

Desert Trails Preparatory Academy



2023 - 2024 PARENT AND SCHOLAR HANDBOOK

Office Hours 7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (Mon.-Thurs.)

7:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. (Fridays)

**Grades TK-8th Charter School
14350 Bellflower St.
Adelanto, CA 92301
(760) 530-7680**



Desert Trails Preparatory Academy

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of ***Desert Trails Preparatory Academy*** is to provide a sound classical educational program that will enable all scholars to learn skills, acquire knowledge, apply wisdom, and develop character within a rich, diverse, and nurturing learning environment.

SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

Drawing upon the tradition of classical education, ***Desert Trails Preparatory Academy (DTPA)*** was established to follow the steps of its mentor, Hillsdale Academy. Academia (docere), discipline (disciplina), and virtuous character (virtus) are integrated in the formation of a ***Desert Trails Preparatory Academy*** scholar. These attributes will continue to form scholars' minds throughout life, long after they have left their schooldays behind.

The school is committed to educating the individual child by helping each student in the acquisition of knowledge and the wisdom necessary to apply it correctly. Every child is capable of achieving his or her potential to the fullest extent when afforded respect, fairness, kindness, loving discipline, and appropriate instruction. Uniforms will help scholars to focus on learning, academics, development, and creativity.

Scholars will benefit from the use of a structured program rich with classical curriculum that will provide a strong relationship with their teachers, staff, and peers. Scholars will achieve academically and socially, and through their accomplishments will see themselves as important contributors to their lives as well as that of others. Teachers will be allowed to passionately engage scholars in their profession through the encouragement and involvement of staff, students, and parents. The Administration will be empowered to oversee the effective management of the school. Teachers, scholars, and the administration will work as a team to accomplish the goal of the most effective and valued learning environment for students. Parents will be given weekly feedback on the progress of their children.

The school is committed to the education of each student by helping them to acquire knowledge and the wisdom necessary to apply that knowledge. With the school providing moral and ethical standards, DTPA will prepare its scholars to accept the privileges and responsibilities of citizenship in a democratic society that honors and respects everyone. Every child is capable of achieving his/her potential to the fullest extent when afforded respect, fairness, kindness, discipline, and appropriate instruction.

SCHOOL ESLR'S

Lifelong Learners

Exceeding Expectations

Pursuing Knowledge

Achieving Academic Excellence

ENROLLMENT

Desert Trails Preparatory Academy is a public charter school serving scholars in grades TK-8TH. The only major expense to the parents/guardians is the cost of dress code apparel for the scholars to wear.

According to our charter, there is no academic requirement for admission. However, to ensure proper class placement, testing is administered to new students, grades TK-8TH at the beginning of the school year. Continuing scholars in the future shall have first priority for reenrollment and their siblings shall have preference. Spaces remaining shall be filled by a lottery drawing during April of each school year. Any prospective student not enrolled may remain in lottery. Parents of new and returning students must fill out a new registration application each year.

ARRIVALS AND DISMISSALS

7:30 a.m.	Breakfast is open. <i>Please be aware that there is no supervision of scholars before 7:00 a.m.</i>
7:45 a.m.	Breakfast service ends.
7:45 a.m.	Gates open. <i>Please be aware that there is no supervision of scholars prior to 7:30 a.m.</i>
8:00 a.m.	Class begins for grades TK-8TH. (If your child is not in their class by 8:00 a.m. they are considered tardy). <i>Please be aware that according to state law the only tardies which can be "excused" are for doctor appointments.</i>
3:00 p.m.	Monday dismissal for all scholars. Kindergarten dismissal Monday through Thursday. <i>Please pick up promptly and be aware there is no supervision after 3:15 p.m. for kindergarten children.</i>
3:45 p.m.	Dismissal of grades 1-6, Tuesday through Thursday. <i>Please be aware that there is no supervision of scholars after 4:00 p.m. unless they are attending an after-school program.</i>
11:45 a.m.	Transitional Kindergarten dismissal. Minimum day dismissal time. <i>Please be aware that there is no supervision of scholars after 12:15 p.m. Please call the office if you are running late.</i>

PLACARDS

One new placard per scholar is given to the parent or legal guardian at the start of each school year. Prior school year "old" placards are not acceptable. Placards are considered valid and acceptable for use when they have the following information listed on the front: scholar's first and last name, teacher last name, and current school year. Dark colored, permanent marker should be used when writing information on the placard. Sibling(s) can also be listed on the front of the placard following the same format as listed above as long as the information is legible and fits on the front of the placard only. Additional placards are available for purchase in the front office by parents or legal guardians only. The cost of replacement or additional placards is \$2 each.

DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP

Drop-off

Parents should utilize the drop off "drive-thru" line, if possible, unless a parent needs to visit the office for other affairs and an appointment has been made prior to arrival. The drive-thru line is a single file line in which a continuous flow of movement shall be kept with stopping only allowed for scholars to quickly unload from the vehicle. Scholars should be ready to unload by having necessary items within their possession to help keep the line moving in a regular pattern and to further scholar safety by limiting the amount of time around moving vehicles. Parents should pull their cars as far forward in the drive-thru lane as possible before unloading, to allow as many vehicles as possible to fit into the lane. Scholars should exit the vehicle on the passenger side (side nearest the school campus) of the vehicle only. Scholars should only exit the vehicle when they can do so safely and will not need to cross traffic, vehicles, or encounter other potentially dangerous situations. The drive-thru line of vehicles should not be impeded with vehicles that are parked or with drivers parking to help unload scholars even if the unloading process is believed to be brief. If assistance is needed to unload or to exit a child restraint seat, parents/guardians should park in designated parking stalls only. Drivers should practice care, including staying alert and maintaining a safe speed, when driving in school zones including the drive-thru line and parking lots to ensure the safety of all scholars, staff, and guests. It is imperative that parents/guardians and scholars are prompt so educational minutes are not disrupted.

If choosing the walk-up option for drop-off, parents must park in a marked parking stall and walk up to the door/gate with the scholar. For their safety, scholars may not walk across the parking lot unaccompanied. Be advised that handicapped parking spots are for vehicles with handicapped placards only. Vehicles may not park in these spaces to unload scholars unless a proper handicapped placard is present. It is also unlawful to stop or park in the fire lane in front of the office. If you must visit the office, please park in one of the parking spaces. Parents cannot walk scholars to their classroom and will not be admitted on campus.

If a scholar arrives late or tardy to school, a parent or guardian must accompany the scholar into the office to sign the scholar into school for the day. In this circumstance, there is not a drive through option available so vehicles should be parked in an appropriately marked parking stall before the vehicle is exited. Whenever walking through parking lots and nearby sidewalks, pedestrians should practice safety by keeping aware of their surroundings and the constantly evolving/changing situations, using marked crosswalks only, and maintaining control of young children at all times.

Pick-up

Placards are utilized during pick-up procedures and must be shown to staff in order to receive a scholar. Scholars will only be released to an adult 18 years of age or older. When someone appears younger than 18 years old and attempts pick-up with a placard, staff will ask for photo identification to confirm age prior to releasing a scholar. If a scholar is sick and therefore requires pick up from school early, the placard must be shown in the front office. If the placard is unavailable, government issued photo identification is required in order to pick up a scholar so that authorization can be verified.

The drive-thru line is available daily during dismissal. All Transitional Kindergarten (TK) and Kindergarten scholars must be picked up at the appropriate dismissal gate. To expedite the drive through line, the placard should be placed on the bottom right "driver side" dashboard so that it can be quickly and easily read. The drive through line is the pick-up method given priority and the most attention. Drivers should not exit the vehicle when in the drive through line and must remain alert and vigilant to ensure safety of all scholars, staff, and families.

A photograph of a placard is only acceptable for use in the walk up line, and only as long as the entire front of the placard and information can be seen when zoomed in or out. Please limit who you share the photograph of your placard(s) with since you are unable to limit use of the photo once it is shared.

If the placard is forgotten, an adult 18 years of age or older must go to the front office and show photo identification to verify

authorization and receive a one-time use pass. This one-time pass will be accepted at the dismissal area but must be shown and surrendered to the staff member at the gate in order for the scholar to be released. Photo identification is not acceptable at the dismissal gate since verification of authorization for pick-up must be completed in the front office.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR/ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

For grades 1-6, extracurricular/enrichment activities are an extension of the school day on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 2:45 – 3:45 p.m. Teachers will have scholars completing projects and helping those who need extra support with homework. Mondays are slated for our staff development day; therefore, all scholars must be picked up at 3:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE/TARDIES/ABSENCES/EARLY SIGN-OUTS

Attendance

Desert Trails Preparatory Academy is a full, seat-time program; therefore, scholars are required to attend each day of the school year. A scholar is considered to be in attendance when he/she is in their classroom on time. We maintain that school is the same as a full-time job. Scholars need to be in school and on time every day.

According to the California Compulsory Attendance Laws (Education Code 48200), parents and students are responsible for regular school attendance.

Truancies are not acceptable. Truancy is defined as an unexcused absence without a written excuse from parent/guardian or DTPA staff member. Truancy is also defined as excessive tardiness, even a few minutes is tardy. Repeated violation of the truancy policy will result in further disciplinary action up to and including involuntary withdrawal.

When at all possible, medical appointments should be scheduled after school or on Fridays. If for some reason the medical appointment has to be scheduled during school hours, the scholar should come to school before or after the scheduled appointment. In the event that your scholar needs to miss school for an extended length of time, i.e., becomes ill or hospitalized, we ask that you notify the office as soon as possible. Attendance at a naturalization ceremony can be an excused absence with appropriate documentation provided. Certificates will be provided for perfect attendance.

Absences

Excused absences are those that are recognized by the state as legal excused absences:

- Student is personally ill, and his/her attendance in school would endanger his/her health or the health of others (Three (3) or more days of absence for illness will require a doctor's note)
- Serious illness in the student's immediate family necessitates absence; Death of family member necessitates absence
- Special/recognized religious holiday observed by student's faith
- Appearance in court

Unexcused absences are those not defined above, including, but not limited to:

- Unverified absence
- Truancy
- Absence due to leaving campus without permission
- A tardy of five minutes or more
- Absence due to taking an early vacation or extending a vacation.
- Absence due to oversleeping
- Absence due to transportation problems
- Absence due to not knowing it was a school day
- Family emergency without valid reason

School Excused Absences

- Field Trips
- Academic Events
- School Office Appointments
- Suspension
- Athletes participating in athletic event

Scholars with excessive absences will be subject to SARB.

Tardies

Tardy is truancy. A tardy occurs when the student is not in his/her assigned seat when classes begin. For scholars in TK through 6th grade, a scholar is deemed tardy when arriving after 8:00 a.m.

We realize there will be instances when your scholar may be tardy, but please avoid this whenever possible as tardiness interrupts your scholar's instructional time. **If a scholar is tardy, Parents/ Guardians must come into the office to sign the scholar in to school.** Excessive tardies may subject the student from dismissal from the school.

Unexcused tardies are defined as arriving any time after a class/activity has begun or before class/activity has concluded without an excuse from a parent/guardian or DTPA staff member. T-30 tardies occur when a student is more than 30 minutes late to his assigned seat when class begins, or leaving 30 minutes before class ends.

Repeated violation of the tardy policy will result in disciplinary action up to and including involuntary withdrawal.

- ▶ Excused tardies include only the following:
 - Medical, dental, optical, or other health related appointment (with note from the office where appointment was scheduled)
 - Unforeseen circumstances and family situations
 - Circumstances discussed with the school ahead of time, and pre-approved by a school administrator
 - All late arrivals other than those described above will be considered unexcused
- ▶ Excessive Excused and Unexcused Absences and Tardies
 - Ten (10) or more days of *excused* absences within a school year are considered excessive and shall require a doctor's note to excuse subsequent absences.
 - Three (3) or more tardies, not seated in class at the time class begins, within a two (2) week period, is considered excessive.
 - Three (3) or more consecutive days of illness shall require a doctor's note upon return to school.
 - After three (3) or more total days of *unexcused* absences, three (3) or more tardies for more than any 30- minute period ("T-30") or 5 or more tardies, not seated when class begins, within a 2-week period, without a valid excuse on three occasions, or any combination thereof within a school year, will result in the school mailing the parent the 1st Truancy Letter asking for the parent's help with their student's attendance and warning of consequences for further truancy.
 - After five (5) total days of *unexcused* absences and/or T-30 tardies, and/or tardies, not seated when class begins, or any combination thereof within a school year, the school will mail the 2nd Truancy Letter and invite the family to a meeting with the Administration or Designee. The intent is to create and implement a written plan for improving attendance.
 - After any *unexcused* absence, T-30 tardy or 3 more tardies, not seated when class begins, following a written plan for improvement OR 2nd letter notice if parent/guardian refuses to schedule a meeting to discuss a written plan for improving attendance, your student may be dropped from the school's roster, and you would need to re-enroll. Admission will be based on availability at the time of re-enrollment.
 - After fifteen (15) or more days of *unexcused* absences and/or T-30 tardies may be referred to the District Attorney.
 - Students who miss 5% or more of school for any reason may be subject to retention.

A doctor's release note must accompany the student when returning back to school from any doctor/dental/orthodontic appointment. A student who fails to attend school without a valid excuse is considered truant.

Early Sign-outs

At DTPA, we believe that every minute of instructional time is important. And just as being late to school interrupts instructional time, leaving school early does so as well. Per the Student Parent Handbook and DTPA Attendance and Truancy Policy, parents/guardians will make every effort to schedule medical and dental appointments before or after school or during the time that school is not in session. Parents/Guardians will notify the school office before 8:00 a.m. if your child will be absent. The school will call to verify and code any absences not reported by you. Any TK-8THth grade student who arrives after 8:00 a.m. must report to the office to receive a tardy slip. Students are not considered "in attendance" or "present" until they are seated in their class. **If it becomes necessary to pick up your scholar early, please remember that we will not call scholars from class within the 20 minutes prior to that day's dismissal time.** Also, scholars who must leave early will be called from class once the parent arrives in the school office.

HOMEWORK

It is the philosophy of *Desert Trails Preparatory Academy* to require homework from scholars throughout the school year, 3-4 nights a week, depending upon the assignment.

Teachers often assign homework to be completed over the course of several days, a week, or month. It is the school's belief that this assists students with time management and planning. Parents are encouraged to monitor assignments to prevent last-minute frustration. Providing a quiet environment and regular time for completing homework is essential.

After school tutoring is a great opportunity for students to complete homework assignments. If they have questions, they will get extra assistance from their teacher.

HOLIDAYS AND BIRTHDAYS

DTPA will observe all state and federal holidays. Halloween: There is no formal observation of Halloween at *Desert Trails Preparatory Academy*. Uniforms are to be worn to school on that day.

Parents/Guardians may bring birthday treats for their scholars. Time will be set aside for the last 30 minutes of the day for the treat to be shared with their classmates. Please notify the teacher a day in advance if you are providing treats for your child so they can prepare for the special day. Please deliver the treats to the office, and the office will deliver them to the classroom. ***Please note that all treats or food must be store bought and sealed, not homemade.***

TRANSPORTATION

Desert Trails Preparatory Academy does not provide transportation to and from school.

CELL PHONES

Per our school cell phone policy, cell phones and other electronic devices, such as watches with phones, are not permitted to be on campus. It is a violation of school policy for cell phones or other devices to be on campus during school time.

School time is considered to be from the moment a student steps onto DTPA property/campus (in the parking lot and certainly when within the gates of the school) to the moment they leave (outside the school's gates and not in the parking lot).

This is for the safety of all scholars and staff.

All types of electronic devices (those listed above and/or IPODs, MP3 players, portable video game players, etc.) are strictly prohibited. All forms of electronic devices brought onto campus will be immediately confiscated by school personnel and parents will be called to retrieve the item. Scholars may face school disciplinary action if found in possession of these types of devices on any portion of school property.

Should a call need to be made during school hours, it must be made in and/or through the school office.

DTPA and DTPA school personnel are ***not*** responsible for lost, stolen or damaged items that are prohibited on school property.

Exceptions to this cell phone policy can be made for phones that are medically necessary. A doctor's note is to be provided prior to the first day of use on campus when possible.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

The role of discipline at Desert Trails Preparatory Academy is to create an environment conducive to learning. It is to provide an atmosphere of civility in which due respect will be given to teachers and to individual students, so that all students will be allowed to pursue learning without distraction. In addition, discipline at DTPA will always uphold the essential virtues established in the school's Mission Statement and professed in its curriculum. DTPA recognizes that a student's good conduct in school promotes their education on campus. This requirement will also promote good behavior off campus and prepare students for good citizenship in adulthood. Accordingly, all students will be expected to adhere to the general rules of the school as well as those rules established by each teacher within his or her classroom. DTPA's Harassment, Anti-Discrimination, and Bullying policy is available upon request.

Governing Law: The procedures by which pupils can be suspended or expelled. – California Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(J).

When a student commits one of the enumerated offenses described herein, it may be necessary to suspend or expel a student from regular classroom instruction. Compliance with the procedures set forth in our Charter Petition shall be the only processes for DTPA to remove or otherwise exclude a student who attends DTPA from attendance at DTPA.

DTPA will follow all applicable federal and state laws including but not limited to the California Education Code, when imposing any form of discipline on a student identified as an individual with disabilities or for whom DTPA has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability or who is otherwise qualified for such services or protections according to due process to such students.

Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion of Students

A student may be suspended or expelled for prohibited misconduct if the act is:

- A. related to school activity;
- B. related to school attendance occurring at the Charter School or any other school; or

- C. related to attendance at a Charter School sponsored event. A student may be suspended or expelled for acts that are enumerated below and occur at any time including but not limited to the following:
- 1) while on school grounds;
 - 2) while going to or coming from school;
 - 3) during the lunch period, whether on or off the school campus;
 - 4) during, going to, or coming from a school-sponsored activity.

Students shall be suspended or expelled according to the following Enumerated Offenses as required by law:

Enumerated Offenses

Discretionary Suspension and Recommendation for Expulsion Offenses

Students may be suspended from school or recommended for expulsion for any of the following acts when it is determined the pupil:

- a) Either:
 - 1) Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person.
 - 2) Willfully used force or violence upon the person of another, except in self-defense.
- b) Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished a firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object.
- c) Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property.
- d) Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property.
- e) Possessed or used tobacco, or products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including, but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets, and betel. However, the pupil is not prohibited from the use or possession by that pupil of his or her own prescription products.
- f) Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
- g) Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell drug paraphernalia, as defined in Section 11014.5 of the Health and Safety Code.
- h) Disrupted school activities or otherwise willfully defied the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, administrators, school officials, or other school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties, except that a pupil enrolled in kindergarten or any of grades 1 to 3, inclusive, shall not be suspended for disrupting school activities or otherwise willfully defying the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, administrators, school officials, or other school personnel, nor shall these act constitute grounds for a pupil enrolled in kindergarten or any of grades 1 to 12, inclusive, to be recommended for expulsion.
- i) Knowingly received stolen school property or private property.
- j) Possessed an imitation firearm. "Imitation firearm" means a replica of a firearm that is so substantially similar in physical properties to an existing firearm as to lead a reasonable person to conclude that the replica is a firearm.
- k) Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a pupil who is a complaining witness or a witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for purposes of either preventing that pupil from being a witness or retaliating against that pupil for being a witness, or both.
- l) Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell, or sold the prescription drug Soma.
- m) Engaged in, or attempted to engage in, hazing. For purposes of this subdivision, "hazing" means a method of initiation or preinitiation into a pupil organization or body, whether or not the organization or body is officially recognized by an educational institution, that is likely to cause serious bodily injury or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to a former, current, or prospective pupil. For purposes of this subdivision, "hazing" does not include athletic events or school-sanctioned events.
- n) Engaged in an act of bullying, including, but not limited to, bullying committed by means of an electronic act.
 - i) "Bullying" means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or by means of an electronic act, and including one or more acts committed by a student or group of students which would be deemed hate violence or harassment, threats, or intimidation, which are directed toward one or more students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:
 - (1) Placing a reasonable student (defined as a student, including, but is not limited to, a student with exceptional needs, who exercises average care, skill, and judgment in conduct for a person of his or her age, or for a person of his or her age with exceptional needs) or students in fear of harm to that student's or those students' person or property.
 - (2) Causing a reasonable student to experience a substantially detrimental effect on his or her physical or mental health.
 - (3) Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with his or her academic performance.
 - (4) Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with his or her ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by the Charter School.
 - ii) "Electronic Act" means the creation or transmission originated on or off the school site, by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone, or other wireless communication device, computer, or pager, of a communication, including, but not limited to, any of the following:
 - (1) A message, text, sound, video, or image.
 - (2) A post on a social network Internet Web site including, but not limited to:
 - (a) Posting to or creating a burn page. A "burn page" means an Internet Web site created for the purpose of having one or more of the effects as listed in subparagraph (1) above.
 - (b) Creating a credible impersonation of another actual pupil for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in subparagraph (1) above. "Credible impersonation" means to knowingly and without consent impersonate a pupil for the purpose of bullying the pupil and such that another pupil would reasonably believe, or has reasonably believed, that the pupil was or is the pupil who was impersonated.

- (c) Creating a false profile for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in subparagraph (1) above. "False profile" means a profile of a fictitious pupil or a profile using the likeness or attributes of an actual pupil other than the pupil who created the false profile.
 - iii) An act of cyber sexual bullying.
 - (1) For purposes of this clause, "cyber sexual bullying" means the dissemination of, or the solicitation or incitement to disseminate, a photograph or other visual recording by a pupil to another pupil or to school personnel by means of an electronic act that has or can be reasonably predicted to have one or more of the effects described in subparagraphs (i) to (iv), inclusive, of paragraph (1). A photograph or other visual recording, as described above, shall include the depiction of a nude, semi-nude, or sexually explicit photograph or other visual recording of a minor where the minor is identifiable from the photograph, visual recording, or other electronic act.
 - (2) For purposes of this clause, "cyber sexual bullying" does not include a depiction, portrayal, or image that has any serious literary, artistic, educational, political, or scientific value or that involves athletic events or school-sanctioned activities.
 - iv) Notwithstanding the above, an electronic act shall not constitute pervasive conduct solely on the basis that it has been transmitted on the Internet or is currently posted on the Internet.
 - v) "Reasonable pupil" for purposes of this subsection means a pupil, including, but not limited to, an exceptional needs pupil, who exercises average care, skill, and judgment in conduct for a person of his or her age, or for a person of his or her age with his or her exceptional needs.
- o) A pupil who aids or abets, as defined in Section 31 of the Penal Code, the infliction or attempted infliction of physical injury to another person may be subject to suspension, but not expulsion, except that a pupil who has been adjudged by a juvenile court to have committed, as an aider and abettor, a crime of physical violence in which the victim suffered great bodily injury or serious bodily injury shall be subject to discipline pursuant to subdivision (a).
- p) In addition to the reasons specified above, a pupil may be suspended from school or recommended for expulsion from school if the Administration or Designee determines that the pupil has committed sexual harassment as defined in Ed. Code section 212.5. The conduct described in Section 212.5 must be considered by a reasonable person of the same gender as the victim to be sufficiently severe or pervasive to have a negative impact upon the individual's academic performance or to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. This enumerated offense shall not apply to pupils enrolled in kindergarten and grades 1 to 3, inclusive.
- q) In addition to the reasons set forth above, a pupil in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive, may be suspended from school or recommended for expulsion from school if the Executive Director or Designee determines that the pupil has caused, attempted to cause, threatened to cause, or participated in an act of, hate violence, as defined in subdivision (e) of Education Code section 233.
- r) In addition to the grounds specified above, a pupil enrolled in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive, may be suspended from school or recommended for expulsion from school if the Executive Director or Designee determines that the pupil has intentionally engaged in harassment, threats, or intimidation, directed against school personnel or pupils, that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to have the actual and reasonably expected effect of materially disrupting classwork, creating substantial disorder, and invading the rights of either school personnel or pupils by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment.
- s) In addition to the grounds specified above, a pupil may be suspended from school or recommended for expulsion if the superintendent or the principal of the school in which the pupil is enrolled determines that the pupil has made terroristic threats against school officials or school property, or both.
 - 1) "Terroristic threat" shall include any statement, whether written or oral, by a person who willfully threatens to commit a crime which will result in death, great bodily injury to another person, or property damage in excess of one thousand dollars (\$1,000), with the specific intent that the statement is to be taken as a threat, even if there is no intent of actually carrying it out, which, on its face and under the circumstances in which it is made, is so unequivocal, unconditional, immediate, and specific as to convey to the person threatened, a gravity of purpose and an immediate prospect of execution of the threat, and thereby causes that
 - person reasonably to be in sustained fear for his or her own safety or for his or her immediate family's safety, or for the protection of school district property, or the personal property of the person threatened or his or her immediate family.
- t) "School" property" includes, but is not limited to, electronic files and databases.
- u) For a pupil subject to discipline, the Executive Director may use his or her discretion to provide alternatives to suspension or expulsion that are age appropriate and designed to address and correct the pupil's specific misbehavior.

1. Shall Recommend for Expulsion Offenses

The Executive Director or Designee shall recommend the expulsion of a pupil for any of the following acts committed at school or at a school activity off school grounds, unless the Executive Director or Designee determines that expulsion should not be recommended under the circumstances or that an alternative means of correction would address the conduct:

- 1) Causing serious physical injury to another person, except in self-defense.
- 2) Possession of any knife or other dangerous object of no reasonable use to the pupil.
- 3) Unlawful possession of any controlled substance listed in Health and Safety Code section 11053 et seq. (except one ounce of marijuana or over the counter medications or medication prescribed to student).
- 4) Robbery or extortion.
- 5) Assault or battery (as defined in Penal Code section 240 and 242) upon any school employee.

2. Immediate Suspension and Mandatory Recommendation for Expulsion Offenses

- 1) Possessing, selling, or furnishing a firearm, as defined below. E.C. 48915(c)(1)

- 2) Brandishing a knife¹ at another person. E.C. 48915(c)(2)
- 3) Unlawfully selling a controlled substance listed in Health and Safety Code section 11053 et seq. E.C. 48915(c)(3)
- 4) Committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault or committing a sexual battery, as defined in the enumerated offenses above. E.C. 48915(c)(4)
- 5) Possession of an explosive². E.C. 48915(c)(5)

Suspensions

The Administration or Designee may suspend any student for unacceptable behavior at any time. Suspensions may range from one to five days, depending on the circumstances and severity. Parent/guardian will be contacted to pick up student. Additionally, a staff member and/or witness will write a report on the incident. Prior to a student's return from suspension, a parent and staff conference will be scheduled, as well as a behavioral contract will be recommended.

Behavioral Contracts

The behavioral contract is a written agreement between Desert Trails Preparatory Academy, the parent/guardian, and the student. This document states the student's name, lists the reason(s) for the behavioral contract, identifies the behavioral contract period, and is signed by all parties, including the Administration or Designee. Any violation of school rules in conjunction with our student discipline policy while on a behavioral contract could result in a recommendation for expulsion.

Serious Offenses

Some offenses may require school officials to notify local law enforcement agencies. In addition, instructors are mandated by State law to report any suspected child abuse.

Fire Play

Anytime a scholar is caught with matches, lighters, fireworks or engaging in fire play, we will notify the Hesperia Fire Department immediately.

FIRE DRILLS

A fire alarm and drill system have been established according to law and are regularly practiced. It is essential that when the first signal is given, everyone obeys directions promptly and clears the building by the pre-determined route as posted in each area. All persons occupying the building during an emergency procedure drill must comply with the directions given.

EARTHQUAKE DRILLS

As with fire drills, earthquake drills will be practiced periodically. It is essential that when the first signal is given, everyone is to obey directions promptly. All persons occupying the building during an emergency procedure drill must comply with the directions given.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Photographs and video will be taken throughout the school year to record special events as well as daily activities. Photos will be displayed at LaVerne Elementary and used to create our yearbook. Photos will not be released to outside individuals (such as the newspaper) without a signed consent form from the parent/guardian.

Parents wishing to take photos of school events are allowed to include *only their own children* in those photos unless otherwise agreed to by both Administration and the parents of the other scholars. Scholars are not permitted to take photos at school at any time.

SEVERE WEATHER PROCEDURES

On occasion, we experience severe weather conditions such as snow or extremely heavy rain. Since DTPA does not provide transportation to school, please assume we will continue to conduct school as usual. We understand that there are certain areas that make it nearly impossible to drive a vehicle through during these times. Please contact the office as soon as possible if you are unable to get your scholar to school due to these conditions. If the conditions are extreme, please listen to **Radio 100.2 FM, 102.3 FM, 106.5 FM, 1550 AM, or 103.1FM. You can also tune in to the local news stations and the school's website.** We will follow the Hesperia Unified School District's plan for school closures.

VISITORS

For the protection of the scholars and the security of the school, visitors must schedule an appointment prior to their arrival. Visitors will not be allowed to visit any part of the school beyond the front office. It is against our school policy for visitors or parents to go directly to classrooms before, during, or after school without checking through the office first.

¹ "Knife" means any dirk, dagger, or other weapon with a fixed, sharpened blade fitted primarily for stabbing, a weapon with a blade fitted primarily for stabbing, a weapon with a blade longer than 3 1/2 inches, a folding knife with a blade that locks into place, or a razor with an unguarded blade.

² The term "explosive" means "destructive device" as described in Section 921 of Title 18 of the United States Code.

Approved visitors must be accompanied by a school staff member while on campus.

Adults are expected to follow the school dress code while on campus. Only DTPA staff, students, approved visitors (by appointment only), members of the Board of Directors, emergency personnel, and legal counsel may be on campus at any time. Emergency situations will be handled at the discretion of the CEO/Administration.

There are no exceptions to these rules.

HEALTH SERVICES

Desert Trails Preparatory Academy staff will participate in active visual wellness checks of scholars as they arrive on campus.

All students must wash or sanitize hands as they enter campus.

If a student is feeling ill or has a fever, they must be kept at home. If a scholar has a fever or displays other symptoms of illness while at school, they will be separated from others right away and the parent/guardian **on the emergency card** will be notified. The student must then be picked up immediately both for his/her protection as well as that of other students and staff. Students are not to return to school until they have met CDC criteria to discontinue home isolation. DTPA does not have a school nurse but does employ a medical assistant.

It is imperative that if your child has any health needs, the office is informed immediately.

Please note:

- **It is essential that a scholar's address, phone numbers and emergency contacts be kept current. Please notify the office immediately of any changes.**
- **Medications are given only with written authorization from the parents and physician. Forms are available in the office. School personnel will give only prescribed doses at prescribed intervals. They do not cut or break medications if the pill comes in a larger dose. Please inform your pharmacist and doctor of this.**
- **The school cannot administer medicine, including aspirin, Tylenol, Chapstick, etc. Scholars who need to take prescribed medication, including inhalers, must have the appropriate form signed by the parent and physician before the medication can be brought to the school. The medication and form must be left in the front office and the original pharmacy label must be on the item.**
- **All medications are kept in a locked area and dispensed by either the medical assistant or unlicensed school personnel in the event that the medical assistant is unavailable. If this is not acceptable to you, then you or your designee (with written permission) may come to the school and give the medication.**

LUNCH

Scholars will have a 30-minute lunch and a 30-minute recess break daily. We encourage the children to finish their own lunches; we discourage the sharing, exchanging, or throwing away of food. Please monitor your child's lunch box and adjust their food portions, if necessary. Clearly label your student's lunch box with his or her name. A well-balanced nutritious snack and lunch help promote academic success. Soft drinks and candy are not permitted at school. *We discourage sending items which need to be heated since we are unable to accommodate these requests.* Students are expected to clean their eating area after snack and lunch. They will gather all trash and deposit it in the bins. They will all help clean their eating tables.

CARE OF TEXTBOOKS AND MATERIALS

Scholars are responsible for all textbooks, classroom books, chrome books, and other classroom materials issued to them during the school year. All lost or damaged materials must be paid for replacement purposes by parent/guardian. If items are lost or damaged during the school year, they must be replaced immediately so the student can continue with their studies.

DRESS CODE

We believe a scholar's behavior and attitude are related to his or her appearance. We want students to attend school and focus on academics and scholarly behavior and not focus on what brand of clothing they are wearing. Therefore, we have implemented a dress code policy for all students. It is our desire to foster good grooming and good judgment as well as make all our scholars feel that they are equally important to our staff and to their peers.

The Dress Code Policy

- **Shoes:** Shoes may be athletic shoes, or standard oxford casual or dress shoes. They may not have steel toes. They may not be open-toed, high-tops, platforms, combat boots, cowboy boots, or Crocs. Heels should not be more than one inch high.
- **Socks:** Dress code socks are dark blue, white, or green. Socks of other colors are allowed. Socks with inappropriate pictures will not be allowed.
- **Belts:** Belts are optional, but if they are worn, they must be plain, black belts with plain buckles. Those with initials, designs, logos, etc. will be taken from the scholar and returned only to a parent/guardian. Belt ends must not be left hanging loose or drooping below belt loops.
- **Shirts/Sweaters/Jackets:** Only burgundy or gold DTPA polo shirts with the school's logo may be worn. White uniform blouses may only be worn under girls' jumpers. DTPA zip-up or pullover sweatshirts are also available and may be worn over uniform polos. DTPA has an account with Hattrix, and they will show you the available styles you may choose from. Shirts, sweaters, and jackets may not contain inappropriate images or wording.
- **Pants:** Pants should be Dickies brand style (navy blue or khaki). Pants may not be more than one size too large in the waist and may not be baggy, even if they fit in the waist. Pants must be hemmed, may not be split, or cut at the hem and may not drag on the ground. Female scholars are to wear pants that are fitted but not skintight. Pants and shorts made of corduroy or jean material, having cargo pockets, jeggings, skinny jeans, or other tight fitted pants will not be allowed.
- **Shorts/Skirts/Jumpers:** Shorts follow the same guidelines as pants. Shorts, skirts, and jumpers may not be shorter than mid-thigh or extend more than two inches below the knee from a standing position. **Capris for girls are not acceptable.** Hems must be finished, and shorts may not have rolled or cuffed hems.

The dress code policy will be followed at all times. Everyone must adhere to the policy. No student shall be sent home from school or denied attendance to school, or penalized academically or otherwise discriminated against, for arriving at school in clothing that does not comply with this Policy.

Jewelry/Head Coverings

Scholars are only permitted to wear simple gold or silver chains and bracelets. Studded type earrings are allowed; no hoops or dangling earrings of any kind may be worn. Additionally, bandanas, hats, or any head coverings of any kind are not permitted inside the classroom. Hats may be worn outside for protection from the sun. Head coverings for religious purposes are allowed. Also, no facial piercing is permitted. No tattoos, including the washable or Henna type will be allowed.

Hair

All scholars must be well groomed each day. Hair must be neat, clean, and out of the eyes. Any alteration of the scholar's natural hair color (including highlights, full head dying, and washable colors) will not be permitted. For the purpose of this policy, rainbow colors are not considered natural hair colors. It is encouraged that hair accessories be school colors or natural hair colors. Spiked hair, mohawks, faux hawks, headbands containing ears, unicorn horns, etc., feathers (colored, clipped or braided in the hair), duck tails, or shaved cuts **are not** permitted. Hair should be neatly groomed on a daily basis without all the new fads. We will be involved with our community so professional appearance is a necessity. Exemptions should be requested and approved by the School Administration.

STATEWIDE TESTING

Every year, California students take several statewide tests. When combined with other measures such as grades, class work, and teacher observations, these tests give families and teachers a more complete picture of their child's learning. You can use the results to identify where your child is doing well and where they might need more support.

Your child may be taking one or more of the following California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP), English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC), and Physical Fitness Test assessments. Pursuant to California *Education Code* Section 60615, parents/guardians may annually submit to the school a written request to excuse their child from any or all of the CAASPP assessments. This exemption does not exist for the ELPAC or Physical Fitness Test.

CAASPP: Smarter Balanced Assessments for English Language Arts/Literacy (ELA) and Math

Who takes these tests? Students in grades 3–8 and grade 11.

What is the test format? The Smarter Balanced assessments are computer-based.

Which standards are tested? The California Common Core State Standards.

CAASPP: California Alternate Assessments (CAAs) for ELA and Math

Who takes these tests? Students in grades 3–8 and grade 11 whose Individualized Education Program (IEP) identifies the use of alternate assessments.

What is the test format? The CAAs for ELA and math are computer-based tests that are administered one-on-one by a test examiner who is familiar with the student.

Which standards are tested? The California Common Core State Standards through the Core Content Connectors.

CAASPP: California Science Test (CAST)

Who takes the test? Students take the CAST in grades 5 and 8 and once in high school, either in grade 10, 11, or 12.

What is the test format? The CAST is computer-based.

Which standards are tested? The California Next Generation Science Standards (CA NGSS).

CAASPP: California Alternate Assessment (CAA) for Science

Who takes the test? Students whose IEP identifies the use of an alternate assessment take the CAA for Science in grades 5 and 8 and

once in high school, either in grade 10, 11, or 12.

What is the test format? The CAA for Science is a series of four performance tasks that can be administered throughout the year as the content is taught.

Which standards are tested? Alternate achievement standards derived from the CA NGSS.

CAASPP: California Spanish Assessment (CSA)

Who takes the test? The CSA is an optional test for students in grades 3–12 that tests their Spanish reading, listening, and writing mechanics.

What is the test format? The CSA is computer-based.

Which standards are tested? The California Common Core State Standards en Español.

ELPAC

Who takes the test? Students who have a home language survey that lists a language other than English will take the Initial test, which identifies students as an English learner student or as initially fluent in English. Students who are classified as English learner students will take the Summative ELPAC every year until they are reclassified as proficient in English.

What is the test format? Both the Initial and Summative ELPAC are computer-based.

Which standards are tested? The 2012 California English Language Development Standards.

Alternate ELPAC

Who takes the test? Students whose IEP identifies the use of an alternate assessment and who have a home language survey that lists a language other than English will take the Alternate Initial ELPAC, which identifies students as an English learner student or as initially fluent in English. Students who are classified as English learner students will take the Alternate Summative ELPAC every year until they are reclassified as proficient in English.

What is the test format? Both the Alternate Initial and Alternate Summative ELPAC are computer-based.

Which standards are tested? Alternate achievement standards derived from the 2012 California English Language Development Standards.

Physical Fitness Test

Who takes the test? Students in grades 5, 7, and 9 will take the FITNESSGRAM®, which is the test used in California.

What is the test format? The test consists of five performance components: aerobic capacity, abdominal strength, trunk strength, upper body strength, and flexibility.

Which standards are tested? The Healthy Fitness Zones, which are established through the FITNESSGRAM®.

****Please note that this handbook is subject to change.**

**DESERT TRAILS PREPARATORY ACADEMY
SCHOOL HANDBOOK AGREEMENT**

I have been given a copy and have read Desert Trails Preparatory Academy's 2023 – 2024 Parent and Scholar Handbook. I agree to abide by all policies set forth in this document.

_____ Scholar's Printed Name	_____ Grade
_____ Parent/Guardian Signature	_____ Date

**Desert Trails Preparatory Academy
Student-Family Compact
2023-2024**

At Desert Trails Preparatory Academy we teach with intent, relying on well-established instructional techniques proven over centuries, and values-centered curriculum that stresses facts, logical concepts, and intelligent language. In addition, we maintain a safe, orderly, encouraging school atmosphere through firm policies of discipline. **We help each scholar acquire a sense of personal dignity and responsibility by constantly making clear what we require in scholarly effort, courteous behavior, and respect for teachers, staff, and others.**

This agreement is designed to promote excellence in teaching and learning. Our goal is to help each scholar reach his/her full potential. To achieve this, the home and school must work together in the learning process.

STUDENT COMMITMENT: *In order to comply with the rules and policies of Desert Trails Preparatory Academy, I commit to the following as terms and conditions of my enrollment. I understand that a violation of the following can lead to disciplinary action from the School. Further, as to the School's student uniform, I hereby expressly waive any right I may have to object to or refuse to comply with that policy, and I understand that failure to comply can lead to disciplinary action from this school. Thus, in order to be successful at Desert Trails Preparatory Academy, I will:*

- Attend classes daily, be punctual, and always do my best
- Dress according to the approved school uniform
- Communicate with my teachers any difficulties completing assignments
- Show respect for classmates, teachers, administration, staff, visitors, directors, and parents
- Strive to maintain a high-quality level of work
- Be responsible in the care and return of all instructional materials and textbooks
- Follow the rules and procedures of the school
- Bring my work (complete and labeled), textbooks, and necessary supplies to class
- Refrain from the use of profanity

_____ Scholar's Printed Name	
_____ Scholar's Signature	_____ Date

Complete Back Side →

FAMILY COMMITMENT: *In order to ensure my child complies with the rules and policies of Desert Trails Preparatory Academy, I recognize the following as terms and conditions of my scholar's enrollment. I understand that a violation of the following can lead my child to disciplinary action. Further, as to the School's student dress code, I hereby expressly waive any right I may have to or refuse to comply with that policy, and I understand that failure to comply can lead to disciplinary action from the school. Thus, in order to promote success for my child, I will:*

- Provide or arrange for timely transportation to and from school
- See that my child attends school wearing the approved school uniform
- Monitor consistent attendance and homework completion
- Provide a time and place for quiet study and reading at home
- Participate/volunteer in school-related activities as needed
- Notify staff of any concerns or problems that may affect attendance
- Assume financial responsibility for the replacement of textbooks, Chromebooks, or materials, if lost or damaged
- Provide and encourage positive use of leisure time
- Reinforce the importance and necessity of education through role modeling
- Attend conferences with scholar and teacher whenever needed
- Provide or arrange for proper nutrition, with emphasis on a healthy breakfast and lunch/snack

Additionally, I understand and accept the following:

Desert Trails Preparatory Academy is a school of “choice”. We exist to provide parents/guardians with a “Classical” alternative form of education. As such, we must all understand that it may not always be the best alternative for any particular family or student. Disqualification from the program due to the repeated or serious violation of this compact does not necessarily prevent a student from participating in the regular educational program offered by the school district of residence.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Thank you for your assistance in maintaining our school's standards of excellence.
Please sign above and return this page to the school office.