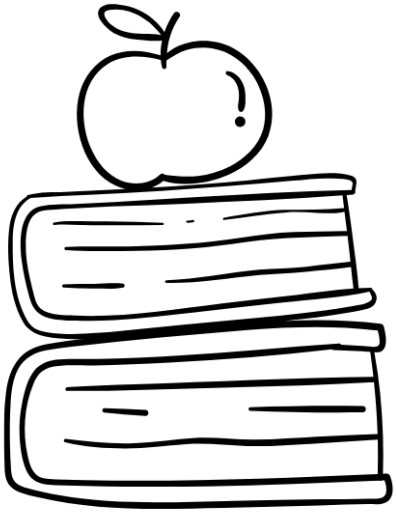
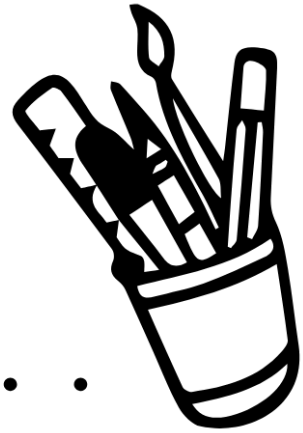
WELCOME TO FIRST GRADE!

2026-2027

FIRST GRADE HANDBOOK

Please read for all things related to first grade.





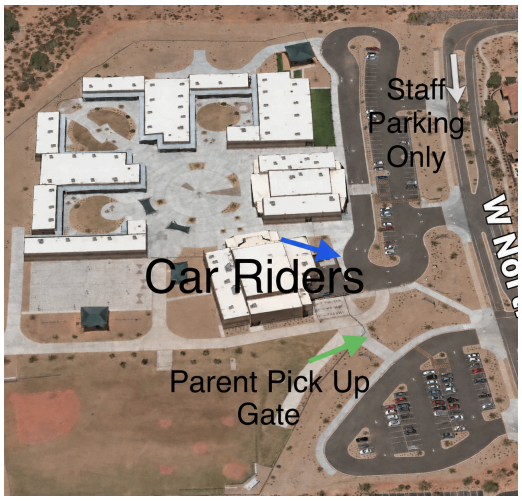


Welcome to First Grade!

We're excited to kick off a brand-new school year and can't wait to get to know each of our students! This is sure to be a wonderful year in your child's educational journey. Together, we'll help your child grow, learn, and of course have fun along the way!

Arrival 8:30AM: Drop off begins at 8:30AM and school starts at 8:45AM. Upon arrival, first graders will go directly to the playground.

First Grade Dismissal 3:30PM: Teachers accompany students at dismissal. If your child's method of transportation changes, please let us know right away by email or call the front office after 2:30PM. First graders are not permitted to leave campus without a parent or older sibling.



Students are dismissed each day using one of four dismissal procedures: **Car Riders, Parent Pick Up Gate, Bus Riders, or Bobcat Burrow**. Please ensure your child knows their assigned dismissal plan and notify the teacher in writing of any changes.

Car Riders

Carline parent pick up will be at the front of the school. First graders will wait on the blue Bobcat paws for those parents that wish to stay in their cars and drive through.

Parent Pick Up Gate

Parents will park in the parking lot near the bus area and walk up to the "Parent Pick Up Gate" to pick up their child if they do not want to drive through the carline.

Bus Riders: To find your child's bus number and stop, please visit our school website: https://sonoranfoothills.dvusd.org/ (Scroll down to "Bus Route Information.)

If your child will ride the bus, please make sure they know their bus number and stop before the first day of school. Practice the route together to help ensure they get off at the correct stop as the bus makes multiple stops on the route.

Bobcat Burrow

On-campus after school care.

School Supplies

Pre-ordered supplies will be delivered directly to our classrooms. Supplies can be brought to the classroom during Meet the Teacher Night. Supply lists can be found on our school website.

Behavior Expectations

The first grade team is committed to creating a safe, respectful, and positive learning environment where every student can thrive. Students are recognized for demonstrating the school's TRACKS expectations:

T – Trustworthy
R – Respectful
A – Accountable
C – Creative
K – Kind
S – Safe

Students earn "Bobcat Tickets" for demonstrating positive choices and may earn both individual and class rewards throughout the year. Students who earn 10 Bobcat Tickets may choose an item from the class treasure box on Fridays.

When behavior concerns arise, teachers provide reminders and opportunities for students to make better choices. Families will be contacted if additional support is needed. Serious behaviors will be addressed according to school and district procedures.

Power School

PowerSchool is DVUSD's system for class schedules, attendance, grades, and school communication. To stay informed and access your child's grades, please make sure your email and phone number are up to date with the front office. For first-time access, contact the office at 623-445-8400 or email our registrar, Olga Wagner, at Olga.Wagner@dvusd.org . Teachers do not have login information.

Communication and Weekly Newsletters

Email is the quickest and easiest way to reach us. If you'd like to meet, please schedule a time in advance, as we have duties before and after school and cannot meet during teaching hours. Weekly newsletters will be emailed with information and homework.

Student Daily Folders

Daily folders serve as an important communication tool between home and school. They contain classwork, homework, and school notices. Students are expected to bring their folder to school each day. Parents, please check your child's folder daily.

Homework

Homework will begin once classroom routines have been established. Homework directions will be posted in our weekly Smores digital newsletters.

Reading Homework: Daily reading at home is essential to your child's success in first grade. Please have your child read with an adult for 15 to 20 minutes each day. Students should read assigned stories or passages sent home and are also encouraged to read books of their choice. Taking turns reading aloud helps build fluency, confidence, and a love of reading.

Sight Words: Practice the sight words sent home each week using flashcards. Review them regularly and add new words as your child masters them. Students will be assessed on sight word recognition throughout the year.

Math Homework: Students are expected to complete any math pages labeled "Practice."

Snacks, Classroom Treats, and Water Bottles

Please place a healthy snack in the front pocket of your child's backpack, as snacks packed in lunchboxes often get eaten at lunchtime. We kindly ask that snacks be kept separate. Also, send a labeled, refillable water bottle each day. If your child has any food allergies, let us know right away.

Birthdays

Arizona's Healthy Schools Act no longer allows store bought birthday treats, such as cupcakes, cookies, donuts, or brownies, to be brought to school. Students are welcome to celebrate by bringing **nonfood birthday bags**, such as stickers, pencils, erasers, or other small classroom friendly items.

Families may also order a **DVUSD Birthday Bucket** with approved snack options.

Birthday Bucket Orders:

- Birthday Bucket Information
- Birthday Bucket Form
- Order at least **2 weeks in advance** and email the completed form to **madeline.holland@dvusd.org** , send it to school with your child, or drop it off in the front office.

Summer birthdays can be celebrated during Bobcat of the Week. Please send birthday items with your child in the morning. Students may pass out invitations **only if the whole class is invited. No exceptions.** Please use our class roster to contact families directly.

Bobcat of the Week

Each student will be "Bobcat of the Week" during the school year, usually near their birthday. Summer birthdays will be celebrated then too.

Classroom Volunteers

All classroom volunteers and field trip chaperones must complete DVUSD's new online volunteer training before volunteering on campus. Volunteer opportunities will begin on an as needed basis once classroom routines are established and may be limited. Both the online training and annual testimony form are **required**, even for returning volunteers.

Volunteer training: https://www.dvusd.org/departments/human-resources/volunteering

Field Trips and T-shirts

Field trips and first grade T-shirts will have a small cost. Chaperones must complete DVUSD volunteer training in advance.

Curriculum

Please visit our district website for more detailed information regarding all curriculum. https://www.dvusd.org/

English Language Arts

Amplify CKLA (Core Knowledge Language Arts) is DVUSD's K through 5 English Language Arts curriculum. It is a research based program that builds strong reading, writing, speaking, listening, and knowledge skills through engaging, grade level instruction.

Daily 5 Literacy Centers

The Daily 5 is a research based literacy framework that builds reading and writing skills through whole group, small group, and independent learning.

Students rotate through activities that include:

- Teacher Time: Small group reading instruction targeted to students' needs.
- Read to Self: Independent or partner reading with appropriate books.
- Word Work: Practice with weekly phonics, spelling, and vocabulary skills.
- Work on Writing: Daily writing to strengthen writing skills.
- Centers: Listening, reading, and literacy activities that build fluency and comprehension.

Spelling

DVUSD uses a word study approach to spelling, helping students learn spelling patterns and word relationships rather than memorizing word lists. Students take spelling assessments that include word spelling and sentence dictation. Students who score 90% or higher on the pretest may advance to a more challenging word list.

Writing

Our first grade writing program teaches weekly grammar skills and the writing process through a variety of writing genres. Thinking Maps are used to help students organize and develop their ideas.

Math

DVUSD's iReady Math program is a standards-aligned program that builds procedural fluency and conceptual understanding. First grade units include addition and subtraction, place value, word problems, geometry, and measurement.

Science

Our K–2 science curriculum includes resources like Mystery Science, Picture Perfect, and Open Education materials. Units include light and sound, forces and motion, habitats, and life cycles, along with topics in life, physical, and Earth science.

Social Studies

DVUSD uses McGraw Hill's Arizona Social Studies program. First grade units include citizenship, communities, history, America, and economics.

Assessments

DIBELS Reading Assessment: All K–3 DVUSD students take the DIBELS 8th Edition reading assessment in August, December, and May. The DIBELS assessment tracks progress in phonemic awareness, decoding, fluency, and sight words.

Diagnostic Reading Assessment (DRA2): The DRA2 (Developmental Reading Assessment 2) measures students' independent and instructional reading levels through observation, recording, and comprehension.

NWEA Map Reading Assessment: The NWEA online reading assessment is administered several times throughout the year to monitor student reading progress.

iReady Inform: The iReady Math Inform assessment is an online adaptive screener given multiple times throughout the year.

Grading

Visit our district website for our grading policy: https://www.dvusd.org/ Students in Kindergarten through 2nd grade will be assessed on their proficiency toward grade-level standards using the following scale:

K-2 Standards Grading Scale

4 = Applies grade level skills with greater depth and complexity.

3 = Demonstrates grade level proficiency.

2 = Approaches grade level proficiency.

1 = Displays a significant lack of grade level proficiency.

Academic Subject Grades

Students in 1st and 2nd grade will receive overall course grades based on the average of their standard scores for the grading period. This average is converted to a letter grade: E, S, N, or U.

E = Excellent (80%-100%)

S = Satisfactory (60%-79%)

N = Needs Improvement (42%-59%)

U = Under Performing (0%-41%)

Parent-Teacher Conferences: Parent-teacher conferences will be held in October and February.

First Grade Online Payment

T-shirt orders and field trip fees will need to be paid online. Cash will not be accepted.

1. Go to the Sonoran Foothills website at dvusd.org/sonoranfoothills
2. Select **Online Payments & Tax Credit Donation**
3. Log into Student Account using student's user name and password
   User Name=Student's lunch number
   Password=Student's Last Name (as listed in PowerSchool/case-sensitive)
4. Select the Student you are shopping for

Making a Purchase

1. Select **Shop/Items at Your School**
2. Choose the category **Class and Club Accounts**
3. Scroll down to **1st grade Class of 2034**
4. Type in payment amount and click **Buy**
5. Click on the **Checkout** link, in upper right corner. Verify the cart contents and click on the **blue Checkout** icon.
6. The customer will be directed to a payment screen where all of the credit card information is entered.
7. Click **Pay Now** and complete transaction.
8. The customer has the opportunity to print and/or save a copy of the payment receipt.