

Dear Parents,

Our sincere desire is to help each student learn at the highest levels possible. For the past few years, teachers and leaders of Duchesne County School District have been seeking to identify things that are hindering our students from learning at the highest levels possible. We have identified 5 such categories:

1. **Gaps:** We have too many students moving through our system with too many gaps in their learning.
2. **NASA:** We have too many students who are capable of going to work for NASA (for example) upon graduation, but are not pushing to that level.
3. **Settlers:** We have too many students who are totally capable of getting As and Bs, but are settling for Ds.
4. **Attendance:** We have too many students who miss too much school.
5. **Engagement:** We have too many students who do not engage in their learning when they are at school.

As we began to make improvements in each area, we quickly discovered that our current system lacked too many features to be able to adequately address all 5 categories while keeping the good things going on. As a result, we have created a new educational system that is designed to keep what is helping, and change what is not working. We call our new system the ABCs which stands for Accountability-Based Competency System.

This letter focuses on category #1 Gaps, and is intended to inform you regarding how it will work with your elementary child this school year so that students acquire the vital knowledge and skills needed to move on to the next grade level.

The Utah State Board of Education directs what standards are to be taught in each subject area at each grade level. We teach these standards. However, there are too many to be able to report on all of them. Therefore, DCSD teachers and leaders have selected several per subject area as DCSD Priority Standards. These are graded and appear on the report card. All of this has been happening for the past several years. No change there. Now we will add one more level to all this. DCSD teachers and leaders have analyzed all these standards and selected 5-7 "Vital Competencies" per grade level. These Vital Competencies are so important that we are designating them as mandatory before moving on to the next grade level.

Teachers will track whether each student has passed each Vital Competency when they have been assessed. If a student passes, we celebrate. If they don't, we keep working on it. We also send a letter home to inform parents of what steps the school will take and what steps we request the parents to take in the reteaching process. If the school year ends before a student passes any particular Vital Competency, they will proceed to the next grade level, but must continue to work on every Vital Competency until they pass. If, after this 15-20 months of intervention, a student still has not passed every Vital Competency, they will need to repeat the grade.

*Form letter informing parents that a student did not pass a vital*

Dear Parents,

In Duchesne County School District, we are working hard to ensure that every student learns the vital content in each grade level so they will have success at every level in the future. We recently completed the Vital Competency of \_\_\_\_\_.

This notification is given to inform you that your student, \_\_\_\_\_, has not demonstrated adequate competency yet.

At the school, over the next few weeks, we will provide intervention for your student so that they will have the opportunity to continue to learn the concepts in this area. Then your student will have the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skill to pass this Vital Competency. It is anticipated that this re-assessment will take place by: \_\_\_\_\_.

The in-school interventions will be as follows:

We also ask that the family help in the following ways:

Thank you for allowing us to partner with you in the education of your child. We look forward to success!