



Deer Valley Unified School District

K-8 PROMOTION, RETENTION, ACCELERATION & GRADING HANDBOOK

2013-2014



**Superintendent
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Governing Board

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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. 15-701 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 3 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. § 15-342(11) states that 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. Atty. Gen. Op. 189-095).

3rd Grade AIMS requirement:

A.R.S. 15-701 (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. The student has an identified disability and did not take the AIMS test.
2. The student has an identified disability and has previously been retained.
3. The student is an English Language Learner and has had less than 2 years of English instruction.
4. The student has a reading deficiency and has previously been retained twice.
5. The school district or charter governing board accepts a parent/legal guardian's written request for an exemption that included the required documentation provided by the parent/legal guardian.

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 the professional responsibility of every teacher 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 of the 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.

In grades K-8, the student will be promoted if the student receives a teacher's recommendation for promotion.

If a parent or legal guardian disagrees with a promotion or retention decision of the teacher 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.

Definitions for Grades K-8

Acceleration:	Matching the level, complexity, and pace of the curriculum with the readiness and motivation of the student.
Promotion:	Meeting the criteria for moving to the next grade level
Reassignment:	Not meeting all criteria for promotion at a grade level, (7/8) but moving to the next grade
Retention:	Not meeting the criteria for promotion and remaining at the same grade level

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.

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. 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 it will be determined if the data supports age appropriate placement be maintained 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 be guided by teacher recommendations and consultation with the parents/legal guardians. (DVUSD Policy JG-R)

Assignment of a student to classes shall be the responsibility of the principal after consideration of the student's grade-level assignment, completion of any prerequisites, the student's achievement, and any classroom limitations or class-size guidelines. (DVUSD Policy JG-R)

Children may be admitted to first grade that are six years of age, or shall be deemed six years of age if they reach such age prior to September 1 of the current school year. Children entering first grade who are not six years old on or before August 31, but will be six years old by December 31 of the current school year will be tested through the Early Entry testing process.

Home Schooled Students Wanting to Participate in DVUSD Extra-Curricular Activities

Students that 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, and proof of residence, etc. If sports participation applies, athletic paperwork would need to be completed.

Students attending a Charter school may not participate in DVUSD exploratory classes or athletics.

Retention and Promotion 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**.

A.R. S. 15-701 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 3 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:

7. 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.

Process for Parents or Legal Guardians

If a parent or legal guardian chooses 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. (See Appendix for forms).
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 Associate Superintendent for Teaching and Learning for review.
5. If warranted, the Associate Superintendent for Teaching and Learning will then schedule a hearing conference with the Governing Board.

PROMOTION

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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.

K-6 Promotion Procedures

Student progression in grades K-6 is determined by a variety of indicators, as defined by state standards and district expectations, which are aligned with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). These expectations include specific levels of student performance on locally determined assessments, including universal screenings and ongoing progress monitoring, and results of statewide assessments (Arizona Instrument to Measure Standards [AIMS]).

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 K-6 include:

At the K-6 level, it is the responsibility of the teacher to notify parents, via the fourth quarter report card, of the intent to promote to the next grade.

- A. Achievement: Students must demonstrate accomplishment of the standards in reading, writing, mathematics, science and social studies adopted by the State Board of Education. In grades K-8, the student will be promoted when the student receives a teacher's recommendation for promotion.
- 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. (See Appendix - Form JHD-EB)

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 (see page 35) for student data.

7-8 Promotion Procedures

Student progression in grades 7-8 determined by a variety of indicators, as defined by state standards and district expectations, which are aligned with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). These expectations include specific levels of student performance on locally determined assessments, including universal screenings and ongoing progress monitoring, and results of statewide assessments (Arizona Instrument to Measure Standards [AIMS]).

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 responsibility of the teacher to notify parents of the intent to promote to the next grade.

- A. Achievement: The minimum requirement for promotion to the next grade level is a D or higher in the final grade in **ALL** four core academic subjects.

A student must pass all four core academic subjects (English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies) 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. (See Appendix - Form JHD-EB)

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 (see page 35) for student data.

K-8 Promotion Appeal Process

Parent/legal guardian-

Within five days from the notification of intent to promote:

1. Complete a Promotion Appeal form and submit it to the school principal or secretary.
2. Notify the school principal to schedule a meeting.
3. 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:

- a. Promotion Appeal Form from parent(s)/legal guardian(s)
- b. Copies of Report Cards
- c. Copy of the student's attendance record
- d. Test results from District Assessments (DIBELS Next, Reading or Math Assessments, Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI), teacher-made tests, etc.) and state mandated assessments (AIMS, SAT 10)
- e. 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)
- f. Copy of the student's Intervention Plan or documentation of intervention
- g. Records of communication with the student's parents/legal guardians (telephone logs and copies of written/electronic communication)
- h. Verification of conferences with parents/legal guardians (signed forms with a list of items discussed)
- i. Light's Retention Scale Rating (see page 35)

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 Associate Superintendent for Teaching and Learning for review and decision.
4. If warranted, the Associate Superintendent for Teaching and Learning will then schedule a hearing conference with the Governing Board.

RETENTION

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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

Prior to retention, it is the belief of the Deer Valley Unified School District that the school staff makes a concerted, proactive effort to provide the learning opportunities and support systems that students need for success. It is important for teachers to document instructional strategies used as interventions for underachieving students. Conducting a General Education Intervention Team (GEIT) meeting is necessary when considering retention.

Promotion of students annually is desirable; however, it is recognized that under certain circumstances retention must be considered for some students. Retention of elementary school students shall conform to the following:

1. 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.
2. Attendance regulations set forth by Arizona Department Education ARS 15-803 shall be enforced.

Promotion of students in grade 3 shall follow requirements set forth in A. R. S. 15-701:

Effective the 2013-2014 school year, no third grade student shall be promoted to the fourth grade if the student obtains a score on the third grade AIMS reading test that indicates he or she is reading far below third grade. (A.R.S. 15-701)

At the K-8 level, it is the responsibility of the teacher or counselor to notify the parents/legal guardians of intent to retain. A copy of the notification is turned in to the principal. The final recommendation to retain is made by the teacher with the use of the Light's Retention Scale (see page 35). Consultation with the principal and other staff members and involvement of parents/legal guardians in all steps of the retention process are vital. **No decision for retention shall be made without parent/legal guardian involvement.** Late entries should receive special consideration.

If parents/legal guardians feel retention is 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 (see appendix) and submit it to the child's teacher
3. Schedule a meeting with the school principal
4. The appeal process will start immediately upon the parent/legal guardian's completion and submission of a Retention Appeal Form.

Retention Criteria for Grades K-6 include:

- A. Achievement: Students must demonstrate accomplishment of the standards in reading, writing, mathematics, science and social studies adopted by the State Board of Education.
- 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. (See Appendix - Form JHD-EB)

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 (see page 35) for student data.

K-6 Retention Notification Timeline:

Following the end of 1st quarter:

- Parents/legal guardians are notified that their child is experiencing academic difficulty during their first conference time
- Teacher will notify and conference with administration regarding concerns.
- A GEIT meeting to problem-solve for students and to provide interventions and strategies to teachers
- Information flagged in PowerSchool

Following the end of 2nd quarter:

- Parents/legal guardians are notified of possible retention.
- Use K-6 Notification of Possible Retention letter (Principal must sign letter)
- Update information in PowerSchool

Six weeks after the end of third quarter, upon documentation of teachers' final grades:

- Parents/legal guardians are notified of intent to retain.
- Use K-6 Notification of Retention letter/Appeal letter (Principal must sign letter)
- Update information in PowerSchool

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/Promotion Appeal Form. A meeting is held with parent/legal guardian, teachers and Principal.

Retention Criteria for Grades 7-8 include:

- A. Achievement: The minimum requirement for reassignment to the next grade level is a D or higher for the final grade in **ALL** four core academic subjects.
- 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. (See Appendix - Form JHD-EB)

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 (see page 35) for student data.

7-8 Retention Notification Timeline:

Following the end of 1st 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*
- Information flagged in PowerSchool

Following the end of 2nd quarter:

- Parents/legal guardians are notified of possible retention
- Use *Grades 7 and 8 - Second Quarter Letter*
- Update information in PowerSchool

Following the end of 3rd quarter:

- Parents/legal guardians are notified of possible retention.
- Use *Grades 7 and 8 - Third Quarter Letter*
- Update information in PowerSchool

At the end of 4th 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*.

Reassignment Criteria for Grades 7-8 include:

Achievement: The minimum requirement for reassignment to the next grade level is a D 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.

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

- 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 8th 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. (See Appendix - Form JHD-EB)

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 (see page 35) for student data.

7-8 Reassignment Notification Timeline:

Following the end of 3rd/4th 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 4th quarter, parents/legal guardians of 7th 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 8th grade. *Use 7th Grade Retention /15 Years Old Letter*

At the end of 4th quarter, parents/legal guardians of 8th 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 8th Grade /16 Years Old Letter.*

K-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.
3. 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:

- a. Retention Appeal Form from parent(s)/legal guardian(s)
- b. Copies of Report Cards
- c. Copy of the student's attendance record
- d. Test results from District Assessments (DIBELS Next, Reading or Math Assessments, Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI), teacher-made tests, etc.) and state mandated assessments (AIMS, SAT 10)
- e. Examples of the retained student's work and examples of an average student's work (remove the average student's name from the papers)
- f. Copy of the student's Intervention Plan or documentation of intervention
- g. Records of communication with the student's parents/legal guardians (telephone logs and copies of written/electronic communication)
- h. Verification of conferences with parents/legal guardians (signed forms with a list of items discussed)
- i. Light's Retention Scale (see page 35) 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 Associate Superintendent for Teaching and Learning for review and decision.
4. If warranted, the Associate Superintendent for Teaching and Learning 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 below) shortens the number of years a student spends in K-12 schooling. Students are placed by factors other than age, and given opportunities to master content faster. Also includes early entrance.

Forms of grade-based acceleration

- Early admission to 1st 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 age grade level, in a content replacement pull-out class (SAGE), or in a classroom above their age grade level.

Forms of content-based acceleration

- Single-subject acceleration
- Curriculum compacting
- eSchool online

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.

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

1. Complete a Request for Whole Grade Acceleration Form (see appendix) and submit it to the child's teacher
2. Schedule a meeting with the school principal
3. Collect academic data in all subject areas that indicate the student has exceeded achievement as measured by Arizona state standards, and district expectations for current and next grade level

The principal will:

1. Contact the Gifted Services Specialist to schedule ability and aptitude assessments.
2. Form an acceleration team that includes the following people
 - Principal
 - Current teacher
 - Receiving teacher
 - Parents or legal guardians
 - DVUSD gifted services specialist
 - Any specialists who work with the child (gifted, ELL, Special Education, etc.) if applicable

The Iowa Acceleration Scale (IAS) 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.

The team will review the required data to complete the IAS including ability, aptitude, and achievement scores. Using the IAS, the team will review and discuss the data, then make a recommendation for or against whole-grade acceleration. The team will use the IAS Summary and Planning Record to outline subsequent steps to ensure success.

If the team recommends whole grade acceleration, the principal will forward documentation to the Superintendent's office for review. **The final decision to accelerate a student a whole grade level rests with the Superintendent.**

Single-Subject Acceleration in Grades 2-6 (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 typically have the opportunity to accelerate in math, reading, or both in grades three through six in SAGE. If a student is not identified gifted or does not have access to SAGE and parents/legal guardians want to request single-subject acceleration they should:

1. Complete a Request for Single-Subject Acceleration Form (see appendix) and submit it to the child's teacher
2. Schedule a meeting with the acceleration team through the school principal
3. Collect academic data to indicate the student has exceeded achievement as measured by Arizona state standards, and district expectations for current and next grade level

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, ELL, special education, etc.) if applicable

The team will look at pertinent data (including but not limited to AIMS, 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 a single-subject grade level rests with the school principal.**

Planning and Monitoring for Success

After a decision to whole-grade skip, the team will complete the IAS Summary and Planning Report (provided by Gifted Services Specialist). 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, and one must be placed in the student's cumulative file.

A follow-up meeting with the acceleration team should take place within eight weeks of the program change. At this time, the team may establish a need for continued monitoring or other interventions to ensure success. An 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.

Homework

DVUSD Board Policy IKB 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 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 individual students' 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.

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, teachers should follow these guidelines:

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 K-1: **up to 30** minutes per night across all content areas
 - Grades 2-3: **up to 60** minutes per night across all content areas
 - Grades 4-6: **up to 90** minutes per night across all content areas
 - 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.

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).

Make Up Assignments

- Students may make up assignments missed due to absences. Students shall be allowed the same number of days to complete make up work as they were absent, plus one. In order to alleviate a heavy workload during the school week, teachers may extend the makeup work deadline through the next weekend so that work will be turned in on the following Monday. Students may turn in work sooner.

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>

Accommodations/Modifications/Accelerations

Accommodations, modifications and accelerations are provisions that are made in how a student accesses and demonstrates learning. If provided to students they are to be indicated on the supplemental page of the First through Eighth grade Report Card by checking the appropriate box.

Accommodations

Modifications

Accelerations

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, modified to meet student needs”. It is not appropriate to refer to a student as EL, Gifted, having a 504 etc.

Accommodations do not substantially change the curriculum, the instructional level, the content, or the performance criteria. Accommodations change how students access and express knowledge on a daily basis. General education and special education students may receive accommodations.

Modifications do change the curriculum, instruction level, content, or performance criteria. These changes customize the curriculum and expectations for the student’s mastery of essential skills.

Acceleration means that the content and/or learning environment has been changed to provide curriculum sooner at a faster pace. Students can be accelerated either by skipping to a higher grade or by receiving accelerated instruction in a single subject.

Please refer to the Deer Valley Special Education Services document, “High Expectations for All Students: A Toolkit for Charting the Course,” for more information on accommodations and modification. More information on accelerations can be found on pages 18-20 of this document.

K-8 English Language 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.

K-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.

However, an exception to this guideline could be made if a 3rd grade student with a disability has an Individualized Education Program (IEP). The IEP team and the pupil’s parent or guardian could agree that promotion is appropriate based on the pupil’s individualized education program. This decision would need to be made in 3rd grade, prior to the end of the school year.

Grading Procedures — Kindergarten

Teachers will communicate to parents all grading practices and procedures at the beginning of the school year. Report cards are required for new students who have attended at least 10 days during a quarter.

The following grading system for Kindergarten will be used on the report card in all academic subjects including: Math, Science, Social Studies, Physical Development, and Language Arts (Listening/Speaking, Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Comprehension, and Writing). Plus and minus signs may be used on grades for academic subjects.

E = Consistently Demonstrates (Needs minimal support, displays confidence)

S = Is Developing (Needs some support, shows progress)

N = Needs Support (Needs additional guidance and direction)

Benchmarks for Kindergarten Report Card

Teachers should refer to the Common Core Standards and/or DVUSD Curriculum documents for guidance in pacing and setting benchmarks.

- Students who have been able to consistently exceed the standard throughout the school year should receive an E (Consistently Demonstrates).
- Students who are able to meet these benchmarks should receive an S (Is Developing).
- Students who are unable to meet these benchmarks or who need considerable support should receive an N (Needs Support).

Student Conduct - Kindergarten

Teachers will mark areas of needed improvement on the report card with an **X**.
Previous parent communication regarding conduct issues should be documented.

<u>Conduct Area</u>	<u>Explanation</u>
Listens attentively	Actively listens and is involved in instructional presentation
Follows directions	Follows teacher's instruction promptly without excessive reminders
Stays on task	Is appropriately engaged in classroom activities
Works well independently	Works independently without undue assistance from teacher or others
Functions as a group member	Works cooperatively with others
Completes work in a timely manner	Turns in completed assignments at the time the teacher has specified
Prepares for class	Has necessary items, including assignments and supplies
Respects rights and property of others	Respects and accepts differences among others including the property of others
Exhibits self-control	Is able to stay in seat, respond appropriately to requests and conversations and respects others' learning
Follows school and classroom rules	Obeys all campus and classroom rules

Grading Procedures – Grade 1

Teachers will communicate to parents all grading practices and procedures at the beginning of the school year. It is part of the district standards that progress reports are provided to parents at a minimum of halfway through each grading quarter. Report cards are required for new students who have attended at least 10 days during a quarter.

Academic Subjects

It is recommended that the assignment of academic grades for each subject area be based on a composite or average of a student's performance on daily assignments, performance indicators, tests, projects, and other classroom activities as determined by the classroom teacher. No one test or project should be more than 25% of the total grade.

The following grading system for first grade will be used on the report card in all academic subjects: **Reading, Writing, Math, Social Studies and Science**. Plus and minus signs may be used for academic subjects in first grade.

Academic Subject Grade			Performance Level Indicator		
90-100	E	Exceeds	4	Exceeds	Above grade level
70-89	S	Standards Met	3	Meets	At grade level
60-69	N	Needs Improvement	2	Approaches	Below grade level with support
59 & below	U	Unsatisfactory	1	FFB	Below grade level with little progress

Special Areas

Two separate grades will be used for grading in the special areas (Art, Music, Physical Education, and Band): an individual achievement grade and a conduct grade. Each special area teacher should prepare guidelines for grading that identify the criteria to be used in student evaluation. These guidelines should be made available to the principal, classroom teachers, parents/legal guardians, and students.

Achievement: The individual achievement grade takes into consideration mastery of standards and skill development. A variety of evaluative techniques should be used for determining a child's achievement grade. Such techniques may include class discussion, knowledge testing, skill testing, and teacher observation.

The following grading scale will be used for Special Area grades.

90-100	E	Exceeds the Standards
70-89	S	Standards Met
60-69	N	Needs Improvement
59 & below	U	Unsatisfactory

Conduct: The conduct grade is to be based on a combination of effort and behavior. Citizenship effort has been previously defined. Consult the student conduct checklist on the grade 1-6 report card and/or your school's discipline plan for guidelines in evaluating student behavior. PowerSchool does not allow the use of plus and minus signs for conduct grades in Special Areas.

Student will receive an "x" to indicate need for improvement in the area of student conduct as part of citizenship grade. PowerSchool does not allow the use of plus and minus signs for citizenship grades in Special Areas.

Grading Procedures – Grade 2

Teachers will have ongoing communication with parents/legal guardians regarding academics, behavior, grading practices and procedures. Report cards are required for new students who have attended at least 10 days during a quarter.

It is part of the district standards that progress reports are provided to parents/legal guardians at a minimum of halfway through each grading quarter.

Academic Subjects

It is recommended that the assignment of academic grades for each subject area be based on a composite or average of a student's performance on daily assignments, performance indicators, tests, projects, and other classroom activities as determined by the classroom teacher. No one test or project should be more than 25% of the total grade.

The following grading system for second grade will be used on the report card in all academic subjects: **Reading, Writing, Math, Social Studies and Science**. Plus and minus signs may be used for academic subjects in second grade.

90-100	E	Exceeds the Standards
70-89	S	Standards Met
60-69	N	Needs Improvement
59 & below	U	Unsatisfactory

Special Areas

Two separate grades will be used for grading in the special areas (Art, Music, Physical Education, and Band): an individual achievement grade and a conduct grade. Each special area teacher should prepare guidelines for grading that identify the criteria to be used in student evaluation. These guidelines should be made available to the principal, classroom teachers, parents/legal guardians, and students.

Achievement: The individual achievement grade takes into consideration mastery of standards and skill development. A variety of evaluative techniques should be used for determining a child's achievement grade. Such techniques may include class discussion, knowledge testing, skill testing, and teacher observation.

The following grading scale will be used for Special Area grades.

90-100	E	Exceeds the Standards
70-89	S	Standards Met
60-69	N	Needs Improvement
59 & below	U	Unsatisfactory

Conduct: The conduct grade is to be based on a combination of effort and behavior. Citizenship effort has been previously defined. Consult the student conduct checklist on the grade 1-6 report card and/or your school's discipline plan for guidelines in evaluating student behavior. PowerSchool does not allow the use of plus and minus signs for conduct grades in Special Areas.

Student Conduct – Grades 1 & 2

Teachers will mark areas of needed improvement on the report card with an **X**.
Previous parent communication regarding conduct issues should be documented.

<u>Conduct Area</u>	<u>Explanation</u>
Listens attentively	Actively listens and is involved in instructional presentation
Follows directions	Follows teacher's instruction promptly without excessive reminders
Stays on task	Is appropriately engaged in classroom activities
Works well independently	Works independently without undue assistance from teacher or others
Functions as a group member	Works cooperatively with others
Completes work in a timely manner	Turns in completed assignments at the time the teacher has specified
Is prepared for class	Has necessary items, including assignments and supplies
Respects rights and property of all	Respects and accepts differences among others including the property of others
Exhibits self-control	Is able to stay in seat, respond appropriately to requests and conversations and respects others' learning
Follows school and classroom rules	Obeys all campus and classroom rules
Displays appropriate playground behavior	Interacts appropriately with peers and uses the equipment in a responsible manner

Grading Procedures – Grades 3-6

Teachers will have ongoing communication with parents/legal guardians regarding academics, behavior, grading practices and procedures. Before marking a conduct concern on report card parent contact must be made. It is part of the district standards that progress reports are provided to parents/legal guardians at a minimum of halfway through each grading quarter. Report cards are required for new students who have attended at least 10 days during a quarter.

Academic Subjects

It is recommended that the assignment of academic grades for each subject area be based on a composite or average of a student’s performance on daily assignments, performance indicators, tests, projects, and other classroom activities as determined by the classroom teacher. No one test or project should be more than 25% of the total grade.

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, modified to meet student needs”. It is not appropriate to refer to a student as EL, Gifted, having a 504 etc.

All teachers in grades 3-6, including Special Ed, EL, and Gifted will provide midterm progress reports and quarterly grades. The grading system A, B, C, D, and F will be used. Plus and minus signs will be used where appropriate (see chart).

The following grading system for grades 3-6 will be used on the 2nd through 6th Elementary Report Card in all academic subjects: **Reading, Spelling, Writing, Math, Social Studies, and Science**. Plus and minus signs may be used.

Exceeds the Standards	Standards Met		Needs Improvement	Unsatisfactory
100-98 = A+	89-88 = B+	79-78 = C+	69-68 = D+	59/below = F
93-97 = A	83-87 = B	77-73 = C	63-67 = D	
90-92 = A-	80-82 = B-	72-70 = C-	60-62 = D-	

Special Areas

Two separate grades will be used for grading in the special areas (Art, Music, Physical Education, and Band): an individual achievement grade and a conduct grade. Each special area teacher should prepare guidelines for grading that identify the criteria to be used in student evaluation. These guidelines should be made available to the principal, classroom teachers, parents/legal guardians, and students.

Achievement: The individual achievement grade takes into consideration mastery of standards and skill development. A variety of evaluative techniques should be used for determining a child’s achievement grade. Such techniques may include class discussion, knowledge testing, skill testing, and teacher observation.

The following grading scale will be used for Special Area grades.

90-100	E	Exceeds the Standards
70-89	S	Standards Met
60-69	N	Needs Improvement
59 & below	U	Unsatisfactory

Conduct: The conduct grade is to be based on a combination of effort and behavior. Citizenship effort has been previously defined. Consult the student conduct checklist on the grade 1-6 report card and/or your school’s discipline plan for guidelines in evaluating student behavior. PowerSchool does not allow the use of plus and minus signs for conduct grades in Special Areas.

Student Conduct – Grades 3-6

Teachers will mark areas of needed improvement on the report card with an **X**.
Previous parent communication regarding conduct issues should be documented.

<u>Conduct Area</u>	<u>Explanation</u>
Listens attentively	Actively listens and is involved in instructional presentation
Follows directions	Follows teacher's instruction promptly without excessive reminders
Stays on task	Is appropriately engaged in classroom activities
Works well independently	Works independently without undue assistance from teacher or others
Functions as a group member	Works cooperatively with others
Completes work in a timely manner	Turns in completed assignments at the time the teacher has specified
Prepares for class	Has necessary items, including assignments and supplies
Respects rights and property of others	Respects and accepts differences among others including the property of others
Respects authority	Respects and accepts direction from school staff
Exhibits self-control	Is able to stay in seat, respond appropriately to requests and conversations and respects others' learning
Follows school and classroom rules	Obeys all campus and classroom rules
Displays appropriate playground behavior	Interacts appropriately with peers and uses the equipment in a responsible manner
Displays appropriate cafeteria behavior	Behaves appropriately in a cafeteria setting

Grading Procedures – Grades 7-8

Teachers will communicate to parents/legal guardians all grading practices and procedures at the beginning of the school year. It is part of the district standards that progress reports are provided to parents/legal guardians at a minimum of halfway through each grading quarter. Report cards are required for new students who have attended at least 10 days during a quarter.

It is recommended that the assignment of academic grades for each subject area be based on a composite or average of a student's performance on daily assignments, performance indicators, test, projects, and other classroom activities as determined by the classroom teacher. No one test or project should be more than 25% of the total grade.

Any high school math 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 and constitute 80% of the final semester grade. Each semester final exam grade is 20% of the final semester grade.

Procedures for Incomplete Grades – Grades 1-8

If incomplete grades are to be issued, 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

Note: It is the responsibility of the teacher to notify the Registrar and parents of the changed grade.

Final End-of-the-Year Grade 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 an F or if the grade is very close to the next higher or lower grade, teachers should 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 = 1 point	(60% - 69%)
F = 0 points	(0% - 59%)

The four quarter grades will be averaged. 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:

	1 st Q	2 nd Q	3 rd Q	4 th Q	Final
Grade	B	C	D	C	C
Points	3	2	1	2	2

$$\frac{3+2+1+2}{4} = \frac{8}{4} = 2 \Rightarrow \mathbf{C}$$

EXAMPLE II:

	1 st Q	2 nd Q	3 rd Q	4 th Q	Final
Grade	F	F	F	B	D
Points	0	0	0	3	.75

$$\frac{0+0+0+3}{4} = \frac{3}{4} = .75 \Rightarrow \mathbf{D}$$

EXAMPLE III:

	1 st Q	2 nd Q	3 rd Q	4 th Q	Final
Grade	B	A	B	A	A
Pts	3	4	3	4	3.5

$$\frac{3+4+3+4}{4} = \frac{14}{4} = 3.5 \text{ rounds to } 4 \Rightarrow \mathbf{A}$$

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

EXAMPLE IV: Averages are 0.5

(a)

	1 st Q	2 nd Q	3 rd Q	4 th Q	Final
Grade	F	F	F	C	D
Pts	0	0	0	2	0.5
%	59	59	59	79	64

$$\frac{0 + 0 + 0 + 2}{4} = \frac{2}{4} = 0.5 \text{ rounds to? } \Rightarrow ?$$

$$\frac{59\% + 59\% + 59\% + 79\%}{4} = \frac{256\%}{4} = 64\% \Rightarrow \mathbf{D}$$

	1 st Q	2 nd Q	3 rd Q	4 th Q	Final
Grade	F	F	F	C	F
Pts	0	0	0	2	0.5
%	50	50	50	70	55

$$\frac{0 + 0 + 0 + 2}{4} = \frac{2}{4} = 0.5 \text{ rounds to? } \Rightarrow ?$$

$$\frac{50\% + 50\% + 50\% + 70\%}{4} = \frac{220\%}{4} = 55\% \Rightarrow \mathbf{F}$$

In all subject areas, academic and exploratory, letter grades A, B, C, D, or F will be used.

90-100	=	A	I	=	Incomplete
80-89	=	B	N	=	No Grade Given
70-79	=	C	P	=	Pass
60-69	=	D			(Given to teacher assistant only)
59 & below	=	F			

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 grades do not affect inclusion on Honor Roll or Principal's List.

High School Courses in Middle School

Grades for honors high school courses taken at the middle school level are weighted on the student's high school transcript.

Credit may only be issued for high school credit when it appears on an official high school transcript. The course implemented must utilize the high school curriculum, the assessments and grading criteria of the high school course and all courses must be given a letter grade, which will be posted on the transcript.

Students who request an Honors level course are accepting the rigor that come with these advanced academic courses. Once students and parents agree to the requirements, they will be enrolled in an advanced academic course. No level changes will be considered for students in advanced academic classes before the 20th day of class and after the 45th day of class. 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. Students may request a level change from a regular-level course to an honors level course within the first 15 days of the semester, provided there is sufficient data that such a change is merited. This follows DVUSD high school placement change procedures as found in the high school Academic Planning Guide.

Academic Recognition Grades K-8

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

Principal's List

All A's

No N's or U's in Special Area Achievement Grades

No Incompletes

Honor Roll

A's or B's

No C's, D's, or F's

No N's or U's in Special Area Achievement Grades

No Incompletes

An "X" in any of the Conduct areas **will not** affect Honor Roll or Principal's List status.

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.

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:

<u>Name</u>	<u>School/ Position</u>
Mike Andersen	Principal – Barry Goldwater HS
Vicki Boone	Software Specialist – IS&T
Julie Browder	Curriculum Secretary
Kim Crooks	Principal – Desert Sky MS
Cathy Dudzinski	Teacher – Highland Lakes
Brian Fineberg	Principal – Copper Creek Elementary
Gayle Galligan	Director of Curriculum
Kim Lanese	Gifted Services Specialist
Jenny Oesterle	Primary Reading Intervention Specialist
Carla Phillips	Assistant Principal – Deer Valley MS
Becky Schultz	Counselor- Desert Sky MS
Brittany Sutton	Teacher – Barry Goldwater HS

Notification Letters/Forms

Parent letters and forms referred to in this document begin on page 37. District letters and forms are sent electronically to administrators, school secretaries, and counselors. These forms include K-8 acceleration, promotion, and retention forms, K-6 retention forms and 7-8 retention/reassignment forms.

Light's Retention Scale

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)

Appendix

Parent/Legal Guardian Request for Whole Grade Acceleration Form	Page 37
Parent/Legal Guardian Request for Single-Subject Acceleration Form	Page 38
Parent/Legal Guardian Promotion Appeal Form	Page 39
Parent/Legal Guardian Retention Appeal Form	Page 40
Parent/Legal Guardian Whole Grade Acceleration Appeal Form	Page 41
Exclusion and Exemptions from School Attendance Form (Chronic Health Condition) Policy JHD	Page 42
Exclusion and Exemptions from School Attendance Physician's Form	Page 43

DRAFT



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 child's teacher
2. Schedule a meeting with the school acceleration team through the principal
3. Collect academic data in all subject areas that indicate the student has exceeded achievement as measured by Arizona state standards, and district expectations for current and next grade level.

List of attachments:

- Parent/Legal Guardian letter of request for grade acceleration including social/emotional/physical background
- K-8 Whole Grade Acceleration Request School Review Form
- Copies of Report Cards
- Test results from District Assessments (DIBELS Next, Reading or Math Assessments, Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI), teacher-made tests, etc.) and state mandated assessments (AIMS, SAT 10)
- Documentation of educational acceleration team meeting
- Any other applicable documents

The principal will meet with parent/legal guardian and acceleration team and will forward the documentation along with the team's decision 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 _____



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 _____

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. Schedule a meeting with the school acceleration team through the principal
3. Provide the team with academic data that indicates the student has exceeded achievement as measured by Arizona state standards, and district expectations for current and next grade level.

Using the K-8 Single-Subject Acceleration Request School Review Form the school acceleration team will review:

- Parent/legal guardian letter of request for single-subject acceleration including social/emotional/physical background
- Copies of report cards
- Test results from District Assessments (DIBELS Next, Reading or Math Assessments, Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI), teacher-made tests, etc.) and state mandated assessments (AIMS, SAT 10)
- Any other applicable documents

The principal will meet with parent/legal guardian and acceleration team 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

Date _____
Student's Name _____ Grade _____
Teacher's Name _____ School _____
Parent/Legal Guardian Name _____
Address _____
Parent Email _____ Parent Phone _____

1. Within five days from the notification of intent 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/Legal Guardian: 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/documentation to support your appeal and attach to this form.

Parent/Legal Guardian Signature _____

Date _____



K-8 Parent/Legal Guardian Retention Appeal Form

Date _____
Student's Name _____ Grade _____
Teacher's Name _____ School _____
Parent/Legal Guardian Name _____
Address _____
Parent Email _____ Parent Phone _____

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 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/documentation to support your appeal and attach to this form.

Parent Signature _____

Date _____



K-8 Parent/Legal Guardian Whole Grade Acceleration Appeal Form

Date _____
 Student's Name _____ Grade _____
 Teacher's Name _____ School _____
 Parent/Legal Guardian Name _____
 Address _____
 Parent Email _____ Parent Phone _____

1. Within five days from the notification of the school acceleration team's recommendation not to accelerate, parent or legal guardian will complete a Whole Grade Acceleration Appeal form and submit it to the Superintendent's office.
2. The appeal process will start immediately upon the parent/legal guardian's completion and submission of an Appeal form and all documentation.
3. In accordance with DVUSD Governing Board policy IKEB the final decision to accelerate a student rests with the Superintendent.

Parent/Legal Guardian: 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/documentation to support your appeal and attach to this form.

Parent/Legal Guardian Signature _____

Date _____



Deer Valley Unified School District

EXCLUSIONS AND EXEMPTIONS FROM SCHOOL ATTENDANCE
Instructional Agreement for Students with Chronic Health Conditions
School Year _____

Student Name _____ Grade _____ Date _____
 Parent Name _____ Address _____
 Person responsible for homework coordination _____
 Position _____ School _____ Phone _____

Eligibility Checklist:	
Medical certification of chronic health condition (diagnosis, prognosis, and inability to attend school regularly).	
Medical certification of physical limitations for physical education.	
District office has noted chronic condition on attendance register.	
If applicable, the school nurse informed of student's chronic health condition.	
Student's teacher(s) informed of student's chronic health condition.	
If applicable, school counselor informed of student's chronic health condition.	
Physical education activities/requirements adapted according to medical certification.	
Certified teacher to provide homework during absences for the school year as follows:	Signature: _____
Parent/legal guardian agrees to return completed homework to the school for absences during the school year as follows:	Signature: _____

Approved by Superintendent _____ Date _____

Annual review of instructional agreement:

____ Number of excused absences due to chronic condition.	____ Promotion requirements met via completed homework for excused absences.	____ Transcripts and attendance record attached.
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For the _____ school year this student should / should not be registered as having a chronic health condition.

Superintendent _____ Date _____

Parent/Legal Guardian _____ Date _____



Deer Valley Unified School District

EXCLUSIONS AND EXEMPTIONS FROM SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

**Medical Certification of Students with Chronic Health Conditions
(Obtained from a licensed physician or podiatrist)**

Date _____

Student Name _____ School _____ Grade _____

Parent/Legal Guardian Name _____ Address _____

Date of Birth _____ Phone _____ Date of initial consultation _____

Medical diagnosis:

Medical prognosis:

Physical limitations affecting physical education activities:

Anticipated absences due solely to illness, disease, pregnancy complications, an accident or severe health problems of an infant child of a student (included anticipated surgeries, treatments, or hospitalizations that may interfere with school attendance during the _____ school year):

Example 1: The physical condition of _____ may result in frequent absences in the school year that may exceed ten (10) consecutive school days per semester, but I do not anticipate that he/she will be absent enough days for require homebound services.

Example 2: _____ will require three (3) hospitalizations of approximately four (4) days' duration each and three to five (3-5) treatments of one (1) day each during the school year.

Other relevant information:

Print Physician's Name _____

Licensed Title _____

Physician's Signature _____

Date _____