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PREFACE

This handbook has been prepared for use by the students, parents, and teachers of DeSoto School. The purpose of the handbook is to set forth the policies and procedures applicable to DeSoto students and to give the students and parents a thorough understanding of the academic and extracurricular activities available at the school. All policies and procedures are subject to interpretation and modification by the DeSoto School Board.

This handbook is distributed to all students enrolling in DeSoto School. We hope that you will find this handbook valuable in answering questions that may arise during the school year.

HISTORY AND PURPOSE OF DESOTO SCHOOL

DeSoto School, named for the early Spanish explorer, Hernando DeSoto, was chartered as a nonprofit organization in 1969. The campus is located on a thirty-acre tract of land on the western slopes of Crowley's Ridge. The location is not far from the site where DeSoto discovered the Mississippi River and held the first Christian service west of the Mississippi.

Groundbreaking for the school took place in April 1970, and the first classes began in September of the same year. Grades one through eleven were offered the first year to a student body of 267. The second year, grades one through twelve were offered, and DeSoto graduated its first senior class in May 1972. Kindergarten (K3) through twelfth grade is now offered.

Athletic activities are an important part of student life, second only to academics, and DeSoto School strives to make the opportunity to participate in interschool athletics available to as many students as possible.

DeSoto takes pride in providing the community with excellent private education in a wholesome and traditional learning environment. The continued success of DeSoto's graduates indicates the quality education they are receiving.

The purpose of DeSoto School is simply and directly stated as quality education. As DeSoto strives to achieve this objective, emphasis is given to helping students acquire a desire for knowledge and respect for learning, an understanding of our cultural heritage and respect for our country, a strong moral character, and a well-developed sense of personal responsibility.

DeSoto School, Inc., is a nonprofit organization and gifts are tax deductible.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Faculty, Administration, and Board of Directors of DeSoto School, Inc., is to strive to serve the educational and social needs of its students through high quality instruction with emphasis on the college-bound student. The school will strive to promote character development and life skills in a safe environment while encouraging family participation. Success has been evidenced by the large number of DeSoto graduates who have entered college and are making a positive contribution to our society.

PAST PRESIDENTS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

1969-1971	Jim Howe
1971-1972	Charles R. Roscof
1972-1973	B. G. Cremeen
1973-1975	Otis Howe
1975-1976	Walter Morris
1976-1977	Ralph Murray
1977-1978	Thomas Dial
1978-1979	James I. Mayer
1979-1980	James O. Gabbie
1980-1981	Jerry Caery
1981-1982	Jerry Kelley
1982-1984	Henry Jordan
1984-1985	Wayne Crews
1985-1986	James Brasel
1986-1988	Joe Tom Cunningham
1988-1990	Steve Toney
1990-1992	Neala Wilson
1992-1994	Norman Bryant
1994-1996	Harvey Yates
1996-1998	Kathy Chisnall
1998-1999	Steve Toney
1999-2000	Harvey Yates
2000-2002	Chuck Roscof
2002-2004	Jay Hollowell
2004-2007	Barry Lawrence
2007-2009	Bobby Boyle
2009-2011	Todd Murray
2011-2015	Helen Halbert
2015-2018	Tommy Young
2018-2019	Kimbrough Stephens
2019- 2026	Stephanie Loveless

**2026-2027 BOARD OF DIRECTORS
AND COMMITTEES
DESOTO SCHOOL, INC.
WEST HELENA, ARKANSAS**

FACULTY AND CURRICULUM

Catherine Bryant - Chair

Christina Garner

Kayln Griffin

FINANCE

Michael Taylor - Chair

Abby Hardy

David Mitchell

Blake Robbins

ADMISSIONS AND RECRUITMENT

Stephanie Loveless - Chair

Blake Robbins

Kayln Griffin

Darren Brown

ATHLETICS & BOOSTER CLUB

Scott Pryor - Chair

Catherine Bryant

Will Young

Christina Garner

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Christina Garner - Chair

Abby Hardy

Neil Culp

Stephanie Loveless

SECURITY

Neil Culp - Chair

Darren Brown

Will Young

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

Will Young - Chair

David Mitchell

Scott Pryor

Michael Taylor

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Kayln Griffin - President

Michael Taylor - 1st VP

Neil Culp - 2nd VP

Catherine Bryant - Secretary

Michael Taylor - Treasurer

HOMEROOM SPONSORS

Grade 6.....	Monica Thomas
Grade 7.....	Debby Smith
Grade 8.....	Elizabeth Stephens
Grade 9.....	Janna Stoker
Grade 10.....	Nash Vonkanel
Grade 11.....	Missy Wood
Grade 12.....	Rhonda Dancy

CLUBS AND SPONSORS

Honor Society	Karen Schwantz
Student Council (High School)	Janna Stoker & Mary Kathrine Rhodes
Student Council (Middle School)	Monica Thomas
Fire Marshals	John Stoker
Quiz Bowl.....	Monica Thomas
Rotary Interact Club.....	Janna Stoker & Mary Kathrine Rhodes
Yearbook.....	Ashley Mayville
Christian Club.....	Sam Pearson

FACULTY AND STAFF

Sam Pearson, BSE, MEd-EAS	Headmaster, Athletic Director, Coach
Karen Schwantz, BAE.....	Academic Dean, Teacher
Tiffany Holland	K3
Katie Jones.....	K4
Rebekah Kendrick, BAECE.....	K5, PK Director, Lead Teacher
Tania Hill, BSE, MAT, MS.....	First Grade
Cindy Sibley, BSE, MSE.....	Second Grade
Stevee Pryor, BSE, MAT	Third Grade
Carmen Dunigan, BSE, MAT.....	Fourth and Fifth Grades
Shelby Pryor, BS	Fourth and Fifth Grades
Elizabeth Stephens, BS.....	Middle & High School Science
Monica Thomas, BSE	Middle & High School Math
Angie Carnathan, BSE, MAT	Middle School English
Murry Rhodes, BSE.....	High School Social Studies, Coach
Nash Vonkanel, BS.....	Middle & High School Social Studies, Coach
Missy Wood, BS, MAT.....	High School English & Fine Arts
Rhonda Dancy, BA.....	High School Honors Science
Rechilda Parañal, BSE.....	High School Math
John Stoker, BS, MEd	Health, Middle School Social Studies, Coach
Judy Lederman	Bookkeeper
Ashley Mayville.....	Secretary
Janna Stoker, BS.....	Library, Resource
Laura Baker	Barton Reading Program
Amy Ward, BA	Supportive Services Coordinator
Mary Kathrine Rhodes	Elementary PE & Computer, Coach
Jordan Simpson	Elementary Music & Art
Debby Smith, MEd.....	Life Skills, Resource, Substitute
Sherry Lusk	Cafeteria Manager

Part-Time Instructors from PCCUA

Cristy Alsup	Keyboarding/Computer Applications
Cathy Fullilove.....	Psychology/Sociology
Kyle Miller	Speech
Lauren Corder.....	Computer Information Systems
Darby Treat	First Aid
Ken Elliott.....	Industrial Heavy Equipment

DESOTO SCHOOL CALENDAR 2026-2027

July 28, August 3-4	Faculty In-service
August 5.....	First Day of School (1/2 Day)
September 7.....	Labor Day; No School
October 6-8	1 st Nine Weeks Exams
October 12-13	Fall Break
October 16.....	Homecoming (1/2 Day)
October 27.....	Fall Weekday ACT
November 23-27.....	Thanksgiving Holidays
December 16-18	Semester Exams (Dismiss 11:30 each day)
December 21.....	Christmas Break Begins
January 4.....	Resume School
February 20.....	Patrons Night Out
March 2-4.....	3 rd Nine Weeks Exams
March 4	Half Day of School
March 5-12.....	Spring Break
March 15-22.....	Stanford Testing
March 23	Spring Weekday ACT
March 26	Good Friday, No School
April 26	Seniors' Last Day
April 27	Seniors' 2 nd Semester Exams
May 2.....	Commencement (5pm)
May 6.....	Kindergarten Graduation (6pm)
May 11-13	Semester Exams (Dismiss 11:30 each day)
May 13.....	Elementary Awards and May Day
May 14.....	Awards Day for 6 th -12 th (8:15am)
May 14.....	Parent Conferences (10-11 a.m.)

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

BELL SCHEDULES

Regular Schedule – Grades 6-12:

First Bell	7:50	
Tardy Bell	7:55	
Homeroom	7:55	- 8:02
1 st Period	8:05	- 8:57
2 nd Period	9:00	- 9:52
Break.....	9:52	- 10:07
3 rd Period	10:10	- 11:02
4 th Period.....	11:05	- 11:57
Lunch	11:57	- 12:20
5 th Period.....	12:23	- 1:15
6 th Period.....	1:18	- 2:10
7 th Period.....	2:13	- 3:05

K3-K4:

First Bell	7:50
Tardy Bell	7:55
Lunch	12:05-12:30
Dismissal.....	2:55

Grades K5-5:

First Bell	7:50
Tardy Bell	7:55
Recess.....	9:55 - 10:15
Lunch.....	11:00 – 11:24 (Grades K5-2)
Lunch.....	11:27-11:50 (Grades 3-5)
Recess.....	12:10-12:30
Dismissal.....	2:55

Chapel/Activity Schedule – Grades 6-12:

First Bell.....	7:50	
Tardy Bell.....	7:55	
Homeroom	7:55	- 8:02
1 st Period.....	8:05	- 8:51
2 nd Period.....	8:54	- 9:40
Break.....	9:40	- 9:55
Chapel.....	9:57	- 10:19
3 rd Period.....	10:22	- 11:08
4 th Period.....	11:11	- 11:57
Lunch.....	11:57	- 12:20
5 th Period.....	12:23	- 1:15
6 th Period.....	1:18	- 2:10
7 th Period.....	2:13	- 3:05

Pep Rally Schedule

(No changes until after lunch.)

5 th period.....	12:23-1:02
6 th period.....	1:05-1:43
7 th period.....	1:46-2:25
Pep Rally.....	2:30

Accreditation

DeSoto School, Inc. is accredited by the Midsouth Association of Independent Schools (MAIS) and Advanced Ed/SACS. Beginning with the 1990-91 school year, DeSoto was accredited by the Arkansas Nonpublic School Accrediting Association and remains an associate member.

Student Admission

Interested parents are to come to the school office and complete an application for admission to be presented to the Board of Directors by the Headmaster. Upon approval of the application, the parent will be required to sign an educational contract and promissory note for tuition before the student is admitted. Records for a transfer student must be in the possession of administration before the student will be approved and allowed to attend classes. This policy also applies to students who leave DeSoto and return at a later date.

Requirements for Student Admission

1. In accordance with Arkansas state law, no child will be admitted to kindergarten unless he or she is five (5) years old on or before August 1 of the school year. Parents must present their child's birth certificate as proof of age when school begins in August. The August 1 cut-off date also applies to the Pre-K program.
2. All students are required to present proof that they have received up-to-date immunizations. Exception: The parents provide the school with a state exemption waiver.
3. No child will be admitted to the school during any school year if he has attained the age of twenty (20) years before October 1 of that year. Exception: Review by the Board of Directors.
4. No child will be admitted to the school if he or she is or has been married or had a child.
5. No student shall be admitted to this school who has been suspended or dismissed from another school for any reason. Exception: Review by the Board of Directors.
6. Students will be tested at the discretion of the Administration.
7. Drug testing program for grades 9-12: All students will be subject to random testing throughout the year. A description of the school's comprehensive Drug/Alcohol Prevention Policy can be found in Section VI of this handbook.
8. Three (3) character references (with contact information for the references)
9. Documentation of any medical diagnosis must be given to the office.
10. Documentation of any custody arrangements must be given to the office.
11. A student/family interview may be conducted at the discretion of the Administration/Board.
12. Newly enrolled students are on academic probation for one semester. Academic, conduct, and attendance records will be evaluated by the Administration to determine continued enrollment.

Tuition

Annual Tuition: (includes on-site/distance learning)

3 & 4-year-old Kindergarten \$3,000 per child

Grades K5 – 12 \$9,644 less EFA \$7,208 = \$2,436.00 per child per year

Registration Fee \$200 (Pre-registered and New Students)

Registration Fees are Non-refundable and Non-transferable

Tuition may be paid annually or monthly by cash or bank draft. Payments are due on the first of the month from August through May. Any other method of payment will be subject to the approval of the Board of Directors.

Fees

A book fee may be assessed during the school year for a damaged or lost book.

Returned Checks

Any check returned by the bank will have a \$35 fee assessed and have 5 days to make payment.

Delinquent Accounts

A past due balance will result in your child not being allowed to attend school or participate in any sports or extracurricular activities until satisfactory arrangements have been made with the DeSoto School Board. This includes K3-12th grade and applies to all school-related events. Any student absences related to past-due tuition will be counted as personal days.

Notice of Nondiscriminatory Policy as to Students

DeSoto School, Inc., of North Fourth Street, West Helena, Arkansas, admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate based on race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions, scholarship, athletic and other school administered programs.

Enrollment during the School Year

Any student who enrolls in DeSoto School, Inc., after the beginning of the school term will be required to pay tuition for all months attended on a pro-rata basis. A numerical grade average in every subject must accompany each transcript. An entrance test may be required of incoming students before attending classes. All applicants in grades 9-12 must have been drug tested at the parent's expense and found negative for all illegal drugs before being admitted.

Withdrawals

Notice of withdrawal must be made in writing to the Headmaster. No refunds of any tuition or fees will be made to any student who voluntarily withdraws from DeSoto School, Inc., unless the student's family is moving from Phillips County. Tuition payments must be made through the month in which the student withdraws.

No refunds will be made in the event a student is asked to withdraw from school for disciplinary reasons or violations of school policies and regulations. Under no circumstances will Building Fund payments be refunded for voluntary withdrawal. Any charges and school obligations must be met before records are transferred to any other institution.

Transcript Release/Records

Schools are currently required by law to receive written permission from a student and his parents or guardian before releasing the student's transcript. Transcript release forms are available to download on the school website. The cost per transcript copy is \$5. A student's records will not be released to a 3rd party without permission from the contract holder or a court subpoena.

Handbook Receipt Form

The handbook receipt form with student and parent signature must be returned to the homeroom teacher by homeroom on Thursday, August 6, 2026, or demerits will be assigned.

Parental Conferences

Parents are welcome at the school and are urged to visit their children's teachers. Parents should arrange for conferences at times convenient both for the teacher and themselves by calling the office and requesting an appointment. Parents should not contact the teachers or board members at home before checking with the school administration on any question that may arise during the school year. Parents should check in the office before going to a classroom for any reason.

Procedure for Conferences or Complaints:

1. Call the school office and set up a conference with the teacher. A telephone call is no substitute for a conference. Please do not contact teachers at home.
2. If for any reason the conference with the teacher is not satisfactory, parents should contact the Lead Teacher (Grades K-5) or Academic Dean (Grades 6-12) and schedule a conference with that official.
3. Further appeals, if necessary, may be made to the Headmaster, then to the appropriate committee of the Board of Directors.

Patron Conduct

Public displays of abusive, disrespectful, unsportsmanlike, or otherwise inappropriate conduct or behavior will not be tolerated on DeSoto School property, at any DeSoto School sponsored event, at any event in which DeSoto School is a guest or participant, or on social media. Any patron who violates this policy will be subject to suspension from attendance privileges at school events for a period of up to one year. Any violation of this suspension, at the sole discretion of the Board of Directors of DeSoto School, Inc., will be sufficient grounds for termination of any or all education contracts with the school with respect to said parent, guardian, or patron. DeSoto School welcomes your comments and suggestions. Please make them through the appropriate channels or directly to the Headmaster. Social media posts that publicly defame DeSoto School and/or a DeSoto employee, teacher, or staff member are in violation of this policy. Posts can be detrimental to the mission of the school and will be dealt with by the Administration.

Student Drivers

Student drivers must have a valid driver's license, be 15 years old, and must be covered by auto insurance. All vehicles must be registered with the school and must have a parking sticker. Vehicle registration forms are online and must be completed before driving on campus. Students becoming eligible to drive during the year must register vehicles before driving on campus. Seniors have priority when registering, then juniors, etc. Administration must have the registration form filled out completely and signed, a copy of the front and back of the driver's license, and a copy of proof of insurance before giving the student a parking sticker and assigned parking spot. Student drivers must park cars in their designated places, get out of them immediately upon arrival at school and not re-enter cars during the day (See Section V). The offense for parking in another person's place is 5 demerits and for not being properly registered is 11 demerits. Driving privileges may be suspended if rules aren't followed. Unauthorized driving on campus will result in administrative discipline. Bicycles and motorcycles are prohibited due to congested traffic. Elementary students in grades 2-5 who ride with qualified student drivers will be picked up by the driver and escorted to the car. Student drivers must exit the student drive and then enter the main drive to pick up a K3-1st grade student.

Immunizations:

Within 15 days of enrollment, DeSoto School shall verify that the child has been immunized as required by Arkansas State Law, or the child cannot remain in care. Immunizations must be updated during the school year as the child's age changes.

Daily Announcements

Students, teachers, or organizations desiring to make announcements should write them as desired and submit to the Headmaster the day before they are to be announced. Announcements should be as brief as possible. All announcements must be approved before announced. These should be read to students at the end of the period in which they are passed out to teachers.

Fire, Storm, and Tornado Drills

Fire drills will be held periodically according to regulations and will be signaled over the intercom. Storm drills will also be held periodically and will be signaled over the intercom. Information concerning what to do in case of fire or storm will be given to the students by homeroom teachers at the beginning of the school year.

Lost and Found

All books, bags, clothing, etc., found out of place anywhere on campus will be brought to the office. Infractions for items left in classrooms or in hallways will result in demerits. Items not claimed within two (2) weeks will be disposed of at the discretion of the Headmaster.

Visitors

All visitors must first come to the office to sign in. Students not enrolled in DeSoto are not allowed on campus without permission from the Headmaster. Arrangements should be made in advance.

School Lunches

Each student will be responsible for bringing lunch or ordering it from the school cafeteria. The responsibility of ordering food rests with the student and parents. Orders for break and lunch in the cafeteria must be placed during the homeroom period. Students in 6-12th grades who do not pre-order will be served only if there is food left after students who ordered are served. Parents may check cafeteria account history and make payments online. Parents may not deliver lunches and may not bring a forgotten lunch after the homeroom period. Students leaving for appointments during the day may not bring restaurant lunches or drinks back to school. Glass bottles and plastic/Styrofoam/paper cups are not allowed in the building.

Office Telephone Use

The phone in the office is not for students and should only be asked to be used in case of emergency. Parents are asked to remember that the school telephone is for school business and should be restricted to urgent or important calls.

Change of Schedule

No student will be allowed to change schedules without permission from the Administration, and all changes must be made within the first 10 school days. Students must bring a note from a parent requesting the change.

Attendance Policy

For a student to do his best, regular attendance is essential. Regular attendance is the responsibility of the parents as well as the students. Truancy and cutting classes destroy the opportunity of sequential learning. Cutting class is considered a major offense. Absentees are marked by each teacher on Jupiter. Parents should monitor attendance closely.

Official school trips approved by the Headmaster are not considered absences. However, students are accountable for any missed work. Students knowing ahead of time that they will be absent should check with all teachers beforehand to plan for assignments. Unless prior arrangements are made, the students will be responsible for any work missed and assigned, including homework and quizzes.

The school asks parents and students to cooperate with the attendance policy as a student's attendance is essential for a quality education.

Elementary Attendance

Absenteeism and tardiness are the responsibility of the parents of elementary students. Parents should be aware that students who miss more than twenty (20) days in a school year will not be promoted to the next grade. Students will deal with their teachers for absences, tardies, early dismissals, or late check-ins. A note from a parent explaining the absence is required upon return to school. Tardies are recorded and an accumulation of five (5) tardies/left early is considered one (1) day's absence. A student who arrives after 8:15 a.m. or leaves before 2:30 p.m. will be counted as absent one-half day. A perfect attendance award will be given to any elementary student who misses no part of any school day and has no absences or tardies for the year.

6-12 Attendance

In accordance with MAIS written regulations, no student shall be granted a credit whose absences exceed twenty (20) days during the school year. A limit of ten (10) days shall be placed on all one semester (1/2 credit) courses. Attendance is recorded for each period and is accumulated.

Each student is allowed ten (10) personal days (70 periods) per school year. A student who is absent (personal, medical, or any other reason) is to have a note from the parent upon return to school stating that the parent is aware of the student's absence. The student will receive two (2) demerits if the note is not given to Mrs. Schwantz or the homeroom teacher by homeroom. If the student also has a doctor's note, it should state the time of the appointment and when the student may return. If the administration does not receive a doctor's note within two (2) days of the student returning to the school, the absence will remain recorded as a personal absence. It is the parent's responsibility to make sure any note faxed by a doctor is received by the office. Parent notes should be written and sent with students or sent by Jupiter message to Mrs. Schwantz before the tardy bell at 7:55 a.m.

Parents may contact the office before noon and request an absent student's assignments. It is the student's responsibility to consult teachers upon return to school to schedule make-up work. Failure to make up work within the time agreed upon between the teacher and student will result in a zero for each incomplete assignment.

Each teacher marks attendance for his/her class with an A (absent), P (present) or T (tardy). The administration will change absences that are school related, doctor's notes, etc. This may take a day or two, so please wait a couple of days before calling if attendance needs to be changed for those reasons.

Parents are encouraged to check the student's attendance on a regular basis through JupiterEd. It is the parent's responsibility to not exceed personal time. If a student exceeds his/her personal time, any periods missed are considered unexcused and will result in a zero (0) daily grade for each class missed.

If a student uses personal time during a nine-week test or semester exam period, the teacher will decide when the test will be taken. Regardless of that time, the student will receive a deduction of 10 points on the exam.

Students should not be on campus at any time without permission from the administration while checked out or absent from school. This includes break and lunch.

If a student has been absent but checks in later in the school day, he or she should be prepared to take any scheduled quiz or test that was missed if the teacher of that class can arrange it.

Tardies

All students are to be in class ready to work with necessary supplies, books, paper, pencils, etc., when the tardy bell rings. This includes homeroom. Excused tardiness: sickness or emergency beyond the control of the student. A student is allowed five unexcused tardies. With the 6th or 7th tardy in a nine-week grading period, the student will be assigned one hour of detention or alternative punishment by the Administration. With the 8th, 9th, or 10th tardy during a nine-week period, the student will lose 3 personal periods and will be assigned Saturday School for two hours. (Skipping Saturday School will result in a one day Out-of-School Suspension.) If a student receives 11 tardies or more, he/she will receive one day Out-of-School Suspension for each tardy.

Leaving Campus During the School Day

Students are not permitted to leave school during the school day without permission from the Headmaster, Academic Dean, or Elementary Homeroom Teacher. Students must have written permission from a parent stating the reason for leaving. Before leaving, the students should check with all teachers whose classes will be missed to make necessary arrangements for assignments. Students scheduled for a test in any of those classes should be prepared to take the test before leaving if that teacher can arrange it. This includes leaving for appointments, athletic events, minor illnesses, etc. Students must sign out before leaving school, and they must sign in immediately upon return. Failure to comply will result in five (5) demerits. Notes for early dismissal should be given to Mrs. Schwantz or the elementary homeroom teacher by the end of homeroom.

Students may not return to school the same day after leaving for personal reasons unless pre-approved by the Headmaster.

Upon return to school from seeing a physician, the student must present a document signed by the physician or person of official capacity from the point of destination for checking back into school.

A student who is absent for more than 3 periods may not participate in any school-sponsored activity on the day of his or her absence except with administrative approval.

Senior Trips

Senior class sponsored trips for pleasure or leisure, not specifically related to educational, athletic, or otherwise school-related events or activities, will not be permitted during school hours.

School Dismissal Due to Bad Weather, Power Outage, Etc.

Circumstances occasionally make it necessary to dismiss school. Parents will receive a JupiterEd alert by text/email. Please do not contact school employees. Please check your JupiterEd settings periodically to ensure you receive messages.

Funeral Policy

DeSoto School, Inc., wants its students to be able to attend funerals of close friends and family members. Funerals such as this will be handled on an individual basis. To attend any other funeral in the Helena-West Helena area, the procedure described below should be followed if a student wants to leave and return to school. Time missed is considered personal, but the student is allowed to return to campus.

1. Before the end of homeroom, the student is to present the office a notice (no phone calls) from parent including the time of the funeral and stating that the student has permission to attend.
2. The student will sign out in the office before leaving and sign in immediately upon returning.
3. The student must complete any schoolwork missed on that day.

Field Trips and School-Sponsored Events

Students must ride home with the school personnel appointed to their care unless a student's parent gives written permission to ride with another responsible adult. School work assigned before a student leaves for a school-sponsored trip is due when the student returns to class. Students should be allowed an extra day to prepare work assigned or material discussed while the student attends a school sponsored event. For safety and insurance concerns only class members and chaperones can be in attendance on class field trips.

Parent Volunteers

It is recommended that each family serve a minimum of five volunteer hours per semester in support of school activities/events.

Safety

The DeSoto School Board has a safety committee which addresses safety issues. A Crisis Management and Emergency Operation Plan is on file in the office and in the possession of each teacher.

Sign Policy

DeSoto School will not allow any birthday/party signs to be placed on school grounds.

II. ACADEMICS

Minimum Requirements for Graduation from DeSoto School, Inc.

English	4 units
Math	4 units - must include 1 unit Algebra I (2 of 4 must be Alg. I or higher)
Science.....	4 units - must include 1 unit physical science and 1 unit biology
Social Studies	4 units - must include 1 unit U.S. History and ½ unit Am. Government
Electives.....	6 units (may include more of the above: i.e., math, science, etc.)
Total.....	22 units

Note: All students must take at least five (5) courses each semester.

A student will receive credit for each semester that is passed. If a student fails one semester of a full year course, but the year average is 60 or above, the student will receive full credit for both semesters. If a student fails one semester of a full year course and the year average is below 60, the failed semester may be made up through an approved accrediting agency or be retaken at DeSoto for full credit to be awarded. If both semesters are failed, the entire course must be successfully retaken at DeSoto or through an approved MAIS accrediting agency for credit to be awarded.

Grading System

A	-	100-90
B	-	89-80
C	-	79-70
D	-	69-60
F	-	59 and below

Honor Courses: calculated semester average + 10 points (No grade will be higher than 105.)

Nine-Week Grading Period Guidelines for Grading (6-12)

1. Daily (discussions, class assignments, etc.) 40%
2. Weekly unit tests, etc..... 40%
3. Nine Weeks Test 20%
4. Conduct Grades will be given as one grade. (See Section V. Rules, Conduct, and Discipline)
5. Each teacher is required to have a minimum of 9 daily grades and 4 test grades in each 9-week grading period.

Semester Grades (9-12)

1. First nine weeks grade 40%
2. Second nine weeks grade 40%
3. Semester exam grade 20%

Exemptions from Semester Tests

Students are exempt from semester tests as stated below. However, any student exempt may take the test to improve a grade. The semester test grade will count only if it raises the average.

First Semester - Seniors with "A" average (90% or above)

Second Semester - Grades 9-11 - Exempt with "A" average (90% or above)

Seniors - Exempt with "B" average (80% or above)

Headmaster's List and Honor Roll: Grades 3-12

1. Headmaster's List: 90% or above average in each subject area.
2. Regular Honor Roll: 85% average with at least half of the averages being 90% or above.
3. A numerical average of 79% or below in any graded subject will eliminate students from the honor roll.
4. A conduct grade of 79 or below will eliminate a student from the honor roll.

Requirements for Honor Graduates

Honor graduates will be chosen based on scholarship, service, and character.

1. **SCHOLARSHIP** - Students will be required to have an overall average of 89% or better on all graded subjects for the four (4) years of high school. The final average will be computed at the end of the final eight semesters. A student may not make an F (below 60) at semester in any course and qualify as an honor graduate. The Valedictorian will be the Honor Graduate with the highest average, while the Honor Graduate with the second highest average will be the Salutatorian. These two students must have completed their 9-12th grade years at DeSoto School. Seniors must have taken at least 8 of the following Honor courses: Honors English, Advanced Mathematics, Anatomy and Physiology, Chemistry, Advanced Geometry, Advanced Algebra II, Honors World Geography/Economics, Honors Physical Science, and Honors Biology. Three (3) must be taken during the senior year. (College courses that are not concurrent will not be included in determining grade point average.)
2. **SERVICE TO SCHOOL** - An honor graduate must have been an active member of at least three different school-sponsored organizations during grades 9-12. Athletic participation may count for one of these. Active membership will be determined at the end of the school year by the club sponsor.
3. **CHARACTER** - The following are areas of judgment for character evaluations:
 - a) Cooperative and courteous attitude
 - b) Respect for authority
 - c) Behavior on and off campus

A majority vote by the faculty can bar an otherwise eligible student from becoming an honor graduate.

Prerequisites for Honors Classes

Honors Geometry, Chemistry, Honors Algebra II = 80% average in Algebra I

Honors English = 80% average in English 11

Anatomy and Physiology = Conference with A & P instructor

Advanced Math = 80% average in honors Algebra II or 90% average in regular Algebra II

Report Cards and Progress Reports

Report Cards and Progress Reports are available online for each student.

Academic Failure

The Board of Directors of DeSoto School, Inc., recognizes that the proper handling of academic failures requires individualized review on the part of the administration and faculty.

Elementary teachers’ recommendations for passing or retaining will be made to the Headmaster and parents of said child. The recommendation of the teacher and Headmaster will be final. The Headmaster may elect to require a student to repeat the entire year or request withdrawal from DeSoto School, Inc. If a student who is repeating a grade does not show improvement, the student may be retained to the same grade a second time.

Promotion in Middle School

Students in grades 6-8 must pass at least 3 academic subjects to be promoted to the next grade.

Testing Program

DeSoto School uses the Stanford 10 Achievement Test and STAR Reading and Math assessments in grades K5 through the 9th grade. Results are used to determine the strengths and weaknesses of each student in order that better instruction can be provided.

ACT

The high school code number for DeSoto School to be used with the ACT and SAT test is 042-612. The scheduled ACT testing dates for the current school year are shown below. Registration for the ACT is done by going to www.act.org

*Note- The school’s name may be found in the listings as De Soto School (not as DeSoto.)
Two weekday ACT tests will be given at DeSoto: October 27 and March 23 for 10th-12th grades only.
Registration for weekday testing is done at DeSoto.

National test dates:

<u>Test Dates:</u>	<u>Registration Deadlines:</u>	<u>Late Reg Deadlines:</u>	<u>Photo Upload/Deadline:</u>
Sept. 19, 2026	August 14	September 1	September 14
Oct. 17, 2026	September 11	September 29	October 12
Dec. 12, 2026	November 6	November 29	December 7
Feb. 27, 2027	January 22	February 9	February 22
April 10, 2027	March 5	March 23	April 5
June 12, 2027	May 7	May 25	June 7
July 10, 2027	June 4	June 22	July 5

See www.act.org Log in to my.act.org to register for national test dates and to find more details.



College Information

It is very important for students and their parents to check the websites of colleges and universities for entrance requirements. Schools may have many variations in their requirements. Examples: different ACT scores for entrance, course requirements (some require foreign language), etc.

Students and parents should stay in contact with the schools which they are interested in attending.

Students applying for scholarships should be in contact with the schools for application requirements and due dates. An excellent place to start would be the www.adhe.edu (Ark. Dept of Higher Education). There are many links and an enormous amount of information, including the Youuniversal – links to all the main Arkansas scholarships. Students should also be in contact with interested colleges who can recommend other scholarships associated with their school. Do this research early and ask pertinent people for recommendations (if needed) well in advance.

College Days

Students are allowed college days as listed:

Sophomores = 1 Juniors = 3 Seniors = 2

The following rules must be followed, or the days will count as personal:

- A copy of an official email or letter from the college verifying an appointment (tour, etc.) will be given to the Academic Dean prior to the college day.
- A note signed by the parent will be brought to Administration prior to the college visit stating they are aware of the visit. (These are to be planned college visits).
- Official documentation from the college that the student visited must be brought to the Academic Dean upon return to school. (A brochure is not official documentation.) If the student fails to bring official documentation, he/she MUST present an additional note from the parent acknowledging the absence. It remains personal unless official documentation is received within two days.
- Any assignments made prior to the visit are due upon return.
- College days should not be taken during 9-weeks or semester tests.
- If travel is taken prior to or following the college day, it will count as personal.
- Other rules may be implemented by the administration as necessary.

Concurrent Credit

Students may earn high school credit along with college credit for classes offered through Phillips Community College of the University of Arkansas. Parents and students are provided with information about these opportunities. Keep in mind that your student's personal information is shared with these institutions.

III. ACTIVITIES

Club Membership Requirements

1. Club officers must maintain a "C" average or above. If the club has a higher requirement, it shall prevail.
2. Each club shall determine scholastic requirements for membership.
3. A student may be president of only one club. The following positions are equated with being president of a club:
 - a) Editor-in-Chief of the Yearbook or Co-Editor
 - b) Class President
4. A new student must have been at DeSoto for one full semester and have established the required grade average while in residence to be eligible to hold a position of one of the following:
 - a) Club President
 - b) Student Council member/officer
 - c) Class Officer
 - d) Editor-in-Chief of Yearbook

Class Officers

Class officers will be elected in grades 6-12 during the first few days of school. Each class shall elect a president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer and two student council representatives. It is an honor to hold a class office, and only those persons qualified and willing to work should be nominated. Nominees must have a "C" average for the preceding semester and a "C" average overall.

Class Meetings

All class meetings must meet at a scheduled time with a sponsor. A sponsor must be present at all meetings, or any business will not be valid.

Accounts

No DeSoto School organization may use DeSoto School's tax ID number on any existing accounts without permission from the administration. DeSoto School will not be responsible for purchases made by any organization without a purchase order signed by the Headmaster. Any monies in an account raised in the name of the school should be spent in agreement between the sponsors and the class officers. Any monies left in a class account at the end of the senior year will go into the general fund.

IV. ATHLETICS

Eligibility for Athletes – Jr. and Sr. High

No student will be permitted to participate in interschool contests for more than four (4) years after entrance into high school. Students will not be permitted to participate in high school interschool contests if they have reached the age of nineteen (19) years of age or junior high interschool contests if they have reached sixteen (16) years of age prior to August 1.

A student shall be placed on Athletic/ Activity Participation Suspension for the succeeding semester if he or she should make two (2) Fs during the previous semester. Grades may be re-evaluated at 9 weeks by the Administration and suspension may be lifted. The high school student must have passed four (4) subjects during the previous school year and must not have entered the 9th grade more than two years prior to the current school year to participate in athletics or activities. The junior high student must have passed four (4) major subjects the previous school year and shall not have entered the 7th grade more than two years prior to the current school year. This policy applies to all sports, cheerleaders, cheerleader try-outs, and other activities.

A student who is absent for more than ½ day may not participate in an athletic game on the day of his/her absence with exceptions approved by the administration.

DeSoto School Policy Governing Conduct of Athletes and Cheerleaders

All athletes should remember that their attitudes and actions affect the reputation of all students at DeSoto School. DeSoto School athletes are expected to be competitive but not confrontational, volatile, or exhibit poor sportsmanship in any manner. Athletes should be respectful of officials, coaches, and other athletes. Lack of self-control on the part of any athlete representing DeSoto School will result in the following disciplinary action:

Ejection of any athlete from any game must be reported to the MAIS office by game officials and school officials. Failure to do so will result in fines and/or probation. A second ejection will result in suspension from participation of said athlete in the next game scheduled. In addition, the coaches reserve the right to discipline athletes as they deem necessary.

Any athlete who falls below 70% in citizenship will be placed on athletic suspension for 3 weeks.

Patron Conduct At Athletic Events

Refer to page 12. DeSoto School is bound by the MAIS's AAC rule.

Sideline Policy

DeSoto School has and will continue to keep potential safety concerns in mind for our student body and families. Unfortunately, life has become litigious, and as a result even the sidelines must be included in the realm of potential concern.

Due to legal liability concerns and insurance guidelines, DeSoto School Board is mandating that only authorized personnel be allowed on the sidelines or playing field during all sporting events, including, but not limited to, football, basketball, softball, and baseball. Authorized personnel include all coaching staff, officials, players, and cheerleaders.

The sidelines are ordinarily an out-of-play zone. As a result, the sidelines tend to fill up with coaches, support staff, officials, players, and cheerleaders - making the area crowded and very loud. Now more than ever, it is evident that the sidelines can be potentially dangerous. The risk of concussion can be greater for a non-competitor than a student athlete because the non-competitor is usually caught off guard and isn't wearing protective gear. Anyone who isn't directly affiliated with the team must understand the inherent danger of the sideline areas.

We realize that our patrons enjoy taking photographs of their players, but we ask that you do so from the stands or behind the fence around the football field. All patrons and guests will be asked to follow these procedures to ensure everyone's safety.

New Policy

Due to liability concerns and new insurance policies, non-school sports teams are not allowed to practice or play games at DeSoto School at any time.

V. RULES, CONDUCT, AND DISCIPLINE

Because the Board of Directors and Administration of DeSoto School, Inc., are determined to provide an atmosphere which will foster quality education and which will provide opportunities for individual growth, they have set high standards of personal conduct for Desoto students.

The school reserves the right to administer discipline to the extent deemed necessary, including corporal punishment. (See Corporal Punishment, page 31)

School rules and policies concerning conduct and discipline, as stated in this handbook, apply to all school-related activities, both on and off campus.

General Behavior Policies

Student Responsibility for School Property

Each student is expected to maintain the attractiveness of the school by keeping desks, walls, and lockers clean. Graffiti is prohibited. Students should refrain from sitting on the tops of desks and tables. Wastepaper and trash are to be put into the trash cans located in each classroom and in the hallways. At break and lunch, students are expected to pick up after themselves by placing bags, wrappers, cans, etc. into the trash cans in the gym lobby or in front of the gym. Sidewalks are always to be used.

All students should take care to conserve school property and supplies. Parents will be held financially accountable for any property damaged, destroyed, or lost by their student. The school will take legal action to enforce this policy if necessary. Furthermore, students will be referred to the office for disciplinary action.

Cheating

Cheating ultimately solves nothing and frequently hurts many. Cheating, including any form of plagiarism, is not consistent with the values of DeSoto School students. Cheating will be dealt with on an individual basis. Generally, a student found cheating will receive a zero on that assignment. The teacher will post the incident on JupiterEd, and the student may also be referred to the office for further discipline. Cheating involves the giving or receiving of information. A student found guilty of cheating or plagiarizing in an honors class will not receive the 10 points normally added to the semester average.

Obscene Language and Literature

The use of profanity at DeSoto School or any school-related activity will not be tolerated. Possession of obscene or pornographic literature, whether sent or received, is prohibited on the school grounds. Violators will be assigned demerits and may be referred to the office for further disciplinary action.

Gum Chewing

Gum chewing is not permitted at school at any time, including break and lunch. Violators will be assigned demerits for each infraction and may be assigned detention for repeated violations.

Dress Code

Students at DeSoto School are expected to be dressed and groomed appropriately for school. It is hoped that the student's behavior and attitude will reflect well upon the individual and DeSoto School.

All students in K3 through 12th grade will be required to wear a school uniform. French Toast Uniforms provides a website detailing all available options. The web address is www.frenchtoastschoolbox.com Select "Shop by School" and search by school code QS5KUDP or school name DeSoto School. French Toast Schoolbox Customer Service may be reached at 800-636-3104.

The uniform is to be worn every day except for spirit days or other occasions approved by the Administration. Guidelines for dress will be given to students for days when they can wear clothing other than the approved school uniform. To promote school spirit, students will be allowed to wear DeSoto jerseys, cheer uniforms, or a DeSoto School shirt on game days during Jr. and Sr. High football season.

Required Casual Uniform (K3-12th)

- Girls - Red logoed polo shirt (from French Toast or Parker)
Khaki pants, shorts, or skort
- Boys - Red logoed polo shirt (from French Toast or Parker)
Khaki pants or shorts

Required Dress Uniform (6-12th)

- Girls - White logoed blouse (from French Toast or Parker)
(with pointed collar, not Peter Pan collar)
Plaid skirt or skirted skort (from French Toast or Parker)
- Boys - White logoed, button-down shirt (from French Toast or Parker)
Khaki pants, belt, and red tie

Each student should have at least one red logoed polo shirt, but blue or white logoed polo shirts are allowed as part of the casual uniform. Several casual options are listed on the French Toast Schoolbox website. Logoed and plaid items must be purchased through French Toast (or Parker) Uniform. Khaki items may be purchased from any vendor who offers tailored dress or uniform style pants (no cargo pants or skinny leg, etc.)

Other Guidelines

- All clothing should be in good condition with no holes, frayed edges, or too tight, etc.
- Proper undergarments will be worn, but not visible outside clothing.
- Leggings or modesty shorts may be worn with skirts or jumpers.
- Hats or caps may not be worn.
- Shorts, skirts, skorts, and jumpers should cover at least half of the student's upper leg. (As a guide - the bottom edge of the garment should be as long as where the student's fingertips are when arms are down by his/her side.)
- Visible tattoos, body piercings, or other inappropriate adornment are not allowed.
- Male students may not wear earrings.
- Shoes should be of sensible style and comfort to compliment school uniform.

Cold Weather Clothing Guidelines – (anything worn along with the uniform shirt)

Solid red, white, blue (royal or navy) or black turtlenecks or long-sleeved t-shirts may be worn under the short-sleeved uniform shirts.

Solid red, white, blue (royal or navy), gray, or black leggings, tights, and socks may be worn with skirts or jumpers.

DeSoto-logoed fleeces, letter jackets, or other school-colored DeSoto spirit wear may be worn over the uniform shirt. MAIS clothing may be worn over the uniform shirt.

Solid red, white, blue (**royal or navy**), gray, black, or khaki sweatshirts or jackets may be worn throughout the day over the uniform shirt. Items with a mixture of these colors may be allowed by the Administration.

Students who abuse the dress code will be referred to the Administration for appropriate action. Obvious attempts by students to work against the function and purpose of the school uniform through inappropriate choices will be considered in violation of the school dress code policy. Students violating dress code will receive 3 demerits for each infraction and be required to correct the violation. Class time missed to remedy the situation will be excused or unexcused at the Administrator's discretion.

Please see additional DeSoto formalwear policy on page 36.

Hair Code/Shaving (Grades K3-12)

Unusual or distracting hair styles/cuts/coloring are prohibited. Hair should be kept neat and clean. Male students must be clean shaven.

Personal Electronic Device Policy

Students may not have personal electronic devices out, visible, or in use during the school day. This includes phones, smartwatches, personal laptops/tablets, earbuds/headphones, or other Bluetooth-enabled devices. Students in all grades are to turn phones off and place them in phone boxes upon entering homeroom each school day. Other personal electronic devices should be off and stored in a backpack or vehicle. Students that violate this policy shall be disciplined in accordance with the following guidelines:

6-12th grades:

1st violation – 11 demerits (device may be picked up from the office at day's end)

2nd violation – Corporal punishment or Saturday School (4 hours)

3rd violation – Out-of-School Suspension for 1 day (a minimum of one 0 in each class) and no sports or extracurricular activity that day

4th violation (or more) – Out-of-School for 3 days and discipline hearing with Board.

K3-5th grades: Students found to be using a cell phone or personal electronic device will be sent to the Headmaster's office for disciplinary action (including corporal punishment.) The device will be confiscated and must be reclaimed by the student's parent or guardian.

NOTE: Disciplinary actions related to infractions accrue throughout the school year and do not reset every nine weeks or semester (excluding demerits).

Students and Parents/Guardians acknowledge that:

- School administration may confiscate any device believed to be used in an inappropriate manner that violates the school code of conduct. If it is believed that an infraction has occurred, the device will be secured in the Headmaster's office until a parent or guardian can arrange to meet with administration for unlocking (if required) and viewing of the suspected infraction.

- Any student caught posting/taking pictures or video during school hours or during school-sponsored activities/sports that are inappropriate or slanderous will be disciplined accordingly by Administration.
- During the school year, additional rules regarding the use of personal devices may be added or modified.

Authorized Areas

During break and lunch periods, high school students may assemble either in the lunchroom, the gym lobby, or the area in front of the gym. Middle school students have a designated room and mall area. Students may not go into the gym or to the locker room without permission from the duty teacher. Students may not remain in front of the main school building. Students may not go to their cars for any reason and if caught doing so will be sent to the office for disciplinary action. Unless they are attending a scheduled club meeting or supervised activity, students may not remain in the school building during break and lunch. Students should not return to the school building at the end of break or lunch until either the bell rings or the duty teacher has instructed them to do so. Students found in unauthorized areas will be assigned demerits based on the nature of the infraction.

Assemblies/Chapel

Students are to sit in their assigned areas, to behave appropriately, and to follow any instructions given. Food and drink may not be brought into the gym during assemblies. Students are expected to be attentive and respectful. Demerits will be given for infractions to these rules.

Prohibited Items

Objects not pertaining to school-related activities are not to be brought on campus. This includes radios, audio devices, hand-held gaming devices, headsets/earbuds, pagers, or digital recording devices (unless specifically allowed by individual teachers for class purposes). Violation of this rule will result in the prohibited item being confiscated and held at the discretion of the administration. Demerits will be assigned based on the nature of the infraction.

Guns, knives, or any items that are considered dangerous by the administration are not allowed on the DeSoto School campus. These items will be confiscated, and the bearer will be subject to administrative disciplinary action up to expulsion from school.

Tobacco

Tobacco and tobacco products, e-cigarettes, and vape devices are not permitted at school or at school-sponsored activities at any time for any reason. Violators will be referred to the office for administrative disciplinary action. CONSEQUENCES: 1st OFFENSE – ISS and/or paddle, 2nd OFFENSE – 1 DAY OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSION, 3RD OFFENSE – 3 DAYS OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSION, 4TH OFFENSE – MAY RESULT IN EXPULSION

Drugs

The Board of DeSoto School, Inc., hereby states as a policy that the illegal use, handling, sale, or participation in any manner of drugs is condemned by this Board and made subject to these regulations: That upon clear and convincing evidence of any student's participation knowingly and willingly in such illegal use, handling, sale, or procurement of drugs, on or off school grounds, the student shall be subject to expulsion from DeSoto School, Inc. (School Board Meeting: 1-10-72, as amended). A description of the school's comprehensive Drug/Alcohol Prevention Policy can be found in Section VI of this handbook.

Other Offenses

If a student is convicted of a serious crime (DUI, felony offense, drug charge, etc), the Board has the right to discipline the student - up to expulsion.

Gambling

Gambling of any form will not be permitted at DeSoto School, Inc.; those found guilty will be disciplined severely by the Headmaster up to suspension from school.

Other Violations

In addition to the rules and policies stated above, the following are areas in which disciplinary measures may be enforced:

1. Failure to return library materials on time.
2. Failure to return forms on time (includes, but not limited to, handbook receipt form, signed forms of any nature, etc.)
3. Improper or unruly conduct, including fighting.
4. Disrespect for authority.
5. Terroristic threatening.
6. Public displays of affection.
7. Other inappropriate behavior not specified.

Classroom Behavior Policy

All students are expected to conduct themselves appropriately in the classroom. Generally, inappropriate classroom behavior is that which creates an atmosphere that is not conducive to learning. A single, consistent discipline plan for all classes has been designed to encourage students to make good decisions about their behavior and to make compliance almost effortless. The following five classroom rules are intended to promote a positive learning environment and must be strictly followed:

1. Do nothing to disturb the learning of others.
2. Follow teacher's directions first time given.
3. Respect for yourself, others, and the property of others.
4. Follow proper procedures for specific activities.
5. Keep hands, feet, and other objects to yourself.

Conduct Grade/Demerit System for Middle and High School

Each student will receive a single, numerical conduct grade at the end of each nine weeks, based on his/her conduct at school related activities on and off campus. Each student will begin the nine weeks with 100 points. At the end of the grading period, demerits that have been assigned by all teachers and administration will be tallied and subtracted from 100; the resulting total will be the student's conduct grade.

Generally, the number of demerits assigned depends on the nature of the infraction. Lists of specific infractions and their suggested point values are given below; however, the lists are not all-inclusive nor are point values inflexible. Any behavior considered disruptive or inappropriate, even if not specifically listed, may result in demerits; furthermore, demerit values may be modified based on the individual situation.

In addition to demerits, teachers and administration may assign other consequences as they see fit. Additional consequences include parental notification, removal from class, break period detention, before and after school detention (Wednesday), office referral, ISS, etc. Teachers are encouraged to use the most effective method to maintain a positive learning environment in their classroom.

***RECOMMENDED* DEMERIT SCHEDULE**

2 Demerits

- Unsolicited talking or other minor disruptive behavior in class
- Being out of seat without permission
- Lack of necessary class supplies (pen, pencil, paper, etc.)
- Personal grooming in class (styling hair, applying make-up, nails, massages, etc.)
- Sitting on desktops, tables, or counter tops
- Writing or passing notes
- Chewing gum anywhere on campus
- Eating, drinking, or chewing *anything* (i.e., erasers, plastic, etc.) in class without permission
- Failure to return library materials or forms by first deadline

3 Demerits

- Failure to meet hair, shaving, or dress code
- Disrespect of classmates (teasing, mocking, taunting, name-calling, unauthorized use of possession of classmates' belongings, etc.)
- Horseplay – any inappropriate physical or rough play (grabbing, hitting, kicking, pinching, punching, slapping, tripping, throwing things, etc.)
- Off-task behavior (inattention, sleeping, working on anything other than present assignment, not working on assignment or an activity as instructed, etc.) This includes study hall.
- Picking up or handling items belonging to teacher without permission
- Using vulgar slang
- Failure to return library materials or forms by second deadline (then detention or office referral)
- Books, bags, backpacks, etc. found out of place (tops of lockers, empty classrooms, gym, etc.) and brought to the office

5 Demerits

- Second or third violation of a 2 or 3 demerit offense in a single class period
- Presence in any unauthorized area (other than cars)
- Caught with minor prohibited item
- Not signing in upon late arrival or signing out upon leaving early
- Parking in another student's assigned spot or not having sticker displayed

11 Demerits

- Disrespect toward teacher or staff
- 1st violation of personal electronic device policy
- Fighting
- Intentional damage or destruction of school or personal property (including writing on or carving on walls, desks, podiums, or other furniture)
- Invasion of privacy (unauthorized access or attempted access to grade book, other official records, teacher's textbooks, etc.)
- Leaving the classroom without permission
- Talking or disruption during testing
- Use of profanity or obscenity (includes oral, written, or drawn obscenity)
- Willful defiance or disobedience

- Any violation resulting in an office referral
- Forging a signature
- Going to the car without administrative permission
- Driving on campus without proper registration
- Using prohibited items
- Skipping detention

20 Demerits

- Any violation resulting in suspension

Recurrent Misbehavior

Any student who has received demerits for 2 prior infractions in a single class period may be referred to the office on the 3rd infraction, which will result in 5 additional demerits, even if the 3rd infraction is a minor one. Recurrent misbehavior is a serious matter. Accordingly, if a student's conduct grade drops one letter grade, an additional consequence will result with each drop. If grade reaches:

- 89 Detention (and for every infraction thereafter)
Not attending detention is a major offense and will result in administrative action.
- 79 In-School Suspension
- 69 Referral for Administrative Action

Corporal Punishment

The rules and regulations as set forth in this handbook apply to all students. The school reserves the right to administer discipline to the extent deemed necessary, including corporal punishment. As directed by the Board of Directors of DeSoto School, Inc., the following procedures are to be followed when corporal punishment is used. Paddling is the only method to be used. Corporal punishment in the form of paddling should be a last resort. There should never be any intent involved other than emphasizing that a serious violation of school rules has occurred. Discretion is urged in all instances.

1. Student is to be given the reason for "paddling" before punishment.
2. A witness is required to observe the paddling.
3. No more than three (3) licks are to be given. The paddles to be used are only those provided by the school. No other instrument is to be used for corporal punishment.
4. Sex, age, and physical size of student will be considered in application of punishment.
5. Punishment is not to be given in the presence of students that are not involved.
6. Student is to be reminded of the reason for "paddling" after punishment.

Disciplinary Review

Parents will be notified, by Jupiter grades email/text, of any incident (other than minor rule violations) resulting in a student being sent to the office for discipline, or any other serious violation of school rules which require the parent's immediate attention.

Any student who receives more than 30 demerits during a 9-week grading period may be placed on academic probation and extra-curricular suspension, pending a disciplinary review conference. The student may continue to attend classes but may not participate in any school activities or athletics.

Review conferences will be attended by the student, a parent or guardian, teachers, and Administration. The purpose of this conference is to discuss the problem with the student and his/her parent(s) and reach a firm commitment to correct the problem. If no such commitment can be obtained, or in the event of non-attendance of the conference by the student or parent(s), the student may be suspended from school as described below.

Suspension

In certain cases, a student may be suspended from school for disciplinary reasons or other violations of school policy. The Headmaster will determine the length of suspension. Suspension takes effect on the day of administrative action. Parents will be notified of this action immediately. Suspension for disciplinary reasons may be for 1, 2, or 3 days. Any suspension pursuant to the comprehensive Drug/Alcohol Prevention Policy (Section VI of this handbook) will be for an indeterminate period and will continue until all requirements for reinstatement have been met. OSS (Out-of-school) Suspension) will result in a zero for any daily work or test in each class, and the student may not make up any missed work. If no graded work is missed, the student will receive at least a zero-daily grade in each class missed. A student receiving In-school suspension (ISS) will remain at school under the supervision of the Headmaster, be allowed to complete classwork missed, and may be given other duties to complete at the Headmaster's discretion.

Expulsion

A student who is married or pregnant may not remain a student of DeSoto School, Inc. A 2nd positive result for illegal drugs will result in expulsion. Any recommendation of the Headmaster with approval of the DeSoto School Board may result in expulsion.

DeSoto School Alcohol Policy

Arkansas law prohibits the drinking of alcoholic beverages in public places. Inasmuch as DeSoto school is a public place, the consumption of alcoholic beverages by students, patrons and the public is strictly prohibited on campus and in all buildings and facilities which comprise the campus of DeSoto School. Consumption or possession of alcohol by students on campus will result in disciplinary action by the administration.

Sexual Harassment Policy

In accordance with the Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 703, no student or employee of DeSoto School shall be subject to sexual harassment. It is the intent of DeSoto School to maintain an environment free from sexual harassment of any kind. Therefore, unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature amounting to or constituting harassment are prohibited.

Complaints or violations of this policy may be made to the Headmaster, other Administration, or other person designated by the Headmaster, without fear of reprisal. All complaints will be investigated thoroughly and promptly. Should complaints prove to be legitimate, the offending student or employee will be subject to disciplinary action, including involuntary termination of employment or expulsion from school. This policy in no way limits or precludes any student or employee from pursuing any relief afforded by state or federal law. If proof cannot be found, there will be no retaliation against the accuser. All complaints will be kept highly confidential.

Anti-Bullying

Harassment and bullying of students will not be tolerated by the DeSoto School administration. In accordance with the mission statement, the administration is committed to providing all students with a safe school environment in which all members of the school community are treated with dignity and respect. DeSoto School prohibits harassment, bullying, hazing or any other victimization of students. The testimony of a spiritually transformed life does not provide for behavior that victimizes others. This policy is in effect while students are on property within the jurisdiction of the board, while on school-owned or school-operated vehicles; while attending or engaged in school-sponsored activities; and while away from school grounds if the misconduct directly affects the good order, efficient management and welfare of the school or school system. If, after an investigation, a student is found to be in violation of this policy, the student shall be disciplined by appropriate measures up to, and including, suspension and expulsion.

SECTION VI. STUDENT DRUG/ALCOHOL PREVENTION POLICY

The Board of Directors of DeSoto School, Inc., has adopted a comprehensive drug/alcohol prevention policy. Students in grades 9-12 are required to participate in this program.

Purpose of the Program

The purpose of the DeSoto School drug and alcohol screening is as follows:

1. To educate students concerning the dangers of substance abuse
2. To help prevent drug and alcohol use or abuse by students of DeSoto School.
3. To identify any student who may be using drugs and to identify the drugs.
4. To require parents to properly address and seek appropriate counseling and/or treatment for any student identified as using drugs or alcohol.
5. To provide reasonable safeguards in order that every student who attends DeSoto school is not adversely affected by drugs or alcohol.
6. To assure students, parents, and the community that the health, safety and academic progress of each student is the primary goal of DeSoto School.
7. To encourage students to be positive role models and to aid students in the development of healthy, responsible lifestyles.

Testing Procedure

1. All students who attend DeSoto School in grades 9-12 shall be included in this policy. Before any child shall be considered a fully enrolled student, the parents or guardians and the student must have signed the consent form for testing.
2. Administrators, teachers, employees, and school board members are subject to being tested at random.
3. Each student will be, at the expense of the school, subject to random testing anytime during the school year. Testing may also be done if the Headmaster reasonably suspects that a student is under the influence of drugs or alcohol while on campus or at any school-sponsored event.
4. All students applying for admission to grades 9-12 at DeSoto School will be required to take a drug test at the parent's expense prior to being admitted.
5. Any method of testing may be used which is generally recognized as producing accurate and reliable results. Any positive drug result will be confirmed by an additional test at a laboratory selected by DeSoto School.
6. Samples will be identified by number only. The collection and coding of samples will be executed in a manner insuring confidentiality and proper identification.
7. Drug screening samples will be collected and analyzed by a laboratory selected by DeSoto School using scientifically reliable methods. If a student is taking medication, any such medication must be revealed to the tester on the date of the test.
8. Drug screening results will be reported only to the Headmaster or a designated administrator.
9. Parents will be notified when their students participate in a random screening.

First Incident of a Positive Result

All drug screening samples showing a positive result will automatically be retested by the testing laboratory as soon as possible to ensure that no error has occurred. The second test will be a more specific test. If the positive result is verified and confirmed, then the following steps will be taken:

1. The student and parents or guardians will be advised of the results by the testing laboratory.
2. The Headmaster or designated administrator will be advised of the results.
3. The parent or guardian, at their expense, will be required to have the student professionally evaluated and assessed by a Certified Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counselor or other agent or employee of a facility approved by DeSoto School.
4. The student will then be required to attend a drug counseling program as recommended by the approved health-care professional at the expense of the parent or guardian.
5. The drug counselor will determine the length and manner of the program best suited for the student. The student must also participate in any aftercare or follow-up recommended by the counselor. Written documentation of participation in counseling and after-care must be provided to the school at least monthly for the remainder of the current school year.
6. If a parent or guardian fails or refuses to have the student professionally evaluated or fails or refuses to enroll the student in an appropriate counseling program or fails or refuses to complete all of the requirements of such program or falsifies or omits any material information to be provided to DeSoto School in this regard, the student will be dismissed from school.
7. After a first positive test, the student will be required to take every random test thereafter while he/she is a student.
8. Parents and guardians and students expressly consent to and authorize the release of any and all information to DeSoto School concerning the testing, evaluation, diagnosis, counseling, treatment, after-care, follow-up, and other documentation and information relating to students under this policy, and expressly consent to and authorize the Headmaster or designated administrator to discuss any such information directly with any counselor, health care professional or other agent or employee or personnel of any facility in connection with the same.
9. Upon clear and convincing evidence that a student has failed or refused to abide by the terms of this policy, such student shall be subject to immediate suspension from school for an indeterminate period of time, to be determined by the Headmaster, which shall continue until all requirements of this policy have been met. Otherwise, the first incident of a positive result shall not affect the student's participation in school.
10. Upon clear and convincing evidence that a student has falsified a drug test or other material information provided to DeSoto School or has possessed any illegal drugs on school campus or at any other school-sponsored event or has knowingly participated in the delivery or sale of illegal drugs to another person, such student shall be subject to permanent dismissal from DeSoto School.

Second Incident of a Positive Result

All drug screening samples showing a positive result will automatically be retested by the testing laboratory as soon as possible to ensure that no error has occurred. If a positive result is verified and confirmed, then the following steps will be taken:

1. The student and parents or guardians will be advised of the results.
2. The Headmaster or designated administrator will be advised of the results.

The second incident of a student's testing positive for illegal drugs will result in a permanent dismissal from DeSoto School.

DESOTO SCHOOL FORMALWEAR POLICY

This policy was developed as a supplement to the Dress Code in the DeSoto School Student Handbook to provide clear guidelines for students and parents when selecting attire for special school events such as Homecoming Court, Prom or other formal functions. As is stated in the Handbook, students and parents should use good taste, modesty and common sense in selecting attire. All formal clothing will be subject to review by the Administration.

GIRLS:

- A. The dress bodice must provide modest coverage of the torso and is subject to approval. Cut-outs or "jewel-only" coverage revealing skin in the bodice will not be allowed. Mesh fabric is subject to approval.*
- B. Slits in long gowns or hems in short dresses should not be higher than 4" above the knee.*
- C. The back of the dress should not plunge lower than the waistline, nor should the front of the dress be cut below the top of the natural bust line.*

BOYS:

- A. Clothing should be formal wear (tuxedo or suit) with appropriate shoes.*
- B. Hair should be neat and clean. Face must be clean shaven with no mustache or long sideburns.*

1. FORMALWEAR POLICY

- A. At least two weeks prior to the event, participating students and a parent will sign and return a statement agreeing to abide by Formalwear policy.*
- B. Photos of female students and the dates of male students from other schools wearing their dress must be submitted for approval (front and back view).*
- C. The dress submitted for approval will be the dress worn to the event.*
- D. Administration will inspect students upon arrival at the event.*
- E. Failure to comply will result in exclusion from the event.*

2. SEMI-FORMAL DRESS CODE

This section of the Dress Code regards special occasions for which the students are required to dress nicely. Such occasions include, but are not limited to, Sports Banquet, Honors Assemblies, Quiz Bowl, or Math & Science Competitions. At such events students will be expected to wear clothing which conforms to the guidelines of the everyday dress code, usually the dress uniform. Students failing to follow guidelines for semiformal dress will receive 11 demerits.

DeSoto School Technology Acceptable Use Policy

Use of computing and network resources should always be legal and ethical and reflect academic honesty. It should demonstrate respect for intellectual property, ownership of data, the right to personal privacy, and the right of individuals to freedom from intimidation and harassment.

The rules apply both in the Computer Lab and in any other areas where technology is used.

1. NO food or drinks in the computer lab.
2. Students are to be supervised by a teacher.
3. No basic settings should be changed (desktop, screen savers, colors, icons, etc.).
4. All computers should be left on – the last class of the day will take care of shutdown. Just exit your program and return to the desktop.
5. Assignments are for educational purposes only – no games unless educational in nature.
6. All precautions should be used to avoid saving material to hard drive.
7. No programs should be installed without approval from administration. Absolutely no games should be installed.
8. Students remain seated in front of computers. No roaming around the lab and no using or messing with anything else in the room.
9. Students are responsible for bringing their own supplies – no borrowing from teacher materials.
10. Paper is available in the copy room for printing. Press the print button only once. If the printer doesn't respond and the teacher cannot correct the problem, leave a note on the printer, and advise the administration.
11. Leave a note on any piece of machinery with problems and report it, including printers in need of ink cartridge changes.
12. All monitors should always face directly straight ahead.
13. Clean your area completely and the room, if needed, before leaving. Throw away trash and take out any materials brought in.
14. Computers are internet ready. Students are only allowed on sites for educational purposes. Absolutely no Facebook, YouTube, social media sites, or any inappropriate sites.
15. Under no circumstance is there to be any unauthorized copying of software, programs or downloading of licensed or protected material. This includes music and movie piracy. This is against the law!!
16. Under no circumstance is there to be chatting, emailing, or playing non-educational games.
17. Any abuse of equipment should be reported immediately.
18. Any matters not addressed above will be dealt with on an individual basis on the relevant facts, and appropriate action will be taken.

DESOTO PRESCHOOL ADDITIONS

Classroom Policies:

All students entering DeSoto's Preschool program must follow basic classroom and age-appropriate rules. We teach the ABeka preschool curriculum. All students are required to follow this curriculum. If an individualized plan is needed, the parents, teacher and specialist will conference, and the necessary steps will be taken.

Dress Code:

All students are required to wear the standard school uniform. In addition to the school uniform, Pre-K students must wear sturdy, closed shoes. This means the foot is completely enclosed front and back. (No sandals, Crocs, mules, ballet slippers, Chacos, house shoes, etc.) This is for safety and active play. Failure to comply with this dress code will result in parents being contacted to remedy the situation.

Potty Training:

All students entering the preschool program must be completely potty trained. If an accident occurs and the student is unable to change or clean him/herself, a parent will be called to assist.

Food Policy:

All food brought from outside of the facility to be shared (examples: birthdays, class parties, etc.) must be in individual packaging and have ingredient and nutritional labels. There is no exception to this rule!

Snacks must be healthy. No candy, candy bars, cookies, brownies, or sugary snacks. If your student's snack is unhealthy, it will be returned with a note and a healthy snack will be provided for them.

Personal Belongings:

The only personal belongings that your student needs at school are their supplies (backpack, nap mat, change of clothes and snacks.) No toys, games, movies, phones, blankets, stuffed animals, etc.) The only exception to this rule is Show and Tell which will be announced.

Discipline Policy:

Each student is required to follow basic, age-appropriate rules.

1st incident- a verbal warning

2nd incident- time out or exclusion (one minute per student's age)

3rd incident- student goes back to time out/exclusion and parent is contacted

2026-2027	8:05-8:57	9:00 – 9:52	9:52-10:07	10:10-11:02	11:05-11:57	11:57-12:20	12:23-1:15	1:18-2:10	2:13-3:05
TEACHER	1ST	2ND	BREAK	3RD	4TH	LUNCH	5TH	6TH	7th
CARNATHAN Room 16	Prep	7 th English		6 th English	8 th English				
DANCY Room 19	Prep	9 th Phys. Science*		12 th A&P*	11 th Chemistry*		10 th Biology*	Prep	Lab Prep
MCGREGOR Room 21					12 th Sr Math		Prep	Online Proctor (Comp Lab)	9 th Civics/ AR History (Girls) (Room 25)
PARAÑAL Room 22	10 th Geometry (* & Reg.)	11 th Algebra II (* & Reg.)		Prep	12 th Adv. Math*		6 th Science	Math Remediation	Tutoring/ 11 th Study Hall
PCC/UA					9 th Keyboarding/ Micro Bus. App.		CIS/Speech (M & W)	Psych. or Indust. Eqp. /Socio. or 1 st Aid (T & Th)	
M.K. RHODES	Elem. PE & Computer	Elem. PE & Computer		Elem. PE & Computer	Elem. PE & Computer		11 th Girls Workout /Prep	Prep/Girls Athletics	6 th PE/Track
RHODES Room 25	12 th W.Geog. (* & Reg.)	Prep/10 th Boys Workout		10 th American History	10 th Boys Workout/Prep		11 th Boys Workout /Prep	11 th World History	7-9 Boys Athletics
SCHWANTZ Room 13	Administration	Administration		Administration	6 th Art/ Family Consumer Science		Administration	Prep	10 th Spanish I
SMITH Room 21	Resource or Substitute	Resource or Substitute		Resource or Substitute	Resource or Substitute		7 th -8 th Life Skills (Boys)	Study Hall (6 th & non-athletes) (in library)	7 th -8 th Life Skills (Girls)
STEPHENS Room 14	8 th Science	9 th Phys. Science		7 th Science	11 th Gen. Science		10 th Biology	Prep	11 th Animal Science/ Prep
STOKER Room 11	7 th History	8 th History		12 th Health/ Lifetime Wellness	Prep		7-9 th Girls Personal Fitness	7-9 th Girls' Basketball /6-9 th Girls' Track	Prep/ 6-9 th Boys' Track
THOMAS Room 15	9 th Algebra I	6 th Math		8 th Math	7 th Math		11 th Study Hall/ Financial Literacy	Prep	Study Hall (non-athletes)
VONKANEL Room 25	6 th History (HS CompLab)	10 th World View / Study Hall		11 th Government	Prep		9 th Civics/ AR History (Boys)	7-9 th Boys Personal Fitness	7-9 Boys Athletics
WOOD Room 24	11 th English	12 th English (* & Reg.)		9 th English	10 th Study Hall / Fine Arts		Writing Conferences	10 th English	Prep
	*=Honors Class	/=semester break							