

SONORAN

DESERT SCHOOL



2018-19 Student Handbook

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The SDS graduate has a foundation in mathematics, history, science, and the fine arts. The graduate is thus prepared for college in every course of advanced or specialized study and ready to live the lifetime of learning that creates the richest human life possible.

SDS will fulfill its mission by the following means:

- A rigorous curriculum
- Small classes with individualized assistance
- Dedicated, enthusiastic, and intellectually excellent teachers who serve as models of learning and of character
- High standards of personal conduct for students

Parent involvement is essential for the child to have success in their education at Sonoran Desert School. The parent's role is listening and encouraging their child to complete the challenging curriculum. Communication with teachers is also essential to share information on homework, difficulties, or challenges that their child may have. We encourage parents to talk with teachers as soon as they think their son or daughter might be having difficulty. The earlier a problem is recognized, the easier it is to resolve. If you wish to talk with your child's teacher, or to make an appointment for a conference, please call the office at 480-396-5463.

ADMISSION

Admission is not limited based upon ethnicity, national origin, gender, income level, disabling condition, proficiency in the English language or athletic ability. All documents that are required for enrollment must be received before the student can attend at SDS. Pre-enrollment for current SDS students occurs every spring. Applications received during this time will be placed on a registration list for the following school year. Enrollment preferences are given to all returning students and to siblings of students already enrolled at SDS, but they are still required to file an application during the pre-enrollment period. If the number of applications exceeds the number of openings, there will be a lottery to determine enrollment and a waiting list.

A student who has been expelled, or is in the process of being expelled from another educational institution will not be admitted to Sonoran Desert School.

Arizona law requires documentary proof of immunity against certain childhood diseases for students entering Arizona schools for the first time. With some exceptions, students subject to this requirement who lack documentary proof may enroll but may not attend school until proof is provided.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is basic to success in high school. When a student is absent, a parent should call the office at 480-396-5463 or email at learn@sdschool.org if no contact is made to the school within twenty-four hours, the absence will be considered unexcused. Eighteen-year old students may assume the responsibility of notifying the school of an absence with approval of the administration.

Students aged 16 or older who have **ten** unexcused absences per semester will be withdrawn for the remainder of the semester for excessive absenteeism. If the student brings in a doctor's note, the absences will not count towards the 10 absences per semester. Any student who misses **ten** unexcused absences in **ten** consecutive days will be withdrawn according to Arizona State Law.

During school attendance hours, students must be either working on their coursework or alternative educational activities as allowed by the teacher.

BULLYING

Unacceptable Behavior – *Bullying* means systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress in person-to-person encounters and/or by means of electronic communication or technological devices on one or more students or school employees. It is further defined as unwanted and repeated written, verbal, or physical behavior, including any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, by an adult or student, that is severe or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment; cause discomfort or humiliation; or unreasonably interfere with the individual's school performance or participation; and may involve but is not limited to: teasing, social exclusion, threat, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, theft, sexual, religious, or racial/ethnic harassment, public humiliation, damaging or destruction of property, placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or property, cyber-bullying, and cyber-stalking.

Action steps your child should take if he/she is being bullied (advise him/her):

- **Please do not encourage your child to fight or retaliate. Counter-aggression rarely works and often escalates the problem.**
- You can empower your child by listening to and validating his/her feelings, by acknowledging that the harm she/he experienced is not right, and that she/he needs to get help in order to stop the mistreatment.
- Instead, encourage self reporting- Discuss the distinct difference between “tattling” (snitching, ratting, giving up) and “telling/reporting” with your child. Explain that “tattling” is when a person intentionally tries to get another student in trouble for something minor. “Telling” is completely different because it means informing an adult of the harmful, immoral, unethical, dangerous, destructive, hateful or threatening behavior that has hurt the individual or someone else. If telling adults seems hard for your child, encourage him/her to ask a friend to accompany him/her to a faculty member to report the issue.
- Encourage him/her to file a Bullying/Harassment Incident Report/Form located in the front office
- In the short run, encourage your child to walk with friends whenever possible.
- If your child is being bullied online or by text messaging encourage him/her not to retaliate and/or reply, but rather to report the activity to school personnel.

If your child is engaging in bullying behavior:

- Make it clear that you take bullying seriously and you will not tolerate this behavior.
- Develop clear and consistent rules within your family for your child’s behavior.
- Spend more time with your child and carefully monitor his/her behavior.
- Build on your child’s talents by encouraging him or her to get involved in pro-social activities.
- Talk with your child’s teacher, counselor or administrator to approach this behavior as a team.
- If your child needs additional help, talk with a mental health professional.

What you should do if your child is bullied:

- Most importantly, focus on your child. Listen, be supportive and gather information and the facts related to the incident.
- Stay calm and report the incident(s) to your child’s teacher, principal. Document all incidents of mistreatment, abuse, cruelty, and/or disrespectful acts toward your child and or perpetrated by your child.
- Complete and/or encourage your child to file a Bullying/Harassment Incident Report/Form located in the front office. Reporting is not tattling when the intention is to alert teacher and/or administration of any harmful acts of mistreatment toward your child or others.
- Request that you be informed or schedule a follow up conference to discuss findings and determine actions to monitor and support all students involved, as well as to deter continued and/or escalation of incidents.
- Seek resources to assist you in strengthening your child’s resiliency toward harm.

CHRONIC ILLNESS PROCEDURE

A.R.S. § 15-346 provides for adjunct accommodations for students with chronic health problems. This is defined as “...pupils who are unable to attend regular classes for intermittent periods of one or more consecutive days because of illness, disease, or accident but who are not homebound.” A.R.S. § 15-901 provides for at-home instruction for students with chronic health problems. This is defined as “...a pupil who is capable of profiting from academic instruction but is unable to attend school due to illness, disease, accident or other health conditions, who has been examined by a competent medical doctor and who is certified by that doctor as being unable to attend regular classes for periods of not less than three school months, or a pupil who is ...unable to attend regular classes for intermittent periods of time totaling three school months during a school year.”

Students with existing chronic illness conditions should obtain chronic illness request forms from the office at the beginning of the school year. When a new chronic condition is medically diagnosed, please notify the office to obtain the chronic illness request forms. The Medical Certification form must be completed by a licensed MD, DO or pediatrician and returned to the school office.

In order for chronic illness status to override the excessive absence rule the parent must report the absences according to the regular attendance reporting procedures. This status allows teachers and the student to work out a manageable method for completing work. A student requesting chronic illness status will be considered only after nine (9) absences and complete medical documentation is received. If your student is absent from school due to chronic illness it would be expected that they would not be able to attend or participate in extracurricular activities and/or athletics on the date of the absence.

CAMPUS

Students may go outside during breaks. They must stay near the school. A signed permission slip is required to go off campus during lunch.

CELL PHONES & OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Cell phones and other electronic devices are neither encouraged nor prohibited. However, parents should note that any Internet-connected electronic device can distract students from important tasks, expose them to objectionable content, and even place them in “stranger danger” through online communications. At school we monitor our computers very closely, but this is impossible to do with personal devices. We encourage parents to use parental restrictions, data monitoring, and device monitoring if they allow a student to have a cell phone or similar device.

If a student does bring a cell phone or similar electronic device to school, they must observe the following:

- The device must not be a distraction from classroom activities
- The device must not be allowed to disrupt the classroom
- The device must not be used for cheating or academic dishonesty
- The device must not be used for any unsanctioned picture taking, recording, or video recording

Students who do not follow these guidelines will have the device confiscated by staff and returned to the parents.

Students bring these devices to school at their own risk. If a student has a cell phone or other electronic device on campus and it is damaged or stolen, schools will not utilize administrative time to investigate the incident nor will the school take any financial responsibility for the cell phone or cell phone charges or for any other electronic device. Cell phones and electronic devices confiscated by school personnel can be retrieved by a parent from administration.

COLLEGE CREDITS

Full time 11th and 12th grade students who have been enrolled at SDS for one semester, have a GPA of 3.8 or higher, have completed 3 credits per semester, and have a good attendance record may take college classes during the school year at Central Arizona College. Scholarships are available at Central Arizona College.

COURSE SEQUENCE

<i>5th Grade</i>	<i>6th Grade</i>	<i>7th Grade</i>	<i>8th Grade</i>	<i>9th Grade</i>	<i>10th Grade</i>	<i>11th Grade</i>	<i>12th Grade</i>
English							
5 th Grade English	6 th Grade English	7 th Grade English	8 th Grade English	Freshman English	Sophomore English	Junior English	Senior English
Math							
5 th Grade Math	6 th Grade Math	7 th Grade Math	Pre-Algebra	Algebra 1	Geometry	Algebra 2	Pre-Calc (or) Mathematical Models (or) Financial Math
Science							
5 th Grade Science	6 th Grade Science	7 th Grade Science	8 th Grade Science	Physical Science	Biology	Chemistry	Physics (optional)
Social Studies							
Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	US History	World History	US History/Geog.	Economics	Government
Fine Arts						Fine Art	Fine Art
Electives/Foreign Language Foreign Language courses are available for grades 5-8				Elective or Foreign Language			

CUSTODY

In cases where custody/visitations affects the school, the school shall follow the most recent court order on file with the school. It is the responsibility of the custodial parent, or parents having joint custody, to provide the school with the most recent court order.

CYBERBULLYING

Sonoran Desert School provides computers as tools to enhance our students' education. The school's computer network and the Internet, whether accessed on campus or off campus, during or after school hours, may not be used for the purpose of harassment of any kind. All forms of harassment over the Internet, commonly referred to as cyberbullying, are unacceptable and viewed as a violation of this policy and Sonoran Desert School's acceptable computer use policy and procedures.

Cyberbullying includes, but is not limited to the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, or terrorizing another person by sending or posting inappropriate and hurtful e-mail messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or Website postings, including blogs. It is also recognized that the author (poster or sender) of the inappropriate material is often disguised (logged on) as someone else. Students and community members, who believe they have been the victims of such misuses of technology, as described in this policy, should not erase the offending material from the system. A copy of the material should be printed and brought to the attention of the school administrator.

In situations in which the cyberbullying originated from a non-school computer, but brought to the attention of school officials, any disciplinary action shall be based upon whether the conduct is determined to be severely disruptive of the educational process so that it markedly interrupts or severely impedes the day-to-day operations of a school. In addition, such conduct must also be violative of another school policy. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to threats made on or off school grounds to a staff member or student. Disciplinary action may include: the loss of computer privileges, detention, suspension, or expulsion for verified perpetrators of cyberbullying. In addition, when any kind of threat is communicated or when a hate crime is committed, the administration will report such crimes to local law enforcement officials.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

It is the policy of Sonoran Desert School to maintain a positive, safe, and secure learning environment. While this student handbook is designed to be a guide for parents and students any behavior that disrupts the learning of others or threatens the safety of others, whether recorded in this handbook or not, will be disciplined accordingly. After each incidence a student is given a disciplinary step. For example: A student is disruptive in the classroom, the student is given a step 1, the next week the same student is using a cell phone in the classroom and given a step 2, the following month the student is disruptive again, the student is given a step 3.

DISCIPLINARY STEP PROCESS

Step 1: Disciplinary Action

- The student is informed of his/her inappropriate behavior and the parent is notified by mail or email.
- Written Warning

Step 2: Disciplinary Action

- The student is informed of his/her inappropriate behavior and the parent is notified by mail or email.
- 1-4 Days Suspension

Step 3: Disciplinary Action

- The student is informed of his/her inappropriate behavior and the parent is notified by mail or email.
- The police are notified if the student's action is illegal.
- 5-10 Days Suspension

Step 4: Recommendation for Long Term Suspension or Expulsion:

- Student is placed on suspension until the next hearing.
- The parent is notified by mail that states the date and time of the hearing.
- A hearing will be held with the parents and the student to determine if a long-term suspension or expulsion will be made.
- If expelled, an appeal may be requested to the board. To appeal, the parents must deliver to the administrator a letter directed to the board within five days after receiving written notification of expulsion. The letter must describe in detail any objections to the hearing or the decision rendered, and shall indicate a spokesperson on behalf of the student. Upon conclusion of the hearing the decision of the Board is final.

Students that are on suspension or expelled are not allowed on the school campus, including the parking lot and any other school related events. Students involved in a fight will be suspended for a minimum of 1 year from the school. SDS does not confine a student in an enclosed space without a teacher or principal present unless the student poses imminent physical harm to other students or staff. If the student is placed in confinement, the principal will attempt to make reasonable attempts to notify the student's parent or guardian by phone and in writing by the end of the same day that confinement was used.

The following disciplinary matrix contains the applicable step for each offense. These offenses apply at the school site and school-sponsored events. **Depending on the severity of an offense, a student may be moved up more than one step by the administrator.**

Disciplinary Matrix				
Prohibited Behavior	Consequences			
Cell Phone and/or Electronic Device Violation	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
Computer Violation	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
Defiance, Disrespect Towards Authority	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
Disorderly Conduct	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
Disruption	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
Dress Code Violation	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
Language, Inappropriate	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
Minor Aggressive Act	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
Profanity	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
Public Display of Affection (PDA)	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
Scholastic Dishonesty	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
Bullying/Cyberbullying				
	Step 2		Step 3	Step 4
Negative Group Affiliation	Step 2		Step 3	Step 4
Parking Lot/Vehicle Violation	Step 2		Step 3	Step 4
Sexting				
	Step 3			Step 4
Tobacco Violation	Step 3			Step 4
Verbal Provocation	Step 3			Step 4
Continued from previous page:				
Aggravated Assault	Step 4 Long-term Suspension or Expulsion			
Alcohol Violation	Step 4 Long-term Suspension or Expulsion			
Arson	Step 4 Long-term Suspension or Expulsion			
Assault	Step 4 Long-term Suspension or Expulsion			
Dangerous Items	Step 4 Long-term Suspension or Expulsion			
Drug Violation	Step 4 Long-term Suspension or Expulsion			
Endangerment	Step 4 Long-term Suspension or Expulsion			
Fighting	Step 4 Long-term Suspension or Expulsion			
Sex Offenses	Step 4 Long-term Suspension or Expulsion			
Sexual Harassment	Step 4 Long-term Suspension or Expulsion			
Theft	Step 4 Long term Suspension or Expulsion			
Threat or Intimidation	Step 4 Long term Suspension or Expulsion			
Vandalism	Step 4 Long-term Suspension or Expulsion			
Weapons	Step 4 Long-term Suspension or Expulsion			

DRESS CODE

Student dress and grooming are generally a matter of personal choice. However, SDS recognizes that there is a relationship between student dress and student success, school pride, the safety and general welfare of students and staff, and the accomplishments of the curriculum goals. Students will be required to change clothing that is inappropriate or be suspended for the day.

Accordingly, the following standards prohibit student dress or grooming that, in the judgment of the school administration:

- A. Presents a risk to the safety or general welfare of students and staff.
- B. Interferes or disrupts the learning environment.
- C. Produces disorder or creates an atmosphere of threat, intimidation or undue pressure.

Tops: No strapless tops or spaghetti straps. No tops which intentionally expose the midriff.

Pants: Pants must be pulled up with no undergarments exposed the entire school day; Pants may not be worn low-hung across or below the hips; no excessively baggy or sagging pants. Pants should not have holes, rips or tears especially in the buttocks or other private areas.

Skirts & Dresses: Must be worn at a reasonable and modest length; no strapless dresses.

Hats: Students may wear hats or visors that do not otherwise violate the student dress code where the instructor has given the student permission. However, students shall remove their hat or visor when requested to do so by a member of the school staff.

Miscellaneous: No attire or accessories with lettering or drawings which depict sexually suggestive expressions or actions, profanity, obscenity, drugs, gang related, alcohol or tobacco related shall be worn. The staff at SDS would like to keep the students free of harmful influences by any group or gang that advocates drug use or disruptive behavior.

DRUG FREE, NON-SMOKING CAMPUS

Sonoran Desert School is a drug free campus. Smoking, vaping, tobacco chewing, dangerous substances, and illegal drugs are not allowed on the school property and/or at any extra-curricular activities or school-sponsored events. The possession, use, distribution or sale of tobacco products or illegal drugs on school property, school-sponsored events and on school-sponsored transportation is not allowed and will be subject to disciplinary consequences.

EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS OF HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH

According to the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 2001 (Title X, Part C, of the No Child Left Behind Act – Sec 725), the term “homeless children and youth” means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including the following:

- i. Children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement;
- ii. Children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings...
- iii. Children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- iv. Migratory children who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii).

Under the McKinney-Vento Act, children in homeless situations have the educational rights to do the following:

Go to school, no matter where they live or how long they have lived there

- Attend either the local school or the school of origin, if this is in their best interest; the school of origin is the school the child attended when he/she was permanently housed or the school in which the child was last enrolled
- Receive transportation to and from the school of origin
- Enroll in school immediately, even if missing records and documents normally required for enrollment such as a birth certificate, proof of residence, previous school records, or immunization/medical records
- Enroll, attend classes, and participate fully in all school activities while the school arranges for the transfer of records
- Have access to the same programs and services that are available to all other students including transportation and supplemental educational services
- Attend school with children not experiencing homelessness; segregation based on a student’s status as homeless is prohibited

EMERGENCY CODES

Code Red - School is placed on TOTAL LOCKDOWN - NO MOVEMENT. All students proceed quickly to the nearest room with a staff member who can lock the door. Follow the directions of all teachers and administrators.

Code Yellow - School is placed on LOCKDOWN. Same as above.

Code Blue - Students and staff are evacuated or shelter-in-place implemented due to unsafe conditions. Follow directions of teachers and administrators. Staff and students may be evacuated to another interior or exterior location depending upon the situation.

Code White - A credible bomb threat has been received by school officials or a suspicious package has been spotted in or near the school. Follow directions of teachers and administrators. Staff and students may be evacuated to another interior or exterior location. Turn off all cell phones, pagers and portable radios.

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Sonoran Desert School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, handicap/disability, age, and/or disabled status in any of its policies or practices. Sonoran Desert School is in compliance with Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)¹

Confidentiality of education records is a right of public school students and their parents. Two federal laws, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) provide for this right. Under these laws, "education records" means those records that are: (1) directly related to a student; and (2) maintained by an educational agency or institution or by a party acting for the agency or institution. Of course, education records are maintained on every child enrolled in a public school. The types of information gathered and maintained includes, but is not limited to: the student's and parents' names, address and telephone number; the student's date and place of birth, date of enrollment in the school, records from previous schools attended, attendance record, subjects taken, grades, school activities, assessment results, number of credits earned, immunization records, disciplinary records, if any, correspondence from parents, and child find and other screening results, including hearing and vision screening results. In addition, for children with disabilities, education records could include, among other things, evaluation and testing materials, medical and health information, each annual Individualized Education Program (IEP), notices to parents, notes regarding IEP meetings, parental consent documents, information provided by parents, progress reports, assessment results, materials related to disciplinary actions, and mediation agreements. The information is gathered from a number of sources including the student's parents and staff of the school of attendance. Also, with parental permission, information may be gathered from additional sources including doctors and other health care providers. This information is collected to assure proper identification of a student and the student's parents and the maintenance of accurate records of the student's progress and activities in school. For children with disabilities, additional information is collected in order to assure the child is identified, evaluated, and provided a Free Appropriate Public Education in accordance with state and federal special education laws. Each agency participating under Part B of IDEA must assure that at all stages of gathering, storing, retaining and disclosing education records to third parties that it complies with the federal confidentiality laws. In addition, the destruction of any education records of a child with a disability must be in accordance with IDEA regulatory requirements.

The federal Family Policy Compliance Office of the U.S. Department of Education has provided the following notice of parent's rights under FERPA. In accordance with IDEA, the rights of the parents regarding education records are transferred to the student at age 18. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

- (1) The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the school receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal (or appropriate school official) a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The School official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
- (2) The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate. Parents or eligible students may ask a School to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. They should write the school principal [or appropriate school official], clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
- (3) The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception that permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit

¹ Also available in other languages

personnel); a person serving on the school board; a person or company with whom the school has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, SDS forwards educational records to other schools that have requested the records and in which the student seeks or intends to enroll.

(4) The right to refuse to permit the designation of all of the following categories of personally identifiable information as “directory information,” which is not subject to the above restrictions on disclosure:

- Name, campus address, home address, telephone listing and email address
- Photograph
- Student’s major(s) and the department, division, and college in which the student is enrolled
- Classification as a freshman, sophomore, junior, senior, graduate student or special student
- Dates of attendance at Sonoran Desert School
- Degrees and awards received
- Grade point average (available to campus professional and social organizations)
- The most recent previous educational agency or institution attended by the student
- Any parent or student over 18 wishing to exercise this write must notify the front office in writing

(5) The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by a School District to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The following is the name and address of the office that administers FERPA: Family Policy Compliance Office / U.S. Department of Education / 400 Maryland Avenue S.W. / Washington, D.C. 20202-4605

GRADES

90-100%	A	Excellent
80-89%	B	Above Average
70-79%	C	Average
60-69%	D	Below Average
59% and below	F	Failing

Note: If incomplete work (I) is not made up within the allotted time, the incomplete will become an “F.”

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Courses	Standard Diploma	Scholastic Diploma
English	4 credits	4 credits
Mathematics	4 credits	4 credits
Science	3 credits	3 credits
Social Studies	3 credits	3 credits
World Language	0 credits	2 credits
Fine Arts	1 credit	1 credit
Electives	7 credits	5 credits
Total	22 credits	22 credits

All students now need to pass a state-mandated Civics Test to receive a diploma.

Graduation requirements can change based on legal and political decisions at the state level. See the AZ Department of Education’s website showing state graduation requirements for the most up to date information:

- <http://www.azed.gov/hsgraduation/>

IDENTIFICATION CARDS

During the school day all middle and high school students are required to have their school identification card for scanning in and out on the attendance software. Students who do not have their school ID card will not be permitted to go outdoors during break. Initial ID cards are provided free of charge. Students are required to pay \$5.00 for any lost or damaged ID cards.

MEDICATIONS

Under certain circumstances, when it is necessary for a student to take medicine during school hours, SDS will cooperate with the family physician and the parents if the following requirements are met:

- There must be a written order from the physician stating the name of the medicine, the dosage,
- There must be written permission from the parent to allow the student to administer the medicine. Appropriate forms are available from the school office.
- The medicine must be in the prescription container or, if it is over-the-counter medication, in the original container with all warnings and directions intact.

Exceptions:

- Students who have been diagnosed with anaphylaxis may carry and self-administer emergency medications including auto-injectable epinephrine provided the pupil's name is on the prescription label on the medication container or device and annual written documentation from the pupil's parent or guardian is provided that authorizes possession and self-administration.
- For breathing disorders, handheld inhaler devices may be carried for self administration provided the pupil's name is on the prescription label on the medication container or on the handheld inhaler device and annual written documentation from the pupil's parent or guardian is provided that authorizes possession and self-administration.

The school reserves the right to circumscribe or disallow the use or administration of any medication on school premises if the threat of abuse or misuse of the medicine may pose a risk of harm to a member or members of the school population.

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to provide an alternative educational setting that emphasizes individualization supported by technology in order to assist students with overcoming academic, behavioral, and social challenges while increasing academic performance and facilitating the earning or recovery of academic credits as a precursor to achieving a high school diploma and successfully transitioning to postsecondary studies.

NONDISCRIMINATORY POLICY

Sonoran Desert School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, handicap/disability, age or Vietnam era/disabled veteran status in employment or in the application, admission, participation, access and treatment of persons in instructional programs and activities.

PARENT LIABILITY

Under Arizona law, upon complaint of the Governing Board, the parents of minors who cut, deface, or otherwise damage any school property shall be liable for all damages caused by their children. See A.R.S. 15-8438

PARKING LOT

In order to maintain a safe campus environment, minimize vandalism, and regulate use of student vehicles during school hours, the following regulations have been established:

- All student-driven vehicles, including motorcycles, must be parked in the designated student parking area.
- Students who drive trucks are not permitted to have passengers in the back (bed) of the truck while on school grounds.
- Causes for loss of parking privileges may include, but are not limited to: reckless driving, failure to drive courteously, failure to provide seatbelts for passengers, failure to respond to school rules and authorities, intentionally damaging other vehicles, leaving campus without approval or parking in unauthorized areas.
- Vehicles are not to be used as lockers. Therefore, once school has begun, students may not return to their vehicles until the school day is over. Students are not permitted to sit in their cars and loiter in the parking lot.

PERSONAL ITEMS

All personal items brought to school are the responsibility of the student. Valuable items should not be brought to school. SDS is not responsible for loss, theft, or breakage of a student's personal items.

PROTECTION OF PUPIL RIGHTS AMENDMENT (PPRA)

PPRA affords parents and students who are 18 or emancipated minors (“eligible students”) certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas (“protected information survey”) if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED)—

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student’s parent;
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student’s family;
3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or
8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of—

1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
3. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.

Inspect, upon request and before administration or use—

1. Protected information surveys of students;
2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

SDS has developed and adopted policies, in consultation with parents, regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. SDS will directly notify parents and eligible students of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. SDS will also directly notify parents and eligible students, through the U.S. mail, at least annually at the start of each school year of the specific or approximate dates of the following activities and provide an opportunity to opt a student out of participating in:

- Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution.
- Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by ED.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

Parents/eligible students who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with the following: Family Policy Compliance Office / U.S. Department of Education / 400 Maryland Avenue, SW / Washington, D.C. 20202-4605

REPORT CARDS

Report cards will be distributed by mail once every semester (see calendar for exact dates). Parents should call the school if they do not receive a report card. Parents are welcome to call the school at any time to obtain a progress report on their student. Parents have 30 days to appeal a grade listed on the report card/transcript.

SCHOOL SITE GUIDELINES

1. In order to protect the safety and well being of students, faculty and others, students are prohibited from the recreational use of scooters, skateboards, roller blades/shoes, or similar devices on campus at any time.
2. No loitering is allowed outside the building or in the entryway of the front office.
3. All bikes must be locked outside the school on the designated bike rack.

Any prohibited items may be confiscated immediately by school personnel and only relinquished to the student’s parents/guardian.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment includes all unwanted, uninvited, non-reciprocal sexual attention. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion. Students who experience sexual harassment in the academic environment are urged to report such conduct to the administrator.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Special Education Policies and Procedures are available to parents. Please contact the front office for a copy of the Special Education Policies and Procedures manual.

The following is the Child Find Policy:

All children with disabilities who are in need of special education and related services shall be identified, located and evaluated (§300.125). Sonoran Desert School conducts a screening within 45 days of entry date on the following areas: academic, vision, hearing, communication, emotional and psychomotor. A practical method shall be developed and implemented to determine which children are currently receiving needed special education and related services (§300.125). *This policy applies to highly mobile children with disabilities and children that are suspected of being a child with a disability under §300.7 and in need of special education, even though they are advancing from grade to grade. (§300.125).

The following are the Child Find Procedures:

1. SDS will maintain documentation of the public awareness efforts to inform the public and parents within their jurisdiction of the availability of special education services (§300.125, AAC R702-401).
2. Screening activities will be implemented for all newly enrolled students and those transferring in without sufficient records.
3. The screening will be completed within 45 days of enrollment. The screening will include consideration of academic or cognitive, vision, hearing, communication, emotional and psychomotor domains (AAC R7-2-401(c)). The collection and use of data to meet these requirements are subject to the confidentiality requirements of §§300.560 and 300.577.
4. SDS will maintain documentation and annually report the number of children with disabilities within each disability category that have been identified, located and evaluated (§300.125). The collection and use of data to meet these requirements are subject to the confidentiality requirements of §§300.560- and 300.577).

It is the responsibility of Sonoran Desert School to inform the general public and all parents of students enrolled in our school of our responsibility to make available special education services for students with disabilities and how to access those services.

SDS is responsible for providing a free and appropriate public education (FAPE), which includes special education and related services for students with disabilities at public expense, under public supervision and direction and without charge to the parents. For all new students to the school, the classroom teacher will complete screening activities with 45 days of enrollment. The teacher will look at the child's ability in the areas of academics, vision, hearing, communication, social/emotional, adaptive development, and motor skills. If any concerns are noted, the child may be referred for additional help. If you have any concerns about your child please contact the administrator at (480) 396-5463 for more information.

STUDENT SEARCH

A search of a student's clothing, or his/her bag, backpack, purse, or other personal property shall be undertaken only if there is reasonable suspicion that the student possesses a dangerous, prohibited or illegal substance, or object or items that may interfere with the school purposes and/or present a threat to people or property. A school official may search a motor vehicle when there is reasonable suspicion to suspect that the vehicle contains evidence a student is violating a law or school rule.

SURVEILLANCE

Surveillance cameras at the school ensure the health, welfare and safety of all students, employees and visitors. Video recordings may be used as evidence in any disciplinary action, administrative proceeding or criminal proceeding.

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

All teacher resumes are available for public review. To view a teacher resume, please contact the principal.

VISITORS AT SCHOOL

All visitors must register at the office to obtain permission to remain on school grounds or to enter any classroom. Students may bring in a guest for one visit per year if the guest is interested in attending Sonoran Desert School. Students must obtain prior approval to bring a visitor from the principal.

GLOSSARY OF DISCIPLINARY TERMS

Aggravated Assault: A person commits aggravated assault if the person commits assault under any of the following circumstances: 1. If a person causes serious physical injury to another, 2. If the person uses a deadly weapon or dangerous instrument, 3. If the person is eighteen years of age or older and commits the assault upon a child under the age of fifteen years or under.

Alcohol: (liquor law violations, possession, use, and sale) The violation of laws or ordinances prohibiting the manufacture, sale, purchase, transportation, possession or use of intoxicating alcoholic beverages or substances represented as alcohol. This would include being intoxicated at school, school-sponsored events and on school-sponsored transportation.

Arson: (setting a fire on/in school property) To unlawfully and intentionally damage, or attempt to damage, any real or personal property by fire or incendiary device on or in school property.

Assault: A person commits assault by 1. Intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly causing any physical injury to another person; or 2. Intentionally placing another person in reasonable apprehension of imminent physical injury; or 3. Knowingly touching another person with the intent to injure, insult or provoke such person.

Bullying: Bullying means any intentional written, electronic, verbal or physical act or actions against another person that a reasonable person under the circumstances should know will have the effect of:

1. Placing a person in reasonable fear of substantial harm to his or her emotional or physical well-being or substantial damage to his or her property
2. Creating a hostile, threatening, humiliating or abusive educational environment due to the pervasiveness or persistence of actions or due to a power differential between the bully and the target; or
3. Interfering with a student having a safe school environment that is necessary to facilitate education performance, opportunities or benefits; or
4. Teasing or name calling, intimidation through gestures or social exclusion; or
5. Perpetuating bullying by inciting, soliciting or coercing an individual or group to demean, dehumanize, embarrass or cause emotional, psychological or physical harm to another person.

Dangerous Items: Materials, objects, items, or substances that present a potential hazard to the safety, well-being, order, and/or welfare of people or property. Examples may include but are not limited to the following: incendiary or flammable substances; lighters and/or matches; fireworks; laser pointing devices; perfumes or colognes; creatures such as insects, reptiles, or animals; aerosols of any kind; cleaning solutions.

Defiance, Disrespect Towards Authority, and Non-Compliance: Student engages in refusal to follow directions, talks back, or delivers socially rude interactions.

Disorderly Conduct: Behavior that substantially disrupts the orderly learning environment and/or poses a threat to the health, safety, and/or welfare of students, staff, or others. A person commits disorderly conduct if, with intent to disturb the peace or quiet of a person, or with knowledge of doing so, such person; makes unreasonable noise, or uses abusive or offensive language or gestures; or engages in fighting, violent or seriously disruptive behavior.

Disruption: Student engages in behavior causing an interruption in a class or activity. Disruption includes sustained loud talking, yelling, or screaming; noise with materials; horseplay or roughhousing; sustained out-of-seat behavior, running in the building, or hallways, etc.

Drugs: (illegal drug possession, sale, use, under the influence) The unlawful use, cultivation, manufacture, distribution, sale, purchase, possession, transportation, or importation of any controlled drug or narcotic substance, or equipment and devices used for preparing or taking drugs or narcotics. Includes being under the influence of drugs at school-sponsored events, and on school-sponsored transportation. Category includes over-the-counter medications if abused by the student.

Endangerment: A person commits endangerment by recklessly endangering another person with a substantial risk of physical injury or imminent death.

Fighting: (mutual altercation) Mutual participation in a fight involving physical violence, where there is no one main offender and no major injury.

Language, Inappropriate: Student delivers verbal messages that include swearing, name-calling, or use of words in an inappropriate way but not rising to the level of threatening or intimidating.

Littering: Includes leaving or depositing trash or other debris in places other than appropriate receptacles.

Minor Aggressive Act: Student engages in non-serious but inappropriate physical contact, i.e. hitting, poking, pulling or pushing. Other behaviors that may be considered under this violation are pulling a chair out from underneath another person, or other behaviors that demonstrate low level hostile behaviors.

Negative Group Affiliation: Specific attitudes and actions of a student affiliated with a negative group typically include most of the following:

- May or may not have a recognized leader. Do most things together, especially socially
- Stick together on issues
- Act bores, disinterested, or imposed upon by teacher ideas, suggestions, or requirements
- Involve themselves in each other's problems; therefore perpetuate each other's problems
- Claim loyalty and righteousness if reprimanded. All the interference they cause is in the name of friendship.
- Likely to confront authority as a group when one member has been disciplined
- Usually uncooperative, and possibly hostile
- Conduct themselves as though no other individuals exist in the school, including other students
- Not objective. They turn off to everything, sometimes without even knowing what they are doing.

Other Violation of School Policy: Defined by governing board. Administration discretion on consequences.

Parking Lot/Vehicle Violation: Includes any use of a vehicle, including parking, that violates school rules or driving laws, or that endangers property or personal safety.

Public Display of Affection: Holding hands, kissing, sexual touching, or other displays of affection in violation of school policy.

Scholastic Dishonesty: Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, statements, acts, or omissions related to applications for enrollment or the award of a degree and/or the submission as one's own work material that is not one's own. Scholastic dishonesty may involve, but is not limited to, one or more of the following acts: cheating, plagiarism, collusion, use of annotated texts or teacher's editions, and/or falsifying academic records.

Plagiarism is the use of an author's words or ideas as if they were one's own without giving credit to the source, including, but not limited to, failure to acknowledge a direct quotation.

Cheating is the willful giving or receiving of information in an unauthorized manner during an examination, illicitly obtaining examination questions in advance, copying computer or Internet files, using someone else's work for assignments as if it were one's own, or any other dishonest means of attempting to fulfill the requirements of a course.

Collusion is intentionally aiding or attempting to aid another in an act of scholastic dishonesty, including but not limited to providing a paper or project to another student, providing an inappropriate level of assistance; communicating answers to a classmate during an examination; removing tests or answer sheets from a test site, and allowing a classmate to copy answers.

Sexting - A.R.S § 8-309 Unlawful transmission or possession of explicit sexual material by minors is illegal: "It is unlawful for a juvenile to intentionally or knowingly use an electronic communication device to transmit or display a visual depiction of a minor that depicts explicit sexual material". Students' individual rights (Amendment IV) are balanced by administrators' responsibility to protect the health, safety and welfare of all students and staff. Administrators may conduct searches when they have reason to suspect that a law or school rule has been violated or that the health, safety or welfare of students or staff may be in danger, without first contacting the parent.

In the event administrators have reasonable suspicion that a school rule or law has been violated, phone searches may be conducted with student and parent consent. However, the students' lack of cooperation may result in losing the privilege of having the electronic device on campus for a period of time or the rest of the school year as determined by the administrator.

Sexual Harassment: Unwanted, repeated, verbal or physical sexual behavior that is offensive and objectionable to the recipient causes discomfort or humiliation and interferes with school performance. Age and developmentally appropriate behavior need to be considered before using this category. Acts of sexual harassment include:

- Sexual comments, gestures, jokes or looks
- Being touched, grabbed or pinched in a sexual way
- Flashing or mooning
- Spreading sexual rumors
- Clothing pulled at, off or down in a sexual way
- Being shown or given sexual messages, pictures or notes
- Forced kissing
- Being called gay or lesbian

Sex Offenses: Includes indecent exposure (exposure of private body parts to the sight of another person in a lewd or indecent manner in a public place); and obscene phone calls or communication, possessing materials such as literature or photographs, and entering or downloading pornographic contents (words or pictures) onto school computers.

Theft: The unlawful taking, carrying, leading or riding away of property of another person without threat, violence or bodily harm. Included are pocket-picking, purse or backpack snatching if left unattended or not force used to take it from the owner, theft from a building, theft from a motor vehicle or motor vehicle parts or accessories, theft of bicycles, and all other types of larcenies. This includes personal or school property, or from a vehicle on school property.

Threat or Intimidation: When a person indicates by word or conduct the intent to cause physical injury or serious damage to a person or their property.

A person commits threatening or intimidating if the person threatens or intimidates by word or conduct:

1. To cause physical injury to another person or serious damage to the property of another; or
2. To cause, or in reckless disregard for causing, serious public inconvenience including, but not limited to, evacuation of a building, place of assembly or transportation facility; or
3. To cause physical injury to another person or damage to the property of another in order to promote, further or assist in the interest of or to cause, induce or solicit another person to participate in a criminal street gang, a criminal syndicate or a racketeering enterprise.

Tobacco Violation: The possession, use, distribution, or sale of tobacco-like products (including, but not limited to, e-cigarettes and/or vaping supplies) on school grounds, at school-sponsored events or on school-sponsored transportation. A person who knowingly sells, gives or furnishes cigars, e-cigarettes, vaping supplies, cigarettes, or cigarette papers, smoking or chewing tobacco, to a minor, and a minor who buys, or has in his possession or knowingly accepts or receives from any person, cigars, e-cigarettes, vaping supplies, cigarettes, or cigarette papers, smoking or chewing tobacco of any kind, is guilty of a petty offense.

Vandalism: The willful and/or malicious destruction, damage or defacement of public or private property, real or personal, without the consent of the owner or the person having custody or control of it. This includes graffiti. Examples include: incidents such as destroying school computer records, carving initials or words in desktop or spray painting on walls.

Verbal Provocation: Use of language or gestures that may incite another person or other people to fight.

Weapon Possession: (includes firearms and other weapons)

Firearms: Any weapon (including a starter gun) which will, is designed to, or may be readily converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; the frame or receiver of any such weapon; any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; any destructive device; or any machine gun. A destructive device is any bomb; grenade, rocket, missile, pipe bomb, or similar device containing some type of explosive that is designed to explode and is capable of causing bodily harm or property damage. Includes firearms of any kind (operable or inoperable, loaded or unloaded) including but not limited to hand, zip, pistol, rifle, shotgun, starter gun, flare gun.

Other Weapons: Possession, use or intention of use of any instrument or object to inflict harm on another person, or to intimidate any person. Included in this category are all types of knives; chains; pipes (any length of metal not being used for the purpose it was normally intended); razor blades or similar instruments with sharp cutting edges; ice picks; dirks; other pointed instruments (including pencils and pens); nunchakus; brass knuckles; Chinese stars; billy-clubs; tear gas guns; electrical weapons or devices (stun guns); BB or pellet guns; explosives, fireworks, or propellants. Possession of any type of knife (including a pocket or penknife) is included in this category.