



Norterra Canyon School

Theresa Milks, Principal

Sam DeVriendt, Assistant Principal

7th Grade Core Teachers' Grade Level Syllabus/Handbook and Expectations

Parent Involvement is all about the children. Participation in your child's education is proven to boost his or her achievement in school. We are committed to treating parents as partners while keeping lines of communication open and focused on the needs of your child. Mutual trust and respect between parents and teachers is required to maintain a positive learning experience at any school. We believe that your trust in Norterra Canyon is required to ensure your child's success.

TEACHER DEGREES and INTERESTS/HOBBIES

Tom Deming/Humanities

- *Bachelors of Science in Elementary Education & Social Sciences*
- *Home projects, Outdoors, Reading*

Christine Hartford/7th Math and Algebra

- *Bachelors of Science in Mathematics*
- *Biking, reading, traveling and walking my dogs*

Chelsea Lane/ Science

- *Bachelors of Science in Biochemistry and Masters and Certification in Secondary Education, ASU*
- *Reading and coaching soccer.*

Stacy Mahoney/ELA

- *B.A. Education ASU, Masters in Reading GCU, Highly Qualified Middle School ELA and Math, Gifted Endorsement*
- *Riding and showing my horses, reading, kayaking and crafting*

CURRICULUM INFORMATION

ABOUT THE HUMANITIES CURRICULUM

Integrated Global Studies: Scientific Revolution & Enlightenment - present

The students will view history and geography to understand the relationships and interactions between societies and cultures in both the Eastern and Western Hemispheres. United States history will be taught as it intersects with global issues. IBMYP Individuals & Societies Criterion A-D rubrics will be used to assess learning in each unit.

- *Unit 1: Scientific Revolution & Enlightenment [Q1]*
- *Unit 2: Revolutions [Q1]*

- Unit 3: Industrial Revolution [Q2]
- Unit 4: Imperialism [Q2]
- Unit 4: Imperialism [Q2]
- Unit 6: World Depression [Q3]
- Unit 7: World War II [Q3/Q4]
- Unit 8: Cold War [Q4]
- Unit 9: Global Conflicts [Q4]
- Government and economic systems [Q1-4]
- Examination of primary and secondary sources [Q1-4]
- Geography skills [Q1-4]

ABOUT THE MATH CURRICULUM ~ Illustrated Mathematics (Open Up Resources)

Since we are an IB school, I have combined some of the units that Illustrative Mathematics had separately. We will still be covering all the topics and standards - just a bit differently as we will also include some real-life projects.

MATH 7:

- Unit 1: Introducing Proportional Relationships (Includes Scale Drawings)
- Unit 2: Measuring Circles
- Unit 3: Proportional Relationships and Percentages
- Unit 4: Expressions, Equations, and Inequalities (Includes Rational Number Arithmetic)
- Unit 5: Angles, Triangles, and Prisms
- Unit 6: Probability and Sampling

HONORS ALGEBRA 1-2

- Unit 1: Sequences
- Unit 2: Linear & Exponential Functions/Features of Functions
- Unit 3: Equations & Inequalities
- Unit 4: Systems of Equations & Inequalities
- Unit 5: Quadratic Functions & their Structures
- Unit 6: Modeling Data

ABOUT THE SCIENCE CURRICULUM

Welcome to 7th grade science! This year each quarter will have a new topic. We will cover physics, weather and climate, biology, and the history of the Earth. As we learn more over the year, we will see how each of these topics is connected to the others and the world you live in.

We will also spend some time investigating global issues. Some global issues that you may decide to pursue are "What is the government's role in science?", "Does mankind have a responsibility to maintain biodiversity on Earth?", "How does lifestyle affect what energy sources are available?" and many others you may wish to introduce to the class.

- Unit 1: Newton's Laws

- Unit 2: Forces at a Distance
- Unit 3: Gravitational Forces
- Unit 4: Weather, Climate, and Water Cycling
- Unit 5: Metabolic Reactions
- Unit 6: Matter Cycling and Photosynthesis
- Unit 7: How and Why does Earth's Surface Change

ABOUT THE ELA CURRICULUM ~

7th Grade ELA is a rigorous course that encompasses reading, writing, speaking and listening skills in preparation for high school. Students will be expected to reflect and respond to various texts and literature. They will be challenged to think critically and encouraged to share their thoughts and opinions in various ways. This course is aligned with the Arizona College and Career Readiness standards for English Language Arts.

- Unit 1: The Power of Story/Narrative Writing Unit
- Unit 2: Novel Studies - "Peak" & "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland"/Advanced
- Unit 3: Extraordinary Lives Unit/Informational Unit
- Unit 4: Novel Studies - "Chasing Lincoln's Killer" & "I Am the Cheese"/Advanced
- Unit 5: Everything's an Argument Unit/Argumentative Unit
- Unit 6: Novel Studies - "Uglies" Advanced - "The Outsiders"/Advanced
- Unit 7: Informative Reading, Argumentative & Informative Writing
- Unit 8: Novel Studies - "A Long Walk to Water"/All Classes

Overview of Arizona State Standards

- [DVUSD Math Resources for Parents](#)
- [DVUSD English Language Arts Resources for Parents](#)
- [DVUSD Social Studies Resources for Parents](#)
- [DVUSD Science Resources for Parents](#)
- [What is Depth of Knowledge \(DOK\)?](#)

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

All District Rules will be adhered to at Norterra Canyon School. Please refer to the [DVUSD Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook](#).

7th Grade Expectations and Policies

STUDENTS ROLE IN LEARNING

As students grow and become self-directed in learning about themselves as a learner, they have to analyze their own study habits. They will need to figure out what actually works for them to retain the new knowledge they are gaining and use those strategies to support their learning. Citizenship grades on the report cards and the PRIDE Card in grades 6-8 reflect student effort and behavior and are completely separate from their academic grades.

PRIDE CARDS

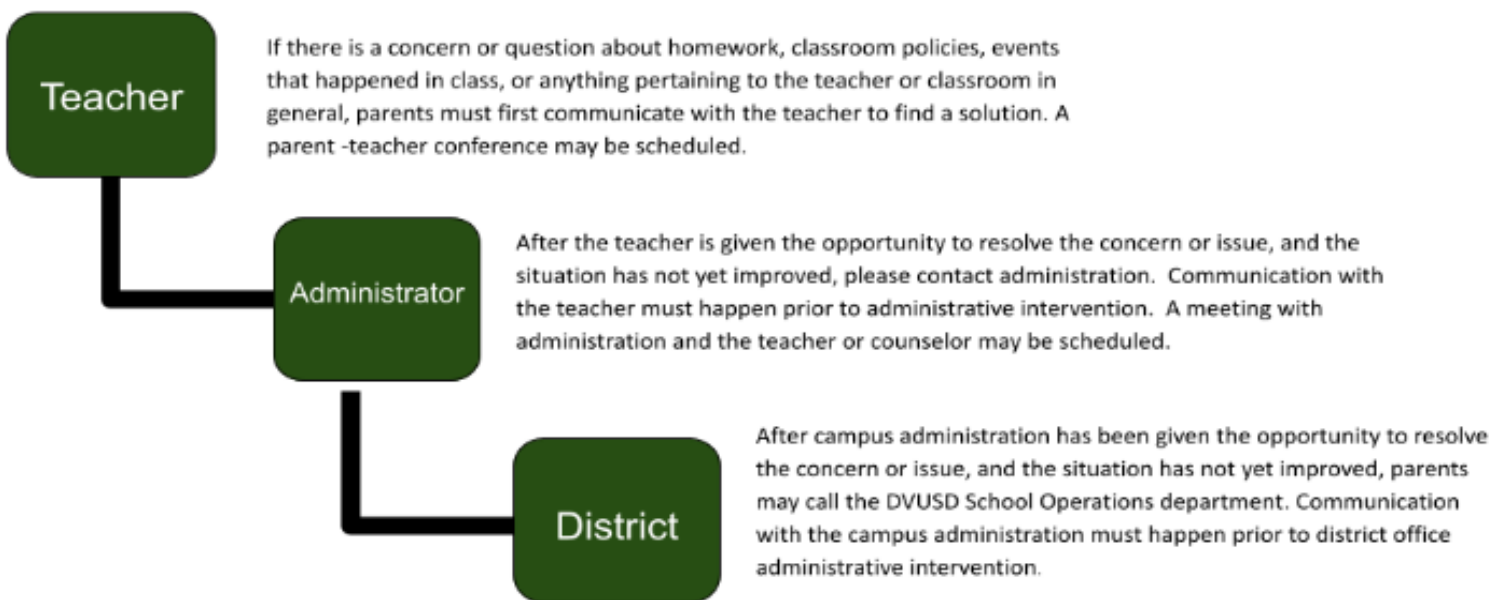
- *Each quarter students are given a PRIDE Card that records positive behaviors like self management or caring on one side.*
- *On the reverse side of the PRIDE Card, behaviors that hurt student achievement - such as disruptive talking or not being prepared for class - are recorded.*
- *At the end of the quarter students with twice as many positive behaviors will be invited to join in a celebration. In previous years we have gone to the movie theater and done escape rooms for that PRIDE Card Celebration.*
- *Missing assignments are also recorded on the infraction side of the PRIDE card. Once a student has earned 5 missing assignments, they will be assigned an after school homework recovery session of one hour after school. Parents will be notified if their child earns a homework recovery.*
- *Please look at your child's agenda and PRIDE card nightly/weekly to stay in the loop with your child's behavior.*

DISCIPLINE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Our goal is for students to be responsible for their own behavior. Students who cause a problem for themselves or others will, with the help of a staff member, work out a solution to the problem that is agreeable to all concerned. If the student refuses to be an active participant in the problem-solving, or the problem persists, the behaviors will be addressed through the use of [progressive discipline](#).

The guidelines in the [Deer Valley Student Rights & Responsibilities Handbook](#) will be used to address behaviors resulting in an office referral.

COMMUNICATION PROTOCOL



SCHOOL WIDE COMMUNICATION

- [Norterra Canyon School Website](#)
- Frequent Smores via social media, email, and texts

TEACHER WEBSITE

[Stacy Mahoney Staff Page](#)

[Christine Hartford Staff Page](#)

[Chelsea Lane Staff Page](#)

[Thomas Deming Staff Page](#)

The four core teachers will send regular updates to both parents and students. We will send the update as a grade level email in order to minimize the amount of emails you receive.

TEACHER CONTACT INFORMATION

Please schedule specific times to meet with me, as we need time to communicate effectively. I often have professional duties directly before and after school hours. Please understand that I will not be able to meet or discuss issues while I am teaching or supervising students. However, I will contact you as soon as I can.

Norterra Canyon has implemented email office hours and a "curfew" to ensure that we maintain a healthy work-life balance. I will respond to emails Monday through Friday from 7:00am to 8:30am and again from 3:30-5:00pm.

Teacher Communication

If you or your child needs to communicate with any of the 7th grade teachers, please use our DVUSD email(s) as that is the best way to communicate with us.

| <i>Teacher</i> | <i>Subject</i> | <i>Email</i> |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|---|
| <i>Tom Deming</i> | <i>Humanities</i> | <i>thomas.deming@dvusd.org</i> |
| <i>Chris Hartford</i> | <i>7th Math; Algebra 1-2</i> | <i>christine.hartford@dvusd.org</i> |
| <i>Chelsea Lane</i> | <i>Science</i> | <i>chelsea.lane@dvusd.org</i> |
| <i>Stacy Mahoney</i> | <i>ELA</i> | <i>stacy.mahoney@dvusd.org</i> |

Weekly Newsletter

The four core teachers will send regular updates to both parents and students. We will send the update as a grade level in order to minimize the amount of emails you receive.

STUDENT PLANNER

- Nightly homework assignments and daily activities recorded for each class
- School events
- Parents: To check for completion of listed assignments

CLASSROOM VOLUNTEERS

School Policy: *Volunteerism in any form is greatly appreciated at Norterra Canyon. Deer Valley Unified School District requires all school volunteers to take the DVUSD Volunteer training course offered throughout the year (if you have taken this in previous years, you are all set). Volunteers must set specific dates and times with the teachers. It is imperative to establish an important role for the volunteer without interrupting the learning environment. Parent volunteerism in the classroom during the school-day varies based on need, teachers, and grade levels. Contact your teacher for more information.*

FIELD TRIPS

- All chaperones must complete the one-time DVUSD Volunteer training course prior to attending the field trip. <https://www.dvusd.org/Domain/5182>
- We make every attempt to offer field trips free of charge. However, the trip may cost a small amount depending upon transportation costs and entry fees to the venue.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES (PLC's)

Most Fridays, students will be released early so that we are able to participate in PLC work. This work is directly related to the planning, instruction and interventions we implement in our classrooms to ensure that students master the standards.

Role of PLC

A professional learning community is a group of educators that meet regularly and work Collaboratively to improve teaching practices and the achievement of students. The questions that drive the work of PLC's are:

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

PLC Teams are responsible for collaborating to establish general consistency among the following:

- Assignments, presentations, products, observations and assessments used to determine a student's level of performance in relation to grade-level standards.
- The method and schedule for additional learning opportunities.
- Due dates, deadlines, and procedures for reassessment.
- Create opportunities for common scoring of assessments.

***Norterra Canyon was one of the ten schools in DVUSD who piloted the new grading system during the 2021-2022 school year. We will continue with a Standards Based Mindset while grading for the 2022-2023 school year with the revised Transition Plan as directed by the DVUSD Governing Board. Additional information regarding Standards Based Mindset for grading transition plan can be found [here](#).

GRADING

The DVUSD grading definition for Phase 1 schools is based on the following ideas:

- Grades will be equitable, accurate, specific, consistent.
- A student's grade should reflect academic learning and should never be used as a punitive tool.
- Grades are for reporting the status of academic learning, not behavioral conduct
- Grades are a reporting tool utilized to reflect what a student knows and is able to do in a content area. We measure achievement, not effort or behavior, in our grading system.
- The primary purpose of assessment and grading is to provide detailed feedback to inform and support student learning.
- Learning is a process that takes place over time and at different speeds for different students.
- A coordinated assessment and grading system, both among common grade level teachers and throughout the school, clarifies the expectations for all students and maximizes academic opportunities.

"Grades are broken when they mix achievement and non-achievement elements. The fix is to report variables such as behaviors separately from achievement, thereby ensuring that the grades reflect student achievement as accurately as possible." (O'Connor, 2011)

WHY STANDARDS BASED GRADING?:

Parents:

- Progress reports are less mysterious and have more meaning
- Parents are aware of exactly what their child knows, is able to do, and next steps for progress
- Parents know in what areas their child needs more support
- Parents are empowered to increase their child's confidence and help their student set goals

Students:

- Learning targets are clearly defined and aligned with state standards.
- Students are offered multiple opportunities and ways through which to demonstrate proficiency
- Students monitor their own progress toward the achievement of specified targets
- Specific feedback on progress helps build self-esteem, pride, and motivation

Teachers:

- Teachers know exactly where students stand in their progress toward learning targets and what support needs to be provided
- Teachers of the same courses have aligned expectations and standards
- Assessment results help teachers determine when students need extra help and when they need more challenging work

Meaningful Grades

In DVUSD, grades in the gradebook are important data points that provide teachers and students information on student learning in relation to the State Standards. Teachers will include one meaningful grade in the grade book per week. A meaningful grade is defined as any student work that provides the teacher data to determine the student's level of learning on a standard or learning progression of a standard. Through sharing this weekly information, students and parents also receive feedback on the level of learning through this meaningful grade update in PowerSchool.

PowerSchool is an essential resource for parents and students. It is not only a tool for communication regarding grades, it is a resource for our students and parents to check progress, missing work, and what is being taught/learned regularly. Please ensure that you and your child have access (separate accounts) and even sign up for the app and push notifications or weekly email updates as an option in [PowerSchool](#).

LATE WORK

In order to accurately reflect a student's academic performance level, teachers will accept late work and missing work for full credit if the work is submitted within the timeframe/procedures developed by the school and before the end of the grading period. Based on the grade scale a "1" or "0" will be entered in the gradebook until the work is submitted. A notation of "M" for missing or "L" for late work will also be denoted in the gradebook. Students will still be responsible for turning in late work in addition to their current coursework, which results in the natural consequence of a heavier workload. The primary consequence for students not completing the work is to complete the work.

- Students needing extra help will receive it from their teacher during Multi-Tiered Systems of Support in class.
- Students choosing not to complete work, but who are able to do so, will complete work with support during Thrive Thursday.
- Missing work will be accepted up to 2 weeks after the assignment date.
- Once assignment is turned in the "M" will Change to "L" to indicate it was completed late.
- Teachers may adjust the time based on the individual needs of the student and/or assignment.

RE-ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Learning is a journey that is often not linear. Some students learn content and skills quickly while others may require more time or feedback in order to learn. The primary objective of grades is to report where a student is in the learning process, regardless of how much time or effort the student needs to get there.

- Students will be allowed to retake assessments during the same grading period to show the student's current level of attainment of the standards.
- Students will be afforded extra time for learning; however, there is an ending point for each course in which final reports on a student's learning must be conveyed.
- Final assessments or end of term capstone projects and performance assessments will not be eligible for retakes.
- Assessments may be in an alternate format for reassessment.

- Students are required to show evidence of learning and applying the teacher’s feedback in order to earn a reassessment opportunity.
- Certain assessments are **NOT** available for retakes as mandated by the district. Check with your teacher to ensure an assessment qualifies for a retake.
- Retakes **must be** scheduled with the teacher.

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

PLAGIARISM/CHEATING

Academic integrity is a cornerstone of learning. Students must present their own work in order for teachers to accurately assess learning and provide appropriate feedback.

Any type of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in DVUSD and any student who engages in cheating or plagiarism will be disciplined for those behaviors. It is important that the penalty imposed is not reflected in the student’s academic grade. Incorporating a behavior penalty into a student’s academic grade, such as issuing a loss of credit, causes the overall grade to no longer represent what the student knows or has learned and, in essence, has become meaningless.

If a student engages in academic dishonesty, they will initially receive a “1” or “0” depending on their grade scale. The teacher will provide an opportunity for the student to demonstrate his/her level of proficiency of the same standards. If they choose not to reassess, the 0 or 1 will remain.

The student will be assigned a discipline consequence for the cheating and/or plagiarism behavior they engaged in. Parents will be contacted and the student will be held accountable through the district’s SR&R handbook.

Depending upon the developmental needs, the stage of the student and the severity of the offense, discipline consequences could take the form of a letter of apology or other restorative measure, loss of privileges, after school detention, and/or suspension.

Phase I DVUSD SCHOOLS Grade 6 Grading Scale

| | |
|----------|--|
| 4 | Independently applies skills and content with greater depth and complexity |
| 3 | Demonstrates grade level proficiency independently |
| 2 | Demonstrates grade level proficiency with support |
| 1 | Demonstrates below grade level proficiency |

| Standard Numeric Grade | 4 & 3 | | | 2 | | | 1 | | |
|------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Letter Grade | A+ | A | A- | B+ | B | C+ | C | D | F |
| Final Grade Scores | 4.0-3.8 | 3.7-3.4 | 3.3-3.0 | 2.9-2.7 | 2.6-2.4 | 2.3-2.0 | 1.9-1.7 | 1.6-1.4 | 1.3-1.0 |

Phase I IB Middle Years Program Norterra Canyon - Grade 6 Grading Scale

| IB Achievement Level | 6th Grade Standards Based Grading |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 0 | M= (missing / no evidence) |
| 1-2 | 1=minimally proficient |
| 3-4 | 2=partially proficient |
| 5-6 | 3=proficient |
| 7-8 | 4=highly proficient |

Phase I DVUSD SCHOOLS - 7-8 Grading Scale

| | |
|----------|---|
| A | Evidence indicates a high level of proficiency of the learning standards |
| B | Evidence indicates proficiency of the learning standards |
| C | Evidence indicates partial proficiency of the learning standards |
| D | Evidence indicates minimal proficiency of the learning standards - NO CREDIT |
| F | No evidence of proficiency of the learning standards - NO CREDIT |

Phase I IB Middle Years Program Norterra Canyon 7-8 Grading Scale

| IB Achievement Level | 7-8 Grade Standards Based Grading |
|-----------------------------|--|
| 0 | M (missing) |
| 1 | F= 60% no evidence |
| 2 | D = 69% minimal evidence |
| 3-4 | C = 79% |
| 5-6 | B = 89 % |
| 7-8 | A = 100% |

THRIVE THURSDAY (1ST GRADE - 8TH GRADE)

Thrive Thursday is a before school opportunity for students to maximize their potential success. Learning and completing work at Norterra Canyon is required. Thrive Thursday is offered to all students who have not shown proficiency in their current learning progressions or classwork.

This tutoring opportunity will be assigned to students to attend for extra help, assistance or, when a student needs to complete his/her work. Without completing their work, it is hard to know if a student is progressing towards mastering the standards we are teaching in class. We ask for parent support and cooperation in transporting students to their assigned tutoring time so that they are not falling behind or simply given the opportunity to opt out of their work.

TECHNOLOGY

Each student in Kindergarten will have access to their own IPAD. Grades 1-8 will have their own Chromebook. Grades 1/2/3 will keep their chromebook at school. Grades 4/5/6/7/8 will be able to bring the chromebook home. DVUSD will be offering an Optional Device Protection Plan for families of 4th-8th graders utilizing take-home devices. Enrollment in the plan is **optional** with the understanding that if students/parents do not enroll in the protection plan they may carry full liability for the student device (iPad or Chromebook) in the same way they do for other damaged or lost school property, such as textbooks. The district has provided families to purchase an annual insurance policy of \$25. <https://url.dvusd.org/DeviceProtectionPlan>.

Electronic payment option <https://url.dvusd.org/TouchBaseParentInstructions>

MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS ONLY

Class Change Request

Class change requests must be submitted through the school academic counselor 623-445-8217. Requests will require signatures from current and requested course teachers. Possible reasons a course request could be denied is if the requested class is full, the time frame is too close to the end of the grading period, disciplinary issues, etc.

High School Courses

Any high school courses taught in grades 7 and 8 will use the high school semester grading system. Each semester grade will be cumulative over the 18 weeks. If a student takes a high school course at a school on the new grade scale, the student's grade will be reported using the new grading scale.

Course Level Placement Changes

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

Procedures for Course Withdrawal

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