



DESERT ACADEMY

Engaging the mind. Engaging the world.



International Baccalaureate World School

SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO

MISSION STATEMENT

Desert Academy is dedicated to academic and personal excellence. We provide a quality college preparatory education in a diverse school community that values individuality and character, promotes self-confidence, and fosters global understanding.



Message from the Head of School



I would like to invite you to visit Desert Academy. It is here that you will see the vibrancy, passion, and life-affirming character of our students and teachers. You will find that our school

culture is imbued with our core values of academic and personal excellence.

Our graduates tell us they are more prepared than their college classmates. We believe this is because our students thrive with our small classes and our innovative curriculum. We emphasize the process of learning; we believe in the joy of discovery and the life-long value of education.

In addition, we're the only secondary school in New Mexico to offer the International Baccalaureate Program in grades 7-12. The IB Program is universally recognized as the standard of excellence in education.

Desert Academy students are truly engaged, whether in the classroom, on the athletic field, or on the stage. We hold a vision of excellence. We believe strongly in love of community as well as a global perspective. This allows our students to meet the challenges to come with confidence and enthusiasm.

There's a word that explains all of this that you won't find in the dictionary. It's a quality that expresses the feeling or energy of a person or place. We call it *Desertness*.

Welcome.

TERRY PASSALACQUA, *Head of School*



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“Desert is a great school with a friendly and small community that let’s you be yourself.”

CARTER,
8th GRADER



ACADEMIC AND PERSONAL EXCELLENCE

AT DESERT ACADEMY, students and teachers alike are challenged to reach, to explore, to grow. Whether it is in the Science laboratory or on the soccer field, at the English seminar table or at the painting easel, expectations are high, and the network of support and encouragement necessary to ensure those small, crucial successes that lead to self-confidence is rich and textured. Day by day, we encourage each other to step out a little farther, spread our wings a little wider, and ultimately, to fly.



COLLEGE PREP EDUCATION

AS AN INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE WORLD SCHOOL, Desert delivers a challenging, internationally recognized curriculum that values inquiry and process, illuminating the woven fabric that connects all subjects.

The International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (MYP) at Desert Academy is a curricular framework for all students in grades 7 through 10. The MYP is designed to help students develop the knowledge, understanding, attitudes and skills necessary to participate actively and responsibly in a changing world. Learning how to learn and how to evaluate information critically is as important as learning facts. The MYP methodology provides a seamless transition from the lower grades at Desert into the Diploma Programme.

The International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme is an 11th and 12th grade experience that involves taking six courses in six different curricular areas, plus completing a course in Theory of Knowledge, a certain number of hours in creativity, action, and service, and an extended essay on a topic of the student’s choice. Students choosing to earn the IB Diploma have access to priority admissions at top notch colleges and universities worldwide, as well as the opportunity to earn college credit hours for their Diploma Programme courses.



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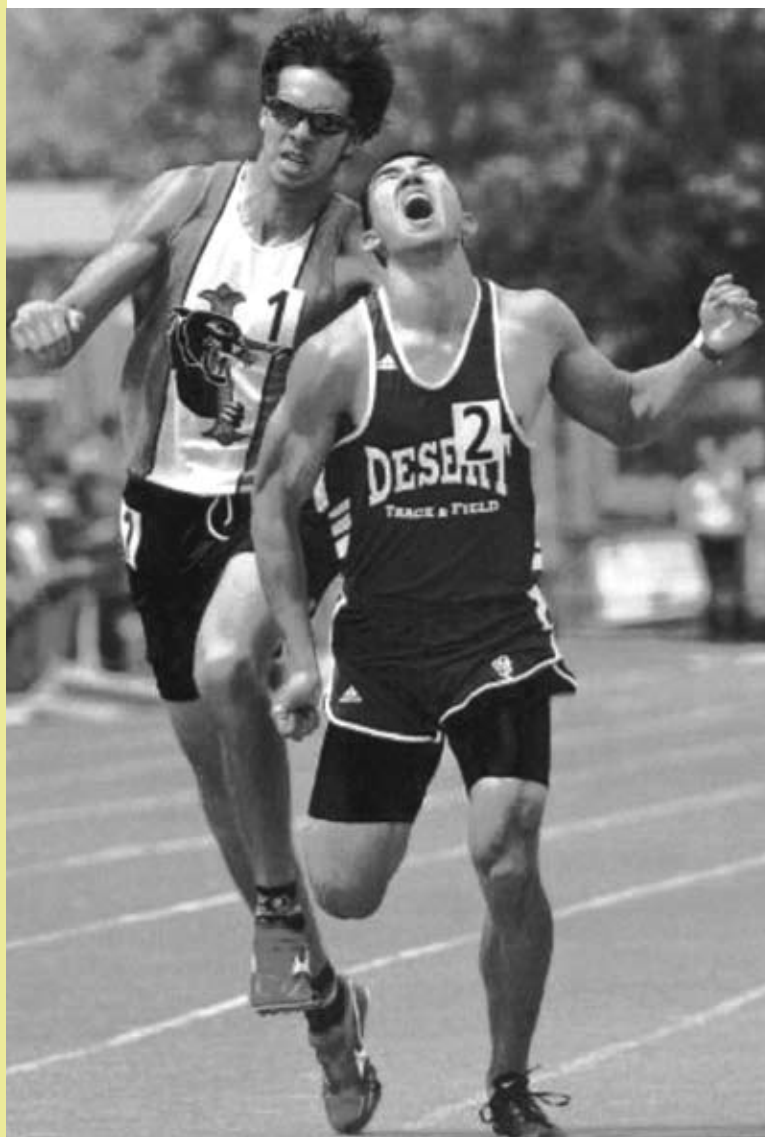
ROSE
2008 Desert Academy graduate, now a freshman at Stanford University, in a letter to her teachers:

“How do we keep up our incentive in striving to be someone, to be awesomely different? Or is that not the point, rather it is to connect and identify with others who share common passions with us and to help each other make a difference.”

“HANNAH

At Desert Academy our daughter Hannah was allowed to be the unique individual she is. She had exceptional teachers who encouraged her to think deeply about academic and social issues. Hannah also had a great time being on the track team, even though sports ” were not her passion.

– Anthony and Cecelia



GLOBAL UNDERSTANDING

AT DESERT ACADEMY, international education stems from a commitment to a curriculum that promotes global understanding and ultimately leads to a more compassionate, conscious way of life. Instead of only teaching a curriculum that reinforces regional and national assumptions, our curriculum aims to shed light on how our experiences shape those assumptions, to consider other points of view as rooted in experience as well, and to recognize that an understanding of multiple perspectives is necessary for a richer, more peaceful world. Our goal is to encourage our students to truly understand the perspectives of those from cultures other than our own. In the process, students better understand their own cultural identity as well. As a whole, our interdisciplinary curriculum seeks to reinforce several key concepts that lead to global understanding. First, across the curriculum we focus on the power of culture to



DOMINO

“Our daughter Domino had an experience at Desert Academy that nurtured self-expression and tolerance of individuals and ideas. We always felt our daughter was in a safe environment with supportive faculty and students who encouraged her individuality.”

– Alan and MaryAnn



shape individual perspective while celebrating the individual's contribution in shaping the culture. Second, we emphasize the importance of citizenship and community service. Third, we recognize the interconnectedness of all living things. Fourth, we affirm the need for environmental sustainability.



7th Grade Japanese Tea Ceremony



Desert Academy is our kind of school because our son is lit up with learning! He is received, respected, encouraged and fortified in who he is.

When your 8th grader comes home and often wants to engage his parents in his current logic and reasoning puzzles, ethical and metaphysical quandaries, creative and humorous theatrics, how can we not love this school?

– PAUL, Father of Silwen



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INDIVIDUALITY, CHARACTER AND SELF-CONFIDENCE

THE DESERT ACADEMY EXPERIENCE is student-centered, placing the individual at the axis of his/her learning adventure. Our curriculum emphasizes the higher level thinking skills of analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and creation. An education that fosters these skills produces reflective, open-minded, curious individuals, the kind of people who are engaged in their local communities and with the world at large.

In addition, our curriculum and programs seek to develop characteristics such as integrity and citizenship. Our advisory program offers activities specifically designed to promote these core values. Our integrated curriculum promotes these characteristics as well through texts that present ethical dilemmas

ALEX

“Desert Academy provided our son Alex with an environment in which he could be assertive, explore his role in the world, and value his talents. Desert values diversity and the unique path of each individual. Alex was encouraged to be who he is and challenged to become who he will be.”

– Miguel and Deborah



and discussion of historical and current events. Organizations like the student council and the sustainability club also encourage integrity and citizenship by placing students at the center of their own educational experience. Our no-cut athletics program challenges all students to test their limits and promotes self-confidence. All of these things reinforce the notion that our students are responsible for their choices, and as such, they control their fate. This sense of empowerment results in engaged citizens who believe in taking action.



“The classes are small so the students have more teacher time.”

**ALDEN,
8th GRADER**





DIVERSE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

DESERT ACADEMY IS A DIVERSE community with a conviction that successful education develops basic human values such as respect and integrity. Our academic curriculum, advisory program, and school activities foster tolerance and understanding of multiple points of view. We affirm that varying perspectives enrich the life of our school community and the world around us.



ELECTIVES OFFERED AT DESERT

High School

Assistance Dogs of the West
Creative Writing/Literary Journal
Art Survey
Painting
Printmaking
Ceramics
Sculpture
Photography I and II
Comics
Digital Technology
Computer Technology
Animation
Acting for the Stage
Acting for the Screen
Film Production
Theater
Musical Theater
Glee
Chorus
Music Theory
Physical Conditioning
Physical Education

Clubs

Outdoor and Sustainability
Drama Club
GUTS (Growing Up Thinking Scientifically)
Supercomputing
Equestrian Club
Digital Media Club
Games Club

Middle School Elective Rotation

Class Seven
Study and Life Skills
Speech
Music Appreciation
Art History

Class Eight
Art Appreciation
Musical Theater
Theater and Improvisation
Class Eight Project

Middle School Fine Arts Rotation

Visual Art 7
Visual Art 8
Movement
Film
Music Theory
Music Appreciation
Speech
Theater

Leos Club (community service)
National Honor Society
National Junior Honor Society
Student Council
Wellness Committee
Gay/Straight Alliance
Speech and Debate
Model United Nations
Yearbook



SPORTS OFFERED AT DESERT

Fall Cross Country • Volleyball • Soccer
Winter Basketball • Swimming
Spring Track and Field • Golf • Tennis



COLLEGE PREP EDUCATION
ACADEMIC and PERSONAL EXCELLENCE

GLOBAL UNDERSTANDING
INDIVIDUALITY, CHARACTER and SELF-CONFIDENCE
DIVERSE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

3-5 MINUTE SELF-PORTRAITS BY DESERT ACADEMY STUDENTS



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DESERT ACADEMY

A College Preparatory School Grades 7-12

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