



Desert Sage High School

2023/2024

Student & Family Handbook

Desert Sage High School

3434 East Broadway Boulevard

Tucson, AZ 85716

Phone: 520-365-3766

Website: www.desertsageschool.org

Mailing Address: PO Box 44008 Tucson, AZ 85733

About Public Waldorf Education

Desert Sage High School is an Initiative Member of the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education. Public Waldorf Education is guided by the following Seven Core Principles:

1. Public Waldorf education is founded on a coherent image of the developing human being.
2. An understanding of child development guides all aspects of the educational program within established legal mandates.
3. Public Waldorf education exists to serve both the individual and society.
4. Public Waldorf schools foster a culture of healthy relationships.
5. Public Waldorf schools work to increase diversity and access to all sectors of society.
6. School leadership is conducted through shared responsibilities within established legal structures.
7. Public Waldorf schools cultivate a life-long love of learning and self-knowledge.

Mission Statement

Guided by the Principles of Public Waldorf Education, we celebrate diversity, embrace equity, and cultivate inclusion to create space for an educational experience that bridges opportunity gaps, develops students' academic and life skills, and inspires lifelong learning.

Vision Statement

We envision a world where an unwavering belief in the dignity of truth honors and celebrates each individual's unique gifts and empowers their self-agency.

Values

We engage our students, their peers and families, and the larger community through:

- Deep and meaningful relationships of respect and empathy
- Arts-infused exploration and project-based collaboration
- Community and global action that sustains the planet our students will inherit

Administration

Pedagogical Director: Sarah Bromer
Community Director: Venus-Tyané Kuya
Administrative Director: David Wagner
Administrative Assistant: Austin Allison

Campus Hours

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 8:00 am to 4:00 pm

Doors open to students at 8:30 am and close at 3:20 pm

Wednesday 8:00 am to 3:00 pm

Doors open to students at 8:30 am and close at 12:30 for early release.

Visitors

All visitors, including parents, must report to the front office to sign in to receive a visitor's pass. Student visitors are not allowed on campus except those participating in a three day trial, campus tours, or other pre-approved events. Failure to do so constitutes trespass and may be reported.

GENERAL SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Nondiscrimination Policy

Desert Sage School fosters a climate of purposeful inclusion, where all feel safe, valued, cared for, and given an opportunity to form meaningful connections. Desert Sage School cherishes the diversity of humanity. It is in this spirit that Desert Sage School affirms its ethical and legal commitment to a policy of equal opportunity and nondiscrimination.

Desert Sage School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), national and ethnic origin (ancestry), sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, political affiliation, and age to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the School, including in admission and enrollment. Desert Sage School abides by the procedures mandated by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and will provide eligible students with disabilities a free appropriate public education (FAPE), including following Section 504 plans and Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).

Teacher Qualifications

Parents and legal guardians have the right to view teachers' resumé. Teacher resumé are located at the front office.

Address and Phone Number Changes

Changes of address, email, or telephone number should be reported as soon as possible to DSHS's Administrative Director, David Wagner at david.wagner@desertsageschool.org or to the Administrative Assistant, Austin Allison at austin.allison@desertsageschool.org.

Van Transportation

The following safety rules apply anytime a student is a passenger in a DSHS vehicle or rented vehicle:

- The driver has absolute authority while students are in the van or while waiting to board.
- Students must board the van one at a time.
- Seat belts must be used wherever they are provided
- Students will conduct themselves in a manner that will not distract the driver's concentration, or endanger the safety of themselves or other students. Examples of inappropriate conduct include yelling, standing when the van is in motion, using profanity, tampering with safety devices, vandalizing the van, putting anything out of the window.
- Any student who endangers the well-being or safety of others will be removed from the van and may be denied transportation.
- Students are responsible for cleaning up after themselves.
- Students must ride in their assigned van unless prior permission is granted by the Administration
- Van misconduct will result in school consequences that may include suspension.

Off-Limit Areas and Campus Boundaries

Students are expected to remain within the campus boundaries during the school day and stay clear of off-limit areas unless under the supervision of a teacher or with permission of a teacher or administrator. The following areas are off-limits to students during school hours:

- West side of the shipping container
- Alley behind the building, remain north of the wall at all times
- Sidewalk north of the parking lot
- Bank of America parking lot
- Teacher's Lounge
- Hallways while class is in session
- Student Lounge while class is in session
- Restroom: Only one student is permitted in a restroom stall at a time. Students may not loiter in campus restrooms.

Cell Phone Policy

Desert Sage School prioritizes community and relationships; therefore, students are expected to leave their phones in a cell phone locker during academic work time and other activities. They are free to use their phones before school, after school and during the last 5 minutes of lunch. On field trips and outings, phones may sometimes be used, depending on the situation. If parents need to reach students during class periods, please call the office at **520-365-3766**.

Dress Code

Students are invited to celebrate and express their personal style in ways that do not disrupt the learning environment.

- Wear comfortable and school-appropriate clothing that completely covers all private parts of the body. Desert Sage is an active place where students often engage in movement classes or activities. Keep that in mind as you select your outfits for the day.

- Do not wear items that promote violence, gang-affiliation, discrimination, or prejudice.
- Do not wear items that depict, advertise, or suggest drugs, alcohol, or illegal substances.
- On field trips, students are highly encouraged to wear their Desert Sage School clothing and accessories, as well as comfortable footwear suitable for walking, and hats.

Field Trips

A field trip is an extension of the instructional program; therefore, all school rules and regulations still apply.

Fire, Disaster, Emergency Drills

Evacuation routes are clearly posted in each room and bathroom. At the sound of the alarm, the following behaviors are expected of the students:

- Students must leave rooms or outside areas as quickly as possible in an orderly fashion.
- Students in classrooms are expected to remain with their class and meet in the designated area.
- Students who are not in a class should go to the nearest exit and join a class nearby, and check in with the nearest teacher or administrator.
- Students are to remain in the designated area until an “all clear” signal has been announced.

Food and Beverages on Campus

- Food is permitted in the Cafeteria and must not enter the classroom unless permission has been granted by a teacher or administrator.
- Classroom teachers may allow closed container beverages and snacks as appropriate to meet the needs of a student, and at the teacher’s discretion.
- Outside food deliveries are not permitted during the school day.

Fundraising

All fundraising efforts must have prior approval from all three administrators and/or the governing board.

Medications

According to A.R.S. §15-344, A.R.S. §15-346 students may not have prescription or over the counter medications on their possessions during the school day. Students who must take medication at school must follow these procedures:

- Parents/guardians must bring the medication to school personally.
- The medicine must be prescribed by the student's health care provider accompanied by the “Medication Consent” form signed by the parent/guardian.
- Medication must be brought to the front office in the original container, labeled with the student's name, date, dosage, and time it is to be given.
- Medication will be administered and documented by the administration only.

Mandatory Reporting

Under A.R.S. §13-3620 a school employee may be subject to a class six felony criminal charge for failing to make a mandatory report concerning a “reportable sex offense.” A school employee may also be subject to a Class One misdemeanor criminal charge for failing to make a

mandatory report concerning physical injury, or child abuse, or neglect. Reports must be made to the appropriate law enforcement officials. Reports will always be made when a minor is the victim of serious harm, whether caused by self, an adult, or another minor. Reports may need to be filed for such actions as fighting, grabbing of the buttocks or breasts, “goosing” or “groping,” and sexual propositions.

Attendance Policy

Public Waldorf Education is rooted in meaningful experiences and community engagement. Accordingly, attendance is essential to our approach to teaching and learning. While we understand that absences are sometimes necessary, we encourage students and parents to embrace the discipline of being present at school.

Late Arrival

- Parents/guardians may call the office at 520-365-3766 prior to the student arriving, or may physically accompany the student to sign in.
- The student may also bring a parent/guardian/doctor note to the office and sign in. Absences will be waived with a doctor’s note.
- Students who miss 25% of the class will be counted as absent, regardless of the reason.
- Fraudulent emails, notes, or phone calls will be referred to the administrator for disciplinary action.

Reporting Absences

Parents/guardians are responsible for reporting student absences by calling 520-365-3766 or filling out the online absence form.

Excused Absences

An absence from school is considered “Excused” for the following reasons:

- Bereavement
- Observance of religious holidays
- Family vacations
- Family emergencies
- Medical appointments
- Illness

For any of the above reasons, the parent or legal guardian must verify that the absence was excused.

Unexcused Absences

Pursuant to ARS § 15-803, absences are considered excessive when the number of absent days exceeds 10% of the number of required attendance days. Accordingly, if a student has **10 or more unexcused absences in a semester-long course, the student may not receive credit**. Further, according to ARS § 15-901, if a student has **10 consecutive unexcused absences, the student must be withdrawn**. The withdrawal shall be retroactive to the last day of attendance or excused absence.

Consequences for Excessive Absences (Excused or Unexcused) per Semester

- Tier One example: 5 absences Parents/guardians are notified in writing
- Tier Two example: 7 absences Parents/guardians are notified in writing and students may be placed on an attendance plan/contract.
- Tier Three example: 10 absences Parents/guardians are notified in writing that the student may not receive credit for the course they have accrued 10 or more absences unless an attendance appeal is submitted and approved by the administrators.

Planned Absences

Attendance is essential to the academic progress and success of students; therefore; all excessive absences disrupt the educational process. However, DSHS understands that there are times when parents/guardians determine that other activities/experiences are vital to the student's well-being and development, and in some cases the students need to be excused from school to participate in those activities or experiences. Here are the guidelines for such cases:

- Parents/guardians must contact the school in writing at least 1 week in advance of the planned absence
- The student and/or parent/guardian are responsible for coordinating and managing all make-up.
- It is the responsibility of the student to coordinate with their teacher if they miss a test or major assignment.
- When a student has been absent for illness, reasonable time will be given for make-up work once the student returns.

Students Must Remain on Campus Unless Permission is Provided

- Parents/guardians are required to come into the building, check in with an administrative staff, and sign their student out before removing them from campus.
- Juniors have the privilege of open campus lunch following these steps and guidelines:
 - Students are responsible for their own actions while they are off-campus. The school provides no supervision of off-campus activities and assumes no liability for any accident or injury that occurs while off-campus.

In order to obtain and retain off campus lunch privileges, each student:

- Must have a permission form on file.
- Must be in good standing in all classes. Five (5) tardies to any class, including MLB will result in the loss of off campus lunch privileges.
- Must be on time to the class following their lunch period. One minute late is considered late.
- Must return to school for the remainder of the school day. Note: If a student becomes ill while off campus, a parent/guardian must call the school office to report the absence. All absences are chargeable absences towards the

attendance policy.

- Will not leave food, drink, or litter in the parking lot.
- May not transport any student who does not have a student transportation parent permission form.

Failure to abide by any of the above rules will result in loss of open campus lunch for the remainder of quarter, semester, or year.

Chronic Illness

- Students with a chronic illness or health condition that affects school attendance or participation should meet with an administrator/teacher to develop a support plan.
- Parents/guardians must inform the school each time a student will miss class or a class activity due to their illness or health condition.
- Students with chronic health conditions which result in absence, must demonstrate proficiency of course standards and benchmarks to earn course credit.
- Required course work and assessments will be determined by each teacher and, as needed, in consultation of the Pedagogical Director.
- Students with chronic health limitations that may affect Movement participation courses must meet with the Pedagogical Director and the Movement teacher to discuss a support plan.

Discipline Policy

Desert Sage School believes that the foundation of any discipline system is trust, strong relationships, a developmentally appropriate curriculum, and a school environment that is positive, rhythmic, and predictable. When students struggle with behavior, DSS follows the discipline matrix below:

Tier	Description of Types of Behavior	Possible Consequences
Tier 1	Disruption of learning Rude or disrespectful behavior Excessive or disruptive talking Mistreatment of school property Inappropriate physical behavior or language Tardiness or absence from class Dress code violations	Conversation and clarification of behavior expectations by teacher Meeting with teacher, advisor, or director Call home Self-reflection work
	Bullying, including misuse of technology or social media to	Removal from class

Tier 2	<p>impact or target a school community member.</p> <p>Possession of drug-related paraphernalia</p> <p>Racism and Discrimination</p> <p>Plagiarism</p> <p>Lying or withholding information about a serious infraction or threat to the school community</p> <p>Vandalism, tagging of school or community property during or before/after school hours</p> <p>Skipping class or tardiness that is purposeful or related to student choice</p> <p>Repeated classroom interruptions</p>	<p>Possible Suspension</p> <p>Phone call home</p> <p>Mandatory meeting with parent/guardian</p> <p>Possible loss of privileges, mandatory school community service that is directly related to infraction, counseling, mentoring</p> <p>Restorative Meeting</p> <p>Behavior Contract</p>
Tier 3 Tier 3 (continued)	<p>Bullying, including misuse of technology or social media to impact or target a school community member.</p> <p>Possession of drug-related paraphernalia</p> <p>Racism and/or Discrimination</p> <p>Plagiarism</p> <p>Lying or withholding information about a serious infraction or threat to the school community</p> <p>Vandalism, tagging of school or community property during or before/after school hours</p> <p>Skipping class or tardiness that is purposeful or related to student choice</p> <p>Repeated classroom interruptions</p> <p>Repeated rude or disrespectful behaviors</p> <p>Repeated disruption or violation of classroom rules, including refusal to follow directions after multiple requests</p> <p>Verbal altercation</p>	<p>Automatic Suspension</p> <p>Mandatory meeting with parent/guardian to set goals</p> <p>A hearing before school's judiciary committee to determine whether the student will be expelled</p>

Facility and School Property

- Each student is expected to take pride in the physical appearance of the school.
- Any marking or marring of school property should be reported to the office at once.
- No student shall damage or deface any property belonging to the school.
- Discipline for damage to school property by students depends upon the circumstances.

- Students may be subject to discipline for willful damage or destruction of school property, including formal charges.
- All administrators, teachers, and students should be observant at all times to prevent damage or destruction of school property.

DSHS is a Drug, Alcohol, and Weapon Free Zone

It is a crime to possess, use, and distribute/sell on a “Drug, Alcohol, and Weapon Free Zone” (Free Zone) and violators are subject to suspension. A Free Zone is defined as any area within 300 feet of a school or its accompanying grounds, any public property within 1000 feet of a school or its accompanying grounds, or on a vehicle that transports pupils to and from school. Students who possess, use, distribute, or sell drugs within a Free Zone are subject to school disciplinary action.

Searches and/or Seizures

School officials may search and/or seize student property if there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search or seizure will reveal evidence that the student has violated or is violating the law or a school policy, procedure or rule. This authority extends to student backpacks, purses, clothes, and vehicles.

Suspension

Students who have been suspended off campus may not be on campus for any curricular or extracurricular activity (including dances) until the suspension has ended. Suspended students who choose to enter campus grounds may be reported and charged with trespassing and police officials may be notified. Additional suspension may also be imposed.

ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Receiving Course Credit

To receive course credit, a student must achieve **at least a grade of C (70% score with evidence of meeting course content and expectations) and at least 90% attendance**. Students who missed class or assignment credit will have an opportunity to demonstrate evidence that academic expectations have been met.

Generally, the grading policy for core courses is as follows:

90-100%/Letter Grade A - Highly Proficient: Student achievement has gone well beyond the evidence criteria for understanding and applying course content and meeting course criteria. The student has clearly performed additional or independent work demonstrating passion and enthusiasm for the material.

80-89%/Letter Grade B - Proficient Evidence of strong student proficiency on course criteria.

70-79%/Letter Grade C - Nearing Proficiency Student has met the minimum course criteria.

0-69%/Letter Grade F - Not Proficient Student has performed insufficient work for evaluation or intervention, has fallen far below the expectations for course criteria and/or has attended less than 90% of class time with no makeup effort. Students will have the option of repeating a class for which an F was earned.

Pass - In extenuating circumstances, students may have the option to take a class Pass/Fail.

Incomplete - In extenuating circumstances, a student may be given an opportunity to complete a class after the semester has ended.

Note that DSHS has elected to not offer a grade level of D as it does not meet the necessary requirements for college entrance credit; additionally the student has not demonstrated mastery and is not prepared to advance. To adequately meet the academic needs of students support will be provided to allow students the opportunity to achieve course mastery.

Graduation Requirements

DSHS prepares its students for success in college, in the post-high-school job market, and as engaged citizens of the 21st century. Our graduation requirements meet or exceed A.R.S. §15-701.01 requirements for graduation. The statewide minimum course of study requires students to take a minimum of 22 credits. DSHS has additional requirements for graduation, including 1 additional credit of Fine Arts; 2 credits of Music; 2 credits of World Language; .5 credits of Health, 1.5 credits of Movement Education (P.E.), and 1 credit of Advisory.

Students must fulfill the Arizona State testing and DSHS Credit Requirements (30) in order to graduate.

English	4
Math	4
Science	4
Social Studies	3.5
Fine Arts	2
World Language	2
Music	2
Health	.5
Movement (PE)	1.5
Advisory	1
Other Electives	5.5
Civics Test (per A.R.S. § 15-701.01)	Pass

Note that there are fewer required additional electives at DSHS, because we have a greater requirement of fine arts and music classes, as well as other prescribed classes (World Language, Advisory, Movement, and Health) which are traditionally elective courses.

**The Administration, Faculty, and Board members are thrilled and honored to have you and your family a part of our DSHS community! Please don't hesitate to reach out with questions.
Have a splendid 2023-2024 school year!**