



P.1 Organizational Description

Desert Sage Elementary is a pre-kindergarten through 6th grade elementary school. As an A+ School of Excellence, we are committed to growing extraordinary lifelong learners. The rich breath of academic and personal programs offered to support students earned us the School of Excellence recognition from the Deer Valley Unified School District. We were acknowledged with the Red Carpet Service based on our stakeholders and community relations. Desert Sage is part of the 6th largest school district in Phoenix - Deer Valley Unified School District. We serve approximately 630 students, about 12% of which are on open enrollment.

P.1a Organizational Environment

P.1a (1) Programs and Services

Desert Sage offers developmental preschool, a partial immersion Mandarin program in kindergarten and first grade, chorus, band, strings, visual arts, and physical education. In our kindergarten through 3rd grade we offer gifted cluster classes. Our school offers a pullout model as part of our gifted program, a continuum of services for special education, and provide EL services. The 4-6 grades are departmentalized in 90 minute blocks of rigorous, relevant instruction in the areas of math, reading and writing, and science and social studies as well. The teachers work collaboratively to plan and implement lessons emphasizing a co-teaching delivery approach for all students. Our focus is on meeting the needs of all students using a differentiated instructional model. Data drives all instruction, flexible grouping, and project based learning. Each grade level has a dedicated Response to Intervention (RTI) time utilized to support students who need

additional accommodations in specific skill based areas of Reading and Math. A key focus is to enable students to think creatively and independently as problem solvers.

P.1a (2) Mission, Vision and Values

Desert Sage is a community oriented school which provides a caring, focused, engaged, positive, creative, supportive environment for students to thrive and excel. Our core values center on our providing extraordinary opportunities to every student and our Lifelong Guidelines and LIFESKILLS to ensure a solid foundation in which students can flourish. We grow extraordinary, caring kids owning their success. **Our mission** is to provide extraordinary educational opportunities to every learner. **Our vision** is to grow lifelong learners who will successfully compete, lead, and positively impact the world.

P.1a (3) Workforce Profile

Desert Sage has 75 administrative, certified, and classified staff characterized in Figure 1. All of our teachers are highly qualified and appropriately certified according to Arizona requirements.

<i>Figure 1: Levels of Education</i>		
<i>Employee Group</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
<i>Administrator</i>	1	1%
<i>Certified</i>	43	57%
<i>Classified</i>	31	42%
<i>Total</i>	75	100%
<i>Degree Attained</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
<i>With Bachelors</i>	20	46%
<i>With Masters</i>	23	54%

Desert Sage has a stable work force who collaborate together to ensure success of all of our students. Our staff has remained consistent over the past 8 years, with last year's attrition rate of only 15%. We have decreased a .5 custodian due to some areas on campus not being utilized at this time. Our teachers have the option to be part of the teacher's union – Deer Valley Education Association. All staff is required to complete safety training videos to ensure understanding of safety requirements.

P.1a (4) Assets

Desert Sage is a Pre-K through 6th grade campus. We utilize two computer labs on campus. One laptop cart is available for classroom check out. Our 6th grade has a class set of Chromebooks to enhance instruction. Kindergarten – 5th grade have iPads to utilize within their grade levels. All classrooms have SMART boards, document cameras, and a minimum of two desktop computers for student use. Classrooms are also equipped with clickers of advancement slides/documents. Our media center is the hub for learning, professional learning opportunities, and meetings. We have four learning centers that are open throughout the day to provide support for students. The K-3 Reading Specialist provides intervention to students in the area of reading, as well as support for teachers in the areas of training, coaching, and instruction. We also have a bookroom available for all students. Our gifted students attend instructional enrichment opportunities provided by the Sage teacher, who teaches 3rd – 6th grade identified gifted students. Our campus has a registered nurse to provide support for students with on-going medical needs. Desert Sage is a clutter free campus which uses green products to keep the facility clean and eco-friendly. Students and staff are trained using our code of conduct to ensure their awareness and understanding of safety.

Desert Sage is also home to the Deer Valley Family Resource Center. This group reaches out to families with young children offering parenting classes and educational experiences such as, but not limited to, the AZ Science Center and Phoenix Zoo. The DVFRC works with families all across the West Valley.

Desert Sage has also become home for Drivers' Education, a High School Drivers' Education Program, provided by Deer Valley's Community Education Department.

P.1a (5) Regulatory Requirements

Desert Sage is governed by District, State and Federal policies and regulations. As a school, we follow the requirements shared by our school district and governing board. The overarching agencies in charge of regulations are the US Department of Education and the Arizona Department of Education. Desert Sage Elementary must meet the standards established by ADE. We are required to assess our 3rd – 6th grade students using the Arizona Measure of Educational Readiness to Inform Teaching. The Deer Valley District aligns curricula to the College and Career Ready Standards. In addition, our school is required to measure growth as a school in relation to AdvancED standards. AdvancED is a continuous improvement organization that provides accreditation to school districts

P.1b Organizational Relationships

P.1b(1) Organizational Structure

At Desert Sage Elementary, we have multiple teams who oversee the leadership of the school. These teams include: the Leadership team, Academic Goals teams, Campus Improvement Team, and Command Team. Teachers are selected for their teams based on their areas of interest, expertise, and individual strengths. The Desert Sage Leadership is composed of both primary and intermediate teachers, special education and gifted education teachers, as well as special area teachers. This team meets regularly to review campus needs, plan for implementation, train, and monitor results. Members of the Leadership team facilitate our Goals teams, ensuring that the goals are aligned with our mission and foster positive stakeholder relationships and continuous improvement.

Desert Sage cultivates teamwork and leadership, through Goal Teams. Goal Teams are groups of teachers who meet to discuss data in particular grade levels and content areas. Using this data, Goal Teams develop action plans to improve instruction. Additionally, they create professional development opportunities to support instruction. The Leadership Team delegates roles within the Goal Teams to ensure shared responsibility for the common good of the teams and the school. Goal Teams submit meeting notes to Desert Sage’s share folder to ensure accountability and enable the non-stop flow of information beyond the goal teams. Our Campus Improvement Team (CIT) reviews all of the data and goals of the teams. This team is comprised of certified and classified employees, parents and community members, and serves to give oversight and the direction to the school. They ensure that we are operating with rigorous goals and achieving desired results.

The Desert Sage PTO meets once a month in the library. The PTO vice president is part of our CIP, allowing for goal alignment with focused, similar results.

CIP Team	Leadership Team	Goal Teams	Command Team	PTO
Campus Improvement Plan Team gives direction to the campus	Reviews CIP Team suggestions and helps delegate to the Goal team and Command Team	Review academic goals from CIP and helps develop ways to meet them	Focus on school safety.	Focus on collaboration between all stakeholders and parents. Work with CIP goals to lead focus for support for the year.

P1.2.(2) Students, Other Customers and Stakeholders

Desert Sage Elementary students, grades pre-kindergarten-6th, comprise our key stakeholder group. The demographics of this group are summarized below.

Figure P2. Student Demographics

Population	Percent of Total Enrollment
African American	2%
American Indian	1%
Asian/Pacific Islander	1%
Caucasian	89%
Hispanic	7%
Male	55%
Female	45%
Special Education	17%
ELL	6%
Gifted	10%
Free/Reduced	31 %
Open Enrollment	12%

Desert Sage is a community based school. Students and parents are welcomed to campus every day with a warm salutation. Parents volunteer on site and from home. Our PTO works collaboratively with parents to communicate availability of services. These services can range from parents attending class parties, to making copies for anyone in need on campus. Some parents support the teachers in the classroom with learning centers and one-on-one support of students. Others donate their time to chaperone field trips or events at the school. Our 6th grade students also serve as volunteers on campus through the CHAMPS program. Every two weeks, they are ‘rented’ out to the staff to support in classroom or in the front office.

Our parent volunteers receive training to better prepare them to serve in this role. Once parent volunteers are trained they are able to help in the classroom. Our 6th Grade CHAMPS are also recipients of a full day training from the 6th grade team early in the school year. This must be completed prior to work in the classrooms. Increasing our parent volunteers during the work day is a challenge. The majority of our parents work during the regular school day. Many are not able to attend the PTO meetings. To validate our commitment to on-going communication with parents and

guardians, we provide information through a variety of media: electronic newsletter, PTO website, Facebook, and twitter accounts. We also use word of mouth and email blasts.

P1.b(3) Suppliers and Partners

Desert Sage Elementary School has excellent business partners who work with us to support our students. One business partner, Happy Valley Baptist Church works with our staff to support our annual Family Art night and school carnival. They help with set up, often work the event, and help tear down and clean up after the event. This groups also takes the time to recognize each one of our teachers around the holiday time with a personalized note and gift card.

Business partners, such as Sardellas, work to support our programs. They support our Personal Best Awards with Honor Roll Dough for each student who makes Honor Roll or Principal's List. They also support our special area teachers with their class recognition for the primary and intermediate classes who have shown their personal best at special areas. We have two business partners who help us raise funds by working at their establishments; Fredericos and McDonalds. We have received between \$500 and \$675 each time we have partnered with these businesses.

One of our most interactive business partners is the Junior Achievement Program. Through the Junior Achievement Program, every student in the school is involved in the classrooms. This helps our students to make the real world connections to the AZCCR standards they are learning by bringing in the real world connections to the AZCCR standards.

In order to communicate with our business partners, we utilize our school newsletter, school marquee, school website, and word of mouth.

We have a business partnership with St. Vincent De Paul's through our art teacher. In this instance, it is about what our students can do to give back to the community. The students have created 'Empty Bowls' and Cups of Kindness that were sold and all proceeds were given to St. Vincent De Paul's to help feed the homeless in our community.

P.2 Organizational Situation

P.2.a Competitive Environment

Desert Sage Elementary has been part of a changing demographic over the past eight years. Our school was greatly affected by the housing market crash from 2008-2012. Enrollment significantly decreased from 850 students to 523. Homes in the area are becoming rentals, and the number of students eligible for free and reduced lunch has increased. Our ability to compete with our more affluent neighbors has been affected as evidenced by the decreasing enrollment over the years. Our competitors in the area are two K-8 schools in more affluent neighborhoods. Over the past two years, Desert Sage has begun an aggressive marketing campaign. We added a partial Immersion Mandarin program beginning in kindergarten. We use our school newsletter, marquee, and sent flyers to neighboring areas to increase our enrollment. We offer on demand tours when new customers come to our building. Increased customer service efforts have been employed to guarantee each person who walks through our doors a welcoming and positive experience. The overall effect has been a steady increase in enrollment. Our 2014-15 enrollment has increased to 630 students.

P2.a (3) Comparative Data

Desert Sage continues to increase its academic scores. Over the past two years, Desert Sage has received an A-rating from the State. As a school, we are consistently looking at data: both ours over time and how we compare to the rest of our region and District. One of our foci is on cohort data in which we track the progress of our students over time. Each cohort of students have shown growth year to year with the exception of 5th grade last year. We have shown growth in the number of students exceeding in all grade levels on AIMS excluding 4th grade. It is important to note that while our 4th grade students did not increase in the number of students exceeding, as a cohort they grew by 7% in reading and 16% in Math. The increases for all remaining grades ranged from 2% to 11% in Reading, and 5% to 15% in Math. We have found it difficult to find a school with comparable demographics in our district. We continue to look outside the

district for comparable schools in order to identify key strategies that have been successful for others. As a team, each grade level meets with the principal on a monthly basis to review data and discuss student learning. We have focused in our interventions during our RTI time in each grade level to ensure academic growth.

P.2.b Strategic Context

Desert Sage adopted the Highly Effective Teaching (HET) principles four years ago. This practice has helped our staff to keep a clean and safe working environment, in order to sustain our focus on brain based teaching. The key components in every classroom include: Learning clubs, LIFESKILLS and Lifelong guidelines, eight smarts, and the use of movement and music, and Townhall meetings. Within these components, teachers are able to address behavioral concerns and or class challenges. Students are given the opportunities to learn in a variety of manners. Our greatest challenge is on-boarding new staff with the use of HET structures. It is important to foster an understanding of the underlying concepts of HET, while guiding staff through their varying depths of knowledge on the matter.

A key operational challenge is increasing student enrollment aggrandizement. Our front office staff continues to provide optimal customer service to support all group segments. Campus tours are a challenge in the afternoons due to a single staffed front office. We accommodate customers seeking tours at this time by scheduling visits that are convenient to us all.

P.2 Performance Improvement System

Desert Sage Elementary focuses on increasing the achievement of all of our students. As a school, we have put structures in place to support student learning. Our CIP Team meets once a month led by our Principal, Ms. Crain. The Continuous Improvement Team looks at current data and monitors and adjust our action plan accordingly. This data is then taken to the leadership team who reviews our overall structures and determines what areas of professional development are required. The leadership

team then moves to the goal teams to facilitate changes and provide professional development. We have a dedicated RTI time in the master schedule. This allows the teacher to use current data to meet the needs of all students.

Continuous Improvement is seen throughout the school from the classified staff to the students. Our students have student data notebooks in which they track their own data and learning growth. They reflect and make goals for personal improvement. Our classified staff all have Individual Performance Plans through which they have created a personalized improvement plan for growth in their area. Teachers have a student learning objective which they track and monitor throughout the year. They adjust strategies when the data within their documentation indicates that students are not making growth.

