

2020 - 2021



desert voices

Welcome to the 2020-2021 School Year



Desert Voices has been working diligently to maintain a path forward to effect transformative change in the lives of children and adults through language and literacy. The tremendous support, flexibility, perseverance, and patience exhibited by our children, families, and staff throughout these unprecedented times have allowed us to enhance and develop how we use technology in the classroom. While we cannot predict what the pandemic landscape will look like as we approach the start of the school year, we are prepared to provide the structure and connection necessary for students and teachers to continue the important work we do together.

Following the recommendations of public health officials, as well as local, state, and federal requirements, and with the absolute priority of safeguarding the health and well-being of our students and staff, the School's intention is to welcome students and teachers back to campus for On-Campus Learning in August. In the event that public health guidelines or concerns require a delayed campus opening or campus closures throughout the school year, we will provide instruction to our students via Distance Learning.

We are all in this together.

We are depending on you to help us keep our campus open by following our health and safety best practices and keeping your child at home as needed.

Your assistance makes a huge difference in our ability to keep our campus open to best serve all our families.

We appreciate your commitment to our community!

Distance Learning with At-Home Access

Desert Voices is committed to maintaining a full-day school schedule for students. If a family chooses to keep their child at home for any reason while On-Campus Learning is occurring, the student will continue learning through our At-Home Access option. As outlined in more detail below, our At-Home Access option will closely resemble On-Campus Learning.

Specific decisions and plans regarding on-campus procedures will align with public health guidelines and will be revised as health and safety best practices evolve.

Both On-Campus Learning with At-Home Access and Distance Learning offer the same evidence-based instruction, including:

- Individualized learning, focused on the needs of each child
- Relationship-building interactions with classmates
- Live-streamed and recorded instruction
- Expertise in Listening and Spoken Language
- Independent activities
- Progress monitoring
- Parent Coaching



On-Campus Procedures

Procedures are being developed in the following areas including, but not limited to:



Protocols for screening, monitoring, reporting, and responding to illness for students, adults dropping students at school, adults picking up students at school, staff, and visitors



Enhanced sanitation and cleaning procedures throughout the building and campus



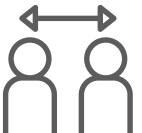
Changes to campus access for visitors and parents



Required face coverings in public settings as recommended by CDC guidelines



Modification of snack and lunch procedures



Modification of programs and events in compliance with limits on crowd sizes and social distancing measures

General Principles & Assumptions

- Our first priority is to protect the health and safety of students and staff.
- We will deliver the highest quality educational services to our students and families, whether it takes place on site or through distance learning.
- We will follow Arizona Department of Health, and CDC guidelines.
- We will provide clear expectations for staff, students, and families.

Before Arriving On Campus

- Anyone who is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 or knows that they have COVID-19 should isolate at home for a minimum of 14 days required by the CDC guidelines.
- Staff and student families should communicate with the School if anyone in their home tests positive for COVID-19, experiences symptoms, or is exposed to someone who is positive or symptomatic.
- Staff who become sick or experience symptoms while on campus should notify Leadership and leave campus immediately or report to a designated isolation room until able to leave campus.
- Students who become sick while on campus will be escorted to an isolation room. The student will be monitored via a baby monitor application and have access to electronic entertainment. When Leadership contacts a parent or guardian, pick up should be within 30 minutes of the call.
- Due to current circumstances, we are limiting entry into the building to students and staff only. We will notify you of changes as community assessment and guidelines evolve.
- Any adult who comes into the school building must wear a mask and maintain social distancing.

Morning Arrival & Screening Process

- Everyone entering the building will be screened upon arrival outside their classroom door. Masks and social distancing is required.
- Late arrivals will utilize the doorbell (left side of front door) and a staff member will meet you outside for the screening process and then a staff member will accompany your child to their classroom.
- During check-in, All parents will be asked the following health screening questions during campus arrival:
 - Section 1: Symptoms
 1. Temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher
 2. Sore Throat
 3. Uncontrolled cough that causes difficulty breathing (for students with chronic allergic/asthmatic cough, a change in their cough from baseline;
 4. Diarrhea, vomiting, or abdominal pain
 5. New onset of severe headache especially with a fever
 6. Loss of smell and/or taste
 - Section 2: Close Contact Potential Exposure
 1. Had close contact within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes with a person confirmed COVID - 19; OR
 2. Had close contact within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes with person under quarantine for possible exposure to SARS -CoV-2; OR
 3. Traveled to or lived in an area where the local, Tribal, territorial, or state health department is reporting large numbers of COVID - 19 cases as described in the Community Mitigation Framework
 4. Live in areas of high community transmission (as described in the Community Mitigation Framework) while the school remains open
- If the screening reveals any illness symptoms or COVID-9 exposure, the student must immediately leave campus.
- Temperature checks will be taken throughout the day.
- Upon dismissal, the adult picking up the child will have their temperature taken as well.

Handwashing

- Staff, students, and visitors should wash or sanitize their hands after entering the building and throughout the day for at least 20 seconds with soap and water or with hand sanitizer with an alcohol content of more than 60 percent.
- Staff, families, and students will receive instruction and reminders on hand hygiene and proper coughing and sneezing protocol to limit the spread of infectious disease.

- The School will provide and maintain appropriate hand soap and hand sanitizer supplies throughout campus.

Face Coverings

- All staff, students and visitors must wear a face covering while on campus. Exceptions will be made with consideration for medical reasons and age, and to accommodate eating and drinking, outdoor activities, and independent work in personal office spaces where physical distancing can be maintained. All staff should remain 6 feet from students if not wearing a mask.
 - Face coverings do not have to be worn by staff when they are alone in their office, but the School recommends wearing one whenever safely possible to limit the spread of microbes.
- Face coverings must not be placed on young children under the age of two, anyone who has trouble breathing, or anyone who is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.
- Staff, students (3 years and older), and visitors must wear face coverings when traveling throughout the building, in confined spaces, and in common areas where others could be present. In the classroom face coverings will be encouraged. However, when social distancing is difficult due to activity, face coverings will be required for students 3 plus years and older.

Cleaning & Sanitation Practices

In addition to rigorous hygiene, sanitation, and disinfection procedures already in place, special attention will be paid to the following:

- Surfaces and objects that are frequently touched will be sanitized regularly, including but not limited to toys, games, and objects or surfaces not ordinarily cleaned daily.
- Toys, books, and games that cannot be cleaned and sanitized will not be used.
- Toys that children have placed in their mouths or that are otherwise contaminated by bodily secretions or excretions will be set aside until they can be cleaned thoroughly by a person wearing gloves.

- Machine-washable cloth toys will be used by one individual at a time or will not be used at all. These toys will be laundered before being used by another child.
- Toys used by a group of children will be washed and sanitized before they will be used by children in a different group or classroom.
- Items that need to be cleaned will be set aside in a dish pan with soapy water or in a separate container marked for soiled toys.
- Children need to be able to independently handle all aspects associated with using the restroom including: removing and replacing clothing, using toilet tissue, and washing and drying hands. If your child has more than three accidents (either urinary or bowel) in a three - week period, we may ask that you remove your child from the program, until fully potty trained. Re-entry will depend on space availability and his/her readiness to use the toilet independently.
- All toileting accidents will be handled by the cohort teacher. While the cohort teacher is assisting the student, their teaching "buddy" will be responsible for monitoring the students that remain in the classroom. This will limit possible exposure to other students and staff members.

Physical Distancing & Group Gatherings

- All students and staff will maintain safe physical distances of six feet as feasible.
- Group sizes will be limited to a maximum of 7 people per classroom, including teachers.
- Class group size will be determined by the ability to maintain physical distancing in the designated classroom space.
- Students will remain in the same cohort throughout the day.
- Discovery Room activities will be provided through one of the following: cohort's teacher of the deaf, recorded lessons from Discovery Room teacher of the deaf, direct, Online or in-person instruction from a Discovery Room teacher of the deaf.
- One Leadership team member will be on-site during the instructional day. The Leadership team will be rotating on and off campus every 2 to 3 weeks.

- All large events such as open house, holiday celebrations and school-wide events will be modified to allow for social distancing or held virtually.
- Signage throughout the School will reinforce physical distancing.
- During student drop-off and pickup, staff will wear face coverings and maintain six feet of physical distance from others.
- Classrooms may be set up in our small building in addition to the main building in order to accommodate social distancing procedures.

Lunch Service

- Lunch will take place in most classrooms, instead of in the lunchroom. One cohort may be assigned to another room in the building.
- All students and staff must wash their hands before and after eating snacks or lunch.
- All Staff will use provided gloves during student lunch time.
- Staff will use provided gloves, disinfectant, and paper towels to thoroughly clean tables after students have eaten.
- Water will be provided to students in disposable cups and discarded after use.
- Hand sanitizing stations will be provided.

Shared Materials

- All classroom toys, supplies, materials, and manipulatives will remain in their designated classroom. Sharing of supplies between classrooms will be properly sanitized and removed from available materials for 72 hours.
- Each student should use pens, pencils, scissors, and other supplies designated for their sole use.
- Staff will sanitize classroom materials as needed using provided spray bottles, cloths, and EPA-approved wipes.
- All school materials must stay at school; no home materials should be brought to school.
- All toys and manipulatives will be washed or sanitized daily.
- No personal toys will be allowed on campus.
- Whiteboards and markers will be wiped down at the end of the day and between classes.
- Each student will be assigned their own playdough/clay set. If this set is exposed to another child, that set will be thrown away.
- Only manipulatives that can be easily disinfected will be used.
- E-Books will be used in the classroom for most lessons. If a class book is used in the classroom, it will be handled only by the teacher. If a book becomes contaminated, the book will be removed and unavailable for a minimum of 10 days.

Exposure to COVID-19

- Students should not come to school and an email should be sent to Leadership at leadership@desert-voices.org immediately if they feel sick, test positive for COVID-19, or have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19.
- Leadership will notify local health officials, staff, and families immediately if a student or staff member is sick with COVID-19.
- Families will be notified of confirmed illnesses occurring within the classroom, however, patient confidentiality will be maintained.
- If a student or staff member is confirmed to have been exposed or is highly likely to have been exposed to COVID-19, they will be required to self-quarantine.
- Anyone exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 will be immediately placed in an isolation room until they can be safely transported to their home or to a healthcare provider.
- Sick staff and students should not return until they have met the CDC's criteria to discontinue home isolation.
- Families may choose to keep their children at home until a quarantine period has passed.
- Students and staff can return to school if they have been symptom free for 72 hours, are not presumed to have COVID-19, or have not tested positive for COVID-19.
- Students and staff who test positive for COVID-19 will be unable to return to campus until they have been released to do so by their physician.
- Students and staff who are presumed to have COVID-19, but have not been tested, may return to campus if they have had no fever for at least 72 hours, their symptoms are improving, at least 10 days have passed since their symptoms first appeared, and a note from their medical professional clearing them to return to campus.

Contact Tracing

- Contact tracing will be implemented to mitigate the spread of infection.
- Leadership will work with public health officials if a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19.
- Leadership and/or local public health officials will work with the infected person to identify close contacts and will notify community members who may have been in close contact with the infected person.
- Instructions that follow current CDC and Arizona Department of Health guidelines will be provided to the infected person and all close contacts regarding isolation and quarantine.

Protecting Vulnerable Populations

Vulnerable populations include elderly individuals and/or individuals with serious underlying health conditions.

- Families will be surveyed to gauge how comfortable they feel returning to campus.
- At-Home Access will be provided for vulnerable students, even when On-Campus Learning operations are occurring.
- The School will adhere to FERPA and HIPAA requirements.

Distance Learning

Preparing for Interruptions

Following the recommendations of public health officials, state, and federal requirements, and trends from past pandemics, Desert Voices is prepared for potential interruptions to On-Site Learning. Should conditions relative to the pandemic change and it is necessary to suspend On-Site Learning, we will transition to Distance Learning.

Distance Learning will look significantly different than the Virtual Learning we implemented last spring. We are investing time and resources to provide Distance Learning experiences as close to our On-Site Learning Experience as possible. Through Distance Learning, our most important instructional goal will be to advance our student's language, listening and articulation skills. Our instruction of students will follow a developmentally-appropriate schedule and will interact with teachers and classmates through a mix of live and recorded content. We will continue to educate the whole child, encourage the pursuit of individual passions, promote life balance, build confidence, encourage play as a foundation of learning, and provide multi-sensory learning experiences when possible.

We are dedicating ourselves to ensuring every child receives the foundation necessary to decide their own future. We strive for every child to feel safe and is able to build their brains for reading and all learning — taking risks, developing confidence and preparing them to enjoy a lifetime of learning.

Technology



Google Meet will now enable our teachers and students to securely connect for class over high-quality video.



Google Classroom is a free web service developed by Google for schools that aims to simplify creating, distributing, and grading assignments. The primary purpose of Google Classroom is to streamline the process of sharing files between teachers and students.



ChildPilot is an All-In-One cloud-based childcare management system that helps childcare owners & directors perform day-to-day administrative tasks more efficiently, enhance parent communication & more.



Epic! is the leading digital reading platform - built on a collection of 40,000+ popular, high-quality books from 250+ of the world's best publishers+ that safely fuels curiosity and reading confidence for kids 12 and under.



Seesaw is a platform for student engagement that enables students to use creative tools to take pictures, draw, record videos and more to capture learning in a portfolio.

*Technologies will be implemented according to need, and in alignment with developmental and age-level appropriateness for the children we serve.

Supporting Resources

- Community Mitigation Framework
- American Academy of Pediatrics - COVID-19 Planning Considerations: Guidance for School Re-entry
- CDC - The Importance of Reopening America's Schools this Fall
- Children's Face Coverings
 - Noah's Art Workshop
 - Zazzle
 - Little Lives PPE

**DESERT VOICES ORAL LEARNING CENTER
RELEASE AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY AND INDEMNIFICATION**

**PLEASE READ THIS CAREFULLY BEFORE YOU SIGN IT. BY SIGNING THIS RELEASE, YOU WILL BE
WAIVING LEGAL RIGHTS, INCLUDING THE RIGHT TO SUE.**

By signing this release, I represent and warrant that I am 18 years of age or older, and that I am the parent or legal guardian of the participant, [insert name] _____, a minor under the age of 18 ("Minor"), with the legal authority to sign this document on Minor's behalf. I acknowledge, as parent or legal guardian of Minor, that I am aware of the dangers and the risks to Minor involved in attending or participating in the activities or treatment at Desert Voices Oral Learning Center (the "Center"). I understand that participating in activities or treatment at the Center involves risks to Minor which could result in serious illness, injury, or death, including, without limitation, illness, injury or death due to contracting the COVID-19 virus or other communicable disease. I also understand that there are potential risks which may presently be unknown.

In consideration for allowing Minor to attend the Center and/or to participate in any activities or treatment at the Center, I, as the parent or legal guardian of Minor, for myself, and on behalf of Minor and Minor's heirs, executors, administrators, next of kin, successors, and assigns, agree to be legally bound by this Release and Waiver of Liability and Indemnification, as follows:

1. Minor and I acknowledge that Minor is not required to attend the Center or participate in any activities or treatment at the Center, and that Minor's participation is voluntary and is not essential. I understand that Minor can withdraw from the Center or any activity or treatment at the Center at any time.

2. I understand and acknowledge that the Center provides care and treatment to many children, often simultaneously, and that by the nature of the activities or treatment at the Center, Minor may come into contact with surfaces, objects, circulated air or persons that have been exposed to or carry the COVID-19 virus or other communicable disease. I understand that the inherent nature of attending or participating in activities or treatment at the Center may present a significant risk of illness, personal injury or death to Minor, and that even if the Center uses reasonable care in its operations, illness, injury or death may still occur and these are risks that cannot be eliminated. On behalf of Minor, I understand and accept any and all risks, whether known or unknown to Minor and/or me, of having Minor attend the Center and/or participate in activities or treatment at the Center, including, without limitation, the risk of contracting the COVID-19 virus or other communicable disease.

3. I am not aware of any reason, medical or otherwise, why Minor should not attend the Center or participate in activities or treatment at the Center, including any pre-existing conditions or health issues that may place Minor at a higher degree of risk by attending the Center and/or participating in activities or training at the Center.

4. On behalf of Minor, I AGREE TO WAIVE, RELEASE AND DISCHARGE THE CENTER and its respective directors, officers, employees, agents, representatives, heirs, insurers, successors, and assigns, and each and every person acting by, through, under, or in concert with them, or any of them (hereinafter individually and collectively referred to as the "Released and Indemnified Parties"), from any and all liability for illness, personal injury, death, disability or claims of any nature which may accrue to Minor and Minor's estate as a direct or indirect result of Minor's attendance at the Center or participation in activities or training at the Center.

5. I AGREE TO DEFEND, INDEMNIFY, FOREVER DISCHARGE AND HOLD HARMLESS, AND COVENANT NOT TO SUE, THE CENTER and the Released and Indemnified Parties, of and from all manner of action or actions, cause of action, suits, claims, demands, damages, liability, lost cost or expense, of any nature whatsoever, known or unknown, fixed or contingent (hereinafter referred to as "Claims") which Minor and/or I may have or hereafter have against the Released and Indemnified Parties by reason of any illness, injuries or death that Minor may sustain, as a

result of or incident to the Released and Indemnified Parties' negligence (whether active or passive) or Minor's attendance at the Center or participation in activities or treatment at the Center.

6. Minor and I agree that if Minor and/or I, or anyone acting on behalf of Minor or me, commence, join in, or in any way seek relief through any action or proceeding arising out of, based upon, or relating to any of the Claims released herein, or in any way assert against the Released and Indemnified Parties any of the Claims released herein, then we will pay to the Released and Indemnified Parties, in addition to any other damages caused to the Released and Indemnified Parties thereby, all attorneys' fees incurred by the Released and Indemnified Parties in defending or otherwise responding to such action, proceeding, or Claims.

7. This Release shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Arizona.

8. I UNDERSTAND THAT BY SIGNING THIS RELEASE AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY AND INDEMNIFICATION ("RELEASE"), I AM GIVING UP MINOR'S AND MY LEGAL RIGHT(S) TO SUE THE RELEASED AND INDEMNIFIED PARTIES AND/OR TO SEEK COMPENSATION FROM THE RELEASED AND INDEMNIFIED PARTIES FOR ANY ILLNESS, INJURY, DEATH OR DAMAGES THAT MINOR AND/OR I MAY INCUR AS A RESULT OF THE ACTIVE OR PASSIVE NEGLIGENCE OF THE INDEMNIFIED PARTIES, MINOR'S ATTENDANCE AT THE CENTER, AND/OR PARTICIPATION IN ACTIVITIES OR TRAINING AT THE CENTER, AND/OR ANY AND ALL RISKS ASSUMED BY MINOR AND/OR ME UNDER THIS RELEASE.

I HAVE READ THIS RELEASE AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY AND INDEMNIFICATION AND AGREE TO ALL OF ITS TERMS.

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name of Parent/Guardian: _____

Witness Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name of Witness: _____

Name of Minor: _____ Age: _____