

Cougar Communiqué

A publication of


Desert Sky Middle School
"Building a Community of Learners"
9850 E. Rankin Loop


January 2019




A+ School of Excellence
2011, 2018


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 **Desert Sky Office Hours:**
7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Site Council

 Jon Carlyon
(Parent/Community)


 Amanda Jensen
(Parent/Community)

 Kiki Ngo
(Parent/Community)

 Karleene Talley
(Parent/Community)

 Sheri Aken
(Certified Staff)

 Ming Chen
(Support Staff)

 Abby Jackson
(Certified Staff)

Dates to Remember

January

- 7 **School Resumes**
- 12 Vail Honor Festival-choir, orchestra, band at Cienega. Time-TBA
- 15 **STEEP Screening – Schoolwide**
- 16 **High School Choice Parent Night - Gym - 6:30pm**
- 18 **District Spelling Bee @ VTOTA**
- 21 **No School – Martin Luther King Jr. Day**
- 22-25 GRIT Spirit Week
- 24 GRIT Skate Night @ Skate Country – 6:00pm – 8:00pm
- 29 Middle School Music Festival @ CH (8th grade music students only)
- 29 **High School Open House-Andrada & VHS 5:00pm – 7:00pm**
- 31 **High School Open House-CHS & EHS & VIC 5:00pm-7:00pm**

February

- 4-8 Spring Book Fair
- 7-8 **Parent/Teacher Conferences – Early Dismissal – 12:00pm**
- 15 **Early Dismissal – 12:00pm**
- 16 Vail Pride Day – Pima Country Fairgrounds
- 18 **Reading and Math Benchmarks #3 begin**
- 21-22 **No School – Rodeo Break**
- 25 **Algebra and Geometry Benchmarks #3 begin**
- 28 **Web Skate Night – 6:00pm-8:00pm**

From the Principal...

Dear Parents,

Happy New Year! It's hard to believe that we have already started the 3rd quarter of the 2018-2019 school year. As we move into the second half of the school year, students are more focused and ready to learn than ever. Each instructional day provides students with the opportunity to learn something new, master a skill previously taught, or extend their learning through enrichment. At Desert Sky we believe that we are building a community of learners, which means that every minute of every day students are engaged in the learning process.

We know that the level of parental involvement is an essential element to our school's success. I would like to share some easy ways to stay involved:

- * You can access your child's grades anytime at <https://ps.vail.k12.az.us/public/home.html> as long you have a username or password. Our Site Tech Coordinator, Mr. Jones (879-2707), can provide assistance with PowerSchool as needed. This is a great way to stay informed of your child's progress, view assignments, and citizenship.
- * Be sure to check your child's agenda each day to view homework assignments, DMS daily scores, and student behavior.
- * Check out our teachers' Schoology page for the latest news and assignments found on the left side of your PowerSchool homepage.
- * Call or email your child's teacher. Our teachers strive to return voicemail and email by the following day (Monday-Friday).
- * Attend parent teacher conferences, which will occur on February 7th & 8th.
- * Volunteer! Mrs. Wactor, Desert Sky's Volunteer Coordinator, is always searching for volunteers to work in classrooms, tutor students, help out in the workroom, or support staff at our various community events. She can be reached at 879-2011.

We look forward to working with you and your child during the second-half of the school year.

Sincerely,

Katie Dabney, Principal

January 7, 2019

Dear Desert Sky Families,

I am writing to let you know that schools around the country are dealing with an increase in a dangerous new trend among students, e-cigarette use, also known as vaping. This trend has unfortunately found its way into our community and schools.

THE PROBLEM

E-cigarettes, vape pens, or juuls, are electronic devices that emit a vapor that is inhaled by the user and are often times undetectable due to how small they are and a lack of odor that is detected.

Students who are using these devices are inhaling nicotine and other harmful chemicals, thinking it is safe. Nicotine is highly addictive and some of these unregulated products that students are purchasing at vape shops, or online, contain higher levels of nicotine than cigarettes. Vaping devices are also being used to dispense crystallized marijuana (THC) and have become a common way for students to use marijuana concentrates (oil) which are four times stronger than high grade marijuana, which places students at risk for THC overdose.

POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES

In addition to safety concerns, we want to remind our students that the possession or use of a vaping device is prohibited in school, on school property, or at school events. Students found possessing or using these devices are subject to discipline under our school's Code of Conduct, which may include short or long-term suspension. Additionally, students found with these items many face felony charges from local law enforcement.

HOW CAN YOU HELP

Please take a moment to click on the articles below, look through the materials to familiarize yourself with the information, and have a conversation with your child. If you need support for your child, please contact our school's administration for assistance.

Article 1: [E-Cigarettes and Young People: A Public Health Concern](#)

Article 2: [Vaping Now an Epidemic Among U.S. High Schoolers](#)

Article 3: [What Parents Should Know About the Different Vaping Devices](#)

Article 4: [Is My Child Vaping? Here are Nine Signs to Watch For](#)

Article 5: [Talk with Your Teen About E-Cigarettes: A Tip Sheet for Parents](#)

Thank you in advance for being a partner with us in your child's education. It is imperative that we work together as new trends emerge that risk the health and safety of our children.

Sincerely,

Katie Dabney

Desert Sky Middle School Yearbook Order Form



**Order your yearbook now and enjoy a lifetime
of memories!**

To order now go to www.jostensyearbooks.com

Select Desert Sky Middle School

(Be careful to choose the one in Tucson)

Order now and save! The cost will increase from \$38 to \$40 in

February and \$45 in May!

If you have questions or concerns, please contact Mrs. Willard at 520-879-2754
or willardm@vailschooldistrict.org



Did you know in Vail you have high school choice for your 8th grader?

The Vail School District is committed to offering unique high school offerings throughout the district that meet your student's specific interests for the upcoming 2019-2020 school year.



Andrada



Cienega



Empire



VAHS



VIC

High School Information Nights

Please plan to attend this important event for parents and students. Representatives from each high school will be available to provide information and answer questions about their school. If you are unable to attend your school's meeting, please feel free to attend at any other school.

Tuesday, January 15th – 6:30 pm – Old Vail

Wednesday, January 16th – 6:30 pm – Desert Sky/Esmond Station @ DSMS

Tuesday, January 22nd – 6:30 pm – Rincon Vista/Civano/VIC @ RVMS

Wednesday, January 23rd – 6:30 pm – Corona Foothills

High School Open House Nights

Take the opportunity to visit and see each high school campus in person.

Tuesday, January 29th – 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm – Andrada Poly HS and Vail Academy & HS

Thursday, January 31st – 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm – Cienega HS, Empire HS and the Vail Innovation Center

High School Choice Process

*Families can submit their school choice rankings beginning **Friday, February 1st** on <https://vailhighschoolchoice.org/>*

*The process is not first come first served and choices may be submitted through **Thursday, February 28th**.*

*In the event a lottery is needed, it will be held **Wednesday, March 6th**.*

*Families will be notified of final school placements by **Friday, March 8th**.*

In the meantime, please verify your PowerSchool parent login information and email address is current.

Contact your school office if assistance is needed with PowerSchool.

Questions? Please email: schoolchoice@vailschooldistrict.org

Dear Families,

I just wanted to let you know that there were a couple of errors in the “Dates to Remember” section of the monthly newsletter. My apologies. Please see the new monthly Cougar Communique with the updated dates.

Thank you in advance for your understanding.

Vail School District No. 20

Approved 12/5/18

PK-8 STUDENT CALENDAR 2019-2020

July							August							September							October						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6					1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7			1	2	3	4	5
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
28	29	30	31				25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30						27	28	29	30	31		
	B									Y							C	C									

November							December							January							February						
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					1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4							1
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			Y							T							Y						C	C			
																	Y	VPD									

March							April							May							June						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4						1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30				
																			T/E								

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| <p>B/E = Beginning/End of school</p> <p>C = Parent/Teacher Conferences (1/2 day for Students)</p> <p>T = Teacher Grading Day (1/2 day for Students)</p> | <p>Y = Inservice for Teachers - 1/2 day for Students</p> <p>VPD = Vail Pride Day</p> <p>[Black Box] = Holidays/Vacations (No School for Students)</p> |
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