DOTHAN CITY SCHOOLS

STUDENT PROGRESSION GUIDE

2026-27

Approved by the Dothan City Board of Education on June 29, 2026

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DOTHAN CITY SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION

The Student Progression Guide is reviewed and amended annually, as necessary to meet the needs of students in the Dothan City School System. All instructional personnel of the Dothan City Schools are charged with the responsibility of implementing the Dothan City Schools Student Progression Guide to achieve state, district, and school goals.

APPROVED

By the Dothan City Schools Board of Education on June 29, 2026

MEMBERS

Julie Mullins-Turner, Chairman
Brenda Guilford, District 1
Franklin Jones, District 2
Taiisha Walton, District 3
Scott Patrick Childers, District 4
Ashley Davis, District 5
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Superintendent, Dr. Garrick Askew

FACILITATORS

Sherry Corbitt, District Elementary Coordinator
Lori Shaughnessy, District Secondary Coordinator
Alyssa Dyer, Director of Special Education
Dr. Charles Corbitt, Director of Student Services

REVIEW & EDIT PROCESS

A request for edits document is sent to all administrators with an expectation that they review the current year's Progression Guide with their faculties and staff. All recommendations are shared with all administrators. Edits are made based on recommendations from building-level input and district leadership. Recommendations are sent to the Dothan City Schools Board of Education in draft form for review. After final review and approval, the Progression Guide is made available on Dothan City Schools' website. This process is comprehensive and includes face-to-face meetings as needed.

GUIDE
INTRODUCTION

The Student Progression Guide (SPG) is an agreement defining what a student must know and be able to do to be promoted and to graduate. The SPG also describes what the district will do to help each student meet the requirements for promotion and graduation. The purpose of the Student Progression Guide is to present to school personnel, parents, students, and other interested citizens the Board of Education's policies, rules, and administrative procedures that are required to implement state and local student progression requirements.

OUR
MISSION

The mission of the Dothan City School System is to prepare the whole child to build a better tomorrow.

VISION
STATEMENT

The vision of Dothan City Schools is: Every learner equipped with the skills, confidence, and readiness to learn, and thrive today and for their future.

VALUES

EXCELLENCE: Dothan City Schools values excellence because we believe in providing consistent, equitable, and high-quality instruction that empowers learners to reach their full potential—emotionally, socially, and academically—while preparing them to contribute meaningfully to their communities.

INTEGRITY: Dothan City Schools values integrity because we believe in being honest, upholding strong moral principles, and doing the right thing—even when no one is watching—as a reflection of high character.

RESPECT: Dothan City Schools values respect because we believe in building strong, empathetic relationships to create a positive learning environment in support of personal and academic growth as well as a safer, more inclusive community.

TRUST: Dothan City Schools values trust because we believe in promoting transparency, accountability, and confidence in the actions and decisions of our students, staff, and leaders.

UNITY: Dothan City Schools values unity because we believe in the power of people from all backgrounds coming together with a shared purpose to achieve more than they could alone.

RESPONSIBILITIES
OF STAKEHOLDERS

Instructional personnel of Dothan City Schools, parents, and students have responsibilities of collaborating on the implementation of the Dothan City Schools Student Progression Guide to achieve state, district, and school goals. It is the responsibility of the school board and district administration to provide students with effective instructional and remedial programs that monitor progress, promote continuous achievement, and make provisions for individual differences. The principal is responsible for creating and maintaining required records and reports; for providing leadership for instruction that meets the needs of all children; and for ensuring that teachers follow the appropriate standards. Teachers are responsible for providing effective instruction, enrichment, and remediation; documenting instruction; and documenting students' proficiency in the Alabama State Standards. Parents are responsible for their children's attendance; for promoting an interest in learning; for sending their children to school each day rested, fed, and ready to learn; and for ensuring their children's proper conduct while at school. Students are responsible for learning, regularly attending school and classes, and actively engaging in instruction.

RESPONSIBILITIES
OF THE PRINCIPAL

» Direct the administration of the Student Progression Guide within the school.
» Assist and supervise teachers in utilizing curriculum guides, scope and sequence charts, state assessment item specifications, and assessment information.
» Ensure that parents or guardians are advised of student progress and of the possible retention of their child.
» Make final decisions regarding the assignments and progression of students.
» Make available to all parents or guardians and students an electronic version on the district website of the Student Progression Guide at the time the student is officially enrolled in the school.

RESPONSIBILITIES
OF THE PARENT

» Ensure consistent school attendance of the student. Encourage students to have good study and work habits, self-discipline, and respect for schools and school personnel.
» Review official progress and report cards from the school at the end of each grading period and to schedule conferences with teachers, if such reports indicate that their child is having difficulty.

» Honor requests for conferences from school officials, whenever possible.
» Respond promptly to all requests from the school for information.
» Stay informed of a child's progress through scheduled parent-teacher conferences, report cards, and communications from the school.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TEACHER

» Use the Alabama Courses of Study, curriculum guides, scope and sequence charts, frameworks, and appropriate instructional materials, as intended.
» Utilize all available data, including achievement tests, progress reports, daily assignments, formative and summative assessments, and other available information to plan instruction and evaluate student performance.
» Determine students' grades and follow established district and school procedures for recording and reporting them.
» Inform parents or guardians of students' progress and seek their assistance in meeting student needs.
» Help students acquire study skills and self-discipline needed to understand content successfully.
» If progress reports, assessment data, or general performance indicate that a student is having difficulty, teachers shall schedule a conference with parents/guardians.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STUDENT

» Accomplish all objectives in each subject.
» Maintain good attendance.
» Deliver all report cards and other communications from the school to parent(s) or guardian(s).
» Develop good study habits and self-discipline, as well as accept additional help from available educational personnel and parents, if school-related problems are experienced.
» Adhere to all Dothan City Schools policies and the Code of Conduct. Make the best effort in taking all assessments.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The goal for high student performance is to prepare all students to participate productively and responsibly in a rapidly changing society. The Dothan City School System believes that all decisions will be made with the best interest of students first. The "Dothan Way" demonstrates that all students will be successful learners; will be taught to respect themselves and others; will be taught to communicate effectively; and will meet and exceed high standards.

PARENTS' RIGHT TO KNOW

In accordance with **Parental Right to Know (SB48 - ACT #2024-35)**, relating to public PreK-12 education; to require the posting of classroom curricula on the website of the school; to permit parents or guardians of enrolled students, upon request, to request information on instructional and supplemental materials used in the classroom; to provide a complaint process; and to provide for the reporting of the number of complaints to the State Superintendent of Education and the Legislature. Go to **dothan.k12.al.us/parentsrighttoknow** for more information.

REGISTRATION, ADMISSIONS, AND ATTENDANCE

KINDERGARTEN AND FIRST GRADE REGISTRATION

A child who is five years of age on or before September 1 shall be entitled to admission to kindergarten. It shall be the policy of the Dothan City Schools to enforce kindergarten attendance requirements which are the same as those which apply to all other students enrolled in Dothan City Schools.

If a child's "Proof of Birth" indicates that the child's sixth birthday is on or before December 31, the child will be entitled to admission to the first grade.

Alabama Act #2016-297 requires local education agencies to allow a child who is six years of age on or before December 31 to enroll in first grade. This act extends the timeframes from the current date of on or before September 1 for first grade only. It does NOT extend the timeframe for enrollment in kindergarten.

First Grade Readiness

Dothan City Schools will implement policies that ensure students being enrolled in or promoted to the first grade can demonstrate first grade readiness. First grade readiness may be demonstrated by successful completion of kindergarten or otherwise demonstrating first grade entry readiness on an assessment of essential developmental and physical skills. Immediate interventions and support will be in place for students who are unable to demonstrate first grade readiness, but otherwise required to be enrolled in the first grade. (Code of Alabama, 290-3-1-.04:§16-28-4; §16-3-12). **Act #2024-347**

Resident Students:
School-aged children who reside within the municipal limits of Dothan, Alabama may be admitted to Dothan City Schools. For purposes of this admissions policy, the residence of the student will be the residence of the custodial parent or legal guardian. If custody of the child is shared, alternated, or unclear, or if the child does not reside with a custodial parent or legal guardian, the domicile or actual physical residence of the child will control, except when there is evidence that the claimed residence of the child is not his actual residence, or that the claimed residence is fraudulently given as a means of avoiding or violating admission, enrollment, attendance, and residency standards and requirements.

Non-resident Students:
Dothan City Schools will allow non-resident students who are children of employees of Dothan City Schools or children of employees of the City of Dothan to attend Dothan City Schools. The placement will be at the school or zone where the parent works or may be determined by the Superintendent, based upon enrollment or other factors.

Other students who do not reside within the municipal limits of the City of Dothan may apply for enrollment in the Dothan City Schools. The school system may require the payment of tuition as a prerequisite to enrollment. A non-resident enrollment application may be denied because a school, grade, or program(s) lack(s) adequate space, staff, support services, facilities, or equipment, taking district enrollment projections into consideration. Denial of enrollment may also be given because the student:

- has not obtained a release from the zoned school system;
- does not meet the established eligibility criteria for participation in a particular program, including age requirements, course prerequisites, and required levels of academic performance;
- has been suspended or expelled from school; is in the process of being suspended or expelled; or
- has withdrawn from a school to avoid possible suspension or expulsion; or
- has a history of documented disciplinary infractions within the past three (3) years; or
- has a record of excessive absences for truancy from school; or
- presents incorrect or incomplete information on the enrollment application.

Homeless, Migrants, Immigrants, and English Learner Students and Children in Foster Care:

All homeless, migrant, immigrant, and English learner students and children in foster care will have equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including public preschool education, provided to other children and youth. They will be provided the opportunity to meet the same challenging state content and state student performance standards to which all students are held.

The enrollment of homeless, migrant, immigrant, and English learner students and children in foster care shall not be denied or delayed due to any barriers that are specifically prohibited by applicable law, which may include the following:

» Lack of birth certificate
» Lack of school records or transcripts
» Lack of immunization or health records
» Lack of proof of residency
» Lack of transportation
» Guardianship or custody requirements
» Lack of social security card

Homeless Students:

Enrollment: Homeless students will be permitted to enroll without regard to residency status and may be entitled to other accommodations under federal law. Homeless students will continue in the school they attended before becoming homeless for the duration of their homelessness, or for the remainder of the academic year if the student becomes permanently housed during an academic year. Otherwise, a homeless student may be enrolled in any school in the system that non-homeless students who live in the attendance area in which the student is living are eligible to attend.

» Dispute Resolution: When a dispute arises regarding school placement, the system will immediately enroll the homeless student in the school in which enrollment is sought by the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth, pending resolution of the dispute. The school will provide the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth with a written explanation of the decision, a statement of the right to appeal, and the procedure for appealing the placement decision. The principal of the school will notify the Board's Homeless Liaison of the dispute.

» The Homeless Liaison will execute the system's dispute resolution procedures, expeditiously, as detailed in the homeless policy.

Students in Foster Care:

A student in foster care will enroll or remain in the student's school of origin, unless it is determined that remaining in the school of origin is not in such student's best interest.
If it is not in a student's best interest to stay in the school of origin, a student in foster care

may be enrolled in any school in the system that serves the attendance area in which the student is living, even if the student is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment. The school system will immediately contact the school last attended by the student to obtain relevant academic and other records.

Students Expelled or Suspended from Other School Systems:

Students with discipline issues enrolling in Dothan City Schools must complete all discipline assignments before attending regular classes. This includes suspensions, alternative school placement, etc. Students permanently expelled from another school system shall not be permitted to attend school in Dothan City Schools. Dothan City Schools reserves the right to uphold any discipline action taken by the previous school system.

Required Documentation:

Students entering the school system for the first time, regardless of grade level, are not required to submit a birth certificate, but may be requested to submit a birth certificate or another form of acceptable documentation to verify the student's age. A social security number may also be requested, but such a request is voluntary and is not a requirement of enrollment.

Students may also be required to submit other registration materials as school officials may reasonably require including, but not limited to, a certificate of immunization or an exemption as prescribed by the Department of Public Health and signed by a private physician or appropriate health department official. The Superintendent may accept alternate forms of evidence or modify otherwise applicable requirements as necessary and appropriate to accommodate migrant, immigrant, limited English proficient or homeless students.

Placement of Students:

The Board policy will determine the placement of newly enrolled students in accordance with state law.

Dothan City Schools Board Policy
6.1.2 Admission to Schools -
h. ***Placement of Students*** – The Board will determine the placement of newly enrolled students in accordance with state law (See Alabama Code-Instructional 64.03, 290-3-1-.02(7)(k).

Students without transfer records from accredited schools will be required to complete an assessment in reading and math to determine grade level/course placement.

Note: Any school/school setting not accredited by an institutional accrediting agency recognized by the Secretary of the United States Department of Education or other organizations approved by the State Board of Education shall be considered a non-accredited school for the purpose of transfer of class/grade credit.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AREAS

All students attending Dothan City Schools shall reside within the municipal limits of DCS and attend the school for which they are zoned according to the school zone plan currently in effect, except as noted in the DCS Board Policy.

ADMISSIONS AND ATTENDANCE

Kindergarten to Grade 12

All students enrolled in Dothan City Schools are required to be in continuous attendance and to abide by the policies governing attendance as outlined by the State of Alabama and the local Board of Education. Alabama Legislative Act 93-972 requires a parent/guardian to be responsible for enrolling their children in school, ensuring that they attend school regularly, and requiring that they conduct themselves properly while in school.

For Attendance policies please see the **Dothan City Schools Code of Conduct.**

The following information regarding Admissions and Attendance is also found in the Dothan City Board of Education Policy Manual, Adopted March 18, 2021 (Revised November 19, 2021).

Compulsory Attendance and Entrance Age

All persons between the ages of six (6) and seventeen (17) years are required by state law to attend school for the minimum number of scholastic days prescribed by the State Board of Education unless the person holds a certificate of exemption issued by the Superintendent or is otherwise exempt under state law.

[Reference: ALA. CODE § 16-28-3 (1975)]

Grades 9-12

Attendance Requirements for High School

For semester classes, students may be excused for up to a total of five (5) days per semester based upon legal cause. Absences beyond five (5) days must be substantiated by a physician's statement unless excused by the principal. If there is no physician's statement, the absence may be appealed to a school attendance hearing committee.

» For year-long classes, students may be excused for up to a total of ten (10) days based upon legal cause. Absences beyond ten (10) days must be substantiated by a physician's statement unless excused by the principal. If there is no physician's
statement, the absence may be appealed to a school attendance hearing committee.

See Code of Conduct for further information.

STUDENT PROGRESSION INFORMATION GRADES K-5

Kindergarten to Grade 12 All students enrolled in Dothan City Schools are required to be in continuous attendance and to abide by the policies governing attendance as outlined by the State of Alabama and the local Board of Education. Alabama Legislative Act 93-972 requires a parent/guardian to be responsible for enrolling their children in school, ensuring that they attend school regularly, and requiring that they conduct themselves properly while in school. For Attendance policies please see the Dothan City Schools **Code of Conduct.**

PARENTS' RIGHT TO KNOW

In accordance with **Parental Right to Know (SB48 - ACT #2024-35)**, relating to public PreK-12 education; to require the posting of classroom curricula on the website of the school; to permit parents or guardians of enrolled students, upon request, to request information on instructional and supplemental materials used in the classroom; to provide a complaint process; and to provide for the reporting of the number of complaints to the State Superintendent of Education and the Legislature. Go to **dothan.k12.al.us/parentsrighttoknow** for more information.

ALABAMA COURSES OF STUDY

Link to Alabama Course of Study: English Language Arts
Link to Alabama Course of Study: Mathematics
Link to Alabama Course of Study: Physical Education
Link to Alabama Course of Study: Science
Link to Alabama Course of Study: Social Studies

GRADING PROCEDURES

Teachers should post a minimum of one (1) to two (2) grades every two weeks per content area. These posted grades should not include homework in Grades 1-5 but should include all areas in the English/Language Arts (ELA). Student work is equally assessed during each nine weeks. Both school administrators and central office personnel will monitor progress reports and nine-week report cards to prevent and address high failure rates.

Students should receive feedback on all assignments, however, not all feedback on assignments is posted in grade books. Note that homework should not be graded since it reflects the teacher's assessment of the student's comprehension of content standards and progress in a subject.

The teacher will provide evidence to justify a grade on an assignment or assessment. All assigned grades will be on grade-level content standards, unless otherwise directed as part of an (Individual Education Plan (IEP)), 504, and/or ELL plans. Each graded assignment must have a minimum of 10 items and align to the Alabama Course of Study Standards.

Grades MAY come from the following:
(Reminder: Review and adhere to IEP, 504, and ELL plans for additional guidelines on grading for the student.)

» Standards-based teacher-made assessments
» Open-ended performance assessments
» Assessments centered on the five reading dimensions: phonics, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension
» Oral assessments
» Writing prompt responses
» Projects with standards-based rubrics
» Presentations
» Summative assessments

MAKE-UP WORK

All graded assignments will be recorded as a numerical grade and will be entered into the electronic grade book. For incomplete or missing assignments, teachers will enter an “I” or “M” in the teacher’s hard copy grade book (not electronic grade book). Principals will ensure that the following opportunities are provided for all students:

- Students have five (5) school days to make up incomplete or missing work. The period of time to make up work may be extended at the discretion of the principal working with the content, special education, and/or ELL teachers.
- Students are fully responsible for completing any incomplete or missing assignments (i.e., course assignments, tests, projects, and other related work).
- Teachers are expected to provide multiple opportunities for students to make up assignments to avoid assigning zeros. Teachers will communicate by telephone, email, or in writing with students and parent(s)/guardian(s) regarding incomplete work, missing assignments, or unsatisfactory course/class work. Teachers will contact the ELL department, if a translator is needed.
- Make-up work completed within the required time frame will be graded and recorded in the grade book by teachers without penalty to students.
- If work is not completed, the incomplete (I) or make-up work (M) will become a zero grade (0). Any zero that is recorded in the electronic gradebook must be accompanied by a comment in PowerSchool.

HOMEWORK

Homework is defined as a written or non-written standards-based activity, or an assignment directed by the teacher and completed by the student outside of the classroom. The purpose of homework is to provide independent practice for newly taught skills, review of previously mastered skills, development of independent study habits, and extension or enrichment of content standards in the curriculum.

If assigning homework, the following guidelines are used as best practices for extended learning:

- Homework is related to the curriculum being taught.
- Homework is NOT used as a behavior management tool or as a form of punishment.
- Homework is NOT to be given as a grade.
- Homework may be given four nights per week in Grades 1-5 and should not be assigned on weekends.
- Reading assignments are incorporated into homework time allotments at each grade level, but voluntary reading beyond homework guidelines is encouraged.
- Long-term projects should be assigned at least two weekends before the work assignment is due.
- Homework guidelines for students with special needs and English language learners (ELL) may be determined by the student's educational plan and should be specifically related to the student's learning profile.
- The appropriate time limits for homework (as recommended by the National PTA) for children in Grades 1-5 are shown in the following chart.

APPROPRIATE TIME LIMITS FOR HOMEWORK		
Grade 1	10 Minutes	Monday - Thursday
Grade 2	20 Minutes	Monday - Thursday
Grade 3	30 Minutes	Monday - Thursday
Grade 4	40 Minutes	Monday - Thursday
Grade 5	50 Minutes	Monday - Thursday

(These times refer to a combination of homework for all subject areas).

REPORTS FOR KINDERGARTEN

Progress reports and report cards for kindergarten students will be reported using the following scale.

REPORT CARD KEY FOR KINDERGARTEN	
Performance Description	Code
Advancing	4
Proficient	3
Progressing	2
Developing	1
Not Assessed	N/A

GRADING SCALES FOR GRADES 1-5

Handwriting and physical education for students in Grades 1-5 will be reported using the following scale:

Satisfactory (S), Needs Improvement (N), and Unsatisfactory (U).

HANDWRITING GRADING SCALE	PHYSICAL EDUCATION GRADING SCALE
E=90-100	
S=89-75	S = 80-100
N=74-60	N = 60-79
U=below 60	U = 59 and below

Grading of special education and English Language Learner (ELL) students will be completed in collaboration (and in accordance with IEP and IELP) between the regular classroom teachers and special education/ELL teachers.

Teachers are responsible for accurate assessments and reporting of student progress in the student information system. Students' progress and/or grades reported by teachers will not be changed unless the following conditions are documented in consultation between the teacher and principal.

- Errors have been made in computation;
- Factors have been included that are not consistent with guidelines; or,
- Procedures have not been followed.
- All changes must be documented. Decisions made in the administration, teacher, parent, student conference(s) are final. Grades for academic coursework in Grades 1-5 will be awarded according to the following scale.

LETTER GRADE	NUMERICAL GRADE (100-point scale)
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	59 or below

REPORT CARDS/PROGRESS REPORTS

All students in K-5 will receive a report card each nine weeks. The following subjects are to receive grades beginning with the first nine weeks of school.

Subject	Kindergarten	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
Conduct	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Reading	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Language Arts*	✔		✔	✔	✔	✔
Mathematics	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Handwriting**		✔	✔	✔		
Spelling		✔	✔			
Speaking and Listening	✔					
Physical Education		✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Science				✔	✔	✔
Social Studies				✔	✔	✔

**In Grades 3-5, the Language Arts grade consists of 25% spelling, 25% grammar, 25% writing, and 25% speaking.*

***Manuscript writing will be taught in kindergarten, grade 1, and grade 2. Cursive writing will be introduced during the second semester of 2nd grade. Beginning the fourth nine weeks of Grade 3, handwriting grades will be based on cursive handwriting unless otherwise noted in an IEP, 504, and/or I-ELP.*

Each teacher is required to send a progress report on all students the fifth week of each nine weeks. Parent conferences are required on any student receiving a failing grade. Documentation of these conferences should be kept until the end of the year. Documentation includes conference notes, missed conferences, phone call logs, etc. Teachers will contact the ELL Department, if a translator is needed.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION

Third Grade Promotion and Retention:

Dothan City Schools will adhere to the retention requirements outlined in The Alabama Literacy Act (ALA). View the links below for additional information:

- Pathway to Promotion Chart
- Good Cause Exemptions

Note: Third grade students are required to pass math as well as meet the criteria under the Alabama Literacy Act in reading to be promoted to fourth grade. Alabama Literacy Act criteria for promotion to fourth grade is based on the Reading subtest cut score on ACAP or one of the alternate pathways for promotion. The cut score is determined by the Alabama State Department of Education.

Grades 1-2, Grades 4-5

The decision to retain a child is not to be made until the last nine weeks of the school year. Promotion is based upon grades that support proficiency in content standards. Students in Grades 1-2, and Grades 4-5 are automatically promoted when they receive passing grades in both reading and math. If a student does not receive passing grades in both reading and math, Dothan City Schools' administrators will review multiple data sources for the student. Multiple data sources will include grades, benchmark assessments, ACAP data, previous retentions, age, and attendance. After reviewing all student data, a final retention/promotion recommendation will be made by the Review Team comprised of administration, counselor and teacher(s). Parents will meet with the school administration to discuss the Review Team's findings. When a decision is made to retain a student, the teacher and administrative staff must develop and implement instructional strategies and approaches to enhance the probability of the student's success during the following year. Retention of ELL students must follow policies and procedures outlined in the Dothan City Schools' ELL Manual.

Promotion Criteria in Grade 1 are based on the following averages:

- Reading - Second Semester Average
- Math - Second Semester Average

Note: Letter grades not recorded during the first four weeks of the first grading period in Grade 1 for reading and mathematics.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

Dothan City Schools is committed to ensuring that all students receive the academic and behavioral supports necessary to achieve success. Student promotion and retention decisions are made using multiple sources of data and professional judgment. No single assessment, report card grade, or performance measure is used as the sole factor in determining promotion or retention.

The district believes that retention should be considered only after appropriate interventions, supports, and progress-monitoring efforts have been implemented and reviewed through the school's Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) process.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS (MTSS)

Dothan City Schools utilizes a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework to identify and address student academic and behavioral needs.

Through the MTSS process, schools:

- Identify students who may be at risk for academic or behavioral difficulties through universal screening, classroom performance, attendance, and other relevant data.
- Provide targeted interventions designed to address identified areas of need.
- Monitor student progress regularly to determine the effectiveness of interventions.
- Adjust interventions and supports based on student response and documented progress.
- Review student performance through the Problem Solving Team (PST) process to determine appropriate next steps.

The goal of MTSS is to ensure that students receive timely and appropriate support before retention is considered.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION REVIEW PROCESS

When a student demonstrates significant academic concerns that may impact promotion, schools will engage in a systematic review process that includes:

Academic Review

Schools will consider:

- Classroom performance and grades
- Universal screener data
- District and state assessment results
- Progress-monitoring data
- Intervention data and student response to intervention
- Teacher observations and classroom performance

Intervention Review

Prior to recommending retention, schools will:

- Implement research-based interventions aligned to identified student needs.
- Monitor intervention effectiveness through documented progress-monitoring measures.
- Review intervention fidelity and student participation.
- Consider attendance, tardiness, and other factors impacting academic performance.

Problem Solving Team (PST) Review

The school's Problem Solving Team (PST) will review available data and intervention outcomes to determine whether additional support, intervention adjustments, or retention consideration is appropriate.

The PST process serves as an important component of the district's commitment to ensuring that students receive multiple opportunities for academic support and intervention.

PARENT COMMUNICATION AND INVOLVEMENT

Dothan City Schools recognizes the important role parents and guardians play in student success. Schools will communicate regularly with parents regarding student progress and academic concerns.

Parents may expect schools to:

- Notify families when significant academic concerns are identified.
- Share information regarding intervention services and support strategies.
- Provide updates regarding student progress.
- Invite parents to participate in meetings when additional support planning is needed.
- Discuss promotion and retention concerns in a timely manner.

Parents are encouraged to maintain regular communication with the school and support student attendance, engagement, and academic growth.

RETENTION CONSIDERATIONS

Retention decisions are made on an individual student basis and are intended to support long-term academic success.

When considering retention, schools may review:

- Academic achievement data
- Progress-monitoring data
- Intervention effectiveness
- Attendance and tardiness records
- Student maturity and developmental considerations
- Parent input
- Other relevant educational information

Retention may be recommended when available data indicates that a student has not demonstrated sufficient progress despite documented intervention and support efforts.

DISTRICT EXPECTATIONS FOR PROMOTION AND RETENTION

To ensure consistency across all schools, Dothan City Schools maintains district procedures related to promotion and retention decision-making.

These procedures include:

- MTSS implementation expectations
- Intervention documentation requirements
- Progress-monitoring procedures
- Problem Solving Team (PST) review processes
- Parent communication expectations
- Promotion and retention review protocols

School administrators are responsible for implementing district procedures and maintaining documentation supporting promotion and retention decisions. All intervention plans and evidence of implementation will be documented in Analytics and Insights inside PowerSchool.

The principal maintains final responsibility for student promotion and retention decisions in accordance with district procedures, Board policy, and applicable state requirements.

SUMMER CAMP

Dothan City Schools offers Summer camp as a support structure for students with reading deficiencies (Literacy Act 2019-532 subsection b). The planning for this support structure begins in January of each school year. The planning process starts with the review of student data. Data sources include reading and math grade, the district's winter benchmark assessment, second grade ACAP scores from the prior year and current ACAP scores, once released. Upon the review of these data points, schools determine which students are eligible to participate in summer camp. Eligible students, then receive an invitation to summer camp no later than March of the current school year. The invitations and/ or parent notifications of eligibility, outline the logistics of summer school (i.e. schedule, transportation, and locations). Once parents accept the invitation, each school will provide their parents and students with additional information regarding summer camp.

Students who participate in summer camp, have the opportunity to strengthen reading and math foundational skills. In addition to strengthening skills, third grade students will have the option to take the ACAP Supplemental assessment for reading, which provides a pathway to promotion to the fourth grade.

PERTINENT LEGISLATION

Lexi's Law Act #2016-352

Lexi's Law requires cursive handwriting to be taught by the end of third grade in all state schools. Lexi's Law prescribes a standardized method for teaching cursive handwriting and provides classroom instruction plans outlining when and how cursive handwriting is to be taught.

The Alabama Literacy Act #2019-523

The Alabama Legislature passed the Alabama Literacy Act [HB388], which became a law on June 10, 2019. The Alabama Literacy Act (ALA) outlines proficiency skills for students in Grades K through 3 with specific guidelines for student progression from one grade to the next. Clear descriptions on what the student must know and demonstrate sufficient reading skills by the end of the third grade to be promoted to the fourth grade are included in the Alabama Literacy Act (ALA).

This legislation, based on the best current research, provides comprehensive information and guidance for educators and requires concentrated, systematic efforts to improve the reading skills of all public school students so that every student is reading at or above grade level by the end of Grade 3. The Alabama Literacy Act outlines steps to improve the reading proficiency of each student in Kindergarten through Grade 3.

The Alabama Numeracy Act

The Alabama Numeracy Act (Act 2022-249) implements steps to improve mathematics proficiency of public school K-5 grade students and to ensure that those students are mathematically proficient at or above grade level by the end of fifth grade.

Computer Science Act #2019-389

The Computer Science Act was passed in 2019 for K-12 public schools. This act outlines the phases of implementation for grade bands. Beginning with the 2020-2021 school year, each public high school will offer at least one authentic Computer Science course from a department approved list. At the start of the 2021-2022 school year, middle schools will offer a Computer Science course to 7th and 8th grade students. In the 2022-2023 school year, each public elementary school (K-6) shall offer instruction to all students on the basics of Computer Science and computational thinking.

STUDENT PROGRESSION
INFORMATION GRADES 6-8

The curriculum for Grades 6-8 builds upon the foundational skills mastered by the student in elementary school. Skills in Reading, English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies are extended with learning opportunities to build critical analytical and application skills in these content areas in preparation for high school. Students also engage in elective courses to build career interest and personal development.

PARENTS' RIGHT TO KNOW

In accordance with **Parental Right to Know (SB48 - ACT #2024-35)**, relating to public PreK-12 education; to require the posting of classroom curricula on the website of the school; to permit parents or guardians of enrolled students, upon request, to request information on instructional and supplemental materials used in the classroom; to provide a complaint process; and to provide for the reporting of the number of complaints to the State Superintendent of Education and the Legislature. Go to **dothan.k12.al.us/parentsrighttoknow** for more information.

ALABAMA COURSES OF STUDY

Link to Alabama Course of Study: English Language Arts
Link to Alabama Course of Study: Mathematics
Link to Alabama Course of Study: Physical Education
Link to Alabama Course of Study: Science
Link to Alabama Course of Study: Social Studies

ACCELERATED 7TH GRADE MATHEMATICS ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

This course is designed to challenge even the most proficient math student. For course enrollment, students must show strong proficiency in prerequisite math skills by meeting the required benchmark on a district-approved readiness screener. Additional factors such as prior math performance and teacher input may also be considered to ensure appropriate placement and support for student success.

Note: Consideration will be given regarding the most appropriate screener for limited-English speaking students.

HONORS COURSE ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

Enrollment in honors courses is based on a student's demonstrated readiness for advanced academic work. Students must meet the required Lexile level on a reading measure to show reading and comprehension ability and submit a writing sample that reflects their ability to communicate effectively. Writing samples will be evaluated using a district-developed rubric. Additional factors, such as prior academic performance and teacher input, may also be considered to ensureappropriate placement and support for student success.

GRADING

All assigned grades must be based on grade-level content standards, unless directed as a part of an Individual Education Plan (IEP), 504, and/or I - ELP. Assignments below grade level that are completed by the student can NOT be used as a part of the content grade.

Grades MAY come from the following:

- Standards-based teacher-made assessments
- Projects and writing assignments with standards-based rubrics
- Presentations
- Skills Checks
- Laboratory Activities
- Standards - based Journal Activities
- Major and minor assessments
- Grades must be entered in the student information system with a Course of Study Standard Number.
- The same assessment cannot be used for more than one grade.
- The testing category for a content area will count 60% of the total grade. Minor assessments will count the remaining 40% of the grade.

60% Major Common Assessments
Examples: unit tests, chapter tests, major projects, major essays, labs, teacher-made tests
**Teacher-made tests will be developed by like-content area teachers and all teachers will administer the same assessment.*

40% Minor Assessments
Examples: skill checks, small projects, presentations, labs, essays, reflection journals

- Major projects will count as a test grade and will be graded based on a rubric. Rubrics will be distributed to students prior to the project and an exemplary model for the project should be shared with students when the project is assigned. Presenting an exemplary project demonstrates the expectations of proficiency.
- Each nine (9) weeks, student grades will be measured on a minimum of three (3) to a maximum of five (5) major assessments and a minimum of seven (7) to a maximum of nine (9) minor assessments that are documented with the Alabama Course of Study in the grade book.
- Written feedback must be given to students on formative practice, major, and minor assessments. Writing assignments will include written feedback/suggestions to guide student improvement.
- Formative practice assignments will not be recorded in the gradebook.

- At least one major assessment must be recorded in the Student Information System (PowerSchool) within the first three (3) weeks of each grading period.
- Assessments must be graded, recorded, and returned to students within five (5) school calendar days.
- Essays and research papers must be graded, recorded, and returned to students within twelve (12) school calendar days.
- A minimum of one critical thinking response question shall be included on all major assessments unless otherwise specified in an IEP, 504, or I-ELP.
- Daily work will not count more than 40% of the total grade average.
- Grades will not be given for notebook checks.
- Standards - based extra credit questions are acceptable, but grades shall not exceed 100.
- Participation and completion grades cannot be given.

BEHAVIOR AND GRADES

- Student behavior will not be a factor in calculating grades for any subject.
- Behavior will be addressed through the teacher's behavior management plan and the school discipline policy that are aligned with the **Code of Conduct for Dothan City**

MAKE-UP WORK

**** The following guidelines apply to any student with a recorded absence and students who were present but need an extension.**

Administrators and teachers will ensure that the following opportunities are provided for all students:

- Students that are in attendance, but have incomplete or missing work will have a maximum of two (2) school days to complete or make up the work. A grade of "1" will be entered and marked "missing" until the work is submitted.
- Students who are absent, have a maximum of five (5) school days to make up incomplete or missing work. A grade of "1" will be entered and marked "missing" until the work is submitted.
- The period of time to make up work may be extended at the discretion of the principal who will work with the content, special education, and/or ELL teachers.
- If work is not submitted, the incomplete or missing work will be recorded as a zero grade. When a zero grade is assigned, a comment will be included in PowerSchool to document efforts to collect incomplete or missing work.
- Teachers are expected to provide multiple opportunities for students to complete assignments to avoid assigning zeros.
- Teachers will communicate with students and parent(s)/guardian(s) regarding incomplete work, missing assignments, or unsatisfactory course/class work. Teachers will contact the ELL department, if a translator is needed.
- Make-up work completed within the required time frame will be graded and recorded in the grade book by teachers without academic penalty to students.

HOMEWORK

Homework is defined as a written or non-written standards-based activity or assignment directed by the teacher and completed by the student outside of the classroom. The purpose of homework is to provide independent practice for newly taught skills, review of previously mastered skills, development of independent study habits, and/or extension and/or enrichment of the content standards in the curriculum. Assigned homework will be completed according to the teacher's specified due date.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Schools will communicate the progress of all students the 5th week of each marking period. Parent conferences are required on any student receiving a failing grade. Documentation of these conferences should be kept until the end of the year. Teachers will contact the ELL Department if a translator is needed.

GENERAL GRADING SCALE

LETTER GRADE	NUMERICAL GRADE (100-point scale)
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	59 or below

REPORT CARDS

Report cards will be provided to parents or legal guardians every nine-week grading period and will reflect student progression.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION

PROMOTION AND RETENTION DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

Dothan City Schools is committed to ensuring that all students receive the academic and behavioral supports necessary to achieve success. Student promotion and retention decisions are made using multiple sources of data and professional judgment. No single assessment, report card grade, or performance measure is used as the sole factor in determining promotion or retention.

The district believes that retention should be considered only after appropriate interventions, supports, and progress-monitoring efforts have been implemented and reviewed through the school's Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) process.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS (MTSS)

Dothan City Schools utilizes a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework to identify and address student academic and behavioral needs.

Through the MTSS process, schools:

- Identify students who may be at risk for academic or behavioral difficulties through universal screening, classroom performance, attendance, and other relevant data.
- Provide targeted interventions designed to address identified areas of need.
- Monitor student progress regularly to determine the effectiveness of interventions.
- Adjust interventions and supports based on student response and documented progress.
- Review student performance through the Problem Solving Team (PST) process to determine appropriate next steps.

The goal of MTSS is to ensure that students receive timely and appropriate support before retention is considered.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION REVIEW PROCESS

When a student demonstrates significant academic concerns that may impact promotion, schools will engage in a systematic review process that includes:

Academic Review

Schools will consider:

- Classroom performance and grades
- Universal screener data
- District and state assessment results
- Progress-monitoring data
- Intervention data and student response to intervention
- Teacher observations and classroom performance

Intervention Review

Prior to recommending retention, schools will:

- Implement research-based interventions aligned to identified student needs.
- Monitor intervention effectiveness through documented progress-monitoring measures.
- Review intervention fidelity and student participation.
- Consider attendance, tardiness, and other factors impacting academic performance.

Problem Solving Team (PST) Review

The school's Problem Solving Team (PST) will review available data and intervention outcomes to determine whether additional support, intervention adjustments, or retention consideration is appropriate.

The PST process serves as an important component of the district's commitment to ensuring that students receive multiple opportunities for academic support and intervention.

PARENT COMMUNICATION AND INVOLVEMENT

Dothan City Schools recognizes the important role parents and guardians play in student success. Schools will communicate regularly with parents regarding student progress and academic concerns.

Parents may expect schools to:

- Notify families when significant academic concerns are identified.
- Share information regarding intervention services and support strategies.
- Provide updates regarding student progress.
- Invite parents to participate in meetings when additional support planning is needed.
- Discuss promotion and retention concerns in a timely manner.

Parents are encouraged to maintain regular communication with the school and support student attendance, engagement, and academic growth.

RETENTION CONSIDERATIONS

Retention decisions are made on an individual student basis and are intended to support long-term academic success.

When considering retention, schools may review:

- Academic achievement data
- Progress-monitoring data
- Intervention effectiveness
- Attendance and tardiness records
- Student maturity and developmental considerations
- Parent input
- Other relevant educational information

Retention may be recommended when available data indicates that a student has not demonstrated sufficient progress despite documented intervention and support efforts.

DISTRICT EXPECTATIONS FOR PROMOTION AND RETENTION

To ensure consistency across all schools, Dothan City Schools maintains district procedures related to promotion and retention decision-making.

These procedures include:

- MTSS implementation expectations
- Intervention documentation requirements
- Progress-monitoring procedures
- Problem Solving Team (PST) review processes
- Parent communication expectations
- Promotion and retention review protocols

School administrators are responsible for implementing district procedures and maintaining documentation supporting promotion and retention decisions. All intervention plans and evidence of implementation will be documented in Analytics and Insights inside PowerSchool.

The principal maintains final responsibility for student promotion and retention decisions in accordance with district procedures, Board policy, and applicable state requirements.

RETENTION STIPULATIONS

A student will be promoted in Grades 6-8 upon satisfactory completion (minimum of 60% final grade) of Language Arts, math, and science and/or social studies.

- Students who do not meet the established criteria for promotion may be retained one (1) time in Grades 6-8, if the student has been previously retained in Grades K-5.
- Students who do not meet the established criteria for promotion may be retained two (2) times in Grades 6-8, if the student has not been previously retained in Grades K-5.
- A student should not be retained at Dothan Preparatory Academy, if the student will reach his/her sixteenth birthday during the following academic year.
- No student is to fail any subject without being brought to the Problem-Solving Team (PST) or ELL Committee with proper Tier II and Tier III documentation.

Course Combinations for 6th through 8th Grade Promotion Options

OPTION 1	OPTION 2	OPTION 3
Language and Math (Required) Science and Social Studies	***Language and Math (Required) Science***	***Language and Math (Required) Social Studies***

SUMMER SCHOOL (GRADES 6-8)

- Students will have the opportunity to retake up to two (2) failed required academic courses in summer school.
- Students who fail three (3) or more required academic courses will be retained, and summer school is not an option for promotion (exception: student will turn sixteen during the following academic year).

PERTINENT LEGISLATION

Computer Science Act #2019-389

The Computer Science Act was passed in 2019 for K-12 public schools. This act outlines the phases of implementation for grade bands. Beginning with the 2020-2021 school year, each public high school will offer at least one authentic Computer Science course from a department approved list. At the start of the 2021-2022 school year, middle schools will offer a Computer Science course to 7th and 8th grade students. In the 2022-2023 school year, each public elementary school (K-6) shall offer instruction to all students on the basics of Computer Science and computational thinking.

College and Career Readiness ACT #2023-365

This ACT revises action taken previously by the Alabama State Board of Education and now requires students who are members of the Class of 2026 and beyond shall earn one or more college or career readiness indicators in order to be awarded a high school diploma.

STUDENT PROGRESSION INFORMATION GRADES 9-12

The high school curriculum includes a rigorous curriculum in four content areas: English, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. Elective courses are also included in the curriculum. The four content areas and elective courses are designed to prepare students for college and career readiness along with twenty-first century skills for digital and global citizenship. **The Course Description Guide** provides an overview of all courses offered for high school students.

PARENTS RIGHT TO KNOW

In accordance with **Parental Right to Know (SB48 - ACT #2024-35),** relating to public preK-12 education; to require the posting of classroom curricula on the website of the school; to permit parents or guardians of enrolled students, upon request, to request information on instructional and supplemental materials used in the classroom; to provide a complaint process; and to provide for the reporting of the number of complaints to the State Superintendent of Education and the Legislature.

ALABAMA COURSES OF STUDY

Link to Alabama Course of Study: English Language Arts
Link to Alabama Course of Study: Mathematics
Link to Alabama Course of Study: Physical Education
Link to Alabama Course of Study: Science
Link to Alabama Course of Study: Social Studies **Career and Technical Course of Study**

HIGH SCHOOL PLACEMENT

Rather than being promoted, high school students progress as credits are accumulated. Grade classifications are determined by the number of credits earned. Beginning with the graduating class of 2023, credit and high school placement is as follows:

- Sophomore status will be obtained if a student has earned a minimum of five (5) Carnegie credits of which three (3) must be in the areas of English, Math, Science, and /or Social Studies
- Junior status will be obtained if a student has earned a minimum of twelve (12) Carnegie credits of which six (6) must be in the areas of English, Math, Science, and/ or Social Studies.

Note: Placement of transfer students will be addressed individually.

- Senior status will be obtained if a student has earned a minimum of nineteen (19) Carnegie credits of which nine (9) must be in the areas of English, Math, Science, and/or Social Studies.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT PROGRAM OF STUDIES

Advanced Placement (AP) is an academic program of college-level courses and examinations for high school students. Students enrolled in AP courses are expected to take the College Board AP Exam on the designated testing date(s). Based on scores on the AP exam, students have an opportunity to earn college credit and/or advanced standing in college. In place of an exam, AP Art students must complete an art portfolio. AP Capstone students must complete both an individual and a group project

ADVANCED PLACEMENT RECOGNITION BY COLLEGE BOARD

Students who earn scores of 3 or higher in AP Seminar and AP Research, but not on four additional AP Exams receive the AP Seminar and Research Certificate.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT RECOGNIGITION BY COLLEGE BOARD	
AP Scholar	Granted to students who receive scores of 3 or higher on three or more AP Exams.
AP Scholar with Honor	Granted to students who receive an average score of at least 3.25 on all AP Exams taken, and scores of 3 or higher on four to more of these exams.
AP Scholar with Distinction	Granted to students who receive an average score of at least 3.5 on all AP Exams taken, and scores of 3 or higher on five or more of these exams.
State AP Scholar	Granted to one male and one female student in each U.S. state and the District of Columbia with scores of 3 or higher on the great number of AP Exams, and then the highest average score (at least 3.5) on all AP Exams taken.
National AP Scholar	Granted to students in the United States who receive an average score of at least 4 on all AP Exams taken, and scores of 4 or higher on eight or more of these exams.

GRADING

All assigned grades must be based on the grade-level content standards unless directed as a part of an Individual Education Plan (IEP), 504, and/or ELL Plans.

Grades may come from the following:
» Standards-based teacher-made assessments
» Projects with standards-based rubrics
» Presentations
» Skills Checks
» Laboratory Activities
» Essays
» Journal Activities
» Summative assessments

- Grades must be entered in the student information system with a Course of Study Standard Number.
- The same assessment cannot be used for more than one grade.
- Each nine (9) weeks, student grades should be measured on a minimum of three (3) to a maximum of five (5) summative assessments (end-of-chapter, end-of-unit) and a minimum seven (7) to a maximum of nine (9) minor assessments (skills checks, projects, presentations, labs, essays, and reflection journals) that are documented in the grade book. Feedback must be given to students on formative and summative assessments.
- At least one summative assessment must be recorded in the Student Information System (PowerSchool) within the first three (3) weeks of each grading period.
- Formative practice will not be recorded in the SIS to include homework.
- Assessments must be graded, recorded, and returned to students within five (5) consecutive school calendar days.
- Essays and research papers will be graded, recorded, and returned to students within twelve (12) consecutive school calendar days.
- A minimum of one critical thinking response question shall be included on all summative tests unless otherwise specified in an IEP, 504, or I-ELP.
- Standards based extra credit questions are acceptable, but grades shall not exceed 100.
- Grades will not be given for notebook checks
- Participation and completion grades cannot be given.

BEHAVIOR AND GRADES

- Student behavior will not be a factor in calculating grades for any subject.
- Behavior will be addressed through the teacher's behavior management plan and the school discipline policy that are aligned with the **Code of Conduct for Dothan City Schools.**

MAKE-UP WORK

The following guidelines apply to any student with a recorded absence and students who were present but need an extension.

Administrators and teachers will ensure that the following opportunities are provided for all students:

- Students that are in attendance, but have incomplete or missing work will have a maximum of two (2) school days to complete or make up the work.
- Students who are absent, have a maximum of five (5) school calendar days to make up incomplete or missing work. A score of one (1) will be entered into the gradebook until the work is submitted.
- The period of time to make up work may be extended at the discretion of the principal working with the content, special education, and/or ELL teachers.

- If the work is not submitted, the incomplete or missing work will become a grade of zero (0). When a zero grade is assigned, a comment will be included in PowerSchool to document efforts to collect incomplete or missing work.
- Teachers are expected to provide multiple opportunities for students to complete assignments to avoid assigning zeros.
- Teachers will communicate with students and parent(s)/guardian(s) regarding incomplete work, missing assignments, or unsatisfactory course/class work. Teachers will contact the ELL department if a translator is needed.
- Make-up work completed within the required time frame will be graded and recorded in the grade book by teachers without academic penalty to students.

REPORT CARDS/PROGRESS REPORTS

Schools will communicate the progress of all students the 5th week of each marking period. Parent conferences are required on any student receiving a failing grade. Documentation of these conferences should be kept until the end of the year. Teachers will contact the ELL Department if a translator is needed. Dothan City School students receive report cards for each nine-week attendance period that indicate students' academic progress. Parents are encouraged to communicate with teachers and request conferences, as needed, to discuss pupil progress towards state and district expectations.

GRADING SCALE

Grades for academic coursework will be awarded according to the following scale.

LETTER GRADE	NUMERICAL GRADE (100-point scale)
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	59 or below

GENERAL CLASSES

60% Summative Common Assessments

Examples: unit tests, chapter tests, major projects, major essays, labs, teacher-made tests

*Teacher-made tests will be developed by like-content area teachers and all teachers will administer the same assessment.

40% Minor Assessments

Examples: skill checks, projects, presentations, labs, essays, reflection journals

HONORS CLASSES

65% Summative Common Assessments

Examples: unit tests, chapter tests, major projects, major essays, labs, teacher-made tests

*Teacher-made tests will be developed by like-content area teachers and all teachers will administer the same assessment.

35% Minor Assessments

Examples: skill checks, projects, presentations, labs, essays, reflection journals.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP)

70% Summative Common Assessments

Examples: unit tests, chapter tests, major projects, major essays, labs, teacher-made tests

*Teacher-made tests will be developed by like-content area teachers and all teachers will administer the same assessment.

30% Minor Assessments

Examples: skill checks, projects, presentations, labs, essays, reflection journals

GRADE POINT AVERAGE

Dothan City Schools uses a weighted scale. Students enrolled in honors classes earn an extra 0.5 grade point for each credit earned. Students enrolled in advanced placement classes and dual enrollment earn an extra 1.0 grade point for each earned.

GENERAL COURSES	HONORS COURSES	AP COURSES	DUAL ENROLLMENT
A=4.0	A=4.5	A=5.0	A=5.0
B=3.0	B=3.5	B=4.0	B=4.0
C=2.0	C=2.5	C=3.0	C=3.0
D=1.0	D=1.5	D=2.0	D=2.0
F=0.0	F=0.0	F=0.0	F=0.0

MID-TERM EXAMINATIONS

Midterms are required for full-credit classes for all students unless otherwise specified in academic student plans (IEP, 504, or I-ELP).

FINAL EXAMINATIONS (ALL STUDENTS GRADES 9-12)

How do I exempt my Final Exams?

Students have two ways to exempt a final exam in each course.

1. You may exempt the final exam in each course you have earned an "A" for the entire course AND you have five (5) or fewer unexcused absences (UA) in that course. These absences include parent excuses (PE).
2. You may exempt the final exam in each course that you have perfect attendance* and your course average is 70% or higher.

**perfect attendance for final exam exemption: The student is present everyday in that course. The only excused absences allowed are school sponsored activities like field trips, administrator approval, doctor excused letters, or legal reasons with the proper documentation.*

Additional notes about Final Exam Exemptions:

- If a transfer student enrolls with all "As" and continues to make all "As" in the Dothan City Schools will be eligible for consideration for exemption on a case-by-case basis as approved by the principal.
- Any student who was placed on out-of-school suspension (OSS) or remote learning for disciplinary reasons during the academic year is not eligible for exemption from any final exam.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS FOR DOTHAN HIGH SCHOOL

The Dothan City Board of Education has adopted graduation requirements that are consistent with the Alabama State Board of Education. As of December 12, 2024, the Alabama State Board of Education offers two diploma pathways for the general education students. Please speak with your counselor and refer to the **Course Description Guide** for credit requirements.
Alabama Workforce Pathway Act #2024-126

CLASS RANK

Academic class rank represents the weighted average of all classes taken for high school credit. The class rank on an official transcript is determined by ranking each student's overall grade point average within the graduating class.

VALEDICTORIAN AND SALUTATORIAN

Students having the highest and second highest weighted GPA using the Dothan City Schools course weights after the seventh term (or semester) of study will be recognized as valedictorian and salutatorian. Transcripts may or may not reflect valedictorian and salutatorian recognition, as these two celebratory titles will be based solely GPAs calculated by hand using Dothan City Schools course weights and will be calculated by hand.

**To make the determination of valedictorian and salutatorian equitable, Dothan City Schools will convert any weighted courses from a transferring student to reflect the equivalent DCS course weights based on the student's transfer grades. Additionally, this calculation will be completed by the counselor and/or administration. The student's transcript will not be altered per ALSDE policy. If a student transfers to or within Dothan City Schools anytime during their senior year, the student will not be eligible for either valedictorian or salutatorian.

HONOR COURT

Honor Court will be determined using unweighted and weighted GPA at the end of the seventh term (or semester) of study. Students with a cumulative GPA of 3.5 unweighted or 4.4 weighted or higher will be recognized in the Honor Court.

Dothan City Schools uses the Cum Laude system to honor graduates. The Cum Laude system establishes three distinct “honors” levels where students are recognized for their academic performance at the graduation ceremony. These classifications will account for the weighted and unweighted GPA. The honors distinctions include:

LEVEL	MEANING	WEIGHTED GPA
Cum Laude	With Distinction	3.5 - 3.9999
Magna Cum Laude	With Great Distinction	4.0 - 4.4999
Summa Cum Laude	With Highest Distinction	4.5 - 5.0

The cum laude distinctions are reserved for only those students who have earned a minimum GPA of 3.5 and higher with no failing semester grades (F). Cum laude distinction is based on seventh semester cumulative GPA. However, in fairness to students that do not earn any cum laude designation after seven semesters but do meet the threshold after eight semesters, a cum laude sticker for the diploma will be provided. This only applies for students that did not earn any cum laude designation but end up meeting the “cum laude” threshold after eight semesters.

The Cum Laude system does not eliminate the Valedictorian or Salutatorian designations. Instead, both the Valedictorian and Salutatorian will continue to be selected based upon overall weighted GPA.

Students who have completed four (4) or more advanced courses (AP or DE) with a C or higher will be recognized at graduation with a cord of distinction. (These cords are purchased by the eligible students as part of their graduation attire.)

TRANSFER GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS ENROLLING WITHIN AND OUTSIDE OF THE DOTHAN CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

The following information applies to a transfer student who has taken Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate/Dual Enrollment (AP/IB/DE) courses at his/her former school:

- Students receive the course weight for AP, dual enrollment, and honors courses assigned at the former school for transcript purposes. The transfer grades will not change.
- If a student transfers to or within Dothan City Schools anytime during the senior year, he/she will not be eligible for either valedictorian or salutatorian.
- The following information applies to entering transfer grades on to a student's transcript:
- If a student transfers from an Alabama high school, the grade will appear on the transcript as a number grade.
- If a student transfers from an out-of-state high school, the grade will appear on the transcript as a letter grade.

The following information provides guidelines for accepting transcripts from other school systems:

Dothan City Schools will accept grades as well as the grading scale provided by the former school. The high school will not change a grade per State ALSDE Policy. For example, if the grade submitted is a number grade of 74 that is a letter grade of D on the former school's grading scale, Dothan City Schools will record a D even though Dothan City Schools' grading scale would translate to a C.

Dothan City Schools will convert any weighted courses to mirror the equivalent DCS weights based on the transfer grades. The purpose for this conversion is to make the determination of class rank equitable. This calculation will be completed by the counselor and/or administration. The student's transcript will not be altered.

Credits from the alternative education facility will be awarded on a case-by-case basis, as approved by the principal.

If a student transfers to Dothan City Schools from a traditional schedule to a block schedule, the high school counselor at the former high school will be contacted to receive additional information on the grading scale used. Transfer credits from a traditional schedule are examined and awarded on a case by-case basis.

- Alabama has a Physical Education (PE) requirement (Beginning Kinesiology) that will impact the placement of a transfer student.
- For students transferring in Grades 9, 10, 11, or 12 from an out-of-state school and who have already taken a PE course, Dothan City Schools will accept the course as Beginning Kinesiology.

- Students transferring from a homeschool without a PE course on the transcript, must take one full credit of Beginning Kinesiology.
- **Students who transfer to Dothan City Schools from another school system must meet the Alabama graduation requirements to receive a diploma from the State of Alabama.**
- The Dothan City School is accredited by Cognia®, the only accreditation organization recognized by the Alabama State Board of Education. Transfer credits from other schools that have regional accreditation comparable to Cognia® will be accepted without further validation. Procedures for awarding credit to students coming to Dothan City Schools from a non-accredited school or home school will follow the Alabama Administrative Code 290-3-1-02(7)(j)290-3-02(7)(L).

EARLY/MID-YEAR COMPLETION

Students may complete graduation requirements early from Dothan City Schools by meeting all requirements for an Alabama High School Diploma when the conditions listed below are met.

1. A letter of intent must be submitted one semester prior to the expected completion date. Students who plan to complete early must follow course sequence/prerequisites.
2. Students must have a full schedule during the fall semester.
3. Students who plan to accelerate their programs of studies for early completion may do so if space is available in classes after grade-level students have completed registration. Preferential treatment will not be given.
4. Students who complete graduation requirements early will not be permitted to remain at school during the regular school day since they will not be enrolled in classes. If a student needs to attend a school activity, the principal's permission is required.
5. A student must be a full-time student to be eligible to participate in extracurricular activities; therefore, a student who completes early will not be eligible for extracurricular activities.
6. Students who complete graduation requirements early will receive their diplomas at the regularly scheduled graduation ceremony.

Early Completion is contingent upon final verification of course grades and the necessary credits. Early completers are withdrawn from the school database and records will include a graduation date consistent with the last day of the semester in which final graduation requirements were met.

Students considering Early completion should verify with their insurance providers a change in coverage and students who are 18 years old or older should be advised that they may lose social security benefits if not in school attendance on a full-time basis.

COURSE CREDIT STIPULATIONS BASED ON ATTENDANCE

If a student obtains thirteen (13) or more unexcused absences for a yearlong course, five (5) unexcused absences for a semester course, or four (4) unexcused absences in a nine week course, the principal must evaluate the attendance record and may recommend retention. Parents/Guardians will be notified when a student has obtained ten (10) unexcused absences. Principal recommendations may include:

- Student retention, and completion of the course during the following school year
- Achievement of a passing score of 70% on a comprehensive final exam to achieve course credit.
- Summer School for the failed course with a minimum passing score of 60% and no more than one excused absence.

Note: The parent/guardian may appeal a decision to withhold credit for an individual student based upon excessive absences to the superintendent with reasons for the absences and supporting documentation.

ALTERNATIVE / NON-TRADITIONAL SETTINGS

The Dothan City School System recognizes that some students may be at risk of experiencing school success and may be in danger of school failure and/or non- completion. The reasons some students may find themselves in this situation are often due to circumstances and/or conditions (e.g., environment, family, and behavior) over which they have limited control. By providing focused attention and assistance in identified areas of need, students are given opportunities to experience success in an alternative/non- traditional setting known as the Accelerated Recovery Center (ARC). Guidelines related to the Accelerated Recovery Center can be found in the document linked in Supplemental Document B.

The purpose of the Accelerated Recovery Center (ARC) is to provide an innovative and non-traditional approach to high school. The main focus of ARC is to provide student support frameworks for academic, behavioral, and career development.

Students who complete the ARC program graduate prepared for both college and careers. ARC offers a rigorous and authentic learning environment that connects academics to the real world. For other Credit Advancement Options, see your school counselor.
Click here for more information about ARC.

SUMMER SCHOOL (IF OFFERED)

- During summer school, Dothan City Schools offers opportunities for students to recover credit for course(s) previously failed.

- Students who fail an academic course will be referred for summer school attendance. Summer school course offerings are dependent upon student enrollment. Depending upon need, Dothan City Schools may offer a morning and afternoon session to accommodate those students who need to make up more than one credit.

- Prior to enrolling in summer school, students (and parents) should always contact their school counselor. Summer school is self-supporting; therefore, tuition is charged to off-set the cost of teacher salaries.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION

PROMOTION AND RETENTION DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

Dothan City Schools is committed to ensuring that all students receive the academic and behavioral supports necessary to achieve success. Student promotion and retention decisions are made using multiple sources of data and professional judgment. No single assessment, report card grade, or performance measure is used as the sole factor in determining promotion or retention.

The district believes that retention should be considered only after appropriate interventions, supports, and progress-monitoring efforts have been implemented and reviewed through the school's Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) process.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS (MTSS)

Dothan City Schools utilizes a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework to identify and address student academic and behavioral needs.

Through the MTSS process, schools:

- Identify students who may be at risk for academic or behavioral difficulties through universal screening, classroom performance, attendance, and other relevant data.
- Provide targeted interventions designed to address identified areas of need.
- Monitor student progress regularly to determine the effectiveness of interventions.
- Adjust interventions and supports based on student response and documented progress.
- Review student performance through the Problem Solving Team (PST) process to determine appropriate next steps.

The goal of MTSS is to ensure that students receive timely and appropriate support before retention is considered.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION REVIEW PROCESS

When a student demonstrates significant academic concerns that may impact promotion, schools will engage in a systematic review process that includes:

Academic Review

Schools will consider:

- Classroom performance and grades
- Universal screener data
- District and state assessment results
- Progress-monitoring data
- Intervention data and student response to intervention
- Teacher observations and classroom performance

Intervention Review

Prior to recommending retention, schools will:

- Implement research-based interventions aligned to identified student needs.
- Monitor intervention effectiveness through documented progress-monitoring measures.
- Review intervention fidelity and student participation.
- Consider attendance, tardiness, and other factors impacting academic performance.

Problem Solving Team (PST) Review

The school's Problem Solving Team (PST) will review available data and intervention outcomes to determine whether additional support, intervention adjustments, or retention consideration is appropriate.

The PST process serves as an important component of the district's commitment to ensuring that students receive multiple opportunities for academic support and intervention.

PARENT COMMUNICATION AND INVOLVEMENT

Dothan City Schools recognizes the important role parents and guardians play in student success. Schools will communicate regularly with parents regarding student progress and academic concerns.

Parents may expect schools to:

- Notify families when significant academic concerns are identified.
- Share information regarding intervention services and support strategies.
- Provide updates regarding student progress.
- Invite parents to participate in meetings when additional support planning is needed.
- Discuss promotion and retention concerns in a timely manner.

Parents are encouraged to maintain regular communication with the school and support student attendance, engagement, and academic growth.

RETENTION CONSIDERATIONS

Retention decisions are made on an individual student basis and are intended to support long-term academic success.

When considering retention, schools may review:

- Academic achievement data
- Progress-monitoring data
- Intervention effectiveness
- Attendance and tardiness records
- Student maturity and developmental considerations
- Parent input
- Other relevant educational information

Retention may be recommended when available data indicates that a student has not demonstrated sufficient progress despite documented intervention and support efforts.

DISTRICT EXPECTATIONS FOR PROMOTION AND RETENTION

To ensure consistency across all schools, Dothan City Schools maintains district procedures related to promotion and retention decision-making.

These procedures include:

- MTSS implementation expectations
- Intervention documentation requirements
- Progress-monitoring procedures
- Problem Solving Team (PST) review processes
- Parent communication expectations
- Promotion and retention review protocols

School administrators are responsible for implementing district procedures and maintaining documentation supporting promotion and retention decisions. All intervention plans and evidence of implementation will be documented in Analytics and Insights inside PowerSchool.

The principal maintains final responsibility for student promotion and retention decisions in accordance with district procedures, Board policy, and applicable state requirements.

PERTINENT LEGISLATION

Computer Science Act #2019-389

The Computer Science Act was passed in 2019 for K-12 public schools. This act outlines the phases of implementation for grade bands. Beginning with the 2020-2021 school year, each public high school will offer at least one authentic Computer Science course from a department approved list. At the start of the 2021-2022 school year, middle schools will offer a Computer Science course to 7th and 8th grade students. In the 2022-2023 school year, each public elementary school (K-6) shall offer instruction to all students on the basics of Computer Science and computational thinking.

Alabama Workforce Pathway Act #2024-126

The Alabama Workforce Pathway Act was passed in 2024. The act defines the requirements for an alternate pathway to the Alabama High School Diploma which reduces the number of math and science classes required and requires at least a sequence of 3 CTE courses in a declared pathway. Beginning in the 2025-2026 school year, students will be able to request enrollment into the Alabama Workforce Diploma Pathway - Option B.

College and Career Readiness ACT #2023-365

This ACT revises action taken previously by the Alabama State Board of Education and now requires students who are members of the Class of 2026 and beyond shall earn one or more college or career readiness indicators in order to be awarded a high school diploma.

Restoring Educational Advancement of Completing High School (REACH) ACT #2025-326

This ACT calls for the establishment of a non-traditional diploma option for Alabama public school students aged 18 and older who have dropped out of the traditional high school setting.

Move on When Ready Program ACT #2025-412

The Move on When Ready (MOWR) Program provides eligible Alabama public high school students in Grades 11 and 12 the opportunity to complete all remaining high school coursework through full-time enrollment at an eligible Alabama public college or university. The program allows students to earn high school and college credit simultaneously, accelerating progress toward graduation and postsecondary success. MOWR is designed to support academic readiness, expand access to higher education, and ensure a smooth transition from high school to college.

Supplemental Document A:
ACADEMICS FIRST
(Extracurricular Activities Eligibility Guidelines)

The Dothan City Board of Education recognizes the value of extracurricular activities and regular curricular activities as they relate to the total education of the students; however, the students' pursuit of their academics must be first and foremost and must take priority over participation in extracurricular activities.

The Board policy shall apply the following guidelines to determine a student's eligibility to participate in extracurricular activities:

1. GENERAL - Students may be offered an opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities and organizations. Extracurricular activities must meet the following criteria:

- The organization or activity must be approved by the school principal and must have an assigned faculty supervisor or sponsor;
- The organization or activity must promote or serve the intellectual, cultural, personal, or physical development of the students in a manner that is consistent with the purposes of public education, the Board's legal mandate, mission statement policies, and regulations, and with applicable requirements of state and federal law;
- The organization or activity must operate under general supervision of school officials and be subject to oversight of school officials; and
- The nature of the organization and its activities are consistent with and do not interfere with instructional activities of requirements.

Student participation or membership in such organizational activities may be governed by specific policies of the organization and be subject to review and approval by the principal.

2. ATHLETICS - Participation in Board-sanctioned athletic programs will be on such terms and conditions as that may be approved by the Board and any athletic association of which the Board or the applicable local school is a member. Schools may establish terms and conditions for participation in such programs if school eligibility criteria are not inconsistent with system-wide eligibility or participation criteria, rules, regulations, or standards established by any athletic association or organization of which the Board or the school is a member, or any role, principle, or provision of applicable law.

3. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS – The Board prescribes the following regulations for eligibility in this school system to participate in all extracurricular activities:

GRADES 10 – 12: Students entering Grades 10 through 12 must for the last two semesters in attendance and summer school, if applicable, have passing grades of at least a 70 composite numerical average and earn the appropriate number of credits in each of six (6) subjects that total six (6) Carnegie units of credit, including four (4) credits from the four (4) core subjects composed of English, science, social studies, and mathematics.

a. Physical education may count as only one (1) unit per year.

b. Any number of units (or subjects) earned in an approved summer school may be counted in accordance with local board policy. If a unit (or subject) is repeated in summer school, the higher numerical grade for that unit (or subject) may be used to compute the composite grade average.

c. Eligibility may be determined before the start of each new school year or at the beginning of the second semester. A student that is academically eligible at the beginning of the school year remains eligible for the remainder of that school year so far as grades are concerned. A student that regains eligibility at the beginning of the second semester remains eligible for the remainder of the second semester so far as grades are concerned. Bona fide transfers may be dealt with according to the rules of the Alabama High School Athletic Association for sports and rules to be developed by this Board of Education as they pertain to other extracurricular activities

d. Each eligible student involved in athletics must meet the definition of a regular student as defined by the Alabama High School Athletic Association.

e. Any student who earns more than four (4) credits in the core curriculum in any given year or who accumulates a total exceeding the required four (4) per year may be exempt from earning the four (4) core courses in the succeeding year if that student remains on schedule for graduation with his/her class.

GRADES 8 – 9: Students entering the 8^{th} and 9^{th} grades must have passed during the last two semesters in attendance and summer school, if applicable, at least five (5) new subjects with a minimum composite numerical average of 70 in those five (5) subjects and must have been promoted to the next grade.

GRADE 7: Students promoted to the seventh grade for the first time are eligible.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES: Extracurricular activities associated with athletics are defined as those recognized and sanctioned by the Alabama High School Athletic Association and other extracurricular activities are defined as those that are sanctioned by a public school that are not related to a student's academic requirements or success in a course(s). Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this policy, student participation in extracurricular activities offered by the school through math, science, band, choral music, and other courses at events such as athletic events (pre-game, game, halftime, or other breaks), club conventions, parades, amusement park trips and competitions, trips by tour companies, performance at various meetings, etc. are extracurricular and students academically ineligible under this policy will not be allowed to participate.

REGULAR CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES: Regular curricular activities are defined as those that are required for satisfactory course completion.

APPROVAL OF CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES: School sponsors are required to submit a request for each curricular activity that occurs outside the regular school day and/or school to the principal, Superintendent, and the local Board of Education for approval. Each request for full participation by all students, regardless of academic standing, in a curricular activity will be granted if the principal, Superintendent, and the local Board of education approve participation in the activity as an extension of a course(s) requirements(s) and it is an event sanctioned by a state/national subject matter association.

Reference: Dothan City Board of Education Policy Manual,
March 2019 Ala. Admin. Code 290-3-1-.02(18)]

Supplemental Document B: ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

Documents presented in Supplemental Document B are used to provide additional instructional services to support student progression to high school graduation. Descriptions of documents along with links to access them are provided in this section.

DCS CREDIT RECOVERY PLAN/MANUAL

Students who have failed courses at the high school level are given opportunities to recover lost credit through a process that addresses standards, knowledge, and skills sets. Guidelines for the standards-based approach and an application are outlined in the Credit Recovery Plan/Manual.

DCS PROBLEM SOLVING TEAM HANDBOOK

The Problem Solving Teams (PST) is a model to guide general education intervention service for all students who have academic and/or behavioral difficulties. The PST is central to the school's successful implementation of the Response to Instruction framework.

P.A.S.S. (PROVIDING ALTERNATIVE STUDENT SERVICES) ACADEMY POLICY MANUAL

This document outlines procedures for students in Grades 6-12 who need intervention programs in the areas of social, emotional/behavioral, and academics.

ELL POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL

A Comprehensive Plan for meeting the needs of English Language Learners is outlined in the ELL Policy and Procedures Manual

DCS ASSESSMENT PLAN

ACCELERATED RECOVERY CENTER MANUAL