

DESERT LEARNING ACADEMY

2248 E. Ramon Road, Palm Springs, CA 92262

760-778-0487

-Monthly Newsletter

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- DLA Teacher Spotlight: DLA security officer Jack Manion
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- Monthly Brainteaser activity
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Greetings parents, students, and community members-



As you are probably aware, Mr. Miguel Cardona has been appointed as the new Secretary of Education in Washington DC. We now know that state testing this year will take place , however we are not exactly sure what the testing schedule will look like. As soon as updated information regarding state testing is available I will of course share with families via our monthly newsletter.

During March 2021 , ELPAC testing will continue with the goal of completing all testing in the speaking, listening, reading, and writing domains by Spring Break. We also continue to prepare for our next Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) accreditation visit that will take place on Monday May 3, 2021.

Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out by email or telephone. Only a few weeks until Spring Break!!

Desert Learning Academy– Spotlight Employee

Hello, my name is Jack Manion and I am the Campus Security Officer (CSO) here at Desert Learning Academy. I started my career as a 'dipper' working on a grain elevator in Mount Vernon, Illinois. I then moved to New Haven Connecticut to attend the Culinary Institute of America. There I trained as a chef for two years, graduated and then became a chef at a local restaurant for about two years. I then moved to New York city and served as a waiter in the Maurice Hotel, and then accepted a position as a personnel trainee. I was then offered the position of personnel manager for eight years. I transferred to the Conrad Hilton hotel in Chicago Illinois as food and beverage manager before joining Howard Johnson's management team where I served as division manager serving several southern states.



I moved to California in 1978 to San Jose, and I worked for Travel Lodge as the Vice President of Operations. While in San Jose, I joined the Lockheed Martin aerospace company in the late 1980s working for the Department of Defense. I then worked for AAA as a travel agent for five years, and then I moved to Palm Springs, CA where I was hired as a part-time security officer by PSUSD. In 2004 I became a permanent employee having worked at Raymond Cree Middle School, James Workman Middle School, and Desert Learning Academy. I love working with children and I find it easy to build meaningful relationships with students.

High School Class Support During Spring Break

This year all our high school teachers will be available to provide support to all our current high school students during the first three days of Spring Break recess. Teachers will be available from 10:00am until 2:00pm on Monday March 29, 2021 through Wednesday March 31, 2021.

Below is a table outlining when teachers are available online and on the Desert Learning Academy campus. Should you have any questions, please reach out to your child's lead teacher.

Date	Teacher	Subject	Time Frame	Face to face support on DLA campus	Virtual support
Monday March 29, 2021	Smith	English	10:00am-2:00pm	N/A	X
	Valenzuela	Spanish/Art/ Freshmen seminar	10:00am-2:00pm	X	X
	Borun	Living Earth/ Science of Health and Wellness/ Business Finance/ Electives	10:00am-2:00pm	X	X
	Wheaton	Social Studies/World History/ Social Problems/ Psychology/ Sociology	10:00am-2:00pm	N/A	X
	Barrios Escamilla	Mathematics	10:00am-2:00pm	N/A	X
	Nicholas	Mathematics	10:00am-2:00pm	N/A	X
Tuesday March 30, 2021	Smith	English	10:00am-2:00pm	X	X
	Valenzuela	Spanish/Art/Freshmen seminar	10:00am-2:00pm	N/A	X
	Borun	Living Earth/ Science of Health and Wellness/ Business Finance/ Electives	10:00am-2:00pm	N/A	X
	Wheaton	Social Studies/World History/ Social Problems/ Psychology/ Sociology	10:00am-2:00pm	N/A	X
	Barrios Escamilla	Mathematics	10:00am-2:00pm	N/A	X
	Nicholas	Mathematics	10:00am-2:00pm	X	X
Wednesday March 31, 2021	Smith	English	10:00am-2:00pm	N/A	X
	Valenzuela	Spanish/Art/Freshmen seminar	10:00am-2:00pm	N/A	X
	Borun	Living Earth/ Science of Health and Wellness/ Business Finance/ Electives	10:00am-2:00pm	X	X
	Wheaton	Social Studies/World History/ Social Problems/ Psychology/ Sociology	10:00am-2:00pm	N/A	X
	Barrios Escamilla	Mathematics	10:00am-2:00pm	X	X
	Nicholas	Mathematics	10:00am-2:00pm	N/A	X

Small Group Social Emotional Support at DLA



I am delighted to announce that Mrs. Brenda Gunderson (former retired DLA counselor) is now offering small group counseling services to DLA students on Monday's at 10:00am here on the DLA campus. Also, Mrs. Lisa Cruz licensed clinical counselor will be offering online support services for our DLA students. If you are interested in your child participating in these counseling groups, please contact Rosalia Mendoza or your child's teacher at 760-778-0487 and the necessary referral forms will be provided to you so that services may be provided.

March 2021 Brainteaser Challenge

Please send your answer via email to mgrainger@psusd.us

Bounce	Height (m)
1	400
2	320
3	256

A ball is dropped from a height of 500 meters. The table shows the height of each bounce, and the heights form a geometric sequence. How high does the ball bounce on the 8th bounce? Round your answer to the nearest tenth of a meter.



High School- Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

Beginning on October 1 of every school year, students who plan to attend college have the option to apply for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). FAFSA allows you to get free grant money and student loans to pay for your education. This is money that the government provides to students. This is money that parents do not need to pay back. If you would like to learn more information please click on the following link:

<https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>

Pleaser remember that the submission deadline for the 2020/21 school year

The FAFSA® – Simplified –

1 What is the FAFSA?
This form determines your Federal financial aid eligibility to help pay for college expenses (tuition, books, room and board, etc.).

2 Who Should Fill Out a FAFSA?
All students who plan to attend college (including students who are currently in college) should complete the FAFSA.

3 When To Complete Your FAFSA?
The FAFSA is available January 1st, and the earlier your submission is completed, the better.

ELPAC Testing Schedule and Information

As noted in the welcome message., English Learner Proficiency Assessments will continue during the three weeks leading up to Spring Break recess. The following DLA staff members will be contacting families to schedule virtual ELPAC assessments via Zoom stating with the speaking part of the assessment:

- Mrs. Stacy Brennan – sbrennan@psusd.us** Elementary students
- Mrs. Maria de la Fuente – mdelafuente@psusd.us** Middle school students.
- Michael Grainger – mgrainger@psusd.us** High school students
- Ms. Christina Moore – cmoore2@psusd.us** Supporting all three levels

DLA Calendar Events for March and April, 2021

- Thursday March 11, 2021:** Middle school Teen Talk lessons begin.
- Friday April 9, 2021:** Last day of Spring Break
- Wednesday March 24, 2021:** Elementary Puberty Talk parent information evening (all 5th grade students) via Zoom at 5:30pm.
- Friday April 16, 2021:** Elementary puberty talk lessons from 9:00am until 10:00am.
- Monday March 29, 2021:** Spring Break recess begins for two weeks.
- Monday April 19, 2021:** Virtual state testing begins at DLA via secure browser.
- Monday March 29-Wednesday March 31, 2021:** Spring Break intervention support for all high school students from 10:00am until 2:00pm each day. See page 1 for details.
- Friday April 23, 2021:** Elementary puberty talk lessons from 9:00am until 10:00am.
- Friday April 30, 2021:** Elementary puberty talk lessons from 9:00am until 9:30am.

Desert Learning Academy Teacher of the Year– 2020/21

It is with great pride that I announce that Mrs. Mirta Valenzuela has been elected DLA's teacher of the year for the current school year. Mrs. Valenzuela teaches Spanish classes as well as Art and Freshman Seminar electives here at DLA. We are so proud of Mrs. Valenzuela's accomplishment and look forward to supporting her as she moves forward in the process for county recognition. Mirta, congratulations from all your colleagues here at DLA. You are amazing and we are SO proud of you.



Edgenuity Parent Portal-

I wanted to remind parents that the Edgenuity parent portal provides parents with an opportunity to review student progress in their assigned courses, and monitor the time students spend on the Edgenuity learning platform. Please take a moment to visit the DLA website using the link below and watch the video tutorial on how to access the Edgenuity Parent platform. Once you have viewed the video, please contact DLA so that we may provide you with your parent access code. You will need this four digit code to access the portal.



Please use this link to access the orientation video: <https://www.psusd.us/domain/4743>