

Desert Sky Middle School

Parent & Family Handbook

2026-2027

Deer Valley Unified School District

"Graduating lifelong learners who will successfully compete, lead, and positively impact the world."

Desert Sky Middle School- Parent & Family Handbook

2026-2027

5130 W. Grovers Avenue, Glendale, Arizona 85308

desertsky.dvusd.org

DVUSD Vision Statement

Graduating lifelong learners who will successfully compete, lead, and positively impact the world.

DVUSD Mission Statement

Provide extraordinary educational opportunities to every learner.

GOVERNING BOARD

Steve Bottfeld | Paul Carver, Jr. | Kimberly Fisher

Dr. Karen C. Pack | Stephanie Simacek

SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Curtis Finch

The Deer Valley Unified School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities. For any inquiries regarding nondiscrimination policies contact the DVUSD District Office, 20402 N. 15th Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85027. (623) 445-5000

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Instructional Calendar

2026-2027 PreK-12 Instructional Calendar
(Updated 4/16/2026 - Independence Day Observed July 6)

JULY

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

July 6 - Independence Day Observed
Offices Closed

AUGUST

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23/30	24/31	25	26	27	28	29

Aug. 3 - First Day for Students
Aug. 7, 14, 21, 28 - Early Release - **90 min**

SEPTEMBER

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

Sep 7 - Labor Day No School
Sep 21 - Fall Break Day
Sept. 4, 18, 25 - Early Release - **90 min**

OCTOBER

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8/9		10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Oct. 12-16 - Fall Break
Oct. 8-9 - K-12 P/T Conferences - **Half Day**
Oct. 2, 23, 30 - Early Release - **90 min**

NOVEMBER

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22/29	23/30	24	25	26	27	28

Nov. 11 - Veterans Day Observed
Nov. 23-27 - Thanksgiving Day recess
Nov. 6, 13, 20 - Early Release - **90 min**

DECEMBER

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17/18		19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Dec. 17 - **Half Day** - 9-12 only
Dec. 18 - **Half Day** -K-12
Dec. 21-31 - Winter Break
Dec. 4 & 11 - Early Release - **90 min**

JANUARY

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24/31	25	26	27	28	29	30

Jan. 1 - Winter Break
Jan. 4 - Staff Development, No School
Jan. 18 - Martin Luther King Day - No School
Jan. 15, 22, 29 - Early Release - **90 min**

FEBRUARY

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11/12		13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

Feb. 11-12 - **K-8 only** P/T Conf. - **Half Day**
Feb. 15 - Presidents Day - No School
Feb. 5, 19, 26 - Early Release - **90 min**

MARCH

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Mar. 22-26 - Spring Break
Mar. 5, 12, 19 - Early Release - **90 min**

APRIL

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

Apr. 23 - Spring Break Day
Apr. 30 - Early Release - **90 min**

MAY

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23/30	24/31	25	26	27	28	29

May 25 - Last Day for students 1/2 day
May 31 - Memorial Day - Offices Closed
May 7, 14, 21 - Early Release-**90 min**

JUNE

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

First Day of School
Early Release Days - 90 min
1/2 Day Release - See campus web pages for release times
1/2 Day Release - Parent Teacher Conferences
Jan. 4, 2027 - Staff Development, no school
Last Day of School (1/2 Day Release)
Graduation Dates
No School - Federal Holiday or Break

Graduation Dates
TBD
Please check www.dvusd.org/graduation for updates

Grading Periods
1st Quarter..... Oct. 2, 2026 ((43 days)
2nd Quarter..... Dec. 18, 2026 (44 days)
3rd Quarter.....Mar. 12, 2027 (47 days)
4th Quarter.....May 25, 2027 (46 days)

Teacher Contract Days.....185
Student Contact Days.....180

40th Day.....Sept. 29, 2026
100th Day.....Jan. 22, 2027

Early Release (90 min)
PLC / PD Days

1st Semester	2nd Semester
Aug. 7	Jan. 15
Aug. 14	Jan. 22
Aug. 21	Jan. 29
Aug. 28	Feb. 5
Sept.4	Feb. 19
Sept.18	Feb. 26
Sept.25	Mar. 5
Oct. 2	Mar. 12
Oct. 23	Mar. 19
Oct. 30	Apr. 30
Nov. 6	May. 7
Nov. 13	May. 14
Nov. 20	May. 21
Dec. 4	
Dec. 11	

No School
Holiday or Break Days

Sept. 7	Labor Day Recess
Sept. 21	Fall Break Day
Oct. 12-16	Fall Break
Nov. 11	Veterans Day
Nov. 23 - 27	Thanksgiving Recess
Dec. 21 - 31	Winter Break
Jan.1	Winter Break
Jan. 4	Staff Development
Jan. 18	MLK Day
Feb. 15	Presidents Day
Mar. 22 - 26	Spring Break
Apr. 23	Spring Break Day

Last day for students - May 25
Last day for teachers - May 26
1st semester = 87 days
2nd semester = 93 days

IMPORTANT SCHOOL DATES

District Calendar

First Day of School	August 3, 2026

Holiday/Recess Days

Labor Day	September 7, 2026
Fall Break Day	September 21, 2026
Fall Break	October 12, 2026 through October 16, 2026
Veterans' Day	November 11, 2026
Thanksgiving Recess	November 23, 2026 through November 27, 2026
Winter Break	December 21, 2026 through January 4, 2027
Martin Luther King	January 18, 2027
Presidents' Day	February 15, 2027
Spring Break	March 22, 2027 through March 26, 2027
Spring Break Day	April 23, 2027

Parent Teacher Conferences

1st Semester Conferences	October 8, 2026
2nd Semester Conferences	February 11, 2027

State Testing

AZ State testing–Typically happens in April. Information will be posted on our website

Ending Dates

8th Grade Promotion - May 21, 2027 - (11:35 release for 8th graders)

May 25, 2027 (11:35 release for 7th graders)

Grading Period

1st Quarter October 2, 2026

2nd Quarter December 18, 2026

3rd Quarter March 12, 2027

4th Quarter May 25, 2027

DSMS Bell Schedule

Regular Day

1st Hour	2nd Hour	3rd Hour	FLASH Time	4th (1st Lunch)	4th (2nd Lunch)	4th (3rd Lunch)	5th Hour	6th Hour
8:15-9:12 am	9:15 - 10:08 am	10:11 - 11:04 am	11:07-11:37 am	11:40-12:10 pm	12:10 pm -12:40 pm	12:40pm 1:10 pm	1:13-2:05 pm	2:08-3:00 pm

FLASH (**F**ocused **L**earning **A**nd **S**trategic **H**elp)

Early Dismissal PLC Friday @ 1:30pm

1st Hour	2nd Hour	3rd Hour	4th (1st Lunch)	4th (2nd Lunch)	4th (3rd Lunch)	5th Hour	6th Hour
8:15 - 9:01 am	9:04 - 9:45 am	9:48 - 10:29 am	10:32 - 11:02 am	11:02 - 11:32 am	11:32 am - 12:02 pm	12:05 - 12:46 pm	12:49 - 1:30 pm

Early Release ½ Day @ 11:35am

1st Hour	2nd Hour	3rd Hour	4th Hour	5th Hour	6th Hour
8:15-8:52 am	8:55-9:25 am	9:28-9:58 am	10:01-10:30 am	10:33-11:03 am	11:06-11:35 am

PM Assembly Schedule

1st Hour	2nd Hour	3rd Hour	4th (1st Lunch)	4th (2nd Lunch)	4th (3rd Lunch)	5th Hour	6th Hour
8:15 - 9:04 am	9:07 - 9:51 am	9:54 - 10:38 am	10:41 - 11:11 am	11:11 - 11:41 am	11:41 am -12:11 pm	12:14 - 12:58 pm	1:01 - 1:45 pm
Assembly - 1:50 - 2:55 pm (5 mins to grab backpacks)							

Parent Teacher Conferences

Thursday	1st Hour	2nd Hour	3rd Hour
Friday	**4th Hour**	**5th Hour**	**6th Hour**
	8:15-9:19 am	9:22-10:24 am	10:27-11:35 am

DESERT SKY CAMPUS DIRECTORY

Attendance Line: 602-467-6590

(Find the most updated information on our website)

Position	Name	Phone	Email
Principal	Scott Larter	602-467-6504	Scott.Larter@dvusd.org
Assistant Principal	Tyler Bachler	602-467-6504	Tyler.Bachler@dvusd.org
Instructional Coach	Kimberlee Donat	602-467-6554	Kimberlee.Donat@dvusd.org
Secretary	Karyl Saver	602-467-6504	Karyl.Saver@dvusd.org
Accounting Clerk	Melissa Brady	602-467-6505	Melissa.Brady@dvusd.org
Registrar	Jennifer Ashmore	602-467-6506	Jennifer.Ashmore@dvusd.org
Parent Liaison	Jolie Benner	602-467-6508	Jolie.Benner@dvusd.org
School Psychologist	Sydney Snyder	602-467-6520	Sydney.Snyder@dvusd.org
Nurse	Patty Bowlus	602-467-6510	Patty.Bowlus@dvusd.org
7th Grade Counselor	Mary Harris	602-467-6518	Mary.Harris@dvusd.org
8th Grade Counselor	Andrea Knouse	602-467-6538	Andrea.Knouse@dvusd.org
RTI-B Specialist	Kit Abbott	602-467-6547	Kit.Abbott@dvusd.org
7th Science	Dana Spain	602-467-6542	Dana.Spain@dvusd.org
7th Social Studies	Kevin Flint	602-467-6563	Kevin.Flint@dvusd.org
7th Math	Jobelle Mostoles	602-467-6572	Jobelle.Mostoles@dvusd.org
7th English Language Arts	Andrea Butler	602-467-6551	Andrea.Butler@dvusd.org
7th Science	Junia Tawney	602-467-6541	Junia.Tawney@dvusd.org
7th Social Studies	Wes Harder	602-467-6562	Wesley.Harder@dvusd.org
7th Math	Kaylee Garrigan	602-467-6573	Kaylee.Garrigan@dvusd.org
7th English Language Arts	Hannah Alkhori	602-467-6552	Hannah.Alkhori@dvusd.org
8th Science	Abigail Naylor	602-467-6543	Abigail.Naylor@dvusd.org
8th Social Studies	Mary Kaczmarowski	602-467-6571	Mary.Kaczmarowski@dvusd.org
8th Math	Jamie Leighty	602-467-6566	Jamie.Leighty@dvusd.org
8th English Language Arts	Brooklyn Rugen	602-467-6556	Brooklynn.Rugen@dvusd.org
8th Science	Katherine Kvaale	602-467-6544	Katherine.Kvaale@dvusd.org
8th Social Studies	Robert Fugate	602-467-6569	Robert.Fugate@dvusd.org
8th Math	Kylie Hall	602-467-6567	Kylie.Hall@dvusd.org
8th English Language Arts	Silas Wood	602-467-6557	Silas.Wood@dvusd.org
Student Services	Todd Ellingson	602-467-6548	Todd.Ellingson@dvusd.org
Student Services	Adrianna Botello	602-467-6564	Adrianna.Botello@dvusd.org
Student Services	Penny Murphy	602-467-6550	Penny.Murphy@dvusd.org
Student Services	Belinda Null	602-467-6564	Belinda.Null@dvusd.org
Speech/Language Pathologist	Crista Byrom	602-467-6522	Crista.Byrom@dvusd.org
Physical Education	Olivia Kovacs	602-467-6532	Olivia.Kovacs@dvusd.org
Physical Education	Cody Kunigel	602-467-6532	Cody.Kunigel@dvusd.org
Physical Education		602-467-6532	
Career Action Lab- STEM	Eric Axelrod	602-467-6537	Eric.Axelrod@dvusd.org
Woodshop/Building Skills	Michael Day	602-467-6539	Michael.Day@dvusd.org
Art	Bridget Rough	602-467-6534	Bridget.Rough@dvusd.org
Choir/Music/Orchestra	Vivian Lievre	602-467-6535	Vivian.Lievre@dvusd.org
ELL Specialist	Ali Bourikas	602-467-6574	Ali.Bourikas@dvusd.org

DESERT SKY STAFF

Teams

Students belong to a team at Desert Sky. That means that the same group of academic teachers (English, Math, Science and Social Studies) share the same group of students. Students also belong to the greater community of Desert Sky as a Thunderbolt. Below are our school team names and colors.

The Red Rocks **8th Grade**	**Purple Thunder** **7th Grade**	**The Blue Monsoons** **8th Grade**	**The Silver Cyclones** **7th Grade**
Team Color = Red	Team Color = Purple	Team Color = Blue	Team Color = Black & Gray

COMMUNICATION CHAIN / MEETING WITH STAFF

It takes a partnership between home and school to help students achieve the best version of themselves academically, socially and behaviorally. When questions or concerns arise, it is best to find resolution directly with the individual with whom you have a concern. In preparation for high school, we also encourage students to start to practice advocating for themselves by having discussions directly with their teacher.

If an issue arises, please follow the below steps, in order:

1. Student schedules a time to have a private conversation with the teacher.
   * The student should not try to have a discussion during class time.
2. Parent contacts the teacher via email or phone call.
3. Parent and student schedule a time to meet with the teacher.
4. Parent, student and counselor schedule a time to meet with the teacher.
5. Parent schedules a time to talk to administration. Administration will determine next steps, which may involve a meeting with the parent, student and teacher.

When to talk to the teacher:

- Grades
- Grading practices
- Assignments
- Classroom level discipline
- Student behavior
- Teacher-issued consequences
- Classroom concerns (possible peer issues; possible personality conflicts)

When to talk to the counselor:

- Schedule change
  * Due to limited staffing, schedules are not changed because of personality conflicts, peer issues or preferences
- Student well-being
- Peer issues
- Summer School
- Questions regarding retention

When to talk to administration:

- When you have already followed the chain of communication as outlined above
- Administrative referrals
- Administrative-issued consequences
- School-wide safety concerns

When you call to make an appointment with any staff member, you will need to provide the following information:

1. Your first and last name.
2. Your student's first and last name.
3. Your reason for requesting contact.
4. Steps you have already taken to resolve the concern (if applicable).

Our secretaries are trained to maintain confidentiality, and it is necessary for you to provide the above information so that they know who to route your concern to. Providing as many details as possible also allows our staff to have a more productive conversation with you.

VISITING ON CAMPUS AT DESERT SKY

To keep our campus as safe as possible, DVUSD has implemented a new security check-in system called **Verkada Visitor Management**.

Please note: This system is only for visitors who are entering past the front office onto the main campus (such as attending a meeting, volunteering, or visiting a classroom). You do *not* need to check in if you are simply dropping off an item or picking up a student from the lobby.

If you are coming onto campus, please keep the following in mind for a smooth process:

- **Bring Your ID:** Please be prepared to present a physical government-issued photo ID (Driver's License, State ID, or Passport) at the front desk for our security check.
- **Fast Check-In Options:** When you arrive, you can scan the QR code displayed in the front office with your smartphone to check yourself in digitally.
- **Frequent Visitors:** Frequent guests will receive a welcome text message after their first check-in with a link to create a permanent **Guest Pass** for even quicker future visits!

- **Easy Mobile Check-Out:** When your visit is over, you can quickly check out by simply texting the word **"bye"** from your phone.

Thank you for partnering with us to keep our students, staff, and campus safe!

STUDENT DROP-OFF/PICK-UP PROCEDURES

In order to address parent and community concerns and incidents regarding student safety, please follow the drop-off and pick up procedures.

Morning Drop-Off Procedures

- Students should be dropped off along the **BLUE CURB**
- Pull forward to the ***STUDENT DROP OFF*** or close the gaps with the cars in front of you, this helps speed up the process for all
- Students should be ready to promptly exit the vehicle, drivers should remain in the car
- Use caution when pulling out to avoid any other pedestrians or vehicles
- Please do not pass cars waiting in the drop-off lane and cut others at the front of the line

Afternoon Pick-Up Procedures

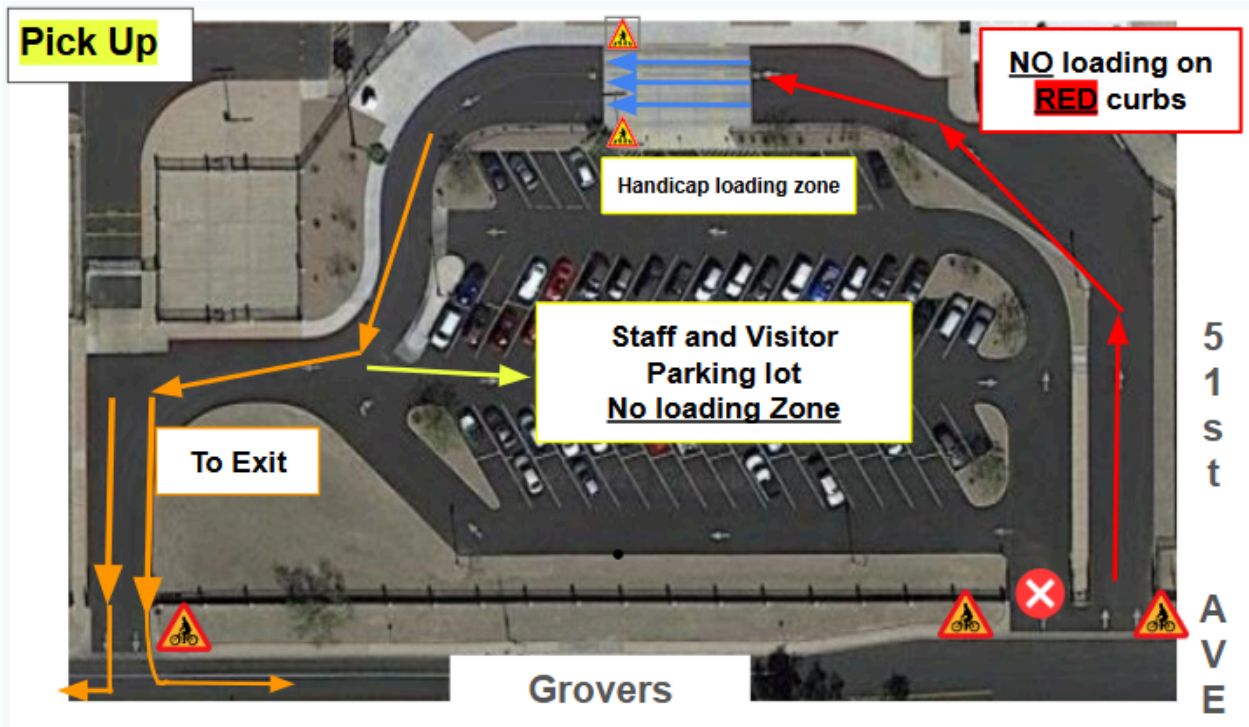
- Campus staff will direct afterschool pick-up. For their safety and the safety of our students, please follow their directions.
- All students being picked up by personal vehicles should wait in the front of the school under the DSMS awning
- Students should watch for their rides and be ready to enter their vehicles when their cars are in the **first two rows and not in the parking lot.**
- When cars are loaded with riders, please wait for staff directions to pull forward to exit
- **Traffic will not be held during pick-up.** If your student does not report to your vehicle in a timely manner, you will be asked to proceed forward to wait in the parking lot, when we have a majority of cars (all three lanes- two cars deep) loaded.

Students should not be dropped off…

- **…along Grovers or 51st Avenue (nor should they be picked up on these streets)**
- …in the left two lanes, these are for passing through and parking lot access
- …in the parking lot
- …in the crosswalk in front of the DSMS awning

Please do not pass or pull around cars in the crosswalk.
There is a bike lane on Grovers at the school entrance and exit. Please stop for cyclists.


DROP OFF
Drop- off on BLUE curbs
NO Drop- off on RED curbs
Staff and Visitor Parking lot No Drop Off
To Exit
51st AVE
Grovers


Pick Up
NO loading on RED curbs
Handicap loading zone
Staff and Visitor Parking lot No loading Zone
To Exit
51st AVE
Grovers

DESERT SKY INFORMATION/EXPECTATIONS

GENERAL INFORMATION

Closed Campus:

- Desert Sky Middle School Campus opens for students at 7:55 am.
- Once students arrive on campus, they must remain on campus unless a parent or guardian signs them out (please see sign out procedures below).
- All students are expected to be in their classrooms **before** the 8:15 am bell.
- A student leaving campus without permission will be considered truant and disciplinary action may be taken.

Tobacco/Drug Free Zone:

Desert Sky Middle School enforces a drug and tobacco free zone within the campus and extending 1,000 feet from the perimeter of the campus.

Communications From the School:

In order to share the most accurate and timely information, we will use text messaging and email updates. To receive important messages, information, and updates, please make sure that you:

- Keep current records with our office. Notify the Registrar with any changes to phone numbers, email addresses, home addresses, and desired people of contact.
- Listen to or read the entire message so that you do not miss important information.
- Check the school and teacher websites, as information and updates may be posted here.

Fire/Emergency Evacuation Information:

To practice safety procedures, we conduct a fire drill each month and a lock-down or lock-out drill each quarter.

In the event of an **actual** lock down or evacuation situation, you will be notified by our automated calling system, and information will be posted on our school website at https://desertsky.dvusd.org/

Deliveries for Students:

- Items for students such as lunch money, lunches, homework, P.E. clothes, band instruments, notebooks and sports items may be dropped off at the front office.
    - Students will be notified that a delivery is waiting for them in the front office and that they can pick the item up during passing periods only.
- Per DVUSD policy, **food delivery services are not allowed** to deliver to campus for student lunches during the school day. Any food items delivered will be held in the office for pick up at the end of the school day.

- Per DVUSD policy, parents/guardians may drop off lunch **for their student only.** For safety reasons, **food cannot be given to your student's friends.**
- In an effort to minimize disruptions and keep the students focused on learning, we do not allow large student celebration gifts, such as balloons, large stuffed animals, flowers, to be on or delivered to the school campus.
- **Before spending money, please feel free to check with the office to see if your special delivery item(s) can be accepted and delivered.**

Bus Transportation:

- **Students may only ride the bus assigned to them.**
- Students may not ride a different bus.
- In **emergency situations only**, a parent/guardian may submit a written request to the registrar, seeking special permission (before noon on the day of the request). The request will be sent to the district transportation department for review, and the office will notify the parent/guardian when transportation has made a decision.
- Violations of student conduct and expectations on the buses are processed by the transportation department, but may involve school administration if they request.

Visitors/Guests:

- For those who wish to visit a classroom during the school day, it is necessary to fill out a "Permission for Visitation/Observation" form at least 24 hours in advance to avoid any conflicts with the school schedule. Visits or audits to a classroom must first be approved by administration.
- If a conference is desired, please contact a teacher to arrange a time **before or after school hours**.
- All activities on school premises by any outside persons, must receive prior approval by the administration.
- Anyone who is not a student or staff member of DVUSD, and is in violation of the above listed visitor's policy, may be asked to leave the property of the district.
- Failure to comply with the reasonable and lawful directions from district officials or district security officers, or any other law enforcement officers, acting in performance of their duties, and failure to identify oneself to such officials or officers when lawfully requested to do so, may subject the person to criminal proceedings applicable under law.

Dances:

Dances are planned by the Student Council as a fun opportunity for students. Expectations are:

- Only current Desert Sky students and staff are allowed.
- School rules and dress code apply.
- Students may not be admitted past 30 minutes after the start time.
- Students must stay until the end of the dance.
- Students must dance appropriately. Running is not allowed, as it is a safety concern.

- Students must be picked up immediately after the school dance. Students picked up late (20 minutes or more past the end time) may lose the privilege to attend future dances or other school events.
- Students who have a suspension on the day of the dance may not attend.
    - Students may also lose the privilege to attend due to previous suspensions or behavior issues.

Students who are not following the expectations for attending dances, or who do not comply with staff requests, may lose the privilege to attend future dances. They may also be asked to leave. *If a student is asked to leave the dance, no refunds will be issued.*

Assemblies & Spirit Days:
We encourage student participation during spirit days and weeks. Dress code applies. If you have questions, ask a staff member. Students must be identifiable to staff. Therefore, ***costumes, masks or paint that completely covers a student's face is not allowed.*** Students are expected to:

- Sit with their teacher and class in their designated area of the bleachers for the entire time.
- Bathrooms need to be used before or after the assembly so as to not disrupt activities.
- Follow all school and district policies, procedures and rules. This includes dress code.
- Cheer ***FOR*** their team or for the performers. Booing or cheering against the others is not allowed.
- Use appropriate language.
- Follow staff requests ***the first time***.
- Students who are on suspension on the day of the assembly may not attend.
    - Students may also lose the privilege to attend due to previous suspensions or behavior issues.

Students or guests who are not following the expectations for attending assemblies, or who do not comply with staff requests, may lose the privilege to attend future assemblies. They may also be asked to leave the event. *If a guest is asked to leave an event, no refunds will be issued.*

Attending Athletic Events:
We encourage students to support our athletes at after school games. Students are expected to:
- Stay in the seating area of the field or gym where there is active supervision. Constant movement in and out of the game area is discouraged, as it is a distraction for athletes and coaches, as well as for the spectators.
- Follow all school and district policies, procedures and rules. This includes dress code.
- Cheer ***FOR*** their team. Booing or cheering against the other team is not allowed.
- Use appropriate language, as there are guests, district and school personnel and young children in attendance.
- Follow staff requests ***the first time***.
- Students who have a suspension on the day of the athletic event may not attend the game.
    - Students may also lose the privilege to attend due to previous suspensions or behavior issues.

Students or guests who are not following the expectations for attending athletic events, or who do not comply with staff requests, may lose the privilege to attend future athletic events. They may also be asked to leave the event. *If a guest is asked to leave an event, no refunds will be issued.*

After School Events & Activity Nights:
Desert Sky hosts a variety of after-school events, movie nights, and activities throughout the year. We love bringing our community together and warmly encourage students and their families to join in the fun! To ensure a safe, positive, and enjoyable environment for everyone, all guests and students are expected to:

- Stay in designated areas where there is active supervision.
- Be respectful of others (e.g., remaining seated during movies or presentations so views aren't blocked, and keeping walkways clear).
- Follow all school and district policies, procedures, and rules, including the school dress code.
- Use appropriate language, as there are guests, district and school personnel, and young children in attendance.
- Follow staff requests the first time they are given.

Students who are suspended on the day of an event may not attend, and students may also lose the privilege to attend due to previous suspensions or behavior issues. Anyone not following these expectations, or failing to comply with staff requests, may be asked to leave and may lose the privilege to attend future after-school events. Please note that if a guest is asked to leave an event, no refunds will be issued.

Lost and Found:
The Deer Valley Unified School District and Desert Sky Middle School assume no responsibility for student personal items that are lost or stolen on school property or at school sponsored events.
Students are discouraged from bringing costly, fragile, or irreplaceable items to school that cannot be secured by the owner. **Students must assume sole responsibility for damage or loss of property they choose to bring to campus.**

Small lost and found articles such as eye glasses, jewelry, wallets, etc. should be taken to the front office; all other items should be taken to the cafeteria. Unclaimed articles will be given to charity periodically during the school year. Lost articles may be claimed before or after school. We encourage students to put identification marks on all their personal belongings, and not share or distribute their items to others.

Bolt Closet:
Desert Sky offers a variety of clothing for students and families that may be struggling with providing clean clothes. If ever in need, please reach out to our parent liaison at 602-467-6508. Students may also use clothing from the Bolt Closet in case of dress code violations. All clothing has been washed and donated through staff and other Desert Sky Families!

Cafeteria:
Meal prices for the 2026-27 school year are- **$1.65 for breakfast; $3.10 for lunch**. The cafeteria is a place for students to eat lunch and socialize appropriately. Please encourage your student/students to adhere to acceptable behavior standards and to follow the directions from staff when eating lunch. Students who do not follow lunch expectations may receive consequences, or lose the privilege to eat in the cafeteria or on the patio. All students are expected to adhere to the following guidelines so that all members of the community may have a clean and safe lunch period:

- Money should be put on a student's account online or in the cafeteria before school begins.
- Do not use another student's ID number. If you have forgotten your ID number or money, wait in line and food will be provided.
- Students must ask staff permission before going anywhere on campus during lunch time.
- Students should not eat while walking, running, or engaging in other activities.
- We expect students to avoid games that involve food.

If you pack a lunch and send it with your student, please avoid food items that could be difficult to chew or which could possibly cause choking.

DISTRICT STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

A responsibility is an obligation one has to ensure that the rights of all are protected. As outlined in the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook, **all students have the responsibility to**:

Attend school to receive an education.

- Schools cannot educate students who do not attend. Students must attend school daily unless ill or legally excused.

Be on time for all classes.

- Students who enter a classroom after a lesson has begun are interfering with the rights of others to learn and study. Punctuality is a habit that students must develop if they are to be successful in the world of work.

Arrive to class with materials appropriate to participate in instruction.

- A teacher should not have to delay instruction because a student comes to class unprepared. This interferes with the rights of others to learn and study.

Complete all in-class and homework assignments and meet all deadlines.

- The full responsibility for student learning does not rest solely on the teacher. Education cannot be effective unless students participate in class and complete all assignments.

Follow all policies and procedures.

- No one has the right to interfere with the education of others. Rules are designed to allow a school to meet its obligation to educate students. Students are required to be respectful and courteous to everyone who works in our schools.

Cooperate with school staff.

- Every community depends upon its citizens to uphold the rules by which everyone has agreed to live. Students have the responsibility to provide truthful information when asked by school authorities.

Respect the person and property of others.

- Treat people and their property with respect.

Respect public property.

- Schools are a community investment and resource for young people. People who damage school property will be held responsible, including financial restitution, for lost, stolen, or broken school-owned equipment.

See that school correspondence to parents reaches home.

- Education is a partnership between home and school. Students must do their part by delivering home progress reports, attendance information and report cards, and any other school correspondence.

GENERAL STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent with the vision, goals, and beliefs of the Deer Valley Unified School District. Accordingly, students are prohibited from engaging in behavior that (1) obstructs, disrupts, or interferes with the educational, administrative, disciplinary, or other activity sponsored or approved by the District, (2) endangers or threatens the safety of any person, or (3) inflicts or threatens to inflict damage on property of the District, employees, students, or others.

School rules and other reasonable expectations of appropriate student behavior are extended to include student conduct while off campus during the regular school day. This may include student conduct while traveling to and from school, and during lunch and release times. School authorities may discipline a student for any misconduct while off campus during these times. Additionally, schools may discipline students for use of social media to convey threats towards a school or speech that causes a disruption to the campus. School rules will be enforced for all school events on or off District property.

Students who fail to abide by this general behavioral expectation will be subject to appropriate discipline, regardless of whether the conduct violates any specific provision of prohibited behavior, and may be cause for revocation of open enrollment admission status.

Attending School Events:

If a student receives an after-school detention, in-school suspension, or out of school suspension, the student may not attend any extracurricular activities including, but not limited to: try-outs, practices, games, competitions, clubs, dances, etc… Parents/guardians may not change scheduled detentions due to conflict with extra-curricular activities**.**

Digital Citizenship:

Digital citizenship refers to the responsible and ethical use of technology and the internet. Educators and parents play a crucial role in reinforcing these expectations through education, open communication, and modeling positive digital behavior.

We encourage parents/guardians to get educated about social media, and to help their child make good choices when they post something online. For more information on ways to keep children safe while using social media, please visit www.commonsensemedia.org/privacy-and-internet-safety.

District Student Rights and Responsibilities and the Promotion, Retention, Acceleration, Grading Handbooks:

Students and their parents/guardians are expected to read and become familiar with the district Student Rights and Responsibilities and Promotion, Retention, Acceleration, Grading Handbooks. Students will be held accountable for the expectations set forth in both handbooks. You can find these handbooks electronically at: https://www.dvusd.org/domain/806

Dress Code:

Per DVUSD Policy, any attire that detracts from the learning environment is not acceptable. Students should dress in a manner that, in addition to the following guidelines, takes into consideration the educational environment, safety, and the health and welfare of self and others.

During the school day:

- Clothing must fully cover the entire buttocks and may not be see-through. Regardless of garment type, shirts and tops must not expose bare midriffs, bare shoulders, or bra straps, nor be strapless, deeply or narrowly cut in the front, back, or under the arms. Muscle shirts and strapless tops are not permitted.
- Shoes must be worn at all times. Closed shoes are to be worn for any type of physical activity, such as physical education, cheer practice, weight lifting, etc. (shoes must have soles)
    - NOTE: Students in **P.E. or Woodshop** Classes **MUST** wear closed-toed shoes.
- Jewelry shall not be worn if it presents a safety hazard.
- No hats, bandannas, other head coverings, or sunglasses may be worn inside any campus building at any time, except for properly approved occupational safety headgear required for special classes or if authorized by a school administrator or authorized/prescribed by a medical professional. Hats and sunglasses may be worn outside. Students will not be asked to remove headwear that is worn for cultural and/or religious reasons.
- Sunglasses are not to be worn indoors. (without authorization from administration or the nurse)

- Obscene language or symbols, or symbols of drugs, sex, alcohol, or weapons on clothing are expressly prohibited. Clothing, accessories and/or jewelry may not state, imply, or depict hate speech/imagery targeting groups based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious affiliation, or any other protected classification.
- Students may wear clothing, accessories and jewelry that display religious messages or religious symbols in the same manner and to the same extent that other types of clothing, accessories and jewelry that display messages or symbols are permitted.
- Tattoos displaying defamatory writing, obscene language or symbols, or symbols of drugs, sex, alcohol, or weapons must be covered.
- Students may not wear clothing, accessories and/or jewelry that is worn with the intent to convey affiliation with a criminal street gang as defined in A.R.S. 13-105.

Exceptions for special activities or health considerations may be preapproved by the administrator.

Students who participate or volunteer in extracurricular activities, such as athletics, band, chorus, et cetera, are subject to the standards of dress as defined by the sponsors of such activities.

Electronic Devices:

In accordance with Arizona House Bill 2484 (2024), Cell phones, earbuds, bluetooth devices and other electronics are to be turned off and put away in the backpack from 7:55 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. Students who need to contact a parent/guardian may use the phone in the front office. If a student is sick, the nurse needs to be the person who contacts the parent/guardian for the student to be picked up.

Violation of the cell phone/electronics policy are as follows:

1st – 3rd violations = Student turns device into the office. Students may pick up the device after school.
4th and all future violations = Student turns device into the office. Parent/Guardian must pick up the device.

Students should understand that if they choose to bring a personal electronic device on campus it is done at their own risk. ***Neither DSMS nor DVUSD assume any liability for the loss, theft, or damage of any personally owned electronic device on campus.*** Any such interference due to the inappropriate use of electronic devices will be considered a disruptive activity and may result in disciplinary action.

Please refer to page 17 of the Student's Rights and Responsibilities handbook for any further information.

Food & Beverages:

Only water is allowed on campus. No other food or drink, including gum or candy is allowed. A lunchbox can be brought to school containing food and drink for a student to eat during their lunch time.

Internet & E-mail User agreement:

DVUSD chromebook and network access is a privilege, not a right, and entails responsibility. It is only to be used for research and academic purposes as determined by the District curricula. Students are responsible for appropriate behavior/communication on school computers and the school network.
The following are not permitted:

1. Send, access, download or display offensive messages or pictures
2. Use obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, or disrespectful language
3. Harass, insult or attack others
4. Damage computers, systems or networks
5. Violate copyright laws and regulations
6. Use passwords of others
7. Share passwords with others
8. Impersonate others or trespass in others' folders, work or files

Violations may result in a loss of access, restitution or other disciplinary action.

Physical Education/Health Class Expectations:

Each student is expected to dress prepared for class. When enrolled in PE, students should dress appropriately for active participation in class, both in clothing and footwear. Our PE teaching team asks that students dress for the easiest and safest movement during instruction. Any items other than these must be approved by the PE teachers. In addition, all students are expected to participate appropriately and to give their best efforts each day.

Exceptions for special activities or health considerations may be preapproved by the administrator.

Students who participate or volunteer in extracurricular activities, such as athletics, band, chorus, et cetera, are subject to the standards of dress as defined by the sponsors of such activities.
(Ref. DVUSD Policy JICA)

Recording Devices:

Teachers, staff, and students have a reasonable expectation of privacy. Students are not to use personal electronic devices for the purpose of taking, sending, recording or transmitting photos, conversations, or videos of others at school, on the bus, or at school-related activities/events without permission or knowledge of the subject being photographed or recorded. Recording devices that can be controlled remotely are prohibited. This section does not apply to law enforcement officers while performing their duties or the filming of school sponsored events (e.g., athletics, band concerts, etc.).

Traveling To and From School:

School expectations apply to those students who come to school via walking, biking, skateboarding or riding a scooter. Motorized transportation is not allowed. Students should remain on sidewalks and use designated crosswalks. Bikes/skateboards/scooters/etc. are to be walked in the crosswalk area. Students are to follow all staff directions. Students are to stay out of the parking lot.

There is a storage space for bikes/skateboards/scooters/etc. on campus, but **students must provide their own locks**. ***Desert Sky Middle School is not responsible for the protection of or theft of bicycles, scooters, skateboards, or other personal mobility devices stored on campus.***

As a representative of Desert Sky, show respect to the neighborhoods and residents.

Violation of these expectations may result in suspension of student privilege to park or store your items on school property.

Vandalism:
Students are expected to take care of school property. They are also expected to report any property damage to an adult on campus. Students who damage school property will receive school consequences, and be responsible for the cost of the damage and any associated fees. A police report may also be filed.

Woodshop Class:
Students are required to wear closed-toed shoes if they are in this class. More information will be provided by the teacher.

ATTENDANCE

At Desert Sky, all students are expected to attend school every day and to be to school on time. Your student needs to be in the classroom to participate in the educational process. We ask your cooperation in scheduling appointments outside of the school day as much as possible. Desert Sky's regular school hours are from 8:15am to 3:00pm and the school expectation is for students to be in their seats in their first period homerooms at the 8:15am bell. On early release Fridays, the school hours are 8:15am to 1:30pm. Students must be in attendance at least one-half of the school day to be eligible to participate in or attend extra-curricular activities.

Absence Line:
A parent/guardian must call the absence line at 602-467-6590 within 24 hours to excuse any absence. This line is available 24 hours a day, so a parent/guardian may call and leave your information as soon as you know that you will be absent. Our absence system finalizes at 9:00am, so absences called in after 9:00 am will still likely receive an automated call to the number we have on record.

Signing Out:
In accordance with the Arizona State Law, **students will only be released to a parent/guardian or a person listed as an emergency contact.** The person signing out the student **must show a valid government issued I.D.** (i.e. passport or state issued driver's license). **NO STUDENT WILL BE RELEASED TO ANYONE WITHOUT A VALID I.D.**

Students will be allowed to come to the office once the parent/guardian is present to pick their student up. ***In order to minimize interruptions to learning at the end of the day, please avoid checking students out 30 minutes prior to the end of the school day.*** Please keep this in mind when making appointments.

Late Arrival:
Student attendance for the entire class period and day is critical to his/her success. If your student must arrive to school late, a parent/guardian must call the absence line at 602-467-6590 **within 24 hours** to

excuse any tardy. If a student arrives late from a medical appointment, please provide documentation showing date and time of the appointment. When a student is tardy between 8:15am- 9:00am, a note will be sent home to the parent/guardian and our Automatic Attendance Calling System will leave a message with the home/primary phone number. ***Any students arriving after 9:00am MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY A PARENT OR GUARDIAN TO SIGN THEM IN.*** Truancy guidelines apply for unexcused tardies beyond the first class period of the day. Upon the 4th unexcused tardy students may begin to receive consequences. If a student accumulates 10 tardies or demonstrates continued chronic unexcused tardies, it may start counting as "truancies".

Absences/Truancies:

Per Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S.), Section 15-803, a "truant child" means a child who is between the ages of six and sixteen who is not in attendance at a public or private school during the hours the school is in session. "Habitually Truant" is defined as a child who is unexcused five school days or absent ten percent of the school year (18 days). The parent/guardian will be notified by mail and/or phone if a student is reaching the "habitually truant" status or has been referred to the Maricopa County C.U.T.S. Program. Fines due to truancy may be applied to the family of the student through the C.U.T.S. Program. If a student has a chronic medical condition that will affect his/her attendance, the parent/guardian must meet with the school nurse and provide documentation from your doctor that a student might miss more than 18 days of school for this medical condition. District disciplinary procedures will be followed for truancy infractions, including the possibility of Saturday school.

Homework:

If a student is absent for THREE (3) or more consecutive days, **it is the responsibility of the student or family/guardians to contact the teachers to clarify needed work. Homework and assignments can be accessed through CANVAS. If you have additional questions, please contact your student's teachers**. A student may submit assigned homework by the time he/she returns to campus.

ACADEMICS

Academic Honors:

Students will receive a Principal's List certificate for each quarter they earn A's in every subject with no incompletes. They will receive an Honor Roll certificate for each quarter they earn B's or higher in every subject with no incompletes. At the end of the year they will receive a gold medallion for earning Principal's list all four quarters, and a silver medallion for earning Honor Roll all four quarters.

PowerSchools Access:

Parents and students have their own user names and passwords to log on to PowerSchools, the Deer Valley Unified School District grades, and attendance websites. You may view your student's attendance and grades using this access, and we recommend that you check on a weekly basis. You will be able to see if they have any missing assignments or homework by clicking on the percentage listed under the grade for each subject.

Grades/Conferences:

Grades can be accessed on-line through PowerSchools. You will find dates for quarter grades on the

district calendar. Hard copies can be requested through the registrar's office. Students are expected to share progress reports and report cards with their parents/guardians. You may contact the counseling office at any time to set up a conference with any or all of your student's teachers. Parent/Teacher Conferences are held each semester. Students are expected to attend these conferences with their parents/guardians. Concerns about grades should be handled by:

1st: Speaking or meeting with the teacher
2nd: Contacting the department chair of the department
3rd: Contacting your student's counselor
4th: Contacting administration if all of the above have been done and there are still concerns

State Testing:

Students participate in state testing, including the Arizona Academic Standards Assessment (AASA) and the Arizona Science Assessment (AzSCI). Testing is completed over multiple days. Please avoid appointments on assigned testing days. Information will be posted on our website.

Promotion Requirements:

In order to participate in the promotion ceremony , 8th grade students must receive passing grades for the year in all classes and adhere to all behavioral expectations and policies. Students may lose the privilege of participating in or recognition during promoting ceremonies if they are in poor academic or behavioral standing. **Any fourth quarter suspension may result in loss of the privilege to participate in the promotion ceremony.**

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

To ensure that your child is college-, career-, and community-ready, students in the Deer Valley Unified School District are expected to demonstrate academic integrity. Academic integrity involves being honest and fair in their schoolwork. It means that your child should complete their work independently and give proper credit to others (including generative artificial intelligence tools) when using their ideas or words.

If you or your child have questions about the guidelines for academic integrity, please discuss them with their teacher.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty refers to any action that compromises the integrity of academic work or evaluation processes. This includes but is not limited to:

- Copying or stealing another person's work or data (plagiarism);
- Allowing another person to copy one's work;
- Doing another person's classwork;
- Creating more than one copy of one's work for distribution;
- Providing another person with the answers on tests or quizzes;
- Noncompliance with teachers' test-taking procedures;
- Unauthorized copying or development of software; and

- Unauthorized use of generative artificial intelligence.

Consequences for instances of academic dishonesty range from a conference and loss of credit (student will be given another opportunity to show mastery of learning) up to a 5-day suspension and loss of credit.

ATHLETICS

Athletic Opportunities:
Fall Sports (Aug.-Oct.) Tryout: boys' baseball and girls' softball
Winter Sports (Nov.-Jan.) Tryout: boys and girls' volleyball; No-cut: cross country and wrestling
Spring Sports (Feb.- Apr.) Tryout: boys and girls' basketball; No-cut: track and field

Please be on the lookout for sign up and participation information from the coach or athletic director.

Student Athlete Leadership Team:

The Desert Sky SALT Team is an organization focused on developing leadership skills among student athletes. SALT programs aim to equip student athletes with the tools to be effective leaders, not just in their sports, but also in their school and community. Students will attend the yearly DVUSD Salt Summit and will lead several activities, on campus, throughout the year.

3A (8th Grade) and North Valley Middle Level Athletic Conferences (7th Grade):
Desert Sky participates in the North Valley Middle Level athletic conference sports programs. As part of these programs we play the following schools:

- North Valley Middle Level Conference: **Grade 7 and 8- All Sports: Highland Lakes, Hillcrest Middle, Diamond Canyon Deer Valley Middle (Cross-Country and track may include other DVUSD k-8 schools as competitors)**

Athletic Fee:
The District requires an athletic fee of $120.00 per sport with an individual student cap of $240.00, a family cap. **All athletic fees and packets must be completed or paid on-line and must be paid prior to the first official game of the season.** Please call the DSMS office if you have any questions.

Requirements for Participation in Athletic Opportunities:

- ✔ **Concussion Class:** Students must complete an on-line concussion class prior to try-outs. The class can be found at http://aiaacademy.org/users/login/brainbook .
- ✔ **Physical:** A physical is required for all DVUSD students participating in sports and must be completed prior to try-outs.

- ✔ **Athletic Forms:** Before your athlete starts with a team, please register your athlete and access athletic forms at https://www.dvusd.org/a-z-guide/athletics/athlete-parent-resources

Eligibility Requirements:

In accordance with the state of Arizona's regulation and Deer Valley Governing Board Policy, only those students deemed academically eligible may participate in extra or co-curricular activities in which competition is an integral part of the organization. Students must be passing all subjects to be eligible and grades are checked on a weekly basis. Study sessions will be available for students needing assistance.

Ineligibility:

- ✔ An absence of more than ½ day of school on the day of the event will make a student ineligible. Students who go home ill may not return to school to participate in extracurricular activities.
- ✔ A failing grade in any subject area may impact a student's ability to participate in games, practices, or team events. **For more information on academic eligibility, please visit our website at https://www.dvusd.org/a-z-guide/athletics/athlete-parent-resources/7th-8th-grade-eligibility**
- ✔ The coach, athletic director, or administration may limit participation in a sport due to classroom removals, disruptive behavior, and/or poor attitudes.
- ✔ If a student receives an after-school detention, in-school suspension, or out of school suspension, the student may not participate in or attend any extracurricular activities including, but not limited to: try-outs, practices, games, competitions, clubs, dances, etc… Parents/guardians may not change scheduled detentions due to conflict with extra-curricular activities**.**

MEDIA and HEALTH CENTER INFORMATION

Media Center

Responsibility:

Desert Sky has a Media Center where students can check out materials for reading, research, or other studies. After checking out a book, its care is the responsibility of the student. If it is lost, stolen, or damaged, the student will be charged a replacement fee. ***School records will be withheld until any damage or replacement fees have been paid.*** All school rules apply to the Media Center. Failure to follow expectations may result in loss of privileges to use this space.

Technology:

All students will have a Chromebook and charger checked out to them at the beginning of the year. Since student work is primarily technology based, it is expected that students have their devices **charged** and ready to go **prior to coming to school each day.** Students should also bring their chargers with them to school. Students should not share with others their usernames or passwords, chargers, or their Chromebooks.

Students are responsible to keep the items in working condition. **Students will be responsible for paying for lost, damaged or unreturned items.**

Students that repeatedly borrow technology, will be assigned consequences by Desert Sky staff. Consequences begin on the 5th time borrowing technology and will go through progressive discipline as needed.

Optional Protection Plan:
Deer Valley Unified School District offers a protection plan with an enrollment fee of $25 for student take-home devices. Detailed information about the protection plan will be provided within the student's first day packets.

Health Center

The Health Center provides health education, counseling, and some emergency care for students and staff. One full-time registered nurse serves as a health advisor on student health problems.

Illness or Accident:
The health center cannot diagnose medical conditions. When accidents or illnesses occur during school hours, emergency care will be given according to standard protocols; further care is the responsibility of the parents. All accidents are to be reported to the nurse by the person involved and the supervising person.

Medications:
Over the counter medication: In compliance with ARS 15-344 and ARS 32-1901, over the counter medications are not available in the Health Center. Tylenol, ibuprofen, Calamine, Neosporin, topical or oral Benadryl, cough drops, antacids, or any like remedies are not stocked. **Students are not permitted to have medication in their possession at any time without a specific prior written arrangement with the nurse.**

Prescriptions: **A written doctor's order is required for all prescription medication on campus.** Each bottle of medication must be in the original container and the medication form filled out and on file in the Health Center. Forms are available in the DSMS Health Center as well as on-line at the DSMS Nurse web page. **Inhalers or Epi-Pens may be carried by students only if the proper medication form has been filled out and placed on file in the Health Center.**

Disease Prevention/Immunizations:
Written proof of compliance with immunization requirements is a part of the registration process for Arizona public schools**.** If you are unsure of the requirements for immunization, see your doctor, visit the school health center, or call the Maricopa County Health Department at 602-506-6767 or 602-263-8856 for locations of clinics and hours of operation. Immunizations are free of charge for children under the age of 18. Exemption forms are available from the nurse.

Parent and Emergency Contacts/Health History:
Parents are required to complete Emergency Contact and Health History forms for each of their children every year. These forms contain vital information should your child become ill or injured at school. Forms and access to update this information are available in PowerSchools. If you have trouble with PowerSchools access, please call our front office. For the safety of your student, please update the school with any changes in contact information in a timely manner.

Student Illness:
If a student feels ill during the school day, they should report their complaint to the classroom teacher for referral to the nurse. **Students are not to contact their parents directly via cell phone regarding illness unless prior arrangements have been made with the nurse.**

Please keep your student home if they show illness symptoms such as: fever, diarrhea, vomiting, deep cough, or any related symptoms from potentially communicable diseases. Children with a fever of 100 degrees or higher must be fever-free for 24 hours- without the use of fever reducing medications- before returning to school. **If your student has been diagnosed with a contagious illness,** please contact the Health Center so parents of other students in the class can be notified as needed. Please call your student's doctor for advice on an illness. Do not send sick students to school to be evaluated by the nurse.

Chronic Health Conditions:
If your student has been diagnosed with a chronic health condition, please contact the nurse immediately. The nurse will work with you through the DVUSD protocols/procedures necessary to ensure a healthy and safe environment for your child during the school day.

PE Excusals:
Students requesting to be excused from PE must bring a note signed by their parent or guardian to the school nurse. The nurse will then write an "excused from PE" pass for the student to take to PE. Any request for an excuse for three or more PE classes may require communication or coordination with the school nurse. All injuries requiring any type of orthopedic support or device on campus must be reported with a medical excuse and be cleared through the Health Center.

BEHAVIOR MATRIX

Below are the academic and social behaviors that are expected of all Desert Sky students. These are taught to students at the beginning of the school year, and re-visited throughout the year.

THE DESERT S.K.Y. WAY

	Classroom	Anywhere Anytime	Technology
Safe	• Keep hands, feet, and stuff to yourself • Lead by example • Arrive on time	• Be where you're supposed to be • Use self-control • Be considerate of others • Keep campus clean	• Use devices appropriately • Put away personal devices • Report damage in a timely manner
Kind	• Be someone others can count on • Encourage someone • Use positive words	• Help others • Use appropriate language • Include others and be open to different ideas	• Be a positive influence • Demonstrate digital citizenship
Your Best	• Actively participate • Embrace mistakes, learn, keep going • Take responsibility • Follow directions • Ask for help	• Take pride in being a Thunderbolt • See something, say something • Resist peer pressure	• Be prepared for the day • Stay focused and on task

The "Desert S.K.Y Way"

Desert Sky uses a program for positive social and academic behaviors called, "Be Good People". All staff and students on the Desert Sky campus share a common language and recognition of the "Desert S.K.Y. Way". Through the "Be Good People" lessons and the "Desert S.K.Y. Way" we support social and academic behaviors, and how they directly impact behavior and academics. Students learn to recognize their feelings, manage impulses and emotions, problem-solve and build meaningful relationships.

At Desert Sky, we are proud to teach and reinforce the **Desert S.K.Y. Way**—a set of core values that guide how Thunderbolts treat themselves, others, and their environment every day. The letters in S.K.Y. stand for:

- **S – Safe:** We take care of ourselves and those around us. Thunderbolts follow expectations, use kind words and actions, and help make our campus a physically and emotionally safe place to learn and grow.

- **K – Kind:** We treat everyone with respect, empathy, and patience. Being kind means showing understanding even when it's hard and lifting others up with our words and actions.

- **Y – Your Best:** We come to school ready to learn, grow, and contribute. Thunderbolts take pride in their effort, persevere through challenges, and strive for progress, not perfection.

These values are woven into everything we do, from classroom expectations to how we treat one another in the hallways, cafeteria, and beyond. With the Desert S.K.Y. Way as our daily compass, Thunderbolts create a community that is safe, supportive, and focused on becoming the best version of ourselves.

HANDLING CONFLICT/REPORTING ISSUES

Peer Issues:

Everybody experiences issues with peers from time to time, even as adults. The key is to find ways to peacefully resolve issues so that you learn how to handle conflict appropriately, and can avoid having the issue continue or get worse. Please refer to the student handbook for guidance for how students should handle peer conflict.

When students have a low level concern with a peer, they are asked to:

- Talk with a trusted adult to get your feelings out.
- Journal, or write a letter, to express your feelings.
- Talk it through with that individual.
- Request a peer mediation through the counseling department.

When students have a higher level of concern, they are asked to:

- Report it to an adult on campus.
- Request a peer mediation through the counseling department.
- Fill out student statement form.
- Submit a "See something, say something" report online either through the link on our school or district website.

See something, say something:

Students are a key factor in helping us to maintain a safe campus and environment. It is an expectation that students at Desert Sky report possible issues to administration so that we can handle situations

proactively instead of reactively. ***We maintain confidentiality, even if a student files a report in person***. Things students are expected to report include, but are not limited to:

- Potential fights, or rumors about fights
- Weapons
- Threats—even if students do not think the person would ever do something, or think that it is a joke
- Vandalism
- Safety hazards on campus that could result in someone getting injured

Social Media:

What students post on social media represents who they are as a person, and who they are as a Desert Sky Middle School student. It is difficult to convey meaning, tone and intent with just words in a text or social media post. Frequently, written messages are misunderstood, and that creates issues between people. We encourage students to choose their words carefully. Before posting something, or sending a text message, they should to ask themselves:

- Does this message accurately represent my beliefs and values as a person?
- Does posting this message help someone or hurt someone? Could it lead to a person getting hurt physically, or hurt their feelings?
- Could this message be misinterpreted? If so, do not send or post it. If you choose to post it, are you ready to handle the consequences?
- Could this message offend others? If you choose to post it, are you ready to handle the consequences?
- Would my parent/guardian/adult approve of what I am about to post? If not, do not send it or post it.
- If the school sees this, would I receive a consequence?
    - It is important to note that, depending on the situation, you may receive school consequences…even if you send or post a message outside of school hours.

Other things students should consider are:

- Even if the post or message is deleted, someone has probably already taken a screenshot of it. Once something is out there, it cannot be taken back.
- Jobs and colleges frequently look at social media, and what someone posts can affect whether or not they get a job or are accepted into a school.

Life can be challenging. However, we **all** experience struggles. When others choose to be mean, we encourage our students to choose to be kind. Nobody knows what another person is dealing with or going through behind closed doors, and one kind word or gesture can turn a person's whole day around. If a student is having difficulty navigating how to draft a message, or have a conflict with another person, please encourage your student to reach out to their counselor or other outside resource.

COUNSELING

Counseling and Guidance:
The Counseling Department is an outstanding resource for students and families. Each grade level is assigned a Counselor. Our Counselors advise students in academic matters and address attendance concerns. The Desert Sky Counseling Department also has a mental health counselor for brief therapy and resources for families. Your Counselor is a person with whom a student should feel free to discuss any problems that may arise. In order to see your Counselor about a concern, please fill out a request online or email the Counselor individually. Once you have made a request, the Counselor will send a pass for you when they are available. The Counseling Department maintains a page on the DSMS website at Staff Directory - Desert Sky Middle School

Resources:
- **Suicide and Crisis Line:** no cost help 24-hours a day, 988
- **Teen Lifeline**: a 24-hour, no cost service with trained peer counselors 3-9PM; texting available, 602-248-8336
- **Mercy Maricopa Behavioral Health Crisis Line**: no cost help 24-hours a day, 602-222-9444
- **One In Ten**: no cost supports and resources, 602-279-0894 www.onenten.org
- **Red Light Rebellion**: a no cost, 24-hour service with trained staff to assist with concerns of human trafficking, 1-888-373-7888
- **Mind 24/7** – Walk in mental health - https://www.mind24-7.com
- **Psychology Today** - Psychiatrist, psychologist and mental health counselor search - https://www.psychologytoday.com/us
- **Empact:** Suicide prevention hotline, no cost help 24-hours a day, 480-784-1500
- **Empact Sexual Assault Hotline:** hotline, no cost help 24-hours a day, 480-736-4949
- **Banner Thunderbird Medical Center:** Emergency mental health evaluation, 602-865-5555

DESERT SKY DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES

All students and their families are expected to read and be familiar with expectations, policies and procedures as outlined in the Deer Valley Unified School District Student Rights & Responsibilities Handbook. The complete Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook can be found at Handbooks - Deer Valley Unified School District. Below are some highlights:

Administration Discretion:
Administration will exercise discretion when determining consequences and may assign a more or less severe consequence than outlined in the guidelines.

Alternative Discipline:
Alternative discipline is a framework for assigning meaningful teaching opportunities to students. When

addressing behaviors or values inconsistent with building a positive and safe academic community, Desert Sky staff may incorporate instructional, reflective and/or restorative learning opportunities into consequences when appropriate.

Alternative learning opportunities are approaches that prioritize building and repairing relationships through dialogue, accountability, and community involvement. They focus on resolving conflicts by bringing affected parties together to find solutions and repair harm, emphasizing understanding and responsibility over punitive measures.

Community service may be assigned as a behavioral consequence. The school administration will determine the amount of time to be served and must approve the form of community service. Community services provided may include, but are not limited to, cafeteria clean-up, beautification of the campus, or services provided outside of the school campus such as volunteerism through community programs.

Detention:

Teachers and Desert Sky staff may assign lunch detentions or after school detentions to students as discipline. Detentions will be scheduled as soon as possible. When assigning a detention, a teacher or staff member will attempt to reach out to the student's parent or guardian to notify them of the consequence.

Lunch detentions - a student may bring their lunch, or have a lunch provided for them. They will go straight to the OCR room on the scheduled day of their lunch detention at the start of their lunch time. After school detentions - a time will be needed to be arranged for pick up unless the student is walking or riding a bike home. The classroom teacher will reach out to home to schedule a time. If the student is a bus rider, another way of pickup must be arranged by the parent/guardian.

Progressive Discipline:

Progressive discipline allows for discipline to be carried over year to year, school to school. For example, if a student is disciplined once for Endangerment during their 5th grade year and then again for Endangerment during their 7th grade year, the later incident may be categorized as a second offense and may warrant a more severe consequence than the minimum consequence listed in the Student Rights & Responsibility Handbook.

Searches:

School officials have the right to search and seize property, including school property temporarily assigned to students, when there is reason to believe that some material or matter detrimental to health, safety, and welfare of the student(s) exists. Searches are not conducted due to theft or loss of personal property.The searches will be conducted out of the presence of other students and in a private room.

In extreme conditions, the District/school official shall contact the local law enforcement agency. Contraband materials may be seized when found in the course of a search. Those items will be turned over to the correct department.

Student Bullying/Harassment/Intimidation/Violence:

Please review the District Student Violence, Harassment, Intimidation/Bullying policy in your copy of the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook. An electronic copy of the handbook can be found on the

district website. Look for handbooks at Handbooks - Deer Valley Unified School District. ***Please refer to your copy of the Student Rights and Responsibilities (SR&R) for more information on school and district discipline guidelines, including infractions, infraction descriptions, and consequences.***

Tardy to Class:

Students are expected to arrive to class on time. Desert Sky has a 3 minute passing period in between each class period, with a 1 minute warning bell. Students are expected to get water and use the bathroom during this time, however, they may go to their teacher first to get permission for more time if needed. In order to maximize instructional time, Desert Sky Middle School has implemented a structured tardy policy. Tardies are tracked **per class period** and **reset each quarter**.

- **First Tardy** – The classroom teacher emails the Office Classroom Recorder (OCR). The OCR records the tardy in PowerSchool and sends an email to the parent/guardian notifying them of the first offense.
- **Second Tardy** – The same procedure occurs, with the parent/guardian notified of the second offense.
- **Third Tardy** – The OCR emails the parent/guardian and assigns a **lunch detention**.
- **Fourth Tardy** – The OCR emails the parent/guardian and assigns **two lunch detentions**.
- **Fifth Tardy** – The OCR emails the parent/guardian and assigns **two lunch detentions**.
- **More than 5 Tardies** – The matter is referred to school administration for additional consequences.

We encourage families to work with students to ensure timely arrival to every class.

Threats & Threat Assessment Procedures:

General Policy & Consequences

Every threat to self or others is taken with the utmost seriousness. Administration will thoroughly investigate any situation involving communication regarding death threats, mass violence, weapons, explosive devices, or threats against school property. This includes investigating exhibited behaviors that suggest a substantial risk of violence, even if a direct threat was not openly communicated.

- **Investigation:** School administration may partner with law enforcement to conduct these investigations.
- **Disruption & Rumors:** Rules apply to anyone who disrupts the learning environment. This includes making false reports or deliberately spreading rumors and fabricated information.
- **Legal Action:** When situations warrant, local police will be contacted, and criminal charges may be filed.

The Threat Assessment Process

Parents are highly encouraged to discuss the severe ramifications of making threats with their children. To maintain a secure learning environment, Desert Sky and district leadership utilize a formal Threat Assessment Process to evaluate potential risks and reduce the likelihood of future violence.

- **Team Evaluation:** A multi-disciplinary team will convene to gather information, evaluate the validity and level of the threat, and outline the necessary steps to keep the school safe.

- **Placement Changes:** If the threat assessment indicates that the risk is too great for the student to safely return to campus, administration will immediately begin the process to change the student's educational placement, or pursue a long-term suspension or expulsion.

For complete details on the steps taken during this process, please refer to the *DVUSD Student Rights & Responsibilities Handbook* - Handbooks - Deer Valley Unified School District.