



DESERTFOOTHILLSNEWS

Home of the Scorpions • The higher we climb, the better the view!

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Ms. Susie Smith
Principal

Mr. Steve Whynott
Assistant Principal
February 2021

A Message from Ms. Smith

I hope that you and your families are healthy and well. The Desert Foothills staff and I are feeling hopeful and have great aspirations that we will be returning to in-person learning, five days a week, with so many staff members receiving the second dose of the COVID vaccine and the Maricopa County Health Services Metrics improving each week. Please be sure to watch for weekly updates from WESD Superintendent, Dr. Paul Stanton, on us meeting this aspirational date of March 22, 2021, the Monday after spring break. The Distance Learning Model will be offered to our students throughout this school year, including the fourth quarter.

- A Parent Commitment Form will be sent to all WESD parents on Friday, February 12 from WESD asking parents to choose between in-person and online learning for the remainder of the school year, beginning March 22. **It is very important that all parents make their selection no later than February 19 so that we can have your child's class schedule ready for March 22, 2021.**
- Your attendance at our virtual Parent/Teacher Conferences was greatly appreciated as we partner with you to support your child with their academic and social growth. Please don't hesitate to email any of your child's teachers with any questions or concerns as we are happy to support you and your child at DF.
- At this time, AZ Dept. of Education is requiring that our students take the state standardized assessment, AzM2,

formerly known as AzMERIT. The testing window has been pushed back to begin the first week of April. The AzM2 must be administered on site, so students in the Distance Learning Model will be provided a date and time for them to come to DF to complete the assessment on their Chromebook device. More information will be forthcoming.

- Summer School opportunities for our incoming 7th graders and 8th graders will be offered this summer and our current 8th graders will be offered summer school in GUHSD to provide students with extended learning and growing in their academic and social development. All programs are free for our students with breakfast and lunch provided.
- I am pleased to share with you that DF has applied for the renewal of a five-year grant with 21st CCLC to support our before and after-school classes with ASA. Our theme is DF students will Learn, Lead and Launch as they grow and develop during the two influential years of middle school and prepare to launch to high school with social and academic growth. The classes to be offered, with the awarding of the grant, include GenTech, Kodu, Fitness, Chess, Math, Reading, Scorpion Pride, and STEAM. We are hopeful that our before and after-school program will be awarded to us to support our students.
- Grab 'n' Go Bags are distributed every Monday from 6:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. in the DF Parking lot in a drive-thru COVID careful manner. **With no school on Monday, February 15 in observance of Presidents Day, Grab 'n Go Bags will be**



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Governing Board: Bill Adams, President • Nikkie Whaley, Vice President

Jenni Abbott-Bayardi, Member • Larry Herrera, Member • Lindsey Peterson, Member

Dr. Paul Stanton, Superintendent

distributed on Tuesday, February 16 from 6:30 to 10:30 a.m.

- Parents of 6th graders in our DF Region including Acacia, Ironwood, Chaparral and Sunburst are encouraged to watch the Future Scorpion YouTube Video and complete the Course Selection Form for 7th Grade at Desert Foothills on the Google Form.

Video: <https://youtu.be/LG7M22hJQrU>

Google Form for Course

Selection: <https://forms.gle/ZhNT6Tgx2GvkCcvC7>

Employee of the Month

Congratulations to Mrs. Sonya Titus, Office Manager!

Sonya Titus goes over and above her managerial office duties every day at DF with supporting our parents, students and staff to feel wanted, accepted and loved by us. She trains the office staff and para-pros in a collaborative and professional manner with excellent organization skills and builds a rapport with each member of the Desert Foothills Family of Staff. She models professionalism and compassion for our DF Community.

This school year has required more grace, patience and support for every person who walks in the door in our front office with the COVID pandemic. Sonya provided a COVID careful setting while implementing the new safety protocols and practices to ensure safety and health for the DF Community. She has trained a new Office Tech with excellent collaboration and models skills to keep us organized and compliant with our WESD policies and expectations.

Sonya makes her monthly Classified Staff Meetings purposeful and engaging with team building activities and prizes. She is firm, fair and friendly with her expectations as a manager. Sonya has built positive relationships with DF students, parents and staff.

Principal Susie Smith

A Message from our Social Worker

It's the time of year where love is in the air. While many of us may be getting ready to celebrate Valentine's Day and the romantic love we have in our lives, we should also take time to celebrate the love we share with our children and families. Research shows us that when children have at least one positive relationship with a caring adult, they are more likely to lead successful and happy lives as adults. The time you take now to develop and strengthen your relationship with your child is

actually helping to safeguard their future. This Valentine's season, I encourage you to set aside some time to connect with your children, individually or together as a family. Here is an idea of a family activity to get you started:

A Family Time Capsule. Document your individual and shared memories and experiences from the pandemic. Create your own time capsule by having you and your children take turns interviewing each other or writing about your experiences this past year. Topics to consider could include how you are feeling, what you have been doing at home, your thoughts about virtual school, and how you celebrated special occasions, etc. If you prefer to use a template, you can download this free template: [2020 Covid -19 Time Capsule For Families](#). Consider including a current photo of your family, decide on a place to store it, and create a plan for when you will "open" or revisit your time capsule in the future.

Desiree Montelongo, School Social Worker

PLEASE NOTE

IMPORTANT OPEN ENROLLMENT INFORMATION FOR 2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR
Open enrollment forms were emailed to all 7th grade parents on Thursday, February 4. This form is required for your student(s) continued enrollment at DF. Please email the completed form to dfoffice@wesdschools.org.

News from Our School Resource Officer

In today's society, I have found that a person has to be assertive in life. Making good decisions can enhance and better your life so that the things that matter to you are never overlooked. Here are some suggestions to help you to have the confidence to be assertive.

- State your position: Tell the other person how you feel about something, or give an answer to a request that you do something (e.g., "No, you can't borrow my book"). Speak with a strong, confident tone of voice.
- State your reason: Tell the other person the reason for your position, request, or feelings (e.g., "I need it myself or I already promised that someone else could use it").
- Be understanding (if appropriate): Let the other person know that you understand their point of view, request, or feelings (e.g., "I know you really need to use it, and I

wish there was something I could do to help”).

There are no set standards for dealing with circumstances. We all have to find the best way to deal with issues that suit each of us best. Be open, but never lose your values, or set them aside as they can guide you through decisions that you make while being assertive in your life.

Officer Kenny Angwin



Congratulations to 7th grade Solisa S. for taking 8th place in the District Spelling Bee and will further compete at the Regional level! Great job, Solisa, and good luck at regional!



Yearbook update

Unfortunately, due to the pandemic the DF Scorpion 20-21 yearbook is cancelled. If you have placed an online order already, you will be receiving a refund from Walsworth.

Tax Credit

Giving back is easy! Make a tax credit donation to Desert Foothills Junior High School and receive a dollar-for-dollar reduction in your state income taxes! Taxpayers may receive up to a \$400 tax credit if filing jointly (\$200 if filing single) on their State income taxes by contributing to one of Washington Elementary School District's extracurricular activity programs.

For more information, visit [/www.wesdschools.org/taxcredit](http://www.wesdschools.org/taxcredit). Thank you for your continued support!

Calendar of Events

2/3	Early Release	2:30 p.m.
2/9-2/12	Early Release for P/T conferences	
2/9	DF P/T Conferences	5:00 p.m.
2/11	Governing Board Meeting	7:00 p.m.
2/15	Presidents Day – NO SCHOOL	
2/17	Site Council Meeting	5:00 p.m.
2/17	B.E.S.T PTO meeting	6:00 p.m.
2/24	Early Release	2:30 p.m.
2/25	Governing Board Meeting	7:00 p.m.
3/3	Early Release	2:30 p.m.
3/15-3/19	SPRING BREAK – NO SCHOOL	

To view Desert Foothill's online calendar, insert the URL address below into your Internet browser, <http://desertfoothills.wesdschools.org>; click on Desert Foothills Calendar.

School Hours

8:45 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. M., T., Th., F.
8:45 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. Wednesdays

Office Hours

8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. M., T., Th., F.
8:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Wednesday

Open Gym

(temporarily cancelled due to CO-VID 19)

7:45 – 8:45 a.m.

Important Numbers

Attendance Line – 602-896-5521 (24 hours)
Office – 602-896-5500
Health Office – 602-896-5510



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