



**7-8**

**PROMOTION, RETENTION,  
ACCELERATION & GRADING HANDBOOK**

**Phase I & 2 Schools  
2022-2023**



**Superintendent  
Dr. Curtis Finch**

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**Mission Statement:**

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

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

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

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# Foreword

Deer Valley Unified School District (DVUSD) is dedicated to each student's continuous development. The purpose of the handbook is to provide information on student promotion, retention, and acceleration. This handbook also delineates grading and reporting guidelines for teachers and administrators. The guidelines outlined in this handbook adhere to the requirements of the Arizona Revised Statutes and DVUSD policies and regulations.

Grading is the process by which teachers assess student learning and progress towards mastering the Arizona College and Career Ready Standards and the Arizona K-12 State Standards. Reporting is the process by which teachers communicate information to parents/guardians about students' mastery of taught subject matter and skills.

This handbook is reviewed annually by a Handbook Review Work Team and adjustments are made as necessary.

**Note:** *This handbook is reviewed and revised each spring, typically during the time that the Arizona Legislature is in session. Therefore, if there are changes in statute that affect the information contained herein, we will update these changes as they occur in the electronic version of this handbook that can be found on our district website, <https://www.dvUSD.org/handbooks>.*

# Arizona State Statutes

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

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

The governing board of a district may:

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

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

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

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

## **A.R.S. § 15-521 Duties of teachers' states:**

Every teacher shall:

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

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

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

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

**A.R.S. § 15-701 Common school; promotions; requirements; certificate; supervision of eighth grades by superintendent of high school district; high school admissions; academic credit states:** E. A teacher shall determine whether to promote or retain a pupil in grade in a common school as provided in section 15-521, paragraph 4 on the basis of the prescribed criteria. The governing board, if it reviews the decision of a teacher to promote or retain a pupil in grade in a common school as provided in section 15-342, paragraph 11, shall base its decision on the prescribed criteria.

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

A. Unless otherwise provided by article 1.1 of this chapter or by any other law, all schools shall admit children who are between the ages of six and twenty-one years, who reside in the school district and who meet the requirements for enrollment in one of the grades or programs offered in the school. A school may refuse to admit a child who has graduated from a high school with a recognized diploma.

B. If a kindergarten program is maintained, a child is eligible for admission to kindergarten if the child is five years of age. A child is deemed five years of age if the child reaches the age of five before September 1 of the current school year. A child is eligible for admission to first grade if the child is six years of age. A child is deemed six years of age if the child reaches the age of six before September 1 of the current school year. The governing board may admit children who have not reached the required age as prescribed by this subsection if it is determined to be in the best interest of the children. For children entering the first grade, such determination shall be based upon one or more consultations with the parent, parents, guardian or guardians, the children, the teacher and the school principal. Such children must reach the required age of five for kindergarten and six for first grade by January 1 of the current school year.

## DVUSD Governing Board Policy

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

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

## Guidelines

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

## Standards

Students must demonstrate accomplishment and proficiency of the academic standards in reading, writing, mathematics, science and social studies adopted by the State Board of Education.

In addition to these standards, test scores, grades, teacher recommendations, and other pertinent data will be used to determine promotion or retention.

If a parent or legal guardian disagrees with a teacher's promotion or retention decision as provided in A.R.S. §15-521.10, the parent or legal guardian may request in writing that the Governing Board review the teacher's decision. Once a parent receives notification from the school of intent to retain or promote, they have five days from that notification to submit a retention appeal form (pg. 62) or promotion appeal form (pg. 61) to the school principal or school secretary.

## Intervention in Education

Designing an instructional intervention is a set of steps coordinated by Collaborative Teams to help a student improve on a targeted area of need. Instructional interventions focus on a targeted skill based on data from a common formative assessment. Interventions are designed to provide a time for re-engagement on the targeted skill along with a reassessment opportunity. In an effort to ensure equal access to curriculum for all students, Tier II and Tier III Interventions have been structured at all grade levels. Parents and students will have timely communication in the spring semester regarding a student's enrollment in Tier III academic interventions transitioning into middle school and high school.

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

## Definitions for Grades 7-8

<b>504 Plan</b>	The <b>504 Plan</b> is a plan developed to ensure that a child who has a disability identified under the law and is attending an elementary or secondary educational institution receives <b>accommodations</b> that will ensure their academic success and access to the learning environment.
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<b>Acceleration:</b>	The early promotion of individual students to the next grade or higher (based on their academic achievements or readiness for higher level work or advancing them in one or more content areas).
<b>Accommodations:</b>	Accommodations are supports provided to help a student access the general education curriculum and validly demonstrate learning. They assist students in learning the same material and content, allowing them to meet the same expectation as their peers.
<b>Advanced Middle School Classes</b>	At the middle school level, advanced-level courses are designed to provide a more rigorous curriculum and higher expectations for student performance. Schools offer advanced language arts, and many times science, and social studies as well. Students can take a placement test in order to participate in accelerated Math.
<b>ELD</b>	English Language Development is the teaching of English language skills to students who are in the process of learning English. It is distinguished from other types of instruction, e.g., math, science, social studies, in that the content of ELD emphasizes the English language itself. ELD instruction focuses on phonology (pronunciation – the sound system of a language), morphology (the internal structure and forms of words), syntax (English word order rules), lexicon (vocabulary), and semantics (how to use English in different situations and contexts).
<b>EL</b>	Students whose first language is not English, and encompasses both students who are just beginning to learn English (often referred to in federal legislation as “limited English proficient” or “LEP”) and those who have already developed considerable proficiency is considered an English Learner “EL”.
<b>Exclusions and Exemptions From School Attendance Agreement</b>	This is an instructional agreement for students with chronic health conditions. The agreement provides an exemption from school attendance only not from required school assignments and assessments that may occur.
<b>Exclusions and Exemptions from School Attendance – Medical Certification</b>	This is a companion document that provides a licensed Physician's medical certification of students with chronic health conditions.
<b>Gifted Cohort</b>	The Gifted Cohort is a full day gifted service model. Gifted identified students are placed into one, self contained gifted class at their grade level. The classes are taught by a teacher (or teachers) who have or are working on earning their Gifted Endorsement and are supported by the school Gifted Specialist. The Gifted Cohort model is available for grades 1-12.
<b>Grade Enhancement for High School Courses</b>	Grade enhancement is a process by which a final course grade that a student earns is raised, usually by one level, due to the student demonstrating proficiency in the content standards as measured by an assessment sanctioned by the district for grade enhancement.
<b>High School Credit Classes</b>	In certain instances, middle school students may take high school level, Honors and Advanced Level courses prior to entering high school. Grades for high school courses taken at the middle school level become part of the student’s high school transcript.



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

<b>MTSS:</b>	In Deer Valley, Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) is a systematic and comprehensive approach to student learning in which collaborative communities utilize a problem-solving and tiered framework to ensure high quality, differentiated, and responsive instruction, enrichment, and intervention (academic and behavioral) for all students. The goal of MTSS in DVUSD is for 100% of our students to achieve at high levels.
<b>MyHours Online Attendance</b>	<p>In accordance with ASRS-15-901 and ASRS-15-808, ALL <i>Aspire</i> - Deer Valley's Online Academy students are required to submit weekly attendance time logs for each course.</p> <p>AOI students must work at least the minimum number of hours a week to comply with state attendance statutes and remain in the program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Kindergarten: 10 hours per week</li> <li>○ 1st-3rd Grade: 20 hours per week</li> <li>○ 4th-6th Grade: 25 hours per week</li> <li>○ 7th and 8th Grade: 5 hours per course week, per course</li> <li>○ 9th -12th Grade - 7 hours per course, per week</li> <li>○ Attendance hours includes time on the computer, research, reading, writing, reviewing and completing assignments</li> </ul> <p>If a student goes more than 10 days <b>consecutive</b> without completing their MyHours log and/or 10 days without logging into Canvas and participating in coursework, they will be dropped or withdrawn from the <i>Aspire</i> - Deer Valley's Online Academy.</p> <p>What is AOI? Aspire Online? The Arizona Online Instruction (AOI) Program established in A.R.S. §15-808 allows approved school districts and charter schools to develop online instructional systems to expand learning opportunities for students throughout our state. The State Board of Education approves district AOI programs.</p>
<b>Promotion:</b>	Meeting the criteria for moving to the next grade level.
<b>Promotion to High School:</b>	Students must meet competency requirements in the adopted standards for promotion of students from the eighth (8 <sup>th</sup> ) grade as determined by the State Board of Education in the areas of reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies. An 8 <sup>th</sup> grade certificate of promotion meets this requirement.

<b>Reassignment:</b>	Not meeting all criteria for promotion at a grade level (7/8) but moving to the next grade.
<b>Renaissance:</b>	All-day self-contained learning experience addressing the individual needs of highly gifted students in grades 1-8. Full application process.
<b>Retention:</b>	Not meeting the criteria for promotion and remaining at the same grade level.
<b>SPARK:</b>	Supporting Potential and Achievement in Remarkable Kids (Enrichment Program). SPARK is an ongoing enrichment-learning program that addresses the unique needs of gifted, high achieving, and high potential students at our participating schools. Students attend certain days during the week, depending on the schedule of the school, during RTI periods in grades 7-8. Qualification based on gifted identification score of 90 <sup>th</sup> percentile or higher or using the Gifted Matrix.
<b>Standards Based Mindset</b>	Deer Valley embraces a comprehensive standards-based mindset and grading system that reports what students know and can do relative to standards by facilitating clearer, more targeted feedback.  This work is accomplished by reporting academic achievement separate from behaviors, tying assessment and grading exclusively to standards, prioritizing the most recent evidence of learning, and allowing for editing and resubmission of work.
<b>Targeted Language Instruction</b>	Targeted Language Instruction is the teaching of English language skills to students who are in the process of learning English. It is distinguished from other types of instruction, e.g. math, science and social studies, in that Targeted Language Instruction emphasizes the language proficiency standards (ELPs). This instruction focuses on reading foundational skills, as well as productive, receptive and interactive communication.
<b>Walk-Up to Math:</b>	Qualifying students walk up (usually as a group or cluster) to the next grade level's gifted cluster math class. The school's Gifted Specialist works with the Gifted Cluster Teacher to help instruct students in the classroom and pull out small groups of students as needed. Students are pre assessed for the content and are able to go to the grade level that is appropriate for their individual needs in grades 3-8. Qualification based on rubric.

## Placement of Transfer Students New to the District or Entry of Home Schooled Students

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

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

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

## Home Schooled Student Participation in DVUSD Extracurricular Activities

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

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

## Online Options

### Online Learning Opportunities through *Aspire*, Deer Valley's Online Academy

#### Individual 7th & 8th Grade Courses

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

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

If the online course is in addition to a full school day schedule, there is a \$175 fee per semester course. If the online course is replacing a course within the school day then there is no fee.

7th and 8th grade students who fail a core course during the school year, and are in need of promotion, are given the option to register for the Middle School Summer School Blended Grade

Recovery program. The summer school fee is \$175 per subject (Math, Social Studies, Science, Language Arts). This program runs each June.

For more information go to [dvusd.org/online](http://dvusd.org/online), email [aspire@dvusd.org](mailto:aspire@dvusd.org), or call 623-467-5759.

## Online Students: Starting High School

### Transcripts

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

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

Once there is campus administrator approval, and the campus team is certain online is a successful option, then the administrator will email the **Aspire**, Deer Valley's Online Academy at [aspire@dvusd.org](mailto:aspire@dvusd.org) to provide the student's information and online course request. If the online course is in addition to a full school day schedule, there is a \$175 fee per semester course. If the online course is replacing a course within the school day then there is no fee.

Students exiting 8th grade transitioning to "Entering Freshman" status the summer before high school do not need middle school administrator approval to register for summer school courses. It is common for Entering Freshman to take two summer school courses in order to make room in their schedules for signature programs on campus during the school year. Entering Freshman are able to take PE & Health online or other elective high school courses available to freshman students.

For more information go to [dvusd.org/online](http://dvusd.org/online), email [aspire@dvusd.org](mailto:aspire@dvusd.org), or call 623-467-5759.

### Process for Requesting Online Courses

The process for requesting online courses is as follows:

1. Request a meeting with the middle school campus administrator and/or counselor
2. Discuss scheduling options
3. If moving forward, the middle school campus administrator emails the **Aspire**, Deer Valley's Online Academy Specialist at [aspire@dvusd.org](mailto:aspire@dvusd.org) and copies the Director of Online and Virtual Programs with the updated student schedule.

# Promotion and Retention Parent or Legal Guardian Information

(From the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook)

## The Statutes

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

### **A.R. S. 15-701 states:**

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

### **Parental or Legal Guardian Rights A.R.S. 15-102 states:**

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

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

### **A.R.S. 15-342 states:**

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

## **7-8 Special Education Promotion and Retention**

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

## **7-8 English Learner Promotion and Retention**

The decision to retain a student who qualifies for English language support may not be

related to the student's acquisition of the English language.

## 7-8 English Learner Promotion and Retention Appeal

### **Process** Process for Parents or Legal Guardians

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

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

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

# PROMOTION

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

# 7-8 Promotion Procedures

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

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

## **Promotion Criteria for Grades 7-8 include:**

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

A. Achievement: The minimum requirement for promotion to the next grade level is a **2** or higher in the final grade in **ALL** subjects.

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

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

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

Social & Emotional component:

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



# 7-8 Promotion Appeal Process

## Parent/legal guardian

### Within five days from the notification of intent to promote:

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

1. Complete a Promotion Appeal Form and submit it to the school principal or secretary.
2. Notify the school principal to schedule a meeting.

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

## Teacher –

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

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

## Principal –

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

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

# **RETENTION and REASSIGNMENT**

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

# Retention Procedures

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

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

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

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

At the 7-8 level, it is the teacher or counselor's responsibility to notify the parents/legal guardians of intent to retain. The staff completing the notification must provide a copy to the principal. The teacher makes the final decision to retain, with the use of the *Light's Retention Scale*. Consultation with the principal and other staff members and involvement of parents/legal guardians in all steps of the retention process is vital. **No decision for retention shall be made without parent/legal guardian involvement.**

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

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

## 7-8 English Learner Retention

A team consisting of the principal, EL Teacher Specialist, EL CIAS/Coordinator, and the classroom/core teacher will determine retention of an English Learner. The decision to retain a student in DVUSD who qualifies for English Language services can be made if the student has received English Language Targeted

and Integrated instruction if the reason to retain is not related to the student’s acquisition of the English language.

In order to retain an English Learner, teachers must:

- Demonstrate a student’s inability to meet grade level curriculum with scaffolded classwork and documentation of these EL scaffolds and academic progress.
- Implement a Written Individual Compensatory Plan\*.
- Show that the student has not made appropriate gains on district or state assessments with appropriate accommodations.

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

\*Written Individual Compensatory Plans (WICPs)

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

**Retention Criteria for Grades 7-8 Include:**

- A. Achievement: The minimum requirement for promotion to the next grade level is a 2 ~~D~~ or higher for the final grade in ALL subjects and 4 quarters exploratory/elective areas. *The chart below provides specific guidance for promotion, reassignment and retention.*

**7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> GRADE PROMOTION, REASSIGNMENT AND RETENTION**

Action	Academic Grades	Notes
<p><b>PROMOTION + PROMOTION CEREMONY</b> (8<sup>th</sup> Grade students only)</p> <p><i>Meeting the criteria for moving to the next grade level.</i></p>	<p>Must earn 2 or higher or P as the final grade for <b>ALL</b> subjects. This includes ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies, Electives*, and Exploratories**.</p> <p>*Average grade of Electives taken during the year.            **Average grade of Exploratory courses taken during the year.</p>	<p>Students will receive a promotion certificate and will have the privilege of participating in the promotion ceremony.</p> <p><b>PROMOTION LETTER PROVIDED</b></p>

		<b>(8<sup>th</sup> Grade students)</b>
<p><b>PROMOTION ONLY</b></p> <p><i>Meeting the criteria for moving to the next grade level.</i></p>	<p>Must earn a 2 or higher or P as the final grade in ALL Core subjects. This includes ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies. If an elective and/or exploratory is Failed, based on an average for the year, the student will still be promoted to the next school grade level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Average grade of Electives taken during the year.</li> <li>• Average grade of Exploratory courses taken during the year.</li> </ul>	<p>8<sup>th</sup> Grader will receive a promotion certificate. However, students will not have the privilege of participating in the promotion ceremony and activities due to either academic (failing an exploratory or elective course) or due to behavior concerns.</p> <p><b>PROMOTION LETTER PROVIDED</b></p> <p><b>(7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade students)</b></p>
<p><b>REASSIGNMENT</b></p> <p><i>Not meeting all criteria for promotion at a grade level (7/8) but moving to the next grade.</i></p>	<p>Must earn a D or higher or 2 or higher as the final grade in the four core academic courses (ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies)</p>	<p><u>Exceptions:</u></p> <p>If not passing <b>any of the</b> four core academic courses, a student may still be reassigned if the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student is in 7<sup>th</sup> grade and will be 15 years old during the upcoming school year or attended 7<sup>th</sup> grade for 2 years (reassigned to 8<sup>th</sup> grade)</li> <li>• Student will be 16 years old during the upcoming school year or will have attended grades 7 and 8 for 3 years (reassigned to high school)</li> <li>• Student participated in summer school and earned a passing grade from the program.</li> </ul> <p><b>• REASSIGNMENT LETTER PROVIDED</b></p>
<p><b>RETENTION</b></p> <p><i>Not meeting the criteria for promotion and remaining at the same grade level.</i></p>	<p>Failure to earn a D or higher or 2 or higher as the final grade in all four academic courses (ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies) and does not meet the exceptions listed above for Reassignment.</p>	<p>Grades are averaged on a <b>4 point</b> scale or percentages for all four quarters. Please refer to the End-of-the-year Grade (Y1) Calculation Procedures.</p> <p><b>RETENTION LETTER PROVIDED</b></p>

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

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

**Social & Emotional Component:**

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

**7-8 Retention Notification Timeline:**

**Following the end of 1<sup>st</sup> quarter:**

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

**Following the end of 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter:**

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

**Following the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter:**

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

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

**Within five days of the date of notification of retention,** parents/legal guardians may appeal the decision to retain by completing the *Grade K-8 Retention Appeal Form*. A meeting is held with

parent/legal guardian, teachers, and Principal.

### **Reassignment Criteria for Grades 7-8 include:**

- A. Achievement: The minimum requirement for reassignment to the next grade level is a D or higher or a 1.5 or higher for the final grade in **ALL** four core academic subjects. Students who fail a core academic subject must pass that subject in summer school in order to be reassigned. Summer school is at parent/legal guardian's expense. The district does not provide transportation. Information including registration link for summer school can be found at: [dvusd.org/online](http://dvusd.org/online)

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

- Seventh grade students who will turn 14 years old during their 7<sup>th</sup> grade school year must be reassigned to 8<sup>th</sup> grade.
- Seventh grade students who will be 15 years old during the upcoming school year and/or will have attended grades seven and eight for three years will be reassigned to the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Students who will be 16 years old during the upcoming school year and/or will have attended grades seven and eight for three years will be reassigned to the high school.

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

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

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

### **7-8 Reassignment Notification Timeline:**

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

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

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

# 7-8 Retention Appeal Process

## Parent/legal guardian

### Within five days from the notification of intent to retain:

1. Complete a Retention Appeal Form and submit it to the school principal or secretary.
2. Notify the school principal to schedule a meeting.  
NOTE: The appeal process will start immediately upon the parent/legal guardian's completion and submission of a Retention Appeal Form.

## Teacher –

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

1. Retention Appeal Form from parent(s)/legal guardian(s)
2. Copies of report cards
3. Copy of the student's attendance record
4. Test results from district assessments (Reading or math assessments, Reading Inventory (RI), Math Inventory (MI), Common Formative Assessments, etc.) and state mandated assessments
5. Examples of the retained student's work and examples of an average student's work (remove the average student's name from the papers)
6. Conduct a MTSS Team meeting to review pertinent data, determine targeted intervention strategies, and make plans for monitoring and reviewing student progress
7. Records of communication with the student's parents/legal guardians (telephone logs and copies of written/electronic communication)
8. Verification of conferences with parents/legal guardians (signed forms with a list of items discussed)
9. *Light's Retention Scale* Rating

## Principal –

1. Meet with parents.
2. Sign the Teacher Justification Form.
3. Collect all forms, with the required documentation, and forward the packet to the Deputy Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment for review and decision.  
NOTE: If warranted, the Deputy Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment will then schedule a hearing conference with the Governing Board.



# ACCELERATION

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

# Acceleration Information

## **DVUSD Board Policy I 7300 IKEB states:**

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

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

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

## **What is Acceleration?**

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

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

Forms of grade-based acceleration include:

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

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

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

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

# Acceleration Procedures

## **Whole Grade Acceleration (Grade Skipping)**

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

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

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

### **Timeline for Requesting Whole Grade Acceleration:**

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

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

1. Request the Iowa Acceleration Scale (IAS) and Summary and Planning Record from the Gifted Services Coordinator.
2. Form an acceleration team that includes the following people:
  - a. Principal
  - b. Current teacher
  - c. Receiving teacher
  - d. Parents or legal guardians
  - e. Counselor and/or school psychologist
  - f. Any specialists who work with the child (gifted, EL, special education, etc.), if applicable

3. Gather available assessment data including: Ability, Aptitude, and Achievement (required for the IAS completion). Options for each area include but are not limited to:
  - **Ability**- Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT), Woodcock Johnson Tests of Cognitive Abilities (WJ-Cog); these assessments may be administered by a gifted teacher or school Psychologist. Parents may provide a report completed by a private psychologist if it meets the State of Arizona's criteria for gifted identification
  - **Aptitude**- DVUSD benchmark exams given above grade level (at the level being considered for placement)
  - **Achievement**- State standardized assessments, Woodcock Johnson Tests of Achievement (WJ-ACH); these tests may be administered by a school psychologist or qualified teacher
  
4. Schedule testing for any areas (ability, aptitude, and achievement) where scores are not already available. School psychologists, gifted specialists/teachers, and other qualified staff may administer the assessments.
  
5. Meet with the acceleration team to complete and discuss the IAS.
  - The team will review the required data to complete the IAS including ability, aptitude, and achievement scores. Using the IAS, the team will make a recommendation for or against whole grade acceleration and the principal will contact the Gifted Services Coordinator.
  - The team will use the IAS Summary and Planning Record to outline subsequent steps to ensure success. This process is detailed below.
  - Should the team not find 30 days enough time to acquire the data to make an informed decision (i.e. the student is showing potential, but it is too early in the school year or a student is new to the school), the team will meet with the parents/guardians and recommend pausing the process and restarting after the grading period has ended and more data can be collected.
  
  - If the team recommends whole grade acceleration, the principal will forward the IAS Planning Record to the Gifted Services Coordinator. The Coordinator will then meet with the Deputy Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment to review the documentation. The Deputy Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment will forward the recommendation to the Superintendent, who will make the final recommendation for or against acceleration. Further appeal, if necessary, may be made to the DVUSD school Board.
  - If the recommendation is to accelerate, the goal is to make placement changes at the end of the current grading period, and allow the student to begin the next level in the new grading period.
  - If the decision is made not to skip a whole grade, the team should consider single subject acceleration. See the Single Subject Acceleration (Content Replacement) section below.

### **Planning and Monitoring for Success:**

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

- a step-by-step plan of the program change
- a transition plan
- a monitoring plan

Each member of the acceleration team should receive a copy of the plan. One must be placed in the student's cumulative file, and one must be sent to the Gifted Services Coordinator.

A follow-up meeting with the acceleration team should take place within eight weeks of the grade change. At this time, the team may establish a need for continued monitoring or other interventions to ensure success. A whole grade accelerated student may need a semester or longer to fully adjust to the new placement. During this time, staff should closely monitor the student for gaps in academic understanding or social difficulties. Should problems arise, factors other than the placement change may be contributing to the problem. Be sure to examine all issues and possible related factors before making further decisions.

***Whole Grade Acceleration When Moving to Another Building (MS to HS):*** For a 7<sup>th</sup> grade student accelerating over 8th grade into high school, parents and school will follow the identified acceleration process found on the preceding pages. However, the team should include all current core content teachers and a counselor and administrator from both schools. The team should identify a contact person at the receiving school who will monitor the student's transition for the first semester and will coordinate interventions, if necessary.

### **Special Circumstances:**

#### **Acceleration in Dual Language Immersion Programs (Mandarin and Spanish)**

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

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

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

The team will look at pertinent data, including but not limited to the state achievement test, grade level content, DVUSD Benchmark exams, and grades from the current class. The team will consider any gaps that may exist or develop because of skipped language content and create a plan to fill them. Additionally, the team will develop a transition plan to support the student with social and emotional

factors and to monitor success throughout the remainder of the school year. It is recommended that the student demonstrate a strong desire to be in the program and have a willingness to study at home.

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

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

### **Renaissance Highly Gifted Academies**

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

### **Single Subject Acceleration (Content Replacement)**

Some students are ready to move through single subject areas (usually math or reading) at a faster pace than their grade level peers. Other students have had earlier exposure to content and, if they have reached mastery of grade level content, need to accelerate in order to learn new material. If a child has mastery of the grade level material in a subject area, it may be appropriate to allow them to go to a higher-grade level for that subject area. This is considered content replacement, and the student will be graded on the expectations of the accelerated grade level for that subject. The student's academic achievement level and cognitive ability are important, but physical and social characteristics are also determining factors.

In DVUSD, students who are identified as gifted or above grade level typically have the opportunity to accelerate in math and/or reading. Accelerated programs for gifted identified students include SAGE (content replacement) and Walk Up to Math with a traditional or online option. If a student is not identified as gifted and parents/legal guardians want to request single subject acceleration they should complete a Request for Single Subject Acceleration Form and submit it to the principal.

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

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

The team will look at pertinent data, including but not limited to the state achievement test, grade level content, DVUSD Benchmark exams, and grades from the current class. They should consider any gaps that may exist or develop because of skipped content and develop a plan to fill them. Additionally, the team should develop a transitional plan to support the child with social and emotional factors and to

monitor success throughout the remainder of the school year.

If a team decides that content area acceleration is in the child's best interest, they will proceed with placement and monitor progress as planned. **The final decision to accelerate a student in a single subject grade level rests with the school principal.**

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

##### **Online Classes- [dvusd.org/online](http://dvusd.org/online)**

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

##### **Online High School Courses**

When a student begins courses for their high school credit, by taking online courses, the family must register for classes during the open registration windows. Students complete an orientation and the course within a 14-week timeframe within the semester. The condensed time frame requires 8-10 hours of work each week, per class. The final exam is given in-person at the end of the semester, which the student must pass with a 60% or better to earn credit for the course. Registration and general program information can be found at [dvusd.org/online](http://dvusd.org/online). If the student takes more than 6 courses, there is a \$175.00 fee per .5 high school semester credit.

# GRADING & REPORTING

**A.R.S. § 15-516 states:**

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

**A.R.S. § 15-521 states:**

Every teacher shall:

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



# Grading & Reporting

## **DVUSD Beliefs about Grading and Reporting**

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

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

## **Parent Communication**

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

## **Review of Student Grades in PowerSchool**

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

## **Grade Expectations for Athletic Participation**

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

## **Progress Reports**

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

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

## **Special Program Reporting**

Grade reporting for students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), 504 Plan, or English Learner (EL) Accommodations must be issued at the same frequency as general education students.

Also, IEP goal progress updates must be sent home on a quarterly basis in alignment with grade reporting. Modified grading is only used for students with an intellectual disability as they are working toward different standards at their level.

## **Conferences**

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

An alternative that many schools use is student-led conferences that engage students in their own learning and allows them to be an active part of the conference between a teacher and parent. While both formats take some time and effort, research is clear on the importance of parental involvement to student success.

**Four early release days have been built into the DVUSD calendar to provide teachers with an opportunity to meet with parents.**

## **Canvas**

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

Canvas is used for students to access work virtually. Parents can create a Canvas parent account to track progress, view grades and sign up to receive teacher announcements and notifications. To sign up for the parent "observer" account go to [dvUSD.instructure.com](https://url.dvUSD.org/CanvasParentAccount). On the main login page, find "create a parent account" and authenticate using your student's username and password which is their main school computer login. Instructions for creating a parent account: <https://url.dvUSD.org/CanvasParentAccount>

## **Role of Professional Learning Community (PLC)**

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

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

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

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

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

## DVUSD Definition of Grading

**Authentic grading accurately measures and reflects a student’s performance based upon mastery of the standards.**

Ensuring a fair and credible evaluation of student learning from classroom to classroom and school to school will directly impact and improve student achievement. Students should be held accountable for their learning, but we recognize that many grading practices can contribute to long-term student failure. An emphasis on content standards (knowledge and skills) is a cornerstone to grading that supports the learning process for feedback, growth, and student success.

The DVUSD grading definition is based on the following ideas:

1. Grades will be equitable, accurate, specific, consistent.
2. A student’s grade should reflect academic learning and should never be used as a punitive tool.
3. Grades are for reporting the status of academic learning, not behavioral conduct
4. The primary purpose of assessment and grading is to provide detailed feedback to inform student learning.
5. Learning is a process that takes place over time and at different speeds for different students.
6. A coordinated assessment and grading system, both among common course 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)*

**Grades will be based upon academic proficiency.**

What it is	What it is not
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring every mark/grade relates to a content standard(s). For example: AZ</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Including a mark or a grade that is based on behavior (unless part of the course</li> </ul>

<p>College &amp; Career Readiness Standards, AZ Academic Standards, AP, IB, and other national standards as appropriate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Proficiency-based as opposed to standards-based means any mark/grade can be directly tied to a course content standard(s).</li> <li>● Communicating to students what they must know and be able to do (learning targets and success criteria)</li> <li>● Applying consequences for late work that do not reduce the grade</li> <li>● Handling issues such as disruptions, attendance, or academic dishonesty through disciplinary consequences.</li> </ul>	<p>content standards)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Including marks for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ bringing in a signed syllabus</li> <li>○ bringing in class supplies</li> <li>○ mere completion of assignments or homework</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Awarding points for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ neatness or effort (unless these are part of the course content standards)</li> <li>○ extra credit</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Deducting points for late assignments (see <a href="#">Understanding How to Handle Late Work, Page 39</a>)</li> <li>● A requirement to report a grade for each individual standard, although this is an option available to schools )</li> </ul>
<p>PLC teacher collaborative teams can request exceptions to the above guidelines, pending approval by administration.</p>	
<p><b>Benefits</b></p>	
<p>Marks/grades that only reflect the learning of content standards and that do not incorporate behaviors more clearly communicate what the student knows and can do. This enables teachers to report student learning more accurately, thus providing feedback for student growth. Furthermore, grades based on grade level standards and learning targets provide more consistency across contents.</p> <p>Attendance, effort, behavior, participation, and other factors are important, but separating these from academic grades ensures grades are more equitable and accurate and gives a clearer picture of student learning.</p>	

**How will a standards-based mindset affect my classroom instruction?**

Quality teaching is quality teaching regardless of the grading/ reporting system being used. What a standards-based mindset will impact is how students are assessed and proficiency-based grading will impact how their mastery of essential standards are reported. By specifying the essential knowledge and skills students must know and be able to do, teachers select tasks and activities that will have the greatest impact on student learning. Each learning task has a criterion for mastery that is shared with students in order to pinpoint information about what learning has and has not been demonstrated. If learning has not been demonstrated, students are retaught and then re-assessed.

7-8

<p><b>A</b></p>	<p>Evidence indicates a high level of proficiency of the learning standards</p>
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<b>B</b>	Evidence indicates proficiency of the learning standards
<b>C</b>	Evidence indicates partial proficiency of the learning standards
<b>D</b>	Evidence indicates minimal proficiency of the learning standards - NO CREDIT
<b>F</b>	No evidence of proficiency of the learning standards - NO CREDIT

**How will students be held accountable for different behaviors?**

With a standards based mindset, a student’s effort and behavior are recorded and reported separately from the academic grade. This approach is based on the idea that not completing work is a behavior choice, not an academic one, so the aligned response should address the student’s behavior. For example, if a student has not completed homework assignments and as a result struggles on an assessment, discuss the importance of practice with the student and set goals for future work. An opportunity to leverage ongoing practice is to have a student work on this during MTSS time, if applicable, have them work on it at home, or encourage the student to work on it during, before or after school sessions if offered. You may set up a system to have students file an extension for their due date for late work. It is important to provide feedback to the student about their work habits (behavior) and how it impacts their learning.

Attendance, effort, behavior, participation, and other factors are important, but separating these from academic grades ensures grades are more equitable and accurate and gives a clearer picture of student learning. Students are still accountable for these factors and should realize these factors can directly impact their learning.

*“Rather than lowering students’ grades due to behavioral infractions, a better strategy is to report these infractions separately and not include them as part of the course grade.” (Guskey 94)*

***Behaviors will be communicated separately from proficiency-based grades.***

What it is	What it is not
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Excluding factors such as effort, participation, attendance, attitude, etc. from the grade calculation</li> <li>● Using classroom management and other non grade-based consequences to uphold expectations related to conduct, work completion, and academic integrity</li> <li>● Handling issues such as disruptions, attendance, or academic dishonesty through the <a href="#"><u>DVUSD Discipline Guidelines Matrix</u></a></li> <li>● Communication of behaviors may include conferencing with students, using flags in</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Including points for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ bringing in a signed syllabus</li> <li>○ bringing in class supplies</li> <li>○ mere completion of assignments or homework</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Awarding points for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ neatness, effort, completion, or</li> <li>○ participation (unless these are part of the course content standards)</li> <li>○ extra credit</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Deducting points for late assignments (see</li> </ul>

<p>gradebook (missing, exempt, incomplete, absent, late, etc.), typing comments in gradebook, contacting parents, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using a zero as a placeholder until the student demonstrates what he/she knows and can do within a given time frame to be determined by PLCs</li> <li>Basing grades on individual achievement, not group scores unless it is part of the content/course standards</li> </ul>	<p><u>Understanding How to Handle Late Work</u></p>
<p>PLC teacher collaborative teams can request exceptions to the above guidelines, pending approval by administration.</p>	
<p>Benefits</p>	
<p>Attendance, effort, behavior, participation, and other factors are important, but separating these from academic grades ensures grades are more equitable and accurate and gives a clearer picture of student learning. Students are still accountable for these factors and should realize these factors can directly impact their learning.</p>	

#### **Procedures for 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 and procedures developed by the school and before the end of the grading period. A “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 may also be assigned behavioral consequences as determined by the school site.

*Please note: Accommodations included in a student’s IEP, 504, or EL plan supersede late work procedures. Consult with the student’s Service Coordinator or the student’s support team.*

#### **Procedures for Reassessment**

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.

In DVUSD, students will be allowed to retake assessments/assignments 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/assignments 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.
- Each school will determine the procedures for reassessment eligibility.

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

**Reassessment**

What it is	What it is not
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Schools will identify the specific steps that students must complete to be reassessed to ensure that learning takes place before reassessment.</li> <li>● Feedback on initial performance needs to be provided.</li> <li>● Students should engage in learning and/or reflection with teacher direction prior to reassessment. Strategies could include corrections, tutoring, discussion, revisiting unfinished practice, or reteaching.</li> <li>● Reassessment addresses the same standard(s)/content/skill(s) as the original assessment.</li> <li>● Reassessment could include different formats such as test corrections, retakes, new assessments, oral responses, presentations, etc.</li> <li>● All students, not just students who perform poorly on an assessment, will be able to reassess in order to demonstrate a new or higher level of understanding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Making the reassessment easier or harder than the original assessment</li> <li>● Averaging students’ first and additional attempts or reducing a grade because it was another attempt</li> <li>● Providing students the exact same assessment for a second time without feedback and next steps (opportunities for learning)</li> <li>● Allowing only students who earned a low score on an assessment to reassess</li> <li>● Reassessment of final assessments, district benchmark exams, or district interim assessments</li> </ul>

PLC collaborative teams can request exceptions to the above guidelines, pending approval by administration.

**Benefits**

Multiple opportunities sets the stage for students to focus on learning more and not simply accepting a low grade. The focus can be on targeting specific standards or specific areas of common misinformation and improving reflective practices on the part of the student to help the teacher understand where misconceptions rest. The opportunity for reassessment encourages students to deepen their learning on different standards, and the reassessment itself allows demonstration of the increased knowledge.

Different formats for assessing proficiency allow students to demonstrate content knowledge using their individual strengths within the course format and turn the focus from ‘getting a grade’ to feedback and learning. The original assessment and the reassessment should not be averaged together. Instead, the higher

of the assessment grades should be entered in the gradebook, without deductions or caps to the grade merely for the fact that the student reassessed.

If it takes a student longer to learn a standard, and the assessment comes before the student has completed the learning, there is no reason for further learning if there is no chance for reassessment. With reassessment opportunities, students may actually work harder because they have taken advantage of additional learning opportunities. It is by participating in these additional opportunities, students earn the privilege of reassessing. The practice of allowing students to reassess is consistent with other important assessments such as the SAT, ACT, and even a driver's license. In all of these situations, the number of times one takes the test is inconsequential. In fact, the highest score is the only score that is kept on the final record.

## Grading

Grading should be fair, consistent, reliable, and comprehensive. All grades should be supported by appropriate evidence (e.g., anecdotal notes, work samples, checklists, portfolios, rubrics, projects, assessments, etc.). A standards-based mindset is about grading with only standards in mind. Rather than encapsulating all activities and attributes, the process of grading becomes singularly focused on determining student proficiency against the standards.

### Gradebook Guidelines

- 7<sup>th</sup>- 8<sup>th</sup> grade teachers are to maintain final grades for the school year and are to be maintained in the student's cumulative permanent record.
- Teacher grade books are auditable documents and are maintained digitally by network services.
- Per DVUSD Governing Board Action (7-12-2022), teachers will record at least one meaningful grade per week. Assignment/Assessment with at least one standard tagged and counts toward the overall course grade for each content area.
  - For classes that meet less than 4-5 days/week
    - Meet 2-3 days/per week = minimum of one meaningful assignment posted every other week
    - Meet 1 day/week = minimum of one meaningful assignment posted every 3rd week
- Teachers should take no more than five (5) school days (with exceptions only for major projects and essays) from the assignment due date to enter its grade.

Assignments and evidence of learning are recorded in the existing DVUSD PowerTeacher Pro gradebook

- Assessments Category:
  - Standards WILL be tagged AND counted in the grade
  - 7-8 teachers tag the standards A/B/C/D/F
- In-Process Learning Category:
  - Standards MAY be tagged, but will NOT count in grade
- Assignments will be marked as **collected** or **missing** with no grade showing
  - **All grading will be at the standard level**



- Students are encouraged to take ownership and be proactive when it is appropriate to ask for an extension on a due date. This consequence teaches and reinforces the life skill of knowing how, why and when it is appropriate to ask for an extension on a due date. It also encourages students to take ownership, be proactive and advocate for oneself.

### **How PowerTeacher Pro Gradebook Calculates Grades**

The internal working of PowerTeacher Pro Gradebook calculates grades based on total points, taking into consideration any category weight. PowerTeacher Pro Gradebook displays the percentage and letter grade.

## **Procedures for Incomplete Grades – Grades 7-8**

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

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

**It is the responsibility of the teacher to notify the Registrar and parents of the changed grade and a new report card will be printed and sent home.**

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

## **DVUSD Report Cards**

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

- Progress in Grades 7-8 is indicated by the Performance Levels A-F. Performance levels on the DVUSD 7-8 report card indicate a student's level of proficiency in relation to grade level standards and content.
- Performance levels are then translated into a traditional letter grade, A, B, C, D, F as the final grade for the course each quarter.

## 7-8

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

### Report Cards Grades

Final grades each quarter will be determined based on the following grade scale. DVUSD's goal is to ensure all students are proficient in learning what they know and are able to do in relation to the Arizona State Standards they are taught in each course.

#### Grades 7-12

- Both standards grades and course grades will display as a letter grade of A/B/C/D/F on middle school report cards and high school transcripts

#### Grade Scale Conversion for 7-8 Grades Final Course Grades

Letter Grade	A	B	C	D	F
Final Grade Scores	100-90	89-80	79-70	69-61 NO CREDIT	60 NO CREDIT

Citizenship (conduct) grades will use the following E/S/N/U grading scale.

E = Exceeds the Standards

S = Standards Met

N = Needs Improvement

U = Unsatisfactory

## Grading in Special Programs

### ELD Classes 7-8

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

### English Learners

A student's progress in the content area will be measured according to the students' English proficiency level. Using the content area/ELP crosswalk, the classroom teacher can determine the appropriate measure of mastery for the content area standard using the ELP performance indicators outlined within the ELP

standards. ELP Standards and their Performance Indicators (PI) will be embedded into the content curriculum. It is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to ensure EL students learn the content through the use of English Language strategies.

### **Pre-Emergent/Emergent**

(PE/E) students, as identified through AZELLA Placement test, who are new to the country and/or in their first full academic year in an EL program can be graded on course content as Pass/Fail with scaffolds, until they meet requirements on the transition rubric- as assessed by Teacher EL Specialist.

### **Basic (B)**

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

### **Intermediate (I)**

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

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

When a student is not demonstrating grade level understanding, general education teachers will meet with the EL Specialist on their campus to develop a plan of EL scaffolds and strategies to be implemented in the classroom to help the student access the content. EL scaffolds and strategies are utilized to facilitate student participation and comprehension of course work. If the student is still not progressing academically, then the EL scaffolds or strategies need to be revisited with the support of the Teacher EL Specialist or EL CIAS. As is true with any student, ELs can fail to demonstrate mastery of grade level standards and content. However, general education teachers must provide evidence of student progress monitoring and documentation of the scaffolds that have been *consistently* implemented to make content accessible for the EL student. This ensures that the student's language proficiency level is not the reason for the grade assignment.

### **Monitor Students**

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

### **Gifted Students**

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

graded against the same standards as his/her older classmates. (e.g. SAGE, Walk-Up Math, or Walk-Up ELA/Reading)

Adapted from Wormeli, R (2007-2008). *Fair Isn't Always Equal: Assessment and Grading in the Differentiated Classroom*. **Students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP)**

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

The teacher of record for a student with an IEP is the teacher who is highly qualified and provides the core instruction related to the grade level academic standards. Only teachers who are highly qualified may provide the grade for a student with an IEP.

### **Homebound Students**

For homebound students, the teacher of record is always the campus teacher. For homebound students participating with the *Aspire* - Deer Valley's Online Academy, the teacher of record is the online learning teacher.

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

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

Homebound Teacher Responsibilities:

- Homebound Instructors will contact the counselor/Special Education Strategist at the student's school to assist in coordinating the student's initial services meeting within one school day of contact from the school.
- The Homebound Instructor is responsible for providing quality instruction, utilizing appropriate materials and techniques to keep students working at his/her assigned grade level. This will be done in unison with the classroom teacher. Completed assignments will be returned to the classroom teacher on a weekly basis.
- The Homebound Instructor will work with the classroom teacher to submit grades for the student at the end of each quarter so the student's transcripts/records will accurately reflect his/her grades and performance. The Homebound Instructor will provide assignments, assessments, and documentation to the classroom teacher to support the final grade.
- The Homebound Instructor is responsible for the coordination of administering classroom, state, and district assessments.
- The Homebound Instructor reviews *Aspire*, Deer Valley's Online Academy grades twice a month, if

applicable.

- The Homebound Teacher will ask for a meeting with appropriate school staff and the parent if the process is not working or the student is not progressing with passing grades.

#### Classroom Teacher of Record Responsibilities

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

## Accommodations/Modifications/Acceleration

Accommodations are changes to the way a child is expected to learn or how he/she is tested.

Accommodations eliminate obstacles that would interfere with a student's ability to perform or produce at the same standard of performance as all general education students.

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

Accommodations:

- Are changes in instruction that enable children to demonstrate their abilities in the classroom or assessment/testing setting
- Are intended to reduce or even eliminate the effects of a student's academic or behavioral deficits
- Do not reduce learning expectations

Accommodations can be provided for:

- Instructional method and materials
- Assignments and assessments
- Learning environment

- Time demands and scheduling
- Special communication systems

#### Examples of Accommodations:

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

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

Modifications should be marked only for students with a significant cognitive disability who qualify to take the alternative state assessment in accordance with their IEP. The essential learnings for students who receive modifications are known as Core Content Connectors and can be found at [https://wiki.ncscpartners.org/index.php/Core\\_Content\\_Connectors](https://wiki.ncscpartners.org/index.php/Core_Content_Connectors).

#### Modifications:

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

#### Examples of Modifications:

- Reading a reading test to a student
- Reading a test and rewording/re-explaining questions on the test
- Tests created at the student's reading level
- Tests created including pictures or other visual aids
- Construction of test items at the student's cognitive level of development
- Shortening a spelling test or other assignment

#### Acceleration

Content Acceleration provides students with content, skills, or understanding that is beyond their grade

level or age. Students can work on the advanced content within their current age grade level, in a content replacement pull-out class, or in a classroom above their age grade level.

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

**Grading Procedures – Grades 7-8**

**General Information**

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

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

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

**Special Populations**

On the report card, when describing acceleration, accommodation, modification as they relate to student instruction it is appropriate to write *“The curriculum has been accelerated, accommodated, or modified to meet student needs”*. **It is not appropriate to refer to a student as EL, Gifted, having a 504 etc. in the “comments” section of the report card.** Do not refer to a student as English Learner (EL), having an Individualized Education Program (IEP), etc. as this information could lead to discrimination when report card information is disseminated to entities outside of the parents and school district.

**Achievement in Academic Subjects**

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

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

The following grading system for grades 7-8 will be used on the Middle School Report Card in all subject areas, academic, elective and exploratory courses.

**7-8**

<b>A</b>	Evidence indicates a high level of proficiency of the learning standards
<b>B</b>	Evidence indicates proficiency of the learning standards

<b>C</b>	Evidence indicates partial proficiency of the learning standards
<b>D</b>	Evidence indicates minimal proficiency of the learning standards - NO CREDIT
<b>F</b>	No evidence of proficiency of the learning standards - NO CREDIT

### High School Courses

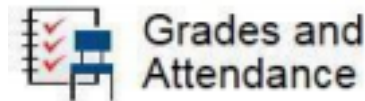
Any high school course taught in grades 7 and 8 will use the high school semester grading system. Each semester grade will be cumulative over the 18 weeks. If a student takes a high school course at a school on the new grade scale, the student's grade will be reported using the new grading scale.

### Grade Eligibility

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

### Parents View of Current and Historical grades

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



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

## Transfer Procedures for Grades 7 and 8

### Grades for 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup>

#### Transfer grades for completed grading periods:

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

#### Transfer grades during a current grading period:

The school registrar will give grades to the school counselor and classroom teachers. Classroom teachers will calculate the transfer grade into the current grading period.

Classroom teachers will need to create an assignment(s) to average this transfer grade according to their



“grade setup/category weighing.”

Students transferring with less than 10 days in the current grading period will receive the grades from their previous school. If these grades are not available, the student will receive an “I” until those grades are available, at which time they will be entered in PowerSchool and a new report card will be issued with the previous school listed. Classroom teachers should exempt these students from any assignment that might fall prior to their placement in that classroom during this grading period. (Reference page 38) regarding Procedures for Incomplete Grades – Grades K-8)

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

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

An average of the four quarter grades will produce the final, year-end grade. PowerSchool will do this. If a student has received a D or F or if the grade is very close to the next higher or lower grade, teachers are required to calculate a student’s final grade based on grade points using the following four-point scale:

- A = 4 points (90% – 100%)
- B = 3 points (80% - 89%)
- C = 2 points (70% - 79%)
- D = 0 point (61% - 69%) No Course Credit
- F = 0 points (60%) No Course Credit

**Students are required to earn a minimum of two points over four quarters in each class to promote to the next grade level.** The four quarter grades will be averaged. In the case that a student might be missing specific quarter grades, the teacher will check with their school registrars to make sure they have grades from previous schools and then will take the grades they have received and average for a final Y1 grade. The final grade will then be assigned based on the average of the points using the above scale. The rules of rounding will apply. Examples are given below for the final grading procedure:

### EXAMPLE I:

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Final	Promote/Fail
Grade	B 3	C 2	F 0	C 2	<b>1.7</b>	<b>Promote</b>

**\*Rounds to a 2**

### EXAMPLE II:

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Final	Promote/Fail
Grade	D 0	D 0	F 0	B 3	<b>.75*</b>	<b>Fail</b>

**\*Rounds to a 1**

**EXAMPLE III:**

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Final	Promote/Fail
Grade	D 0	C 2	C 2	D 0	1.5*	<b>Promote</b>

**\*Rounds to a 2**

**Year End Grade Setup in PowerTeacher Pro Gradebook**

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

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

**Year End Grade Setup in PowerTeacher Pro Gradebooks**

Teachers (7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup>) will be responsible to configure their Grade Setup for Y1 in PowerTeacher Pro Gradebooks in order for the Y1 grade to be stored correctly.

**Prior to grades being stored, teachers/counselors would verify all students are in compliance with the grading and transfer procedures outlined in this handbook.**

**PowerTeacher Pro Gradebook:**

**IBMYP Foreign Language/Technology Final Grading if based on a semester grade (Norterra Canyon only). When a semester-long course is spread across a full year, students are required to earn 1.0 points over the year.**

**EXAMPLE I:**

	1 <sup>st</sup> S	2 <sup>nd</sup> S	Final	Promote/Fail
Grade	3	1	2	<b>Promote</b>

2

**EXAMPLE II:**

	1 <sup>st</sup> S	2 <sup>nd</sup> S	Final	Promote/Fail
--	-------------------	-------------------	-------	--------------

Grade	0	3	1.5*	Promote
-------	---	---	------	---------

\*Rounds to a 2

EXAMPLE III: Averages are 0.5

	1 <sup>st</sup> S	2 <sup>nd</sup> S	Final	Promote/Fail
Grade	0	1	.5	Fail

- For the final Y1 calculation
- These final Y1 might need to be adjusted to match the above criteria.

## High School Courses in Middle School

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

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

The high school course offered at the middle school utilizes high school curriculum, assessments and grading criteria of the high school course. The grading criteria follows the criteria of the school it is being taught at.

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

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

### Course Level Placement Changes

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

### Procedures for Course Withdrawal

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

## **Transfer Procedures for High School Courses**

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

## **Promotion Ceremony Procedures**

In order to participate in the Promotion Ceremony, Deer Valley Unified School District promotion and retention procedure states that students must receive a final year end passing grade of a D average or better in each of the following courses: Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, PE, and Exploratory. All Exploratory course grades will be averaged for a final year end grade. Behavior may also be a determining factor.

## **Home Practice**

**DVUSD Board Policy IKB, Homework, states:**

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Home Practice Philosophy

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

The three main types of homework are:

1. **Practice exercises** – providing students with opportunities to apply new knowledge, or review, revise and reinforce newly acquired skills, including:
  - Finishing class work, physical activities, projects and assignment tasks (classwork sent home should not need the direct supervision of the teacher and can be completed independently\* by the student)
  - Consolidation exercise e.g. math problems
  - Practicing for mastery e.g. spelling words
  - Reading for pleasure
  - Completing writing tasks
2. **Preparatory homework** – providing opportunities for students to gain background information on a unit of study so that they are better prepared for future lessons, including:
  - Background reading
  - Discussion of topics with parents
  - Researching topics for a class unit or work
  - Collecting items e.g. geometric shapes
  - Preparing and practicing public speaking notes
3. **Extension assignment** – encouraging students to pursue knowledge individually, including:
  - Writing e.g. a book review
  - Making or designing something e.g. an artwork
  - Investigations e.g. science, social science
  - Researching e.g. history, local news
  - Information and retrieval skills e.g. using a home computer to find material on the Internet

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

## Home Practice Guidelines and Procedures

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

### Time Guidelines

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

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

### Assigning Home Practice

- Assign purposeful work for students to practice at home. Focus on giving students home practice tasks such as practicing a skill that has been addressed in class to deepen the students' understanding and knowledge, providing students opportunities to extend their learning through independent\* investigation, or allowing for differentiation that allows students to explore topics of their own interest (Marzano & Pickering, 2007).
- Create home practice opportunities that maximize chances for student completion and success. Ensure home practice is the appropriate level of difficulty for each student so that they may complete the assignments with success independently\*. Home practice should also be challenging enough to make it interesting and valuable as a learning tool (Marzano & Pickering, 2007).
- When evaluating home practice, the teacher will provide students valuable feedback on their learning in a variety of ways. Feedback is critical for improving student achievement. If weighting categories is utilized by the school site, home practice should be no more than 5% of the grade.

### Parental Involvement

- Parental involvement in home practice should be supportive of student learning without the expectation that parents are teachers at home or are there to police the students' homework completion, possibly have parents assist by listening to their students summarize their learning. It is important to recognize that each

student has a different support system at home and that successful home practice should be possible for each student in each different home environment (Marzano & Pickering, 2007).

- Parent access to the PowerSchool portal, ps.dvUSD.org, can assist in reviewing assignment due dates, emailing teachers and viewing current grades. Please see the front office staff for login information.

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

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

## Make Up Opportunities

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

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

- Each teacher will provide the student's assignment(s) and any handouts or materials necessary for accomplishment of such assignment(s), allowing a minimum make up period of one (1) day for each day absent. Teachers may adjust time based on the individual needs of the student or assignment.
  - \*Aspire online students have 7 days to complete 5 days of course work, extra time due to absences is not needed as it is already built into a student's schedule.
- School sanctioned and/or approved events should not negatively impact a student's grade.
- Students who miss school work because of unexcused absences or suspensions will be given the opportunity to make up missed work for credit. Teachers shall assign such make-up work as necessary to ensure academic progress, not as a punitive measure.
- When age appropriate, the student is responsible to go to his/her teacher(s) the first day back from an absence to find out what work was missed and to develop a plan to make up those assignments. This would include, but is not limited to, such things as notes, homework, tests, laboratory assignments, performances, and projects.
- If the teacher is unable to supply the student with a make-up assignment, the student will not be held responsible for that make up assignment.
- If work is not turned in by the time the assignment is due, and the student fails to provide an acceptable explanation of the extenuating circumstances that would merit an extension, the teacher may choose to not accept the student's make-up work and may seek alternative assignments or assessments to determine proficiency on subject matter.
- Daily Assignments vs. Long-Term Projects: There is an important distinction between daily/formative assignments and long-term/summative projects. Make-up policies regarding long-term/summative projects are at the discretion of the individual teacher based on the timeframe of the student's absence and the requirements of the long-term project.
- In situations where the student will be absent for more than (3) three days, due to illness, or when the parent notifies the office that the student will be absent more than one (1) week for other reasons, teachers may provide required assignments in advance or send assignments with the student.
- In the case of school absences for up to three months due to chronic health conditions certified by a

doctor, procedures in DVUSD board regulation, Exclusions and Exemptions from School Attendance (JHD, J-1961) will be followed for student make-up work.

### Academic Recognition Grades 7-8

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

Deer Valley Academic Excellence Award

All 3 and 4 (including special area and other elective courses)

### Student Citizenship (Conduct)

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

NOTE: High school course grades will be reflected in the Academic Excellence Award for quarter 2 and quarter 4 grading period

## Committee Members

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

Name	Position	School Location
Gayle Galligan	Deputy Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment	District Office
Kathryn White	Director of Academics and Assessment	District Office
Laura Victor	Principal	Aspire
Adam Laningham	Manager of Gifted Services	District Office
Danielle Bambling	SSS Representative	District Office



Beverly Kerr	EL Coordinator	District Office
Jennifer Louis	CIAS / ELA Literacy	District Office
Denise Darre	Lead Counselor	DVHS
Brittany Hines	Teacher	Sunrise
Carrie Mabee	Principal	Stetson Hills
Christina Myers	Dean	Copper Creek
Lisa Crain	Federal Programs	District Office
Elizabeth Harris	ELA 6-12 CIAS	District Office
Tony Galietti	Principal	Sierra Verde
Andrew Sielaff	Dean	Constitution
Joan Wick	Principal	Constitution
Paul Strauss	Dean	Mountain Ridge
Karen Dial	Principal	Sunrise
Kim Anderson	ELL CIAS	District Office
Kimberly Smith	Teacher	Stetson Hills
Melissa Sepuka	Prncpal	Esperanza
Liz Keith	Teacher	Norterra Canyon
Sarah Kole	Software Analyst	District Office - IS&T
Sharon Wieser	Principal	Terramar
Tina Marone	Principal	New River
Deb Senatroy	Counselor	Union Park
Jessica Carr	Teacher	Union Park
Ann Steutermann	Teacher	
Joni Jacobs	Teacher	Sunset Ridge
Tina Binns	CIA Administrative Assistant	District Office

## Notification Letters/Forms

Parent letters and forms referred to in this document begin on page 56. District letters and forms are sent electronically to administrators, school secretaries, and counselors. These forms include K-8 acceleration, promotion, and retention forms, 7-8 retention/reassignment forms, and a checklist for early entry.

## **Promotion, Retention, Acceleration & Grading 7-8 Handbook**

### **Appendix – School Letters & Forms**

#### **Acceleration**

<i>K-8 Parent/Legal Guardian Request for Whole Grade Acceleration Form*</i>	Page 59
<i>K-8 Parent/Legal Guardian Request for Single-Subject Acceleration Form*</i>	Page 60

#### **Appeal**

<i>K-8 Parent/Legal Guardian Promotion Appeal Form*</i>	Page 61
<i>K-8 Parent/Legal Guardian Retention Appeal Form*</i>	Page 62
 <i>Gifted Services Walk Up To Math Rubric</i>	 Page 63

## Parent/Legal Guardian Request for Whole Grade Acceleration K-8

School \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of

Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Legal Guardian

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Parent Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

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

Parent/Legal Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Principal Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Superintendent's Decision:

Acceleration request approved \_\_\_\_\_ Acceleration request not approved \_\_\_\_\_

Comments:

Superintendent Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



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

School \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Legal Guardian Name \_\_\_\_\_ Parent Phone \_\_\_\_\_

### Requesting acceleration in (content area)

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

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

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

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

Parent/Legal Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Principal's Decision:

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

Comments:

Principal Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



## K-8 Parent/Legal Guardian Promotion Appeal Form

School \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Legal Guardian Name \_\_\_\_\_ Parent Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Email \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Parent/Legal Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



## K-8 Parent/Legal Guardian Retention Appeal Form

School \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Legal Guardian Name \_\_\_\_\_ Parent Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Email \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



# DVUSD Gifted Services Walk Up to Math Matrix



Placement is a data-based decision determined by a team of teachers. The placement team consists of the student's current math teacher, next grade level math teacher, & Gifted Specialist.

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Instrument	Student's Data	Ideal Score	Pass
DVMAs	_____ _____	_____ (at end of year)	
Most recent AzMERIT	_____ Year: _____	Exceeds	
Walk-Up Placement Test	_____	80% or above	
Math Grades	Q1: _____ Q2: _____ Q3: _____ Q4: _____	All As	
Classroom Test Score Average (If not weighted)	_____	90% or above	
Gifted Quantitative Score	_____	At least 90% or above (95% + is best)	
Other Considerations		Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support at home</li> <li>• Good work ethic</li> <li>• Classroom participation</li> </ul>	

Check the box for next year's placement:

3 <sup>rd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup> Gifted Cluster	4 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup> Gifted Cluster	5 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup> Gifted Cluster	6 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup> Gifted Cluster
7 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup> Adv.	8 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup> Adv.	Algebra 1-2	Geometry		

Team signatures: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_  
 Math Teacher                  Math Teacher                  Gifted

*\*All placements are determinant on how the student performs in the advanced class.*

## Early Entry Readiness Checklist

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ I.D. \_\_\_\_\_ D.O.B. \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

*This list describes social and emotional skills demonstrated by children at this grade level. Items should be checked when observed 75-85% of the time. The majority of boxes checked indicate a strong readiness factor. Less than a majority of boxes checked may indicate a need to reconsider continuation in placement at this time.*

- Follows a simple direction without multiple prompts or wandering
- Follows safety rules
- Stays with an activity to completion and/or does not leave group instruction
- Attempts new tasks knowing it is okay to make mistakes
- Does not become easily frustrated when tasks are challenging
- Asks for help instead of waiting for adult intervention
- Has stamina to maintain learning through the day and does not fatigue
- Interacts with peers cooperatively (listens to others, shares, and takes turns)
- Uses words to solve problems or conflicts
- Participates in clean-up activities
- Self regulates emotions
- Demonstrates increasing self-control
- Manages own belongings: coat, backpack, folder, lunch
- Independently uses appropriate bathroom skills
- Separates easily from parents
- Adjusts to new situations and adults
- Develops motor skills to participate in tasks