A charge will be applied if textbooks, materials, or library books are lost or damaged. Repair or replacement costs will be charged to students for school-issued digital devices (iPads, Chromebooks, etc.) that are lost or damaged. An Optional Device Protection Plan is available to students/parents if purchased within three weeks of receipt of the device. Go to [www.dvUSD.org](http://www.dvUSD.org) (A- Z Guide > Instructional Technology > 1:1 Student Devices) for more information.

## Services Available

### Counseling Services

A comprehensive school counseling program is offered at all high schools to promote and enhance the learning process. DVUSD school counseling programs facilitate student development in three areas; academic development, career development, and personal/social development. Students will develop an Educational Career Action Plan (ECAP) that reflects the current plan of coursework, career aspirations, and extended learning opportunities. Additionally, a Wellness Counselor may be available at each high school to provide therapeutic and/or crisis counseling services to students.

### English Acquisition Services

All campuses provide services for English Learners. DVUSD follows the Pull Out and Two Hour models, providing both targeted and integrated instruction to ensure that all ELs are successful in both English acquisition and content area courses to meet graduation requirements.

### Homebound Services

Students who must be absent from school due to extended illness (90 days) may be eligible for homebound instruction with doctor's orders. Homebound applications are available in each school site's nurse's office. Technology is provided by the home school. The teacher of record supplies hard copies to homebound teachers, as needed.

### Special Education Services

DVUSD provides a full continuum of Special Education supports and services to eligible students as stated on the student's IEP under IDEA.

## Translation Services

Contact the Curriculum Secretary at 623-445-4910 for available translated documents and information. *Contacte al Secretario de Curriculum al 623-445-4910 para obtener cualquier información y documentos disponibles que se puedan traducir.*

## Gifted and Advanced Learning

All schools offer Honors, AP, and Dual Enrollment courses and most offer unique gifted programs and services.

## Honors Courses

Honors courses provide an in-depth study and are designed to prepare students for AP and IB courses. Teacher recommendation, grades, and test scores are considered for eligibility in the course.

## Advanced Placement (AP)

The AP Program offers college-level courses to high school students. In AP courses, students can earn college credit, placement, or both with qualifying AP exam scores. Exams are taken in late spring of each year. At the conclusion of the AP course, the student will participate in the national examinations. Students will pay the required College Board fee for each exam the student registers to take. Students who perform adequately on the exam may be awarded university or college credits (score of 3 or higher, based on the course and school), depending upon the issuing institution. The course is equivalent to a university level course and is designed to challenge the student.

## Dual Enrollment (DE)

Dual Enrollment credits are offered for specified courses. These courses are offered at the high school and taught by high school teachers with college certification. There will be a college tuition fee for these courses. Students must qualify for in-state residency in order to qualify for in-state tuition with the community college. Students who take DE classes and earn both high school and college credit concurrently.

[www.aztransfer.com](http://www.aztransfer.com) is a website that has tools designed to help students taking dual enrollment classes make informed decisions regarding earned credits and how those credits will be transferred to Arizona's state universities degree programs.

## International Baccalaureate (IB)

Barry Goldwater High School offers the IB Middle Years Programme, Diploma Programme, and Career-Related Programme. The IB Program is an honors program with a comprehensive and rigorous liberal arts curriculum, focusing on global connections, practical experiences, and real world studies. It is designed for highly motivated students interested in challenging coursework that engages their creative talents, develops critical thought, and instills excellent citizenship.

Students from the entire Deer Valley Unified School District may attend through open enrollment. Regional transportation may be provided.

## National Academy Foundation (NAF)

Each NAF Academy operates as a “school within a school” at Deer Valley High School and Mountain Ridge High School. The Deer Valley High School Academy for Hospitality and Tourism and the Mountain Ridge High School Academy for Entrepreneurship are two/three/four year programs with a senior year option for internships. **NAF** (formerly known as National Academy Foundation) is an educational non-profit organization. The mission of **NAF** is to solve some of the biggest challenges facing education and the economy by bringing education, business, and community leaders together to transform the high school experience.

## Project Lead the Way (PLTW)

Project Lead the Way is a rigorous, hands-on three year program offered at Boulder Creek High School (Engineering) and Mountain Ridge High School (BioScience and Engineering). Each program offers a senior year capstone, where students work on challenging problems requiring critical thinking, collaboration, goal setting, planning, and delivery of specified outcomes. Colleges and universities across the U.S. recognize and reward PLTW students for their great work. These postsecondary institutions recognize PLTW students with scholarships, admissions preference, course credit, and more.

# Homebound Students

For homebound students, the teacher of record is the classroom or online teacher. For homebound students participating with the Aspire Deer Valley's Online Academy, the teacher of record is the online 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, 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 or a student who is capable 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 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

- The 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 and utilizing appropriate materials and techniques to keep the student working at the student’s assigned grade level. This will be done in conjunction 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 semester so the student’s transcripts/records will accurately reflect the student’s 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 Instructor will ask for a meeting with the appropriate school staff and the parent 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, 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 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.
- The classroom teacher will ensure that the student has the appropriate access to textbooks, materials, and assignments. Classroom teachers will provide hard copies of assignments, presentations, and assessments, if electronic copies are not available.

## Intervention

An instructional intervention is a specific program or set of steps to help a student improve in an area of academic or behavioral need(s). Interventions are designed so that parents/guardians and the school can track the student's progress for improvement. In an effort to ensure success for all students, Tier II and Tier III Interventions have been structured at all grade levels.

## Student Athletes - No Pass/No Play

The athletic program will make every effort to support each school's mission of achieving academic excellence. Athletics are an integral part of the educational process and will help support the school's overall curriculum. Participants will be considered student-athletes rather than just students or just athletes. The State Board of Education, as mandated by the Arizona State Legislature, requires each school district to have in place a "NO PASS/NO PLAY" policy. Athletics, speech, theater, band, spirit line, and competitive academic clubs are all defined as extra-curricular activities that fall under the "NO PASS/NO PLAY" policy. All students participating in district-sanctioned athletic events must maintain a passing grade in all classes. (see "High School Grade Scales" on page 28).

In order to represent DVUSD in an extracurricular activity, the student and the parent/guardian shall be notified when:

- Ineligibility is pending
- Ineligibility is determined to be necessary

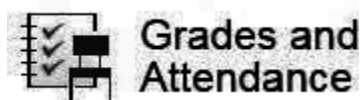
# Parent-Teacher Communication

DVUSD strongly values a parent/guardian's role in a student's education. 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. Teachers can help parents stay involved and informed about the student's academic progress through ongoing communication. Parent contact or attempt to contact parents by phone, conference, or email should be kept on file by the teacher. Records should include the date, student name, parent name, phone number, and notes concerning the contents and results of the conversation. For more information, contact the campus administrator.

Conferences between parents/guardians and teachers are encouraged. This one-on-one interaction promotes 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. A dedicated day for Parent-Teacher conferences is available on the high school campuses midway through the first semester. Additional conferences can be requested by the teacher or parent/guardian.

## Parent Portal in PowerSchool

DVUSD provides parents/guardians with a means of staying up-to-date with the student'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. PowerSchool may be accessed from any place the parent/guardian can access the Internet. To create an account, the parent will need to request an Access ID and Access Password for each child they wish to associate with their parent account from the school. Please note that when a parent sets up their PowerSchool account, the password they create cannot contain any special characters or an email address.



Parents/guardians may view the student's current grades and current year stored grades in the parent portal by logging into PowerSchool at <https://ps.dvUSD.org/public/>. The 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.

Attendance By Class																	
Exp	Last Week					This Week					Course	S1	S2	Absences		Tardies	
	M	T	W	H	F	M	T	W	H	F				S2	23-24	S2	23-24
P1(A)											Algebra 3-4 H		B 85	4	4	0	0
P2(A)											Earth Science		B 81	2	2	1	1
P3(A)											English Language Arts 3-4 H		A 90	3	3	0	0
P5(A)											Student Govt		A 93	3	3	0	0
P6(A)											World Hist H		B 82	3	3	0	0
P7(A)				5							Introduction to Engineering Design		B 86	6	6	0	0

To view assignment scores parents can click on the grade in the grade column and view the score for each assignment in the course for the grading term.

#### PowerTeacher Pro Assignments

Due Date	Category	Assignment	Flags	Score	%	Grade	View
03/08/2024	Coursework	7.1 - Intro to Trig Identities		0/5	0	F	View
02/29/2024	Assessment	Unit 6 Test		85/100	85	B	View
		Math.HS.A2.F-TF.B.5 - Create and interpret sine, cosine and tangent functions that model periodic phenomena with specified amplitude, frequency, and midline. A2.F-TF.B.5		3			

To view scores for standards measured on each assignment, the parent may click on the blue “data” icon by the course titles and see the proficiency score for the standards.

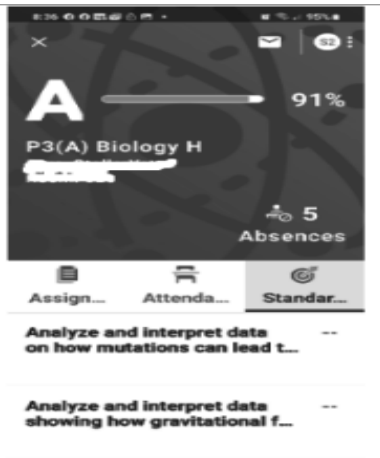
Parents/guardians can set up automatic notifications of the student’s grades on the PowerSchool Parent Portal. The steps to set up notifications are:

1. Log in to PowerSchool
2. On the left-side navigation bar, click on Email Notification
3. Select the information you would like sent to you, and the frequency of alerts
4. When you are finished, click on Submit



In addition to using the web-based version of the PowerSchool Parent Portal, parents can also download the PowerSchool mobile 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 PowerSchool parent username and password to access the App. If they do not have their login information, they should contact their student’s school office to access the login information.
3. Once a parent is logged into the PowerSchool Mobile App, they can 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 can 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, parents 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 it.



Per.	Course	Abs	S 1	S 2
P1(A)	Algebra 1-2	2	A 94%	
P1(A)	Algebra 1-2	5		9
P2(A)	Health Educ*	5		9
P2(A)	Team Sports*	2	A 91%	
P3(A)	Biology H	5		9
P3(A)	Biology H	2	B 89%	
P5(A)	Spanish 1-2 H	6		9

## Parent Observation of Canvas Courses

DVUSD uses Canvas to support the district’s technology initiative. Designed specifically for K–12 teachers and students, Canvas is an easy-to-use, cloud-based Learning Management System (LMS) that connects all the digital tools and resources teachers use into one simple place. It integrates seamlessly with hundreds of apps, empowering teachers and students with countless tools to make teaching and learning easier and more engaging. Canvas provides a secure way for teachers to deliver instruction and also provides a user friendly way to virtually interact with students, provide performance feedback, record and update grades.

The Canvas grade book is connected to DVUSD’s student information system, PowerSchool. Parents can create a Canvas parent account to track progress, view grades, and sign up to receive teacher announcements and notifications.

- Create a Student Pairing Code
  - Have the student log into their Canvas account
  - In the student account, open the settings by clicking on Account in the top left corner
  - Select Settings
  - Select Pair with Observer
  - Copy the pairing code (it is case sensitive)
- Create a Parent account
  - Go to <https://dvusd.instructure.com/>
  - In the top right corner of the log-in box, click on “Parent of a Canvas User? Click here for an account”
  - Create a username and password, then enter the student pairing code

## Home Practice

- Teachers may assign purposeful work for students to practice at home. The focus of the home practice is on giving students tasks such as practicing a skill that has been addressed in class to deepen the students' understanding and knowledge, providing students opportunities to extend the student's learning through independent investigation, or allowing for differentiation that allows students to explore topics of the student's own interest (Marzano & Pickering 2007).
- Teachers may create home practice opportunities that maximize chances for student completion and success. Teachers will 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 the student's learning in a variety of ways. Feedback is critical for improving student achievement.

# GRADING

# DVUSD Grading Practices

## DVUSD Grading Philosophy

Ensuring a 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.

In order to increase grading consistency, accuracy, equity, and focus on learning, DVUSD strives to 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.
- Teachers and/or grade levels ensure clarity in expectations for all students.

The teacher will structure the curriculum around the standards and grading will be completed after the instructional material has been sufficiently taught and practiced. Criteria used for grading will be clearly articulated to students. This grading system recognizes progress toward achievement of established standards. Additional instruction may be required for a student to demonstrate mastery of the standard(s).

*“Grades are broken when they mix achievement and non-achievement elements. The fix is to report variables such as behaviors separately from achievement, thereby ensuring that the grades reflect student achievement as accurately as possible.”*

(Ken O’Connor, 2011)

# Meaningful Grades

## Grading Expectations for Staff (K-12)

To support ongoing communication and ensure all students are progressing towards learning goals, teachers are expected to regularly enter grades into the electronic gradebook for each student and subject/course. **High school teachers must enter a minimum of one meaningful grade each week.** These grades allow students, families, and support staff to monitor academic progress in a timely and meaningful way.

## What is a “Meaningful Grade”?

A meaningful grade is an entry based on student performance that reflects progress toward learning standards. Meaningful grades contribute to the overall course grade and provide insight into student learning. Meaningful grades include.

- Assessments (e.g., quizzes, tests, projects, unit or module assessments, lab reports, exit tickets)
- Coursework (e.g., assignments, classwork, discussions)

## Assessment Category Entries

Semester-Long Courses must include a: **minimum of 8 graded assessments recorded in the Assessment category per semester.**

These minimums help ensure a consistent and accurate reflection of student performance over time.

## Cross-Content Grades

Teachers may apply grades across multiple content areas when appropriate. For example, an interdisciplinary project that integrates writing and science skills may be reflected in both subject gradebooks.

# Grade Scales

## High School Grade Scales

Students in 9th through 12th 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

Students in 9th through 12th grades will receive marks for their overall performance 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%

Final semester course grades of “D” and above are passing marks. A final semester course grade of “F” indicates that the student has failed the course. For 9th-12th grade levels, no course credit will be awarded for a failing course grade.

## Overall Standards Grades

**All teachers are required to tag and enter proficiency levels for standards for gradebook entries in the Assessment category.** Standards may also be tagged and scored for items in the Coursework or Practice categories.

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

## Overall Course Grades

Overall course grades for students in grades 9-12 will be 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. Guidance for entering scores based upon standards scores:

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%						

## Categories and Weights

All 9th-12th 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, exit tickets, long-term projects, short-term projects, presentations, capstone projects, research papers, and lab reports. Some district assessments may be appropriate to include in the Assessment category. Refer to the District Assessment Calendar (<https://url.dvUSD.org/HSAssessmentCalendar>) for guidance on which assessments may be included as a grade in the grade book. This is a school decision and must be applied to all students in the grade level or course at the school.

**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, fall into this category.

All 9th-12th grade teacher gradebooks will utilize the following weights for each category in the gradebook.

ASSESSMENT	80%
COURSEWORK	20%
PRACTICE	0%

## Role of PLC Teams in Grading

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) provide a systematic means of improving instruction and school culture. The PLC model gives DVUSD's schools a framework to build teacher capacity to work as members of high-performing, collaborative teams that focus on improving student learning. Schools modeling this framework adopt a solid, shared mission, vision, values, and goals. Collaborative Teams impact grading through interdependent processes: they create Common Formative Assessments (CFAs), administer them to students, and then score the results to inform and drive instructional decisions.

Collaborative teams consistently meet to answer the following four driving questions:

1. What do we want students to know?
2. How will we know that they have learned it?
3. What do we do if they didn't learn it?
4. What do we do if they already know it?

## Behavior and Academic Grading

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, and disciplinary measures. In order to accurately reflect a student's academic performance level, **deductions of scores or grades will not be applied for student misbehavior.**

*"Rather than lowering students' grades due to behavioral infractions, a better strategy is to report these infractions separately and not include them as part of the course grade." (Guskey, 1994)*

**Behaviors will be communicated separately from grades.**

What it is	What it is not
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excluding factors such as effort, participation, attendance, attitude, etc., from the grade calculation.</li> <li>• Using classroom management and other non grade-based consequences to uphold expectations related to conduct, work completion, and academic integrity.</li> <li>• Handling issues such as disruptions, attendance, or academic dishonesty through discipline consequences.</li> <li>• Communication of behaviors may include conferencing with students, special codes in the gradebook (missing, exempt, incomplete, absent, late, etc.), typing comments in gradebook, contacting parents, etc.</li> <li>• Using a zero as a placeholder until the student demonstrates what he/she knows and can do within a given time frame.</li> <li>• Basing grades on individual achievement, not group scores unless it is part of the content/course standards.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Including marks for:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o bringing in a signed syllabus</li> <li>o bringing in class supplies</li> <li>o mere completion of assignments or homework</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Awarding points for:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o neatness, effort, completion, or participation (unless these are part of the course content standards)</li> <li>o extra credit</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Deducting points for late assignments (see <i>Late Work</i>)</li> </ul>
<p>PLC collaborative teams can request exceptions to the above guidelines, pending approval by administration.</p>	
<p><b>Benefits</b></p>	
<p>Attendance, effort, behavior, participation, and other factors are important, but separating these from academic grades ensures grades are more equitable and accurate and gives a clearer picture of student learning. Students are still accountable for these factors and should realize these factors can directly impact their learning.</p>	

## Absent Work *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 access to the student's assignment(s) and any hand-out 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.
- School sanctioned and/or approved events should not negatively impact a student's grade.
- Students who miss school work due to absences or suspensions will be given the opportunity to make up work for full credit. Teachers shall assign such make-up work as necessary to ensure academic progress, ***not as a punitive measure.***
- Students are responsible for communicating with the teacher(s) the first day back from an absence to develop a plan to make up those assignments. Students are encouraged to communicate electronically with teachers during the student's absence.
- 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. ***Students should self-advocate for assistance if they need extensions.***
- In the case where a student is absent for up to three months due to chronic health conditions certified by a doctor, the student may fall under DVUSD board regulation JHD and J-1961, Exclusions and Exemptions from School Attendance.

## Late/Missing Work

### 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 time frame 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.
- 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 an assignment is not submitted for Late Work or does not meet the criteria for Late Work, schools may choose to assign a score between 0% and 49%, in accordance with their individual site-level grading practices. This is a school-based decision and not a district requirement or expectation.

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 by the end of the instructional 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 supersede late work procedures. Consult with the student's Service Coordinator 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 re-performance scores related to the learning target will be entered in the gradebook.

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, form, or application, if required by the teacher

A reassessment plan must be scheduled with the teacher within **5 school days** of receiving the assessment score.

Retakes are allowed for assessments in which scores are entered into the gradebook for full credit. Retakes may be offered if reperformance opportunities will not be available during the marking period or in addition to reperformance opportunities during the marking period.

*\*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 (such as NWEA-Map, DIBELS, etc.).*

*"Making students redo their learning until it meets high expectations demands far more of both students and teachers than letting them take a failing grade- but it also results in far more learning." (Wormeli, 2011)*

## Reassessment

What it is	What it is not
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schools will identify the specific steps that students must complete to be reassessed to ensure that learning takes place before reassessment.</li> <li>• Feedback on initial performance needs to be provided.</li> <li>• Students should engage in learning and/or reflection with teacher direction prior to reassessment. Strategies could include corrections, tutoring, discussion, revisiting unfinished practice, or reteaching.</li> <li>• Reassessment addresses the same standard(s)/content/skill(s) as the original assessment.</li> <li>• Reassessment could include different formats such as test corrections, retakes, new assessments, oral responses, presentations, etc.</li> <li>• All students, not just students who perform poorly on an assessment, will be able to reassess in order to demonstrate a new or higher level of understanding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making the reassessment easier or harder than the original assessment.</li> <li>• Averaging students' first and additional attempts or reducing a grade because it was another attempt.</li> <li>• Providing students the exact same assessment for a second time without feedback and next steps (opportunities for learning).</li> <li>• Allowing only students who earned a low score on an assessment to reassess.</li> <li>• Reassessment of final assessments, district benchmark exams, or district interim assessments.</li> </ul>
<p>PLC collaborative teams can request exceptions to the above guidelines, pending approval by administration.</p>	
Benefits	
<p>Shifting the focus from "getting a grade" to mastering content requires giving students multiple opportunities to succeed. Reassessment transforms the learning process in three key ways.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional opportunities encourage students to deeply understand standards and correct misconceptions rather than simply accepting a low score.</li> <li>• Offering varied assessment formats lets students showcase knowledge using their individual strengths. To accurately reflect this proficiency, grades should always report the most current results. When learning takes longer, the hope of reassessment keeps motivation alive.</li> <li>• Students actually work harder because they must earn the privilege to reassess through tutorials, alternative assignments, and targeted reflection.</li> </ul> <p>This practice mirrors high-stakes testing like the SAT, ACT, or a driver's license exam. The number of attempts is inconsequential; only the final, highest demonstration of mastery goes on the record.</p>	

## Extra Credit

Just as imposing grade penalties for poor behavior distorts academic grades, so does awarding higher grades or extra credit for good behavior. With a standards-based mindset, 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.**

## 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 Intelligences tools) through proper citation when you use their ideas or words. If you have questions about the guidelines for academic integrity, you should discuss them with your teacher. Academic dishonesty refers to any action that compromises the integrity of academic work or evaluation processes. This includes but is not limited to:

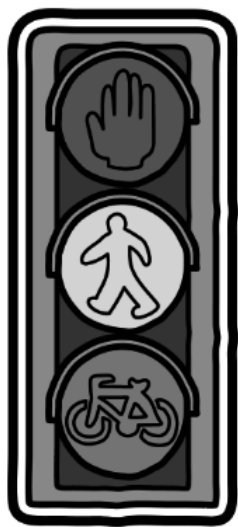
- Copying or stealing another person's work or data (plagiarism);
- Allowing another person to copy one's own work;
- Doing another person's classwork;
- Creating more than one copy of one's own work for distribution;
- Providing another person with the answers on tests or quizzes;
- Noncompliance with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

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 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 ensure 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 they are unsure if the tool or website they are using is permitted on a specific assignment.

## Levels of Student AI Use



Level	Description	Example Instruction
<b>Restrictive</b> <b>No!</b>	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."
<b>Moderate</b> <b>Whoa!</b>	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."
<b>Permissive</b> <b>Go!</b>	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."

### Incompletes

An “Incomplete” for the course may be issued by the teacher if administrative approval has been granted. “Incompletes” must be cleared and reissued as an A-F grade within two weeks into the following grading period. Students must complete missing work and assessments within that time. Extenuating circumstances will be dealt with on an individual basis.

### Final Course Assessments

Teachers will follow these practices with regard to final assessments:

- Final assessments will occur toward the end of the semester.
- Final assessments will not be in a separate category in the grade book.
- Final assessments will not significantly outweigh a typical assessment.

Dual enrollment courses may use a final assessment and factor the assessment grade into the college grade as prescribed by the college. However, the high school grade for the final assessment must follow the above guidelines.

## Online Courses Final Assessments

Students taking blended and online courses in DVUSD may be required to take in-person assessments identified by the district and school. Additionally, full-time Aspire students are required to participate in all state achievement assessments. Per Arizona Revised Statute 15-808, students who fail to comply with state testing requirements shall not be allowed to participate in Arizona online instruction.

## Test-Outs

The purpose of a Test-Out is to allow students to demonstrate course competencies instead of completing the course. Students who believe they are proficient in a course may request a Test-Out exam prior to enrollment or up to 10 school days after the student's enrollment date in the course. After being enrolled in a course for 10 days, students are not eligible to Test-Out unless the student has an AOI (Arizona Online Institution) credit or middle school course the student wishes to transfer for a core content grade on the transcript.

Students may take only one Test-Out exam per academic class. The district does not provide study guides, textbooks, or other types of assistance. Credit will be given and the student's transcript will reflect the grade earned on the Test-Out for each semester of the course if the score is a "C" or higher. The Test Out grade will be calculated in the GPA. After the score is reported on the transcript, students may choose to take the course for grade improvement.

## Dual Enrollment Grades

Students taking a dual enrollment course have the opportunity to earn both high school credit and college credit for the course. The grade for the high school credit will utilize the DVUSD grade scale while the grade for the college credit will adhere to the community college department's grade scale. Additionally, dual enrollment courses will follow the college departmental policies concerning late work, reassessment, and academic integrity as outlined in the course syllabus.

## Grade Enhancement

The state achievement assessments provide students, teachers, and parents with information about how a student is progressing academically. It is important that students perform their best on these assessments to accurately assess the student's academic progress. In order to motivate students to put forth a strong effort, students are eligible to positively impact semester grades in courses aligned to the high school state assessments. The grade enhancement policy provides an incentive for students to do well on the tests, as well as in the student's course of study in preparation for the assessments.

No course grades will be lowered due to poor performance on the high school state assessments. No course grades will be enhanced if the grade has been enhanced previously. Only one grade per eligible semester course will be enhanced. If a student takes a semester course more than once, only the higher of the grades will be enhanced. Only courses taken with a DVUSD school or program are eligible.

Please visit [www.dvUSD.org/GradeEnhancement](http://www.dvUSD.org/GradeEnhancement) for additional information and updates.

## Grade Improvement

Students who want to improve their grades in English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, or world language courses may repeat the same course through an approved DVUSD course. The original grade will remain on the transcript. The higher grade will become the grade of record and the higher grade of the two factored into the GPA, upon request. Credit will be given for one course, not both. Course titles and course grades will not be removed from transcripts. The school counselor must approve the Duplicate Course/GPA Acknowledgment Form prior to the student repeating the course for grade improvement.

## Credit Recovery

Students who fail a core class must retake the class to receive credit. When the course is retaken, the transcript will reflect the original and repeated course grades. Both will be factored into the GPA unless the failing grade is requested to not factor into the GPA. Course titles and course grades will not be removed from transcripts. Upon request, the improved grade will be the only grade factored into the GPA. Prior approval by the school counselor is required before taking credit recovery courses.

# Grading Special Populations of Students

## Differentiation and Scaffolding

**Differentiation** is the way a teacher changes the content, task, environment or instructional approach to help each student learn. **Scaffolding** is the process of making learning content more straightforward by splitting up tasks into progressions and providing various options to prove mastery and learning.

To provide fair and accurate grading, teachers leverage differentiated assessment methods and rubrics. This process involves creating aligned rubrics that assess the same essential standards but with varied levels of complexity tailored to individual student needs including IEP or 504 accommodations. For instance, a general education rubric for a writing assignment might focus on multiple elements, while an aligned rubric for a student with writing needs could initially prioritize core components of the learning progression such as clear communication of ideas. Furthermore, offering various assessment modalities beyond traditional tests and essays allows students to demonstrate their understanding in ways that best suit their strengths. This could include oral presentations, visual projects, performance-based tasks, or technology-based demonstrations, with rubrics adapted to assess the specific skills and knowledge within each format.

## Scaffolds

A scaffold refers to a temporary support or assistance provided to any student, enabling the student to perform a grade level task successfully with the ultimate goal of fostering independent mastery.

## Accommodations

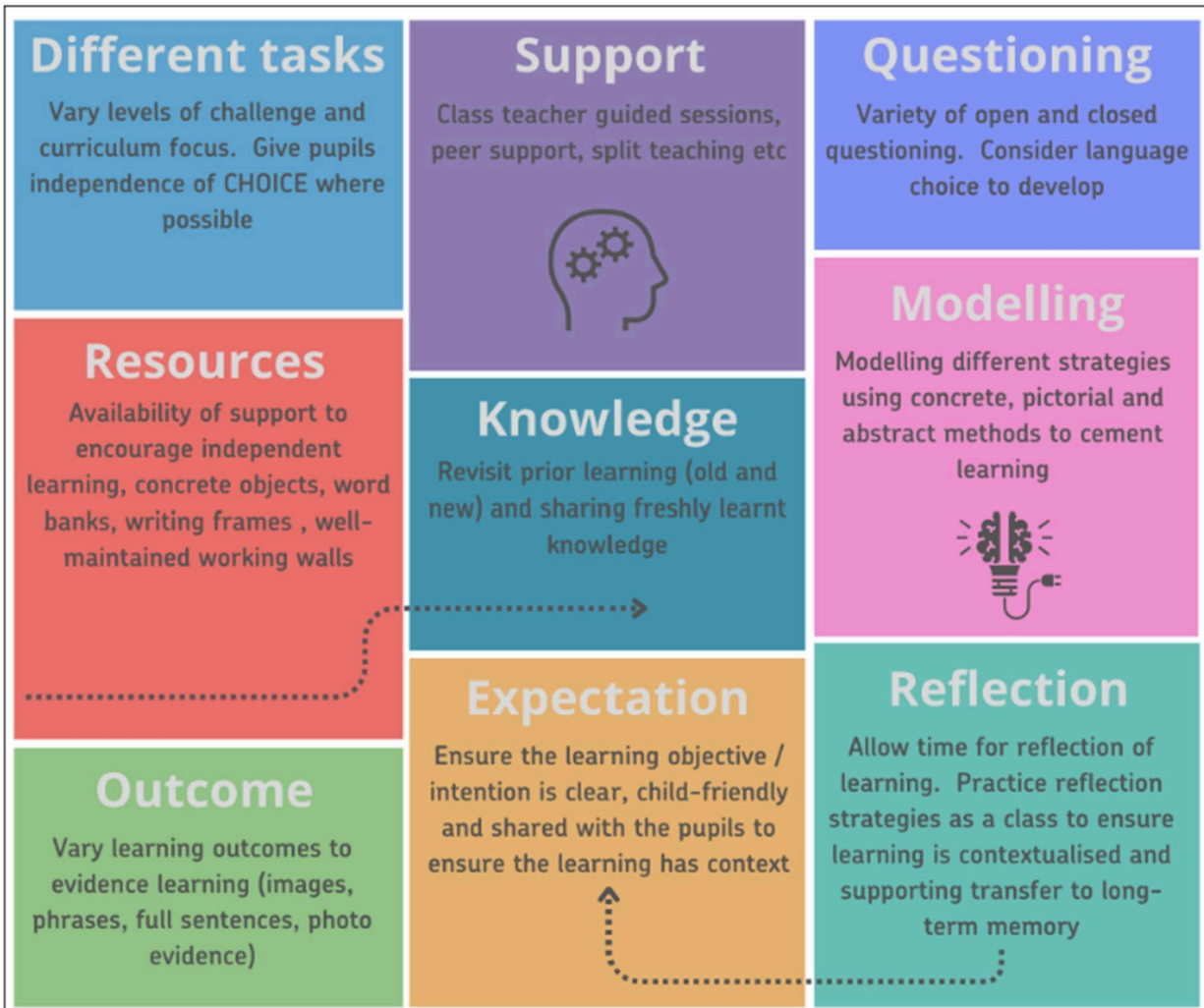
An accommodation refers to the provisions within an IEP or 504 made to allow a student to access the general education curriculum and demonstrate learning. Accommodations *do not substantially change the instructional level, the content or the performance criteria*, but are made in order to provide a student equal access to learning and equal opportunity to demonstrate what is known. Accommodations do not change what a student is expected to learn; they change the approach to learning.

## Modifications

A modification refers to substantial changes in what a student is expected to learn and to demonstrate. Changes may be made in the instructional level, the content or the performance criteria. Such changes are made to provide a student with meaningful and productive learning experiences, environments, and assessments based on individual needs and abilities.

*Modifications should only be used to adapt the instruction for the students who take the alternative state assessment.*

# Differentiation and Scaffolding strategies



([Testbase, February 19, 2024](#))

## Collaboration for ALL

The PLC process is vital for the ongoing development and refinement of fair and accurate grading practices. Through collaborative analysis of student work, discussions about the impact of accommodations, and the sharing of effective strategies for scaffolding and differentiation, teachers continuously strengthen their assessment methods. PLCs provide a structured space to review grading practices, ensuring they are aligned with the principles of meaningful access to essential standards and learning progressions that accurately reflect student learning.

## GRADING STUDENTS WITH MODIFICATIONS

Modifications change what a student is expected to learn. Modifications may alter the curriculum content and/or reduce the complexity of tasks prescribed by the standards. Students who are on a modified curriculum also qualify for the state alternate assessments.

The DVUSD Universal Rubric for students on modified curriculum (Unique Learning Systems) is below. ULS also has clear measurements of progress over time on modified state standards.



## Modified Curriculum Grading Rubric

Universal Rubric for Learning Center			
4	3	2	1
<p><b>PROFICIENT</b> (Independent):</p> <p>The student performs the skill independently and consistently. The student demonstrates clear understanding, engages appropriately, and may even assist others or extend the task.</p>	<p><b>APPROACHING</b> (Supporting):</p> <p>The student performs the skill with minimal support or prompting. The student demonstrates general understanding and can complete most of the task independently with occasional cues.</p>	<p><b>EMERGING</b> (Partial Support):</p> <p>The student performs the skill with partial or moderate support. The student demonstrates some understanding but requires frequent prompting, guidance, or redirection to stay on task.</p>	<p><b>BEGINNING</b> (Full Support Needed):</p> <p>This is new material, new information, or a new skill to the student. They will be exposed to the new material consistently using different modalities</p>

\*Each student has a unique response mode. Grades should reflect the appropriate response mode for individual students.

## GRADING STUDENTS WITH EL SUPPORTS

### English Learners (EL)

According to the federal Equal Educational Opportunities Act (EEOA), states are required to ensure that all students, regardless of native language, have the opportunity for "equal participation" in public education. Equal participation ensures that ELs in general education courses receive scaffolded language and content support as is appropriate in order to participate in high levels of learning.

EL students should only receive a failing grade for the course if the contributing factor for failing the course is unrelated to second language acquisition. All coursework must be scaffolded for the proficiency level of the EL student and accepted for full credit. If the coursework is not scaffolded, Teacher EL Specialists will be unable to determine if the student is failing due to language acquisition or lack of content knowledge.

## EL Students in the General Education Classroom

The teacher of record for a student with a language need will issue content area grades based upon scaffolded content at the student's English Language Proficiency (ELP) Level. ELP Standards and the student's Performance Indicators (PI) will be embedded in the content curriculum to provide integrated instruction. It is the responsibility of the teacher of record to ensure EL students learn content through the use of English language acquisition strategies and instruction. It is recommended that teachers responsible for instructing ELs work in consultation with the Teacher EL Specialist on the student's campus when scaffolding assignments and assigning grades to English Learners.

**Pre-Emergent/ Emergent (PE/E)** students, as identified through the AZELLA Placement test, new to the country and/or first full academic year in an EL program are graded on course content essential standards only. This will allow for more time spent building English language skills through grade level content. Essential content standards are those that have been identified by PLCs as necessary to master in order to be prepared for the next grade or content level. Nonessential standards will be set aside until the student has enough academic language to access grade level text with *substantial* support. This means that students will have more time to work on assignments that address essential standards and are exempt from assignments that address nonessential standards. The determination of when to include nonessential standards in the student's grade will be made through the Teacher EL Specialist/ELD classroom teacher assigned to the campus using a transition rubric. **If scaffolds are not used and documented, students cannot fail the course.**

**Basic (B)** students as identified by the AZELLA placement or reassessment are held accountable for essential content standards with documented scaffolds. Essential content standards are those that have been identified by PLCs as necessary to master in order to be prepared for the next grade or content level. Nonessential standards can be set aside until the student has enough academic language to access grade level text with *moderate* support. This means that students will have more time to work on assignments that address essential standards and are exempt from assignments that address nonessential standards. This determination will be made through the Teacher EL Specialist assigned to the campus using the transition rubric. **If scaffolds are not used and documented, students cannot fail the course.**

**Low/High Intermediate (LI/HI)** as identified by the AZELLA placement or reassessment will be held accountable for essential content standards with documented scaffolds. Essential content standards are those that have been identified by PLC's as necessary to master in order to be prepared for the next grade or content level. Nonessential standards can be set aside until the student has enough academic language to access grade level test with *light* support. However, students at the intermediate level should be able to access 90% of grade level course work. **If accommodations are not used and documented, students cannot fail the course.**

**Monitor Students** - Students who have scored proficient on AZELLA and exited the EL program may continue to receive scaffolds as needed. Grades can be a reflection of scaffolded assignments **if** needed. Please reach out to the EL teacher for guidance with support with scaffolds as needed.

## International Baccalaureate Middle Year Program (MYP) Course Grading

IB MYP courses must use the 1-8 Levels of Achievement scale to assess each criterion and be clearly reported to students and parents (Canvas rubrics, PowerSchool notes, hard copy rubrics). All four criteria must be assessed using the rubrics from the MYP course subject guides. It is inappropriate to use homework or formative work or a single piece of work for assessing the criterion. Each strand of each criteria should be assessed at least twice during the school year.

Teachers of MYP courses must set up their gradebooks with categories for each criterion. These grades will not be used in the calculation but will be used as evidence to support the final assessment grades for each criterion. Teachers will score each assignment using the MYP Criterion 1-8 Levels of Achievement scale and then report in PowerSchool for a grade 1-10. The overall grade will be calculated or determined by the 4 Criterion grades in the "Assessment" category. These 4 grades will be the only grades in the "Assessment" category.

IB Achievement Level	7th-10th Grade Mark
7-8	A
5-6	B
3-4	C
2	D (minimal evidence)
1	F (no evidence)
0	M (Missing)

## International Baccalaureate Diploma Program

IB Diploma courses must use the IB assessment rubrics found in the course subject guides (see the subject area syllabus for details). The scores are then converted to the A-F grade scale and posted in PowerSchool. Grades in any IB Diploma course should never use averaging to determine summative or end-of-course grades. Please see the subject area syllabus for additional information about IB course requirements.

# Grade Appeal

Under the direction of their school principal or program director, teachers will determine grades for their students. Teachers have the right and responsibility to determine grades based upon each student's performance on assignments and assessments designed to measure standards aligned to the course. Grading methods must be communicated to everyone in the class and applied to students equally. Students or their parents/guardians who feel a grade is improper or calculated incorrectly may follow the steps outlined below to contest the grade.

The student or their parent/guardian must provide evidence to support their position.

Evidence can include:

- o Required formative and summative assessments showing mastery or lack of mastery of Arizona State Standards related to the course
- o District assessment results
- o State assessment results
- o Course syllabus

## **Challenging a Grade: Does Not Affect High School Credit**

A parent or student who challenges a grade that does not affect high school credit (such as an individual assignment, project, quiz or test grade) begins at the school level with discussions with the teacher, followed by the school administrator. If the school administrator determines that the grade earned accurately reflects the student's learning and upholds the district's grading practices, then the final grade will remain. The school administrator's decision is not appealable and cannot move beyond the campus level.

## **Challenging a Grade: Affects High School Credit**

A parent or student who challenges a grade that affects high school credit begins at the school level with discussions with the teacher, followed by the school administrator. If the school administrator determines that the grade earned accurately reflects the student's learning and upholds the teacher's grading practices, then the final grade will remain. However, if the parent chooses to appeal the school administrator's decision, then the parent must submit a "Public Concerns and Complaints Appeal" form to the Superintendent's office within five days of the meeting with the school administrator. The Governing Board will only consider appeals where the grade affects the student earning high school credit.

*Administrators: see "Challenging A Grade" AMG for process map.*

# REPORTING

# Reporting

## PowerTeacher Pro Setup

PowerSchool (PowerTeacher Pro) is the official platform for reporting grades. Grades must be entered regularly (see “Meaningful Grades” on page 27). Teachers must enter student assignment grades directly into PowerTeacher Pro or may sync grades from Canvas and then mark the standard proficiency levels in PowerTeacher Pro.

Gradebooks must be configured properly and teachers must use the district-created categories. For guidance on setting up gradebooks, go to the Grading and Reporting portal page (<https://portal.dvusd.org/cms/browser/article/secure/42956>).

## PowerSchool Access – Students and Parents/Guardians

DVUSD provides PowerSchool as a tool for students and parents to view student progress. This computer system allows parents to view students' current grades and attendance information at any time using the Internet. Students will receive individualized log-ins. Parents or students can create their parent or student user account(s) by clicking "Create Account Button," and using the information provided by the student's school to access the student's information. It is recommended that parents also obtain their own PowerSchool access and password for accessing their student's current grades and attendance information. Parent accounts have the option to edit the settings in PowerSchool to receive grade updates via email.

Using PowerSchool, students and parents are able to monitor progress on homework, tests, and other assignments. Teacher notes or comments about an assignment or a grade may also be located in PowerSchool.

Direct parents with questions about PowerSchool parent access to the school's front office. To access PowerSchool, they will go to the web site: <https://ps.dvusd.org> .

## 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.

## Report Cards

At the high school level, hard copy report cards are not distributed. Instead, final grades for each semester will be posted and available to students and parents on PowerSchool. Parents and students are encouraged to print out the final semester grade reports for the student's records.

Parents and students unable to print out the grade reports are welcome to request a copy from the school.

## 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

## Transcripts

A high school transcript is an official record of a student's high school courses, the school year the courses were taken, grades earned, credits awarded, and grade points assigned. The transcript also includes information such as weighted and unweighted Grade Point Average (GPA), class ranking, Civics assessment status, and graduation date. **Once a course grade is posted, the course and grade will not be removed from the official transcript.** See the Grading, Reporting, and Graduation Guide for more information about transcripts and grade appeals.

## Transcript Translation

If a student submits transcripts that are not in English, the school or district may attempt to translate the documents, however, if they are not able to perform the translation, the student's parents/guardians must have the transcripts translated by a certified translator. Here is a suggested list of document translation service agencies: [url.dvUSD.org/DocumentTranslation](http://url.dvUSD.org/DocumentTranslation)

## How to Request Transcripts

The Deer Valley Unified School District has partnered with Parchment as an optional transcript service. Parchment is a self-contained transcript service; it is secure and open 24/7. Transcripts will be sent directly to the admissions office or to the location of your choice for a nominal fee.

Students who graduated from **1983 to the current school year**, must order transcripts through Parchment.com. Parchment.com can be found on the Deer Valley Unified School District (DVUSD) website and on all our high school websites. To register your account, click here: [www.parchment.com](http://www.parchment.com). DVUSD also has other resources listed below for convenience.

### **Video: Requesting Your Transcript on Parchment.com**

(<https://youtu.be/zS52ANkO3zw>) **Video: Registering for a Parchment Account**

### **Using an Email Link or Registration Code**

([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UOV0nTz8ZIM&feature=emb\\_rel\\_pause](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UOV0nTz8ZIM&feature=emb_rel_pause))

*For current students only:* Current students can request a transcript for themselves directly from their school. Some students may qualify for a fee waiver. Students who qualify for Free & Reduced Lunch may receive a fee waiver to process their transcript request. Please contact the high school Registrar for more information.

For additional questions regarding these processes, please contact the high school Counseling department, Monday-Friday 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. (All district and school offices are closed on Fridays during the summer.)

## **Grade Point Averages (GPA)**

A student's Grade Point Average is determined by totaling the number of points associated with each grade earned in a course and dividing it by the number of courses taken. The cumulative **weighted** GPA takes into consideration the course difficulty and is operated on a 0-5 scale.

Courses that would factor into a weighted GPA are honors, AP, and IB courses.

The cumulative **unweighted** GPA does not provide an additional point for honors, AP, or IB courses and operates on a 0-4 scale. It should be noted that most universities recalculate individual GPAs according to the core academic subjects including foreign languages, to determine admissions and merit based scholarships.

Courses such as Student Aide, Peer Facilitator, etc., are given Pass/Fail grades. Pass grades will not be calculated in the GPA, where failed courses will negatively impact the GPA.

### **GPA Conversion Scale**

Letter Grade	Non-Honors/AP/IB GPA Points	Honors/AP/IB GPA Points
A	4.0	5.0
B	3.0	4.0
C	2.0	3.0
D	1.0	1.0
F	0	0

## Class Ranking

Students are ranked among the other students in their school and in the same cohort at the completion of the Fall and Spring semesters. The weighted grade point scale will be used for class ranking (see Grade Point Average section above). It should be noted that universities recalculate individual GPA. The following designated courses will be used when calculating high school class ranking:

<b><u>Freshman</u></b>	<b><u>Sophomore</u></b>	<b><u>Junior</u></b>	<b><u>Senior</u></b>
English Lang Arts	English Lang Arts	English Lang Arts	English Lang Arts
Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics
Science	Science	Science	Science
	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies

If more than one class is taken in the same designated subject area during the same semester, the class with the highest grade will be used. If the grades are the same, the most advanced level class will be used. Qualifying classes from the designated subject areas will include non-elective courses that meet the requirements for graduation. ***Students who do not take all fifteen core courses listed above will be negatively impacted in class ranking with the missing course calculated as a 0 for class ranking purposes.***

Only the designated classes taken during a student's freshman through senior years and approved high school courses taken in 7th and 8th grades will be used for class ranking.

This procedure applies to class ranking only, not to individual GPA. The individual GPA will continue to include all classes on a student's transcript.

# GRADUATION

# Graduation

## Graduation Requirements

English Language Arts	4.0 credits
Mathematics*	4.0 credits
Lab Sciences**	3.0 credits
(which meet the 28 essential high School standards), one of which must be Biology***	
World History/Geography	1.0 credit
American History (including AZ History)	1.0 credit
American Government	0.5 credit
(including civics and AZ Government)	
Economics****	0.5 credit
Physical Education	0.5 credit
Health	0.5 credit
Career & Technical Education (CTE) or credit Fine Arts	1.0
Elective Courses	6.0 credits
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>22.0 credits</b>

\*Designated CTE courses may be substituted for a 4th year math course credit toward graduation but may not meet university admission requirements.

\*\* In Arizona, students are required to take 3 credits of high school science to meet graduation requirements, but there is no mandatory course sequence across the state. Because of this, the high school standards are written at two levels: essential and plus. All high school essential standards should be learned by every high school student regardless of the 3-credit course sequence they take. The full set of 28 high school essential science standards should be taught over that 3-year period. Essential High School Science Standards are designed to provide opportunities for students to develop an understanding of all 14 core ideas across three credits of high school science. In Deer Valley Unified School District, each course offered covers a specific set of essential standards. Three-year course pathways have been established that ensure students receive instruction in all of the essential standards. See the DVUSD Academic Planning Guide (Science section) for more information (<https://www.dvUSD.org/Domain/1302>).

\*\*\*Biology or Biology H meets Biology requirement.

\*\*\*\*Free Enterprise with Aspire Deer Valley Online Academy or 2 years of Marketing may be substituted for Economics.

**Graduating students must pass the required state of Arizona Civics Test with a 70% or higher (ARS 15-701.01). This will be denoted on the transcript as "Met Requirement" or "Not Met Requirement."**

## Civics Assessment

In 2015, the Arizona legislature passed the American Civics Act (House Bill 2064). This bill requires Arizona students to pass a civics test based on the United States Immigration and Naturalization civics test questions. Students are required to score 70% or higher to graduate from high school or obtain a high school equivalency certificate. The test will be available to DVUSD students beginning in the 8th grade through 12th grade. Once the student achieves a passing score, the student will not be required to test again. Students may retake the test as many times as necessary to pass.

Special Education students with an Individualized Education Plan are required to pass the Civics test if designated as so in the student's IEP.

## CPR Requirement Policy

Students are required to participate in one or more training sessions in cardiopulmonary resuscitation through the use of hands-on exercises prior to graduation (ARS 15-718.01). DVUSD provides training sessions through the high school Health course which is a course required to meet DVUSD graduation requirements.

## Early Graduates

Students planning to graduate early must file a request for early graduation at the beginning of the student's last year of attendance. Early graduation requires administrative and parental approval unless the student is 18 years of age and has completed the Student Acceptance of Responsibility (SAOR) paperwork. Diplomas will be awarded at the yearly commencement.

Early graduation candidates must meet all requirements and early graduation must be deemed appropriate for the student's continued education. Early graduation guidelines include:

- All graduates must complete an early graduation request form. The early graduation form must include signatures from counselor, administration, parent and student.
- An early graduation plan with a course outline must be included.
- Continuation of the post-secondary education plan should be included.

## Late Graduates

Senior students who do not complete all required graduation requirements by the date of the graduation ceremony will not be allowed to participate in the ceremony. The student may still earn a diploma within the cohort year if the student completes the credits needed to meet graduation requirements prior to September 1st of the same calendar year.

## Graduation Ceremony

All high schools plan and conduct a ceremony each year to recognize students who graduate from high school. Students must have met all graduation requirements set forth by the DVUSD Governing Board and the State of Arizona for that graduation year to be eligible to participate in the graduation ceremony. No other students may be allowed to participate in the graduation ceremony.

Participating in the graduation ceremony is a privilege. Any off-campus suspension during the senior year excludes the student from participating in the graduation ceremony.

For medically fragile students, students or parents/guardians must notify the district as early as possible if graduation credits are a concern. District personnel will work with the campus administration, counselors, and teachers to create an action plan.

Exchange students with a J-1 Visa may participate in the graduation ceremony but will not earn a DVUSD diploma. Foreign exchange students who are seniors and participate in the graduation ceremony may receive a "Certificate of Attendance" at the graduation ceremony in lieu of a diploma. International Students on an F-1 Visa will not participate in the graduation ceremonies and will not earn a DVUSD diploma.

Student and faculty dress for the graduation ceremony shall comply with the following:

- Graduates will wear school approved cap, tassel, medallion and gown without alterations or additional decoration.
- School administration may approve graduates to wear additional regalia that meet the following criteria:
  - Awarded by an organization with academic association affiliated with a DVUSD high school
  - Awarded by an organization associated with a national honor society which has a minimum GPA requirement or some other academic criteria
  - Stole provided by the school for the senior officers of the student government body of the school designating the student's position of office
  - Medallion provided by the school for the students in the top 1% of the graduating class
  - Provided by a United States military branch
  - Eagle feather or plume if the student is a member or eligible to be a member of a federally recognized Indian tribe

***No other regalia may be worn over the graduation gowns.***

- All faculty participating in the graduation ceremony will wear a school-approved black gown. Faculty may wear a hood representing any earned college degree but may not wear any other decor such as cords or stoles

# Academic Recognitions

## Seal of Arts Proficiency

The Arizona State Seal of Arts Proficiency is administered by the Arizona Department of Education's Office of Arts Education and is awarded to graduates who complete minimum arts pathway requirements throughout their high school career. For more information, please visit the following website:

<https://www.dvUSD.org/departments/cia/content-areas/arts/arizona-state-seal-of-arts-proficiency>

## Seal of Biliteracy

The Seal of Biliteracy is awarded by the Arizona Department of Education. It honors students who have attained proficiency in English and at least one other world language. The seal provides evidence of language and communication skills that are highly attractive to employers, universities, and colleges. Qualifying seniors are awarded the Seal of Biliteracy upon graduation. For more information, please visit the following website:

<https://www.dvUSD.org/departments/cia/content-areas/world-languages>

## Seal of Civic Literacy

The Seal of Civic Literacy recognizes high school students who have attained a high level of proficiency in Civics at the time of graduation. The completion of a set of Arizona State Board of Education Approved Tasks determines proficiency. A seal is placed on the diploma and noted on the transcript up to 90 days after graduation. For more information, please visit the following website: <https://www.dvUSD.org/departments/cia/content-areas/social-studies>

## Seal of Personal Finance

The Arizona Seal of Personal Finance program recognizes high school students who achieve a high level of proficiency in Personal Finance. The seal is placed upon the student's diploma and noted on their transcript. The completion of a set of Arizona State Board of Education Criteria determines proficiency. A seal is placed on the diploma and noted on the transcript up to 90 days after graduation. For more information, please visit the following website:

<https://www.dvUSD.org/departments/cia/content-areas/social-studies>

## Associate of Arts Degree

Deer Valley High School, Boulder Creek High School, and Sandra Day O'Connor High School provide the opportunity for students to earn enough credits while in high school to receive an Associate of Arts (AA) degree from Rio Salado Community College. An AA degree requires 60 credits, which includes the 35-38 credits required for the AGEC. Students can choose from many different dual enrollment classes offered at DVHS, BCHS, and SOHS as well as concurrent enrollment offerings through Rio Salado Community College to meet the AA requirements.

## Certificate of Academic Distinction

Offered at Boulder Creek High School, the Certificate of Academic Distinction provides students with the opportunity to showcase the student's academic excellence and dedication. The certification is awarded upon graduation with the student's diploma and serves as an indication of the student's academic excellence and college preparatory course load throughout the student's high school career. Students begin college preparatory coursework in the student's freshman year and continue through advanced placement and dual enrollment coursework in the student's senior year. This program also contains an independent interdisciplinary senior thesis project.

## Certificate of Advanced Academics

The Certificate of Advanced Academics provides Sandra Day O'Connor High School students with the opportunity to showcase the student's academic excellence and dedication. The certificate will supplement the student's diploma and serve as an indication of the student's rigorous coursework above and beyond the district requirements. It allows students to showcase college readiness and elevate themselves above Arizona's standard high school graduates. This distinction celebrates the student's academic talents and commitment to excellence.

## Certificate of Global Studies

The Certificate of Global Studies provides students with the opportunity to showcase the student's academic interests in globalization and world cultures. Offered at Boulder Creek High School, the certification is awarded upon graduation with the student's diploma and serves as an indication of the student's application of college and career readiness skills in a globally interdependent economy. Students receiving the certificate will demonstrate the ability to communicate in another language and an understanding of interconnected societies and cultures. Students begin global studies in the student's freshman year with a culminating senior year portfolio.

## CTE Honor Cords

Senior students completing all sequential courses in a CTE program may earn the CTE Honor Cord, which is ordered and purchased by the DVUSD CTE Department. The CTE Honor Cord is a designation earned with GPA, CTSO or Partner Program participation/leadership, attainment of pass score on ADE technical assessment, along with other factors demonstrating college or career readiness and must reach a designated number of points.

## CTE Industry Certification

All CTE programs have opportunities for students to obtain industry certifications, which vary by program and change as industry advisors identify necessary changes to ADE. All of the certifications have been selected from Arizona's approved industry certification list for A-F and CTED eligibility: <https://url.dvUSD.org/c8a1d8e6>.

More information on specific certifications is available on ADE's Industry Credential Fact Sheets: [live-az-ade.pantheonsite.io/sites/default/files/2023/09/2023-2024CertificationsLOP.pdf](https://live-az-ade.pantheonsite.io/sites/default/files/2023/09/2023-2024CertificationsLOP.pdf) and [live-az-ade.pantheonsite.io/sites/default/files/2020/11/A-F%20Credential%20List%202021%20%28012221%29.pdf](https://live-az-ade.pantheonsite.io/sites/default/files/2020/11/A-F%20Credential%20List%202021%20%28012221%29.pdf)

## NAFTrak Certified

Boulder Creek High School Academy for Finance, Deer Valley High School Academy for Hospitality and Tourism and Mountain Ridge High Academy for Entrepreneurship provide opportunities for students to earn the NAFTrak Certification. This rigorous and comprehensive assessment system evaluates students on academic proficiency, project execution, and internship performance.

## CTE Technical Skills Certificate

The Technical Skills Assessment System is a secure, reliable, online testing application owned by the State of Arizona and housed in the Department of Education. Assessments are designed for students in the student's final course (usually year 2) of the Career and Technical state identified programs. Students who successfully complete the 60% pass score requirement receive an industry-endorsed congratulatory letter and certificate.

## International Baccalaureate Diploma

International Baccalaureate (IB) is an internationally recognized course of study. It is designed for highly motivated students interested in a rigorous academic program. This program is offered at Barry Goldwater High School. However, students from the entire Deer Valley Unified School District may attend on open enrollment.

Students enrolled in the IB Program meet state requirements for graduation by completing the IB curriculum. During the junior and senior years, students will take six IB exams; three at a Higher Level and three at a Standard Level. One exam will be taken from each of the six subject areas listed. Exams are graded from 1 point to 7 points (maximum). Students must score a total of 24 points to acquire the IB Diploma. In addition, Diploma candidates must meet these other requirements:

- CAS requirements have been met.
- The candidate's total points are 24 or more.
- There is no "N" awarded for Theory of Knowledge, the extended essay or for a contributing subject.
- There is no grade "E" awarded for Theory of Knowledge and/or the extended essay  
\*There is no grade 1 awarded in a subject/level.
- There are no more than two grade 2s awarded (HL or SL).
- There are no more than three grade 3s or below awarded (HL or SL). The candidate has gained 12 points or more of HL subjects (for candidates who register for four HL subjects, the three highest grades count).
- The candidate has gained 9 points or more on SL subjects (candidates who register for two SL subjects must gain at least 5 points at SL).
- The candidate has not received a penalty for academic misconduct from the Final Award Committee.

The IB Career-Related Programme (CP) is specifically developed for students who wish to engage in career-related learning while gaining transferable and lifelong skills in applied knowledge, critical thinking, communication, and cross-cultural engagement. In this program, students will meet all state graduation requirements and complete a minimum of two years in a Career and Technical Education Course Track. During the Junior and/or Senior years, students must take a minimum of two IB Diploma Courses. Exams are graded 1 point to 7 points. Students must earn a minimum score of 3 out of 7. In addition, Career-Related candidates must meet four other requirements:

- Complete an interdisciplinary course called Personal and Professional Skills.
- Complete a Language Portfolio.
- Prepare a Reflective Project reflecting independent research.
- Complete 50 Community and Service Hours.

For more information, visit [www.dvusd.org/IB](http://www.dvusd.org/IB)

## University and College Entrance Requirements

### Arizona University Requirements

Arizona universities require the following for admission:

- High school diploma
- 4 credits of high school English language arts
- 4 credits of high school math (Algebra 1-2, Geometry, Algebra 3-4, and an advanced math class for which Algebra 3-4 is a prerequisite)
- 3 credits of high school lab science, one year each from three of the following: Biology, Chemistry, Earth Science, or Physics (an integrated science or an advanced science may be substituted for one required course)
- 2 credits of high school social studies, including one year of United States History
- 2 credits of the same high school foreign language
- 1 credit of high school fine arts or a combination of two semesters of high school fine arts or Career and Technical Education (CTE).

### Arizona Community College Requirements

Admission to a community college in Arizona may be granted to any person who meets at least one of the following criteria:

- High school diploma or Certificate of Completion
- GED
- Is 18 years of age or older and demonstrated evidence of potential success at the community college level
- Is a transfer student in good standing from another college or university

## University Testing

It is recommended that the students take the SAT and/or ACT in the spring of their junior year. The ACT with writing will be given to all juniors in the spring semester at no cost to students as part of the Arizona state achievement tests. Information and registration for the SAT is available at [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org). Additional information on the ACT is available at [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org). Registration and information materials are also available in each school's counseling office.

The PSAT is a practice test for the SAT. PSAT is the qualifying test for the National Merit Scholarship Program that must be taken during the junior year (11th grade) to be eligible for the National Merit Scholar Program. The PSAT is given in October of each year.

## Out-of-State Universities and Colleges

Admission requirements to colleges and universities vary greatly. Students should consult the web page or catalog of the university or college they are interested in to determine the specific requirements.

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# APPENDIX

## Forms and Letters

Various forms and letters pertaining to grading, reporting, and graduation matters, go to <https://url.dvusd.org/GRAGFormsAndLetters>.

## AZ State Statutes

**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. § 15-718.01** Instruction on cardiopulmonary resuscitation

**A.R.S. § 15-745** Homeschooled children; testing; prohibition

**A.R.S. § 15-763** Plan for providing special education; definition

**A.R.S. § 15-802.** School instruction; exceptions; violations; classification; definitions

**A.R.S. §15-803.** School attendance; exemptions; definitions

**A.R.S §15-808** Arizona Online Instruction: Reports, Definitions

**A.R.S. § 15-821** Admission of children; Required Age

**A.R.S. § 15-872** Proof of immunization; noncompliance; notice to parents; civil immunity

## Administrative Code

**R7-2-302** Minimum Course of Study and Competency Requirements for Graduation from High School

# DVUSD Governing Board Policies

**IHBF** Homeschooled children; testing prohibition  
**IHBD** Online/Concurrent/Correspondence Courses  
**IIE** Student Schedules and Course Loads  
**IKA** Grading/Assessment Systems  
**IKA-R** Grading/Assessment Systems Regulation  
**IKB** Homework  
**IKEA-R** Make UP Opportunities  
**IKFA** Early Graduation  
**IKFB** Graduation Exercises  
**IKF** Graduation Requirements  
**IKF** Graduation Requirements Regulation  
**IKAB** Report Cards/Progress Reports  
**IKAB** Report Cards/Progress Reports Regulation  
**JE** Student Attendance  
**JERB** Student Attendance Regulation  
**JF** Student Admissions  
**JFAA** Admission of Resident Students  
**JFAB** Tuition/Admission of NonResident Students  
**JFABB** Admission of Exchange and Foreign Students  
**JFABB-R** Admission of Exchange and Foreign Students Regulation  
**JEB** Entrance Age Requirements  
**JFABC** Admission of Transfer Students  
**JFABD** Admission of Homeless Students  
**JH** Student Absences and Excuses  
**JHRB** Student Absences and Excuses Regulation  
**JLD** Guidance and Counseling

# **GLOSSARY**

# Glossary

## 504 Plan

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. Unlike an IEP, a 504 plan is not necessarily for specialized instruction but for ensuring access.

## Academic Standards

Statements that define what students should know and be able to do at specific grade levels or in particular subject areas. These guide curriculum development and assessment.

## Accommodations

An accommodation refers to the provisions within an IEP or 504 made to allow a student to access the general education curriculum and demonstrate learning. Accommodations *do not substantially change the instructional level, the content or the performance criteria*, but are made in order to provide a student equal access to learning and equal opportunity to demonstrate what is known. Accommodations do not change what a student is expected to learn; they change the approach to learning.

## Accreditation (Accredited School)

A process of validation in which school systems are evaluated. Accreditation signifies that an institution has met certain standards of quality and is recognized by educational authorities.

## Achievement (Academic)

The level of knowledge or skill a student has attained in a particular subject or area, often measured by tests, assignments, or other assessments at a specific point in time.

## AP (Advanced Placement)

A program created by the College Board that offers college-level curricula and examinations to high school students. Students can earn college credit or advanced placement by achieving high school scores on AP exams.

## Audit

To attend a course without receiving academic credit or a grade.

## Cohort Year (Graduation Cohort)

This year designates a student's anticipated graduation year, calculated as four-years from the student's initial high school entry. The cohort assignment remains the same throughout the student's high school tenure.

## Concurrent Enrollment

When a student is enrolled in two educational institutions simultaneously.

## Credits

Credits are earned upon successful completion of a high school course of study. Each semester course is worth .5 credit. Students must earn 22 credits to graduate from high school as well as pass specific courses required by DVUSD to earn a high school diploma.

## Differentiation (Differentiated Instruction)

Tailoring instruction to meet individual student's needs. Teachers change the content, task, products, instructional approach, or the learning environment based on students' readiness, interests, and learning profiles.

## Dual Enrollment

A program that allows eligible high school students to enroll in college courses and earn both high school and college credit simultaneously at the high school.

## English Learner (EL)

A student who is in the process of acquiring English language proficiency and whose primary language is not English. ELs receive specialized instruction and support to develop their English skills while learning academic content.

## Formative Assessments

In-process evaluations of student understanding and learning needs conducted *during* a lesson, unit, or course. The goal is to monitor student learning and provide ongoing feedback that can be used by instructors to improve their teaching and by students to improve their learning.

## GED (General Educational Development)

An alternative to a traditional high school diploma earned by passing a series of tests that measure high school-level academic skills.

## GPA (Grade Point Average)

A numerical representation of a student's academic performance, calculated by averaging the grades earned in their courses on a 0–4-point scale.

## Growth (Academic)

The progress a student makes in academic knowledge or skills over a period of time, regardless of their starting point. It measures how much a student has learned or improved.

## Homebound Instruction

Educational services that are provided to students who are unable to attend school due to medical reasons.

## Homeschool

The education of children at home by their parents or tutors, rather than in public, charter, online, private school or by using ESA Empowerment Scholarship funds.

## IB (International Baccalaureate)

A rigorous program of international education that develops the intellectual, personal, emotional, and social skills needed to live, learn, and work in a rapidly globalizing world. The IB Diploma Programme is a two-year pre-university course of study.

## IEP (Individualized Education Program)

A legally binding document developed for public school students in the U.S. who are eligible for special education services. It outlines the student's learning needs, the services the school will provide, and how progress will be measured.

## Modifications

A modification refers to substantial changes in what a student is expected to learn and to demonstrate. Changes may be made in the instructional level, the content or the performance criteria. Such changes are made to provide a student with meaningful and productive learning experiences, environments, and assessments based on individual needs and abilities. *Modifications should only be used to adapt the instruction for the students who take the alternative state assessment.*

## MTSS (Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports)

A framework that schools use to provide targeted support to students. It provides different levels (tiers) of academic, behavioral, and social-emotional support based on individual student needs.

- **Tier 1 Instruction:** The high-quality, research-based core instruction that all students receive in the general education classroom. This forms the foundation of MTSS.
- **Tier 2 Instruction:** Targeted interventions provided to small groups of students who need additional support in specific academic or behavioral areas, supplementing Tier 1 instruction. These interventions are more focused and intensive than Tier 1.
- **Tier 3 Instruction:** Intensive, individualized interventions for students with significant needs who have not responded adequately to Tier 1 or Tier 2 supports. This is the most intensive level of support within the MTSS framework.

## PLC (Professional Learning Community) Team

A group of educators who meet regularly, share expertise, and work collaboratively to improve teaching skills and the academic performance of students. They often focus on learning, a collaborative culture, and results.

## Progress (Academic)

The advancement a student makes towards achieving specific learning goals, standards, or milestones. It focuses on the journey towards a defined endpoint.

## Scaffolds

A scaffold refers to a temporary support or assistance provided to any student, enabling the student to perform a grade level task successfully with the ultimate goal of fostering independent mastery.

## Score

A numerical value or qualitative mark assigned to a student's performance on a test, assignment, or other assessment, indicating their level of achievement or understanding.

## Summative Assessments

Used to evaluate student learning, skill acquisition, and academic achievement at the conclusion of a defined instructional period-typically at the end of a project, unit, course, semester, program, or school year.

## Test Out

A Test Out (or Credit by Examination) is a process that allows students to earn academic credit for a course without taking the traditional class by passing a comprehensive assessment.

## Transcripts

An official record of a student's academic work in high school, listing courses taken, grades received, credits earned, GPA, class ranking, and graduation date.