

DESERT RIDGE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Parent Newsletter □ Fall 2019

10211 E. Madero Ave. Mesa AZ 85209 480-635-2025

Principal
Mike Davis

Vice Principal - AD
Jim Louzek

Dean of Students
Ryan Salazar

~ MESSAGE FROM PRINCIPAL DAVIS ~

Hello Rattler families,

My first month as Principal at Desert Ridge Jr. High has been outstanding. I have had a chance to meet students and families as well as getting to know the wonderful staff here. Our staff continues to be visible and available to the students to help them feel welcome and safe.

Communication between the school and our families is a priority. This newsletter, our [website](#), and our Twitter account (@drjhs_rattlers) will inform our families of events and also provide our families ways to be involved and engaged with our school. We are always looking for PTRO and Site Council members and attendees at meetings.

Please join us for our first PTRO meeting September 17th at 6 PM in the Library at DRJHS for a "Meet the Principal and PTRO board" and hear our vision/mission and goals for 2019-2020.

As we work with our 7th and 8th graders on making good decisions and having good character, I ask you to have discussions with your children about their choices and what they would do if... Examples would be:

1. If you see something suspicious, report it! "[Rattler Response](#)" is a great way to provide information we can use to keep the school safe.
2. Using phones and technology appropriately.
3. Video recording and/or posting on social media - events that are against school rules or negative toward other students and their reputations. (Fights in a restroom)
4. Reminding your students the Principal, Assistant Principal, and our Dean of Students are here to fix problems. We are here for the students, and we want them to know care about their concerns and needs. We cannot attempt to fix things if we do not know there is a problem.

Thank you for a great beginning to this year!

Mr. Mike Davis

Mark your calendar~

Early Release Wednesdays

2:30 pm Release

September 4, 11, 18, 25

October 2, 16, 23, 30

November 6, 13

12:30 pm Release - November 20

2:30 pm Release

December 4, 11, 18

Winter Break - Fri. Dec 20 - 12:30 pm Release

NO SCHOOL December 23 - January 3, 2020

School Resumes Monday, January 6, 2020

Picture Retakes - Friday, September 13, 2019

DRJHS PTRO Meeting - September 17th, 2019 at 6:00 pm

DRJHS Library

SHADOW - A - STUDENT DAY - Friday, October 4, 2019

-CAMPUS NEWS-

- Water can be purchased from the vending machines for \$1.25
- Rattler Response
 - The Rattler Response is a new communication tool available to our students. The goal is to give our students a voice and take pride in our school. This program gives students another avenue to communicate with the front office. The form can be used for:
 - **Statement of facts**
 - **Safety Issues**
 - **Suggestion to improve campus**
 - **Concern about a student**
 - **Compliments for staff/students**
 - Students will access the form through a link on the school website and teacher classroom sites.
- The DRJHS website Calendar is the best way to see all campus daily events
 - [DRJHS Calendar](#)

ATTENDANCE NEWS

GPS Attendance Policy

Absences

Students who are not in school 90% of the school days may lead to the withholding of credit and/or reported to the county as truant. Prearranged school-related activities shall not be counted as absences in implementing this policy. Cases involving extenuating circumstances may be appealed to the school administration (See Policy JE, JE-R, JE-E and JHB).

There are two types of absences: **excused and unexcused**. Excused and unexcused absences will carry the same weight in implementing the policy. An **excused absence** only means that a student has the right to receive credit for make-up work.

Excused Absences (may be one of the following):

- School related: If a student misses a class for a school activity (i.e. field trip, counselor, etc.) he/she is not reported absent to the office, but is responsible for making up all missed work.
- Other excused absences: An excused absence is one in which the parent has notified the school **within 24 hours** of the student's absence and the school administrator has approved the absence. When a parent knows that the student will be absent for more than one day, one phone call to the school will be sufficient.

Make-Up Work: When an absence is excused, students are allowed one day for each day absent to submit make-up work.

Homework Requests: Homework requests for students who are absent from school for more than three (3) days are made through the attendance office. Teachers must be given one (1) school day advance notice when requesting homework assignments. Homework assignments may be picked up from the attendance office at 3:30 p.m. the following day.

Unexcused Absences: An absence is considered unexcused if the school has not been notified within 24 hours of the student's absence. **Any student who has 10 consecutive unexcused absences from school may be withdrawn**. The parent will be informed, in writing, when this happens. It is required that the parent accompany the student for re-admittance.

Tardiness: Any student entering the classroom AFTER the bell has rung, and who does NOT have a written excuse from a staff member or the administration, will be considered tardy. If a student arrives after 10 minutes, it will be recorded as an absence. A tardy may result in 9th hour (junior high only), parent conference or any other consequence deemed necessary by the administration.

Check-In Procedures: Students arriving late to campus during the regular day must check in through the attendance office.

Sign-Out Procedures: All District schools are closed campuses. **A parent must sign the student out, in person, in order for the student to leave for any reason**. Photo ID is required prior to any student contact or pick-up.

Health Office News

I am Barb Naleski, Registered Nurse and I came to Desert Ridge in February. I am back because I was so happy working here! I have been an RN for 25 year with hospital experience in medical, surgical, cardiac, special procedures, adult ICU, pediatric ICU training, Hospice Case Manager, School Nurse Gilbert Elementary 11 years, and District Nurse at Kyrene School District for 3.5 years. I wanted to be a nurse since I was a little girl. Caring for others in every way is what I do and I am grateful to support you and your student this school year.

Desert Ridge is fortunate to have a 6 hour per day Health Assistant, Heather Pluhar. "I have been a Medical Assistant for over 11 years! I graduated from Everest College in 2008. I have been with the school district for some time and I just love it! I love making a difference in the lives of others and showing compassion when people are not always feeling the best. I hope your students have a great school year!"

The following donations can make a difference in a students day. Please donate the following to the Health Office throughout the school year. Travel size hand sanitizer and deodorant, chapstick, girls leggings,, girls new underwear, boys athletic shorts, all sizes. Dry snacks such as breakfast bars, granola bars, goldfish crackers, or Chex cereal. We are grateful for your support.

MATH TUTORING

MONDAY 8:10 am - 8:40 am

Herron - rm 302

Lawson - rm 306

Fuller - rm 309

Schafer - rm 313

McDaniel - rm 313

NO PM TUTORING

TUESDAY & THURSDAY 8:10 am - 8:40 am

Elcock - rm 301

Herron - rm 302

Ganucheau - rm 303

Wyatt - rm 304

Lawson - rm 306

Fuller - rm 309

McDaniel - rm 313

Schafer - rm 313

3:45 pm - 4:00 pm

Ganucheau - rm 303

Wyatt - rm 304

FRIDAY

Elcock - rm 301

Herron - rm 302

Ganucheau - rm 303

Wyatt - rm 304

Lawson - rm 306

McDaniel - rm 313

Schafer - rm 313

3:45 pm - 4:00 pm

Wyatt - rm 304

DESERT RIDGE JUNIOR ATHLETICS

Fall:

Tryouts begin August 19, 2019

Cut: Boys & Girls Soccer/Girls Volleyball

Non-Cut: 7th & 8th Grade Flag Football

Winter:

Cheer tryouts begin November 4, 2019

Tryouts for remaining sports November 12, 2019

Cut: Boys Basketball/Girls Softball/Cheer/Dance

Non-cut: Wrestling/Cross Country

Spring:

Cheer tryouts begin February 10, 2019

Tryouts for remaining sports February 17, 2019

Cut: Boys Baseball/Girls Basketball/Cheer/Dance

Non-cut: Track & Field

***** What do you need before you participate in a sport?**

- Complete Registration on Register My Athlete (www.registermyathlete.com)
- Completed an AIA physical form (printed off from Register my athlete website)
- Athletic Fee paid **after you make the team**. \$35 for Flag Football, Dance and Chess; \$75.00 for all remaining sports.
- Minimum 2.0 GPA, No F's or Falling Grades in any subject.

COUNSELING NEWS

What is Mindset Monday?

This year DRJHS has set aside 30 minutes at the beginning of each week to facilitate activities that will allow students to develop the social-emotional skills necessary to develop positive relationships, set goals and manage the challenges effectively. Research has shown that students who participate in social-emotional learning (SEL) report an increase in academic achievement, positive behavior and healthy decision making. An increase in social emotional skills help students thrive in an academic environment, but also lead to improved workplace skills and more fruitful relationships with family and friends. We recognize that junior high is a tumultuous time in a young person's life and are committed to helping him/her develop those skills that will help them not only cope, but thrive! Ask your student what topics were discussed during Mindset Mondays, and help him/her find ways to apply those skills throughout the week.

Additionally, we will be implementing the district depression awareness and suicide prevention training, SOS - Signs of Suicide, through Mindset Monday classes. You will receive additional information about your student's participation in this prevention program which is designed to help students ACT - Acknowledge, Care and Tell an Adult if they are concerned about their own or a loved one's emotional wellness. You can read more about this and other district Student Support and Prevention Programs at <https://www.gilbertschools.net/Page/1203>.

Advisory and Interventions

Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays at DRJHS follow an Advisory schedule. On these days, the last 30 minutes of the school day are designed to increase the students' academic achievement through study skills instruction and intervention time. Study skills includes mini-lessons in time management, note-taking, using notes as resources for test, etc. and includes time to practice these skills on the student's current classroom assignments. Students who demonstrate specific challenges in the areas of reading, writing and math may be selected to receive additional support in those areas through pull-out intervention. These interventions are short term, targeted instruction facilitated and monitored by certified math and English teachers. Your child's participation, should he/she be selected to participate, is not a punishment nor is it designed to replace regular participation in the class. It is, however, additional time to focus on pre-requisite skills, basic skills and implementation of those skills in grade level curriculum. If you have questions about specific interventions, please feel free to contact your child's teacher.

AVID

DRJHS AVID is proud to provide opportunities for students to increase their college and career readiness through schoolwide instructional strategies and through the option of enrolling in the AVID Elective course.



We are currently accepting applications for our Fall Recruitment period - ending September 6th. If your child meets the description below, you may encourage him/her to apply to the AVID Elective course. Applications are available online at the link listed below.

Do the following statements describe you?

- A strong desire to attend college and motivation to do the work necessary in advanced classes
- College potential with support
- Positive attitude toward learning, grades, and school
- Potential for growth as a student
- Possibly the first in the family to attend college
- Special circumstances that require additional support
- Historically underserved in 4 year colleges
- Good attendance

- Desire to be an AVID Scholar
- Strong teacher recommendations

AVID Elective can help you become College and Career READY!

AVID Scholars are selected through an application and interview process.

Online AVID Application: <https://tinyurl.com/DRJHSAVIDapp>

Two teacher recommendations are required for a complete application packet. Please direct your teachers to the following page to fill out an AVID Teacher Recommendation on your behalf:

<https://tinyurl.com/AVIDTeacherRec>

Helpful Links-

[GPS/DRJHS Website](#)

[DRJHS Twitter](#)

[DRJHS Facebook Page](#)

[DRJHS PTRO Facebook Page](#)