

Just a reminder that you're receiving this email because you have a student enrolled at Desert Heights Preparatory Academy. Don't forget to add noreply@desertheightsschools.org to your address book so we'll be sure to land in your inbox!

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DESERT HEIGHTS

CHARTER SCHOOL

Principal's Newsletter



Dear Desert Heights Families,

I know that this school year brings a lot of anxiety, uncertainty, and stress for all of us. As educators and parents, we have been forced to choose between educational options and choices that are all terrible options. We have spent the summer worrying about how our kids will be cared for, connect with others, receive adequate if not strong educational opportunities, and remain physically and mentally healthy. Each option falls short of the standard that we as a community have set for all of our kids. I am speaking of this in an "us and we" voice because that is what we have always been, and although I am the school leader, I too, share all of these emotions as do the rest of our staff. We have taken our turns crying about how hard it is for everyone to be in this current situation and how we so badly want our joyful and education rich classrooms back. We are parents too; we share the fears. How we will be able to give your babies what they deserve while also ensuring our own are learning and growing too?

While it seems like an impossible task, especially now that we have had to shift to all virtual learning for the time-being, I know that while it will not be simple by any means, and there will be moments of frustration, if any community will rise to this challenge, it is ours- together.

I assure you that as a community, we will connect with your children, we will remind them they are part of the Desert Heights Family and they are loved. We will also focus on what our kids and families need right now whether it be video or phone check-ins, or academic support. We will avail ourselves to work through challenges with you, and to get creative to ensure our kids are okay. I find comfort in knowing that starting off virtually means that our community members can remain healthy and safe and that every one of us will be able to return together and stronger.

Please be sure to read the correspondence below for details on this Phase 1 of

learning and what is to come in each phase. I know this has left you all with questions and my hope is that this communication answers those for you, however, as always, my "door" is always open, so please feel free to contact me if you need anything as you are navigating yet another new norm.

I also have a large favor to ask, please tell our HOWlers that Mrs. Miller has been thinking of them every moment and that she is looking forward to the day we are at school and celebrating as a family! I will be sure to send them messages through videos, pop-in to classes, and send them electronic notes too. Many kids email me as well, so please let them know I would love to hear from them.

Thank you for supporting our educational team and each other as we navigate this together!



Meet the Teacher!

Please click on the appropriate link below to schedule a time to meet with your child's teacher. Your child's teacher will be in communication with you regarding whether or not your classes "Meet the Teacher" will be in person or via Zoom.

Teachers will review expectations, virtual schedule, attendance requirements, and login information for students. We have made student logins and accessing information as a student much more simple and streamlined and we are excited to share our plans with you.

If you would like to see the virtual schedule and supply list in advance please **click here** and choose your child's grade level.

[Mrs. Krogmeier](#)

[Mrs. Fuller](#)

[Ms. Keller](#)

[Ms. Bowen](#)

[Mrs. Kolbuss](#)

[Mrs. Ingram](#)

[Ms. Hightower](#)

[Ms. Diaz](#)

[Mrs. Rubio](#)

[Mrs. Brunner](#)

[Mrs. Perez](#)

[Mrs. Gonzalez](#)

[Mrs. Suwyn](#)

[Mrs. Zimbelman](#)

[Ms. Budewitz](#)

[Mrs. Baxter](#)

[Ms. Carey](#)

[Ms. Crawford](#)

[Ms. Davis](#)

Mrs. Woodworth

Ms. Boyce

Mrs. Ash

Mr. Cohn

Desert Heights Phased Reopening Plan

Desert Heights Administrative Team has developed a 4 phase plan to return to learning. Each phase is determined by the metrics and benchmarks set by the Arizona Department of Health as well as recommendations from Kathy Hoffman, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

As of now, our school will begin in phase one on August 17, 2020 at 8:00am. and our team will continue to evaluate benchmarks to determine when we can take the next steps.

Phase 1: All K-12 is virtual. Essential population can be supervised on site as necessary. More information below on what constitutes essential.

Phase 2: Hybrid Model-Kindergarten-6th grade. On-site Instruction available Monday-Thursday for those who chose this option and enrolled prior to August 1, 2020. No more than 16 students in a classroom, students will be clustered for the day and will not travel to other areas on campus unless they receive essential services. In person participants must wear face coverings.

Phase 3: Parent/Student Choice. All who chose in person instruction are on-site 5 days per week, on regular bell schedule. In person participants must wear face coverings.

Phase 4:

All students return to campus, clustering is no longer necessary. Determination will be made regarding face coverings at that time.

Please **click here** to see an more detailed version of Desert Heights phases!



Vulnerable and Essential Students

Governor Ducey's Executive orders 2020-41 and 2020-44 regarding returning to school safely, state that schools must offer on-site supervision of student learning for vulnerable populations as well as children of essential workers. Desert Heights will provide a space on site during regular school hours for students who fall into this category and are signed up by a parent or guardian by **August 12, 2020 at 5:00pm**.

We must have this information in order to provide adequate supervision. During their time on campus, these students will participate in the virtual learning under support staff supervision during "live times" scheduled for their grade level. If these students must remain on campus during independent work time, it is highly encouraged that they bring things to work on or do during that time, activities will not be provided by the support staff for time outside of live classes and due to social distancing requirements, students will not be permitted to share items. Masks/Face coverings will be required, students must be in Desert Heights uniform, and social distancing will be in place.

- Vulnerable students include: Special Education, English-Language Learners, McKinney Vento or Foster Care students
- Essential workers are defined as: healthcare, childcare/teachers, critical community service workers

If your student falls into one of these categories and requires on site supervision email **Mrs. Miller** for any student in K-4 by August 12th at 5:00pm.



Technology Device Needs and Distribution

Thank you to all parents who responded to the survey that was sent regarding your child's needs for technology in a virtual learning phase. The survey asked for responses from all students, regardless of learning preference and outlines the system requirements needed for success in virtual learning.

This data has been analyzed and all of the families who expressed a hardship, and need for devices will be contacted with a solution. We have planned and prepared for the responses we've received. If you have a hardship and are unable to provide a dedicated device to your child, and did not respond to the survey, please contact **Mrs. Miller**, and ensure that you are receiving our communication so that we are in the best position to support your family. We have a limited number of devices and have reserved them for families in need.

School issued devices will be ready within the first week of school, if not sooner. If you responded needing a device, you will receive a link to sign up for pick-up soon. It is highly recommended that you purchased the protection plan for the device in the event that something happens to it when in your child's possession. The cost for the protection plan is \$30.00 per device.



Lunch & Breakfast Plan in Phase 1

Families must still order through our ordering system, however, food service will be available for all those who order. Free & Reduced Lunch students are still eligible. If you are eligible to receive Free & Reduced Lunch, but have not completed the application, please do so. We want to ensure all families are taken care of.

Breakfast

Pick Up is available 8am-9am on Mondays and will be given for the entire week at a time.

Lunch

Families can come anytime between 10:30am-1:30 each day if they need to pick up lunch. You can also email our Food Service Director Sydney Pisano if you need to pick up from one campus or if you need delivery options for your family.

Food Service Plan Virtual

STAY CONNECTED:

