



Valley of the Sun Waldorf Association
dba Desert Marigold School

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PARENT AND STUDENT HANDBOOK

2020 - 2021

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Introduction

Successful education of children results from a strong partnership between home and school. Making Desert Marigold your school of choice means that you have decided to become a contributing member of a community committed to education as a source of social renewal. Just as you have expectations of Desert Marigold, as a school and a community, the school community and organization have expectations of you as a parent. In fact, the Waldorf educational experience you want for your child is possible only if we are all working together.

The purpose of this handbook is to acquaint you with the policies and procedures of daily school life in order to make your participation as a parent and community member as enjoyable and productive as possible.

If you have questions about any of the information presented, please don't hesitate to contact us at dmsadmin@desertmarigold.org or call 602-243-6909.

“Love is higher than opinion.

If people love one another, the most varied opinions can be reconciled.
This is one of the most important tasks for mankind today, and in the future:
that we should learn to live together and understand one another.
If this human fellowship is not achieved, all talk of development is empty.”

Rudolf Steiner

School Operations

School Hours

Gates open at 8:00 a.m.

PreK/Kindergarten: 8:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

Grades 1-8: 8:15 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Grades 9-11: 8:15 a.m. - 2:40 p.m.

Grade 12: 8:15 a.m. - 1:45 p.m.

Morning Drop-off

To facilitate the safe reopening of Desert Marigold School for 2020-2021 school year, the following procedures are established for the drop off and pick up of the students.

Drop-Off: The morning flow of traffic is to enter the main parking lot of Desert Marigold School through the main entrance driveway. Drop-off locations are marked by grade number. All students must exit to the right of their vehicle. The driver must stay in the vehicle. After the student has safely departed the vehicle, drivers continue through the driveway and exit the property onto 28th Street.

Note: For **Preschool** and **Kindergarten** parents/ guardians, designated Early Childhood drop-off is the main entrance driveway in the designated driving lane adjacent to the main shade structure in front of the administrative building. Parents can park in the lanes to quickly get their students out of their vehicles and walk them to their teachers who will be waiting to receive the children under the shade structure. This parking lane is for Early Childhood only. Once students are safely dropped off with their teachers, parents will promptly return to their vehicles and exit the campus by merging with the grades traffic as necessary to minimize contact and interaction and for safety purposes. Please remember to be patient, no cutting or passing in the parking lot.

*******Face coverings are required to enter onto campus to walk your child to the designated preschool and kindergarten drop-off areas and to enter the office. *******

Students **MUST** wear face masks:

- For drop-off
- When they are within 6 ft or less of others
- When they go to the restroom
- When the teacher/adult requests them to put on a mask.
- For dismissal and pick-up

*Students can have mask breaks:

- When they are physically distanced more than 6 ft from one another
- When they are at recess
- When they are at lunch

*Students MUST bring their own water bottle.

At Drop-off and Dismissal: They will proceed to the handwashing station and once safely distanced in the classroom they may safely take the mask off and place it in their sealed bag. Students will remain 6 feet or more apart. Students must bring 2 masks and 2 ziploc bags for their storage.

Pick-up: Drive through pick-up follows the same traffic pattern as the morning drop-off. Each grade is a separate cohort to avoid too many students gathering together in the same place. Each cohort would stage in their respective locations and await pick-up in the same location as the morning drop-off. The teachers will provide their parents with specific instructions about pick-up and drop-off.

Preschool and kindergarten parents may park using the same protocol and location as the morning drop-off to retrieve their students and walk them to the vehicles.

Please do not linger or wander the campus upon picking up your early childhood student.

Please do not leave your car unattended in the drop-off area.

Please drive slowly—5 mph on campus at all times.

We encourage carpooling. Please list all your carpool drivers on your child’s registration form. If your child is going home with someone other than an established carpool, please let the office know prior to that time and add that driver to your carpool list.

High School students will be ready at pick-up area on the east side of campus outside of the High School.

Attendance Policy

All students are expected to be in attendance every day school is in session. Regular attendance is essential for success in school; therefore, absences shall be excused only for necessary and important reasons. We do, however, realize that health and family take precedent, but we ask families to plan activities on days and times when school is in session.

Our attendance policy is governed by ARS 15-803 – School attendance; exemptions; definitions:

1. It is unlawful for any child between six (6) and sixteen (16) years of age to fail to attend school during the hours school is in session, unless excused pursuant to section ARS 15-803.
2. A child who is habitually truant or who has excessive absences, may be adjudicated an incorrigible child. Absences may be considered excessive when the number of absent days exceeds 10% (18 days) of the number of required attendance days prescribed in section ARS 15-803, subsection B, paragraph 1.
3. As used in this section:
 - a. “Habitually truant” means a child who is truant for at least five (5) school days unexcused within a school year.
 - b. “Truant” means an unexcused absence for at least one (1) class period during the day.

c. "Truant child" means a child who is between six (6) and sixteen (16) years of age and who is not in attendance at a public or private school during the hours that school is in session, unless excused as provided by this section.

When a student needs to be absent, we ask that parents/guardians call the attendance line at 602-243-6909 Ext. 2 **before 8:00 a.m. each day** the student is absent. State law mandates that the school record a reason for all student absences. This greatly reduces the need to call you at work or home to confirm the absence. The absence will be **unexcused if no reason is given or if the absence is not reported by 8:30 a.m.** When calling, please leave the child's name (with spelling), date of absence, grade level, reason for absence and a telephone number where you can be reached in case we have questions. Federal law requires that we make every attempt to contact parents/guardians on the day the student is absent.

Late Arrival/Early Departure

Parents/guardians picking up students early from school are required to report to the front desk and sign their student out. However, unless absolutely necessary, signing students out is discouraged during the school day as being in school is a priority. If at all possible, parents/guardians should refrain from scheduling appointments during the school day.

Following the distinction between excused and unexcused absences described above, DMS makes a distinction between cases of excused tardiness (e.g., due to a doctor's appointment, illness, or other family business) and unexcused accidental lateness to school (due to a student oversleeping, transportation problems, or some other non-medically related reason).

The school disapproves of the accumulation of unexcused late arrivals to school, irrespective of the circumstances. Persistent first-period tardiness is highly disruptive of instruction and undermines student morale.

Any time a student arrives after the official school start time, the student is required to sign-in at the front desk. For the safety of all, parents and students may not proceed directly to class without first checking in with the front office. Upon the fifth tardy day/early departure, the student will be credited with one absence day. Ten or more days absent in a semester may result in the student not being promoted to the next grade level and/or losing credit.

Family Vacations

All family vacations should be scheduled during school breaks. Absences due to vacations will be considered unexcused absences. An unexcused absence longer than ten consecutive days will automatically result in the withdrawal of the student from the school. Unexcused absences will automatically result in excess of eighteen days will be considered to be truancy. Special consideration will be made for absences due to bereavement. The school is not obligated to modify or accommodate curricular requirements due to unexcused absences. Unexcused absences are not a waiver of work responsibilities.

Bereavement

Special considerations will be made for absences due to bereavement.

Early Pick-up Procedures

Notification:

If your student needs to leave before the end of the school day for previously scheduled appointments, please follow the following procedures:

- Call the DMS Attendance Line by 9:00 a.m. the morning of the early pick-up. Please leave a message with your name, your student's name, your child's teacher, and the time by which you will need to pick up your student.
- Our Front Office will notify your student's teacher and instructional assistant of the time by which the student needs to arrive at the front office for pick up by the parent/guardian.
- Parents must check in with the front office to sign out the student. Parents may not proceed directly to the classroom to retrieve the student to ensure the safety of all. We will have the student waiting for your retrieval at the front office and the scheduled time.
- If you do not have a previously scheduled appointment but need to retrieve your student on an urgent basis, please try to provide us with 1-hour notice, if at all possible, so we can have your student ready and waiting at the front office.

This procedure is necessary to ensure the safety of our students on campus and to minimize disruption to the class of a student who requires early pick-up.

Communication

Desert Marigold School uses the following methods to communicate with and to strengthen our community:

Parent Square

Important notices from the Executive Director, Board of Directors, class teachers, and Parent Council are posted on Parent Square.

Community Whiteboard

The whiteboard at the drop-off/pick-up area highlights upcoming activities. Check the whiteboard daily, as any unavoidable scheduling changes will be posted there.

Community Bulletin Board

Bulletin boards are set up at the office and outside the early childhood rooms for the purpose of posting general-interest notices of current events in the Valley, as well as for updating the community on various goings-on at the school. All postings must be brought to the office for approval and date stamping before being put up.

Parent Council Meetings

[Parent Council](#) meets monthly. It is composed of the Class Parent Representatives and any parents who

wish to attend. Regular reports about school events and developments take place, as well as planning and coordination. Class Parent Representatives also send out notices which provide information from the class teacher, as well as about community events and information from Parent Council.

Board Meetings

DMS operates as part of Valley of the Sun Waldorf Education Association (VSWEA), a 501 (c)(3) not-for-profit corporation. The [VSWEA Board of Directors](#) meets each month while school is in session. These are open meetings, and parents are welcome to attend. Agendas are posted outside the office and [online](#). During the year, there are also Budget or Finance meetings, which take place in the spring budgeting period or are called as needed. Minutes of Board meetings are posted on the website.

Town Halls

Town Hall meetings usually take place once a semester and include a presentation and Q&A may follow.

Student Dress Code

Please clarify with your child what portion of his/her wardrobe is school appropriate. Questions can be directed to your child's teacher or the administrative office.

Desert Marigold School recognizes that all students have intrinsic worth based on who they are and not on what they wear. We want to create an environment in which each student can develop their positive qualities, focus on learning, and contribute to the school community. We also believe that pressures related to clothing choice can distract students and undermine the school environment. The following dress code encourages self-discipline and is simple to manage. Styles must neither interfere with the educational process nor present a safety hazard.

If a student disregards any of these standards, they will not attend class, and a parent/guardian will be asked to bring a change of clothes or pick them up.

The standards of dress and all personal items (hats, bags, backpacks, lunch boxes, etc) are listed below.

1. Pre-school, Kindergarten, and Grades 1-8

Students must wear:

- Shirt with wide straps or sleeves in a solid color, all-over pattern, or issued by DMS
- Bottom: pants, shorts, leggings, dress, romper, skirt
- Closed-toed shoes with a back strap appropriate for the day's activities
- Hat (outdoors only)
- Sunglasses optional (outdoors only)

Students must wear sufficient clothing so that no bare skin or undergarment is visible in the front or back of the torso from the upper chest to below the buttocks. (As a test, if the student raises hands/arms, or bends over and bare skin is visible, then the clothing is not of appropriate length).

Students will wear modest clothing in the appropriate size. Students will keep their hair clean, neat, tied up when necessary, and in its natural shade. Students in grades 7-8 may wear subtle nail polish and make-up.

Students cannot wear:

- Single images, writing, numbers, large logos, or camouflage
- Images that create a hostile or intimidating environment
- Platforms, crocs, rubber clogs, high heeled shoes, or shoes with lights or wheels
- See-through, loose, tight, or sagging clothes
- Nail polish (including french tip), artificial nails or make-up (grades PreK-8)

2. Change of Clothes

Pre-schoolers, kindergartners, and 1st graders should bring the following items to have on hand if needed: extra shirt, bottom item, socks, and underwear. If your child is older, yet you feel they would benefit from having a change of clothes at school, contact your child's teacher.

3. Dressing Out for Movement Classes

Students in grades 5-8 will be required to dress out for movement classes. They will need to wear a t-shirt, bottom item, socks, athletic shoes, and a hat. It will be the student's responsibility to change during snack or lunch recess as required to be ready for movement class. (Religious exceptions allowed - speak directly with the movement teacher.)

4. High School: See the High School Handbook

5. Masks: For students who wear masks, they must be plain with no graphics, wording, or images.

Health and Safety

No Dogs on Campus

For safety reasons, we do not allow dogs on campus. The only regular exceptions to this rule are service animals or for complementary pedagogical reasons. On occasion, a teacher may seek approval from administration to plan an event involving animals. Such exceptions will be looked at on a case by case basis.

Sun Safety

Recent legislation requires schools to provide preventative education regarding excessive sun exposure. DMS has long supported the practice of wearing hats outdoors and will continue to educate students about sun safety.

Illness/Injury at School:

Depending on the nature of the illness/injury, the following procedures will be observed:

- Minor injuries or illnesses such as a cut, scrape, bruise, fever, vomiting, nosebleed, or sprain will receive first aid treatment, and the parent will be notified at dismissal, by call, or a note sent home. If the parent cannot be located, the emergency contact will be called to take the student for further care.
- For a potentially life-threatening injuries such as loss of consciousness, scorpion sting, and serious broken limb, a staff member with first aid training will stay with the student while another calls 911. As soon as the emergency call is completed, the parent will be called.

Under all circumstances, the appropriate accident report will be filled out and parents will be provided with a copy.

Keeping Your Child at Home When Ill

While trying to minimize time lost from illness, it is still imperative that children are kept home when necessary. Children should be kept at home under the following circumstances:

1. The child is not well enough to play actively outdoors or participate in daily Movement or Eurythmy classes.
2. The child has any of the following symptoms: fever, sore throat, green discharge from the nose, congested cough, discharge from the eyes, rash, or vomiting.
3. The child has something communicable, such as chicken pox, strep throat, lice, etc. In this case, please notify the school immediately so that we may inform others as necessary.

If a student becomes ill during the school day they will be sent to the office, and the parent will be called. If the parent cannot be reached, the emergency contact will be called. Please be sure you keep the office up to date with any changes in contact information. Students who are ill must be picked up within 45 minutes, as we do not have a dedicated nurse's office.

For this school year, please refer to COVID-related information and response guidelines in the event of a reported case. That information is provided on the ["return to school"](#) page.

Medication Policy

If it is necessary for your child to take medication during the school day you must complete a medication permission form or send written authorization including the following information:

1. First and last name of the student
2. Name of medication
3. Prescription number if any
4. Dosage and route of administration
5. Starting and ending dates of the dosage period if indicated
6. Times and frequency of administration
7. Reason for medication
8. Date of authorization
9. Signature of parent or guardian

In addition, these guidelines must be followed:

- We cannot administer any medication that has been transferred from the original container to another. Medication must be in the original, labeled package or bottle, with the child's name clearly marked on the container.

- Medication cannot be brought in by a child; it must be brought to the office by the parent or guardian.
- It is your responsibility as parent or guardian to pick up any unused medication. Items must be claimed no later than two weeks after the last day of school or the last day of the dosage period. Unclaimed items will be disposed.

In situations with serious medical conditions, a formal 504 plan will be required before medication can be administered.

Emergency Safety Procedures

Below is a summary of the DMS Emergency Response Plan (ERP). Because of the detailed and sensitive information about the school premises and emergency sheltering places in the ERP, it is not posted publicly online. However, our complete Emergency Response Plan is available *for viewing only* in the main office.

Crisis Management

The safety of the students and the security of the campus are of the utmost importance to the teachers and staff. In an emergency, the crisis management protocols in the Emergency Response Plan will be followed with director level staff managing the situation.

Evacuations

Regular fire drills take place to assure students know how to respond and are familiar with evacuation procedures.

Lockdown/Sheltering in Place

Should it become necessary shelter in place due to a natural disaster, severe weather or environmental hazard, or lock down due to a civil disturbance, or other dangerous circumstance beyond our control, these procedures will be followed:

- All students will shelter in place or brought into a safe space if outside.
- If a lockdown, doors and windows will be secured and locked and 911 will be called.
- Students and staff will remain in their locations until the campus is deemed secure and safe again or predetermined safe escape route(s) are utilized.

Parent Preparation

- Ensure that the emergency contact information for your child is always accurate and current.
- Opt in to the broadcast messaging service by adding your phone number in Parent Square. ([Click here for instructions](#))

Parent Notifications

- Parents will be notified in emergency situations as soon as possible by text blast via Parent Square and email.

- If no action is needed on the part of parents, the crisis management team will determine what form of reporting is necessary to inform parents.

Although your first reaction would be to call or rush to your child's school, we request you do the following:

- Please do not call or come to the school, this only complicates matters from a safety and security standpoint as it may hinder the efforts of emergency responders or police.
- Do not call your child directly because emergency protocols prohibit cell communications, other than by teachers, for safety reasons.
- Stay close to your phone and email for updates and instructions.
- Rely only on official communications from the school or public safety officials.
- If alternative pickup arrangements are indicated after an evacuation, students will be released ONLY to parents/guardians who are documented as emergency contacts.

Waldorf-Inspired Education and Assessment

Curriculum Overview and Parent Education

Desert Marigold School offers a Waldorf based curriculum that incorporates state standards. Waldorf education uses age appropriate hands-on activities, storytelling, art, drama, and movement to develop the child and hone their academic skills. As the children move through their unit of study, they create their own textbooks, which act as their academic portfolio. The core curriculum encompasses language arts, mythology, history and geography, science, and mathematics. The Class Teacher often is invited and chooses to take the same class of children through consecutive eight years of elementary school (grades 1-8), teaching all the main subjects. For the teacher, this means time to deeply know the children and help them unfold their gifts in addition to the enormous challenge of working with a new curriculum each year. For the children, this means stability and continuing guidance. Please note that this is not always the desired path or best choice for the teacher. This is the ideal that Desert Marigold School strives for. Please see the [curriculum pages](#) for specific grade and specialty class details.

We encourage parents to learn more about Waldorf pedagogy by visiting the [parent resources](#) page on the Desert Marigold website as well as attending all Parent Meetings hosted by the class teacher. Parent Council also offers a [parent enrichment](#) events.

Caring for the Environment

Wonder and respect for nature is an inherent element in a Waldorf-inspired education. The curriculum instills and nurtures those attitudes. As such, we must also take seriously the stewardship of our natural environment here at DMS. We actively practice the following: recycling, organic gardening, and rain harvesting. Our goal is to develop a shared sense of responsibility for the care of our campus. This involves cleaning up after oneself and others and working to make every corner of our campus beautiful.

Student Assessments

DMS uses many assessment tools: observation, student portfolios, informal assessments (quizzes and activities), unit or block tests, and state/federally mandated standardized tests (Galileo and AZMERIT).

These assessments help teachers continually adjust to meet the individual needs of students and also allow DMS to monitor how well we are meeting our goal of providing an exceptional learning environment. Throughout the year, parents are informed of student growth in the following ways:

- Informal conversation
- Parent evenings
- Fall parent/teacher conference
- Mid-year progress report
- Spring parent/teacher conference
- End-of-the-year progress report
- Annual standardized testing results

First Grade Readiness Assessment

The process of determining when a child is ready for first grade is a critical one that requires much care. Parent evenings are held during the year to familiarize parents with the objectives of kindergarten and the numerous indicators of first grade readiness. Discussions will continue through parent/teacher conferences. First grade assessments will be held at the start of the second semester. At the spring parent/teacher conferences, your child's teacher will inform you of your child's placement for the following year—either first grade or another year of kindergarten.

Report Cards and End of Year Narratives: Grades K-8

Report cards will be available online at the end of the fall/spring semesters. A year-end progress report will be sent out in June via email and the SchoolAdmin portal.

Parent/Teacher Conferences and Conversations

Formal parent/teacher conferences take place twice a year—usually in October and February. Check the school calendar on the website and Parent Square for specific dates. There may be other times when a teacher or parent would like to share observations with respect to a child's participation in our program. At such times, a parent/teacher conversation may be arranged by appointment. Parents and teachers can communicate via email or by calling the school and leaving a voicemail for the teachers. When there are attendance or discipline problems, additional parent/teacher conferences may be required.

Grading: 7-8

Grading begins in 7th grade. If a student does not complete all assigned work in a given grading period, the teacher will set a date by which the work must be completed or made up.

The teacher will communicate with families via email to discuss what is expected and by what date. This will need to be signed by both student and parent and returned to acknowledge both recognition of the situation and receipt of the notification. A conference may also be necessary.

If the student meets the due date, they will receive the appropriate passing grade letter grade on their

progress report. If they do not complete the work, they will receive a failing grade.

A student must pass at least 70% of the blocks taught in the grade to be promoted to the next grade.

Field Trips and Class Trip Procedures

Field Trips

Starting in 3rd grade, classes begin to travel off campus for some of their activities. These experiences may take the following forms:

Walking Field Trips

These are walks within a mile radius of the school, including the Farm at South Mountain, the Performing Arts Building at SMCC, SMCC library, etc. Permissions for walking field trips are made in the enrollment process and are kept on file in the office.

Day Trips by Car or Public Transportation

Parents must sign a permission slip every time a class goes on a field trip. One copy stays in the office and a second goes with the teacher. These permission slips provide the details of the trip and contain emergency contact information as a precaution.

Parent Volunteer Drivers

Unless public transportation is being used, we most commonly rely on parent volunteer drivers. All volunteer drivers must complete and sign a Volunteer Driver Form with proof of the following requirements:

- 21 years of age or older
- Valid Arizona State driver's license
- Valid car registration
- Valid auto insurance card
- Valid Fingerprint Clearance Card
- Signed Criminal History Affidavit

Overnight field trips: Drivers must have a valid Fingerprint Clearance Card issued by the Arizona Department of Public Safety.

Teachers are responsible to ensure that all parent drivers have completed the requirements before departing campus. The office will keep this information. This requirement pertains both to day field trips and extended class trips.

Dress Code While on Field Trips

Unless noted by the teacher, the standard dress code applies for field trips. Packing lists will be included for camping and longer class trips or any field trip that has specific dress requirements.

Food on Trips

We ask that you follow the guidelines set forth in the Nutrition Guidelines section of this handbook when contributing food or drinks to a school activity, including class trips. The class teacher should approve any food or drink that you plan to contribute.

Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Policy and Procedure

GUIDELINES FOR STUDENT BEHAVIOR

At Desert Marigold School, we believe that children have a right to a quality education in a safe and caring environment. We hope to accomplish this by fostering respect for self and others and by promoting pro-social behavior among our students. By the same token, all faculty, staff, and volunteers themselves must strive to show great respect and responsibility in their communications and interactions with the students and with each other.

We believe that discipline is striving towards a goal, not a tool for punishment. We consider discipline to be an aspect of moral guidance, to serve as instruction, and be part of a creative learning process. Part of this process is allowing students to take responsibility for their actions. Students will be held to the highest standards of conduct in order to maintain a conducive learning atmosphere for everyone. Any student who chooses to interfere with others' learning will be held accountable.

The purposes of the following discipline policy are: to provide a classroom situation conducive to learning, to promote character training, and to develop self-discipline. In order for this discipline program to be consistent and effective, it is *imperative* that parents and staff work together to support each other.

EXPECTED BEHAVIORS

Students are expected to honor all safety guidelines, treat each other with respect, treat school property with respect and use it appropriately, and treat the personal property of themselves and others with respect. Students are expected to be in class, on time, and to make proper use of the instructional setting by assuming the responsibility of being on task and completing all assignments. Students will stay within school boundaries and will line up quietly and promptly when the bell rings. Behavior in the bathrooms, around the office, and on the playground is to be responsible and in accordance with school and class rules. Students are expected to take the initiative in seeking help for themselves or others when help is needed. Students are expected to follow Desert Marigold School's Dress Code.

Code of Conduct for Early Childhood/Kindercare

Level 1 – The teacher shall discipline for the following—teasing, defiance, destroying property, inappropriate language, name calling—with check-ins, limit setting, redirection, and problem solving.

Level 2 - Parents may be called to take their child home for short-term suspension for the following: physically harming a teacher or student, misuse of materials that harm another student, repeated inappropriate language, leaving supervised areas, wetting/soiling clothing (per contacts for private programming). If the behavior doesn't require suspension the teacher shall discipline with check-ins, limit setting, redirection, problem solving, modeling, and may seek outside support from other faculty.

Following a 2nd suspension, the parent/guardian will be required to meet with the teacher. A 3rd suspension may result in expulsion.

Code of Conduct for Grades 1-12

Level 1 – Offenses include, but are not limited to: Acting out, physical altercations, tardiness, dishonesty, computer misuse, disrespect of authority, invasion of privacy, inappropriate language or gestures

Consequences: The classroom teacher unilaterally assigns one of the following consequences:**

Natural consequences, apology, writing out virtues, work session, time in, informal talk or discipline conference, restriction/loss of privileges, parent notification, referral to see school counselor

**Teachers are empowered to assign a consequence that they see fit based on the behavior that they observed. **

Level 2 – When a teacher notices a repeated pattern of Level 1 offenses, the student will be assigned an out of school suspension.

Level 3 – Offenses include but are not limited to: Possession of contraband, truancy or leaving campus, harassment or bullying, physical altercations, destruction of property, use of inappropriate words or symbols, computer misuse, theft.

Consequences: Level 3 offenses will result in a short-term suspension for 1-10 days.

Level 4 – Offenses include but are not limited to: Endangerment through the use of fire alarm/calling 911/bomb threat*, sexual assault*, premeditated physical assault*, aggravated assault/assault on a staff member*, arson/reckless burning*, possession/use/distribution/purchase of explosive devices or deadly weapon*, possession/use/distribution/purchase/being under the influence of illegal drugs*, threatening physical harm of an employee or student or their property*, hazing/initiation

Consequences: The first violation of the offenses in Level 4 will result in automatic recommendation for expulsion from DMS.

All of the offenses marked with an asterisk () violate ARS Sec. 13-3620 and charter policy and will be reported to the proper authorities.

Excessive Suspensions

Any student in Grades 5-12 who has reached a 3rd suspension will be referred to the Faculty Realm Chairs for evaluation of further consequences, which could include expulsion. Any student in Grades 5-12 who reaches 5 suspensions due to severe behavior will be recommended for expulsion to the Board of Directors.

The school reserves the right to use reasonable judgment to suspend, expel, and contact law enforcement when necessary due to severe concerns.

Staff Conduct with Students

Employees are expected to supervise students' conduct, in and out of the classroom, will treat students with dignity and respect. Students are expected to make good choices and respect the rights of all employees and students; interference with those rights will not be tolerated.

Staff and student relationships that include "romantic involvement" are prohibited. These behaviors deviate from ethical and professional standards and shall be deemed unacceptable and contrary to the expectations of school governance.

Staff and student relationships shall reflect mutual respect and shall support the dignity of the student and the staff, the education profession and process.

Violations of the above shall be considered serious and may result in severe disciplinary action and criminal prosecution.

Display of Affection

There should be no display of affection on school property or at school events.

Electronic Devices and Cell Phones

Electronic devices should be turned off and stored appropriately. Devices may not be used without permission of the teacher. Ignoring these guidelines will result in confiscation of the device, which will only be given to the parent/guardian. The school is not responsible for loss/theft of devices.

Contraband and Property

No tobacco, alcohol or drugs or other contraband are allowed on campus/surrounding area at any time.

Violations of this rule will result in the suspension and/or a police investigation.

Students who deliberately damage/deface school property will be disciplined, which could include a police referral. Parents/guardians are ultimately responsible for any repair costs.

Faculty has the authority to make inspections without a search warrant or student consent to obtain information for school safety.

Students will keep personal items at home. The school is not responsible for loss/theft of personal items.

SUSPENSION/EXPULSION PROCEDURE

Suspension

The Executive Director may suspend any student for up to 10 school days for serious cause, including, but not limited to the following: defiance, verbal abuse, disruptive/violent/threatening behavior, destruction of property, excessive tardies, and truancy. The school officials involved will create a report for the parent/guardian.

Suspension/Expulsion of Students with Disabilities

If a student in special education is suspended/expelled, procedures shall meet the requirements/regulations of IDEA/state statutes.

SUSPENSION OVER 10 SCHOOL DAYS AND EXPULSION

The Executive Director may recommend suspension for over 10 days and/or expulsion of a student for serious cause. The parent/legal guardian will be notified, and a hearing shall be held. Parents will have the right to request an open meeting or an executive session of the Board of Directors for the expulsion hearing and the right to reapply for admission after one year of expulsion. If a long-term suspension/expulsion is recommended, the parent will be provided with a copy of DMS's discipline policies/procedures, meet with the Executive Director and other staff prior to submitting the expulsion recommendation to the Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors has the right to deny admission of a student who has been expelled from another school and to deny readmission of a student previously expelled from DMS.

DMS will meet all requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the IDEA, and State laws regarding disciplining of students with disabilities.

Parent Code of Conduct

Drug- and Smoke-free Campus. Drugs, alcohol and tobacco may not be consumed on campus or in the presence of students.

Cell Phone-free Campus. Please discontinue conversations and put away your cell phone once you enter the classroom areas, i.e., once you are past the Barn and Administration Building.

Respect the Boundaries. Teachers are on campus to teach our students. Please respect their work. Parents are encouraged to visit and participate in classroom activities; however, these visits must be pre-scheduled with the teacher and or office. Parents are not permitted to enter a classroom unannounced.

Do not reprimand or try to discipline students. Unless you are functioning in an official chaperone or

supervision capacity, do not take it upon yourself to discipline any student. If you observe any behavior that you feel is inappropriate, report it directly to the responsible teacher so that it can be handled in a timely manner.

Speak Constructively. We all come from different backgrounds and have differing views and tolerance levels. A comment intended innocently may be interpreted differently. The best policy is to avoid sarcastic “joking” and “teasing” and focus on constructive communication.

Use discretion. Be aware of the types of conversations you are engaging in. For example, it is not helpful to discuss a conflict with or concern about a staff member, parent, or student in the presence of students, whether at school or in your home. What is often known as “parking lot” talk is very undermining to a healthy educational environment.

Do not spread rumors. Check your facts with someone who has real information.

Profanity is not permitted. It is expected that everyone interacting with students use appropriate language at all times.

Please follow these guidelines on campus (and in the immediate vicinity) and during any school sponsored activity, whether on or off campus.

Visitors and Volunteers

All visitors must check into the front office to sign in/out and receive a visitor’s pass. ***No visitor can directly proceed onto the campus grounds without first checking in at the front office. This rule includes families who are dropping off things for their students, picking up their students early or dropping them off late to school, or volunteering anywhere on campus, including the garden.***

Any faculty member who is expecting a parent visitor, whether it be a volunteer or otherwise, will inform the Administration Office in advance of the visit. *Please ensure that you sign into our visitor log-book at the front office and receive a visitor’s pass before proceeding anywhere on campus.*

If parents/guardians come to the office to request early release, due to doctor's appointment, illness, etc., they are not permitted to go directly to the classroom to retrieve their child.

Please come to the front office to sign your child out of school and wait up front. *An assistant, teacher, or other administrative employee will bring the student to the front office for pick up. Similarly, during late drop-off, please check your student into the front office. Students are not permitted to walk directly to their classrooms after the 8:15 a.m. bell without first checking into the front office. Parents are not permitted to walk their students directly to their classrooms at any time.*

Unidentified Visitors/Suspicious Activity

If you see someone on school grounds you do not recognize, and they do not have a visitor’s badge, let

the office know. If their behavior seems suspect, *make that report a matter of urgency*. Similarly, if you see someone acting suspiciously near the school *please report that to the office immediately*.

Community Work Days

There may be occasions throughout the year when we gather as a community to work and play. Projects vary from general campus maintenance to campus improvements to neighborhood service activities. Depending on the season, there may be opportunities to sing, dance, or play simple games together. Everyone is welcome. Community work days are based on the knowledge that many hands make light work, and that the best way to get to know each other is to work side by side.

Media Guidelines

The cumulative effect of repeated exposure to media and screen use can negatively impact a child's development. At DMS, we strongly encourage parents to determine the type and extent of screen viewing and media exposure their children receive. Class teachers will provide information regarding media use and your child's education. They will engage you in a dialogue that we hope will be stimulating and rewarding. Our goal in doing so is to do our utmost to create a learning environment that is conducive to active, imaginative learning.

Recommended media guidelines:***

1. PreK-Grade 2: no media.
2. Grades 3-6: no media during the school week. Minimal use of parent-directed media on weekends and during vacations.
3. Grades 7-8: no media before school; minimal parent-directed media use during the school week; parental involvement in determining appropriate media and computer use choices at all other times.
4. High School: parental involvement in determining media and computer-use choices.

We understand that every family is unique, and circumstances differ. We trust that you will do what is best for your situation. We hope that you can see the value in limiting screen time in your home and encourage you to do so.

****Due to COVID-19, classes may be remote, and some families have chosen to remain online for the school year. The remote learning program requires screen time; however, the school is doing its best to minimize screen time to the extent possible in providing remote education.

Nutrition Guidelines

All students, except those in Early Childhood, need to bring a snack and lunch every day. Please follow these guidelines when packing your child's lunch. Your child's class teacher will inform you if there are any additional guidelines or allergies for that class.

1. Send food in an insulated lunch box with an ice pack.
2. Include a water bottle. Although drinking water is readily available, it is necessary to have a water bottle easily accessible during Movement and Gardening classes.
3. Make sure the lunch is fully prepared. Classrooms do not have facilities for heating food.
4. Pack a well-balanced lunch, including protein, fruit, and vegetables so that your child has good energy for the afternoon.
5. Please limit packaged foods with preservatives, sweeteners, and dyes as children can be sensitive to these. Products with heavy dyes also stain floors and desks.
6. Candy, gum, and soda are not allowed. Gum will be taken away from the child and returned at the end of the day.
7. We encourage all families to reduce packaging waste by sending lunch items in reusable containers.

Note: If your child has special nutritional needs, or if you have questions about any of these guidelines, please let your child's teacher know immediately. Any food allergies must be listed on the emergency medical form and made known to the teacher and the Student Records Manager.

Social Media Guidelines

DMS understands that students, staff, and community members use social media as a way to connect with others and share education-related experiences. Although social networking is fun and valuable, there are some risks you should keep in mind when using these tools.

In the social media world, the lines are blurred between what is public or private, professional or personal. Social media are powerful communication tools that have a significant impact on organizations and professional reputations. Once something is posted it is available on the Web forever, so please think twice before posting.

*Employees are liable for anything they post to social media sites.
Only employees are approved to represent the school.*

We ask community members respect and follow these guidelines:

- Private, personal, or confidential information about any faculty or staff member should not be posted.
- Personal information of students or parents should remain private and not posted on social media.
- Always respect the privacy of school community members.
- Do not post any DMS-related information or images of the school on any non-sanctioned school social media sites.
- Do not post pictures of students taken on school grounds without the express written consent of the school.

Although DMS is the best source of information, we understand that families regularly communicate

through social media. Sometimes, even when trying to be helpful, social media mistakes are made. If this happens, please clarify the error, redirect others to accurate, school-approved information—Parent Square and [Desert Marigold School](#)—and apologize when appropriate.

Giving

Educational Investment Campaign and Fees

At Desert Marigold School, our faculty provides a Waldorf-inspired curriculum that meets Arizona state educational standards. In doing so, we offer quality educational programming to meet the academic and artistic needs of our students in a sustainable learning space. Our school offers a curriculum, specialty classes, and a campus like no other in the Phoenix area. As a public charter school, we do receive funding from the state; however, the shortfall between state funding and what is needed to provide a Waldorf-inspired curriculum is approximately \$2,100.00 per student. To bridge the gap in state funding to ensure that we can continue to provide this exceptional programming, we ask that each family participate in the Educational Investment Campaign at Desert Marigold School.

Your educational investment will support Waldorf consumable materials, festival supplies, specialty class supplies, facilities maintenance, and faculty training. Donate to the [educational investment campaign](#) today!

The educational investment campaign donation does not cover extracurricular activities, field trips, class trips, or special events. More substantial class trips generally involve fundraising to reduce the required parental contribution per student. There are also scholarships available to assist families with field trip and class trip costs.

AZ Education Tax Credit Program

With the AZ State Public School Tax credit, it can cost you nothing to give hundreds of dollars to Desert Marigold School — up to \$200 each year for an individual and \$400 for a couple.

This is a tax credit, not a deduction, so the full amount is subtracted from what you owe in Arizona income tax. You receive a dollar-for-dollar reduction in the amount you pay in taxes to the state for the amount of your donation. You can make a donation as late as April 15th and claim it against the previous year's taxes.*

Everyone can participate! As long as you have Arizona income tax liability, you can make an Arizona [Tax Credit](#) Contribution to DMS. If you have already given, find friends and relatives and have them give to DMS! We ask every family to donate their Tax Credit to DMS and invite their extended network to do the same.

*A confirmation receipt will be sent to you for income tax purposes. Be sure to consult your tax adviser to determine exactly how the tax credit will impact you personally.

Fundraising

DMS offers various fundraising programs through the school year. Please check the [website](#) and sign up for Parent Square to stay up to date on the details.