A.4 School Calendar and Weekly Schedule

Calendar

The school calendar will begin in August and go through May. A total of 144 instructional days will be taught. The school day will run from 7:30 am to 3:30 p.m. Each of the grades K-2 will have a 15 minute morning break with a 45 minute lunch and recess and a 15 minute afternoon break. Grades 3-5 will have the same schedule without the 15 minute afternoon break. The required number of instructional days and hours meet the required number of seat hours as provided by Arizona state statute. A longer school day Monday through Thursday compensates and meets the required seat minutes as required by statute for a four day week.

Weekly Student Schedule

Monday through Thursday 7:30 am – 3:30pm

K – 2 total instruction per day: 6 hours and 45 minutes;

Year: 972 hours

3 – 5 total instruction minutes per day: 7 hours per; Year 1008 hours.

The above schedule meets the weekly instructional criteria as described in Arizona law.

Which is Kindergarten 356 hours; 1-3 is 712 hours; 4-6 890 hours

Daily Schedule: K-2

7:30 – 7:45	Take Attendance, lunch count, pledge	
7:45 – 8:00	Calendar	Whole group instruction
8:00 – 9:30	Language arts block	Differentiated small group instruction
9:30 – 9:45	Recess / snack	
9:45 – 11:15	Math block	Differentiated small group instruction
11:15 – 11:45	Centers / computer and tablet time	Small group tutoring/ instruction
11:45 – 12:30	Lunch recess	
12:30 – 1:00	Literature – Read Alouds Student specials	Whole group instruction (listening and speaking)
1:00 – 2:00	Writing Workshop Character Education	Whole group instruction, one-on-one conferencing, small group differentiated instruction
2:00 – 2:15	Recess	
2:15 – 3:00	Science (Monday and Wednesday) Social Studies (Tuesday and Thursday)	Whole group instruction / small group instruction

3:00 – 3:30	Individual scholar learning	Individual conferencing and tutoring
3:30 dismissal		

Instructional minutes per content area:

Reading	360 minutes per week
Math	360 minutes per week
Writing	240 minutes per week

Daily Schedule Grades 3 – 5

7:30 – 8:00	Daily oral language drill roll call and lunch count	Whole group
8:00 - 9:30	Language arts block	Small group instruction
9:30 - 9:45	Recess	
9:45 - 11:15	Math block	Small group instruction
11:15 -12:00	Literature / centers	Whole group / small group
12:00 –12:45	Lunch	
12:45 - 1:30	Writing block Character Education	Whole group instruction /small group instruction
1:30 - 2:30	Science	Whole group instruction
2:30 - 3:30	Social Studies (Monday and Wednesday) Student specials (Tuesday and Wednesday) Individual tutoring	Small group Individual

3:30 Dismissal

Student Specials will consist of Physical Activities, Library and Computers

Four Day Work Week with Fun Day Friday

Desert Star Academy, Inc. has selected a four day work week with a Fun Day Friday for the following reasons:

- All area schools in Mohave Valley and Bullhead City have early release days on Friday for students and staff development for teachers
- Staff Development for Desert Star Academy, Inc. teachers and teaching assistants
- Intense tutoring for students with learning gaps or those falling below or approaching specific standards
- Improve attendance rate among students and staff

Rationale for Target Population

Desert Star Academy, Inc. is committed to operating a high quality school with rigorous curriculum and rich in technology and scholar-center instruction. Many students will be coming to Desert Star Academy, Inc. with large learning gaps. Fun Day Friday will provide these scholars with intense one-on-one tutoring in specific standards where learning gaps exist. Each grade level teacher will have experience and resources to teach multiple grades thereby having the ability to tutor all scholars in the Common Core Standards. Teachers will be master teachers and be required to teach multiple grades during the first year of operation; teachers will be required to work two half-day Fridays a month to provide necessary tutoring for the target population. One teacher will tutor the lower grades, K-2 and the second teacher will tutor grades 3-6. The School Director and teaching assistants will also be required to take part in tutoring scholars. Tutoring sessions will be made available for all students, in need of additional supports for learning gaps and enrichment for excelling scholars to maintain or exceed their level of learning to meet the high standards and rate of achievement.

A four day school schedule will emphasize a structured rigorous academic commitment for scholars Monday through Thursday with a less structured fun day on Fridays. Class field trips, community service activities and peer tutoring will take place on Friday allowing scholars another avenue for creative student-centered learning. At the close of the intense tutoring sessions scholars will take part in group activities and games in which educational questions and real world problems will be solved. For example, asking a student to calculate heart rate by using multiplication before jumping rope or shooting baskets. Community service activities will also be scheduled on Fridays meeting the mission and vision of educating scholars in school, community at home.

Desert Star Academy will remain consistent with all other school schedules in the Mohave Valley – Bullhead City area. The School Director has established a productive working relationship with the local school district regarding preschool business by attending monthly task force meetings to improve the quality of education provided. Desert Star Academy, Inc. believes communication among all educators will only improve the quality of education programs to be delivered. Operating a four day work week and rotating half day Fridays will allow teachers and administrators to take part in monthly or weekly meetings and staff development opportunities with area educators from surrounding schools.

Staff Development

A minimum of one Friday per month will be designated as a mandatory staff development day. The remaining three Fridays will be designated as optional team development / teacher working days. Desert Star Academy has selected Friday's for staff development training to ensure all teachers and

presenters have ample time to conduct and accomplish necessary training without a time constraint of leaving by 4 or 5 p.m. Conducting staff development on Friday emphasizes a priority of student instruction and development Monday through Thursday and teacher development, student data analysis and planning on Friday. This is also a time in a relaxed atmosphere for teachers to collaborate and bond as a team. Desert Star Academy believes a teacher is more diligent and responsive to training and analyses when they are not teaching hours prior to the development workshops.

Designating a minimum of four uninterrupted training hours allows outside resource trainers and developers to emanate new developments, strategies, or product training and technology without the pressure of time constraints. Teacher implementation, collaboration and practical training may be scheduled, thereby, making the training more productive for teachers to comprehend and implement new information. Teachers will also have the opportunity to attend staff development and trainings offered by the surrounding school district on Fridays. This is important for teachers to participate in area staff development trainings in a rural area. Including more teachers available to attend trainings encourages state personnel and ADE to offer training sessions in the area.

Fun Day Friday

Desert Star Academy recognizes many students will enroll with developmental delays or be grade levels behind in academic knowledge and skills. The opportunity of having Fun Day Fridays ensures each scholar in need the appropriate time with a teacher or tutor to receive intensive instruction. Beginning each tutoring session in the morning when the scholars are alert makes for a more productive session for comprehension and retention. It is unrealistic to schedule tutoring sessions before school and after-school poses the issues of scholars being tired, lethargic and unresponsive. This schedule allows teachers and the Academy to host homework clubs, community service or student interest clubs to assist students with homework and brief concept tutoring sessions as well as provide time for Desert Star Scholars to take part in extra-curricular activities. Study Fridays will be mandatory and a result from a parent teacher conference where a student learning plan was created. A contract would be signed by the scholar and parent mandating the tutoring. Discipline action would follow for any scholar not attending the program. With a signed contract, the concept of “optional” would not be a possibility. Study Friday would be implemented by Desert Star Academy with at least the school director or administrative team (in year four of operation) and designated teachers. Each teacher would be required to work a minimum of one Friday for scholar tutoring.

Improved Attendance Rate for Scholars and Staff

Proposing a four day school week would also reduce scholar and teacher absences. Doctor appointments, personal appointments or activities can be scheduled on Fridays reducing the amount of time teachers and scholars need to be away from school. Stricter attendance policies can be adhered to with this type of schedule. Allow individual time for a teacher to schedule appointments on Friday would also reduce the time teachers request for “early outs” to attend to scheduled

appointment and empower them to stay the full school day and beyond for their scholars in need of assistance or to sponsor after-school scholar events.

Desert Star Academy believes community service and scholar participation within the community is a vital part of educating the whole child. Having a four day school schedule allows teachers to plan class field trips, community participation or scholar leadership training and activities to be scheduled on Fridays and placing emphasis and priority on scholar education and academics Monday through Thursday. There are many tribal holidays celebrated and traditionally the Native American students have higher attendance issues on Fridays.

The four day school week is consistent with the two other charter schools in the area. The local district schools also have early release on Friday for staff development. The most compelling rationale for a four day work week is the opportunity for additional staff development and planning time. At all times Desert Star believes that student days must focus on the student and the learning process. Teachers should not be taking time from the 4 day week to write lessons, make copies or grade student work. Two of the four monthly Fridays will allow teachers to plan, assess student learning and growth, and prepare for the upcoming week without distractions and in the comfort of their home. The extended school day will also allow the staff to have scheduled staff development to meet the needs of the students as described in the performance management plan. This will also allow the school to plan "Friday school" for additional school tutoring as needed per scholar.

Staff Work Days / Hours

Staff hours: 7:00 – 4:00; **7:00 – 4:30 on Thursday to allow teacher conferencing for Friday tutoring**
Staff Development: One Friday per month minimum 8:-00 – 11:00 or as late as 2 pm
Fun Day Friday: One Friday per month 8:00 – 12:00 (Two Fridays per month only in year one with limited number of teachers on staff.
Staff required activity: One evening a month 5:00 – 6:30 for "Family Night"

All staff members are required to be on campus by 7:00 am allowing ample to time set their classroom and prepare for each school day. Arriving thirty minutes prior to school starting will allow time for any last minute staff briefings prior to scholar arrival. A 4 pm departure time will allow staff thirty minutes after school for prepping or scholar tutoring. All staff members, certified and classified, will be required to attend one staff development day on a designated Friday per month. In addition, each certified staff member would be required to work a second Friday each month for Fun day Friday. All teachers will collaborate with each other at the first monthly staff development day to determine which teachers would work each Friday. A master schedule would be turned in to the school director following each meeting. It is the belief of the Desert Star school director that when teachers have buy- in and autonomy with scheduling they will take ownership and support events

with dedication. If teachers are not successful in scheduling staff for the Fun day Fridays the School Director will assume the responsibility.

Monthly Family Nights

Desert Star Academy values the role of the family in the education of each scholar. Promoting a team and partnership among teachers, parents, and scholars will promote effective communication and student accountability. The Academy believes when parents understand the educational environment and expectations a bond will be formed for the benefit of the scholar by instilling a sense of purpose, hope and ownership to apply their strengths for the benefit of the world around them. The values of respect, humility, compassion, integrity, and accountability will be central to the theme of each monthly activity.

Monthly Themes and Events

Month	Event	Character Trait /Event Theme
July	Meet Your Teacher	
August	Open House	Respect
September	Open House	Respect continued
October	Fall Festival Carnival	Responsibility
November	Open House of Student work	Fairness
December	Holiday Celebration	Caring
January	Happy New Year	Citizenship
February	Black History Projects	Trustworthy
March	Spring Science Fair	Gearing up for AIMS
April	AIMS Jeopardy	AIMS all the way
May	End of Year BBQ	Celebration

School Calendar 2014-15

July 2014						
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14Staff Orientation /RTI Differ. Training	15	16 Aims Analysis/ teacher notebook	17	17	19
20	21 Aims Analysis/ teacher notebook	22	23 Team and personal goal setting	24	25	26

27	28 Staff Development	29 Staff Development	30	31 Meet teacher		

August 2014 Respect						
					1 Staff Development	2
3	4 First Day of school	5	6	7	8 Fun day Friday	9
10	11	12	13	14	15 Fun day Friday	16
17	18	19	20	23	24Funday Friday	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	1

September 2014 Respect continued						
2	3 Labor Day No school	4	5	6	7 Staff development.	8
9	10	11	12	13	14 Fun day Friday	15
16	17	18	19	20	21 Fun day Friday	22
23	24	25	26	27	28 Fun day Friday	29
30						

October 2014 Responsibility						
	1	2	3	4	5 Staff development	6
7	8	9	10	11 End of Quarter	12 Fun day Friday	13
14	15 Day 40	16	17	18	19 Fun day Friday	20
21	22	23	24	25	26 Fun day Friday	27
28	29	30	31			

November 2014 Fairness						
				1	2 Staff development	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12 Veterans Day No school	13	14	15	16 Fun day Friday	17
18	19	20 Day 60	21	22	23 Fun day Friday	24
25	26 Thanksgiving	27 Thanksgiving	27 Thanksgiving	29 Thanksgiving	30	1
	Break	Break	Break	Break		

December 2014 Caring						
2	3	4	5	6	7 Staff Development	8
9	10	11	12	13	14 Fun day Friday	15
16	17	18	19	20 End of Quarter Day 74	21	22
23	24 Winter Break	25 Winter Break	26 Winter Break	27 Winter Break	28	29
30	31 Winter Break					

January 2015 Citizenship						
		1 Winter Break	2 Winter Break	3 Winter Break	4	5
6	7 First Day Back	8	9	10	11 Staff Development	12
13	14	15	16	17	18 Fun day Friday	19
20	21 MLK No School	22	23	24	25 Fun day Friday	26
27	28	29	30	31 Day 89		

February 2015 Trustworthiness						
					1	2

3	4	5	6	7	8 Staff Development	9
10	11	12	13	14	15 Fun day Friday	16
17	18 President's Day No School	19	20	21 100 day of school	22 Fun day Friday	23
24	25	26	27	28		

March 2015 Gearing up for AIMS						
					1 Fun day Friday	2
3	4	5	6	7	8 Staff Development	9
10	11	12	13	14 End of Quarter	15	16
17	18 Spring Break	19 Spring Break	20 Spring Break	21 Spring Break	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29 Funday Friday	30

April 2015 AIMS all the WAY						
	1	2	3	4	5 Staff Development /AIMS training	6
7	8	9	10	11	12 Fun day Friday	13
14	15	16	17	18	19 Fun day Friday	20
21	22	23	24	25	26 Fun day Friday	27
28	29	30				

May 2015 Celebration						
			1	2	3 Staff Development	4
5	6	7	8	9	10 End of Year Family BBQ	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18

19	20	21	22	23 Last day of school	24 Teacher work day	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	