



Desert Star

COMMUNITY SCHOOL

**ANNUAL
REPORT
2022-2023**



OUR MISSION

To provide an education that considers the needs of the whole child, develops the full diversity of human intelligence within each individual, and instills a life-long love of learning.

OUR VISION

To inspire and empower students to reach their full academic and creative potentials so they may lead fulfilling, purposeful lives and make a positive contribution to the multi-cultural society and world community in which they live.

DESERT STAR... **OUR COMMUNITY SCHOOL**



This presentation is intended to provide a snapshot of what makes Desert Star unique, insight into the responsible stewardship and governance of the school, our philosophy and principles, the past year's achievements, and the current vision of our plans for the future.



Desert Star
COMMUNITY SCHOOL

**WE ARE A PUBLIC, TUITION-FREE CHARTER SCHOOL
GUIDED BY THE PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC WALDORF EDUCATION
AS A MEMBER OF THE
ALLIANCE FOR PUBLIC WALDORF EDUCATION**

**WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR THE DEDICATION
OF EVERYONE WHO PLAYS THEIR PART
IN THE CONTINUED SUCCESS OF OUR SCHOOL**



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OUR STUDENTS



**WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR THE DEDICATION
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**OUR STUDENTS
OUR STAFF**



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**OUR STUDENTS
OUR STAFF
OUR FAMILIES**



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COMMUNITY SCHOOL



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**OUR STUDENTS
OUR STAFF
OUR FAMILIES
OUR BOARD**



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**OUR STUDENTS
OUR STAFF
OUR FAMILIES
OUR BOARD
OUR COMMUNITY!**



ACCOMPLISHMENTS



The board is delighted to present some of the accomplishments of the Desert Star Community School. The 2022-23 school year was filled with exciting events and milestones that have enriched the educational experience of our students.



MICHAELMAS FESTIVAL

We began the year with our inaugural Michaelmas Festival, which was a resounding success. Each class took part in a captivating all-school play during which Saint George uses courage to conquer the dragon. Additionally, volunteers graciously contributed their time to organize various games of skill and luck to inspire the students.





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THE VIRTUES PROJECT

In an effort to promote character development, virtue assemblies were held each month. These assemblies served as a platform to spotlight a specific virtue and feature a class. Moreover, we recognized individual students who exemplified a virtue throughout the school day, acknowledging their outstanding behavior and contributions.





SCHOOL TRIPS



Thanks to the dedication of teachers, students, and parents, our upper grade students had the opportunity to embark on fantastic school trips. They explored Catalina Island through the CELP program (Grade 8), participated in the Ropes Course in Flagstaff (Grade 7), and engaged in the annual Pentathlon (Grade 5). These trips provide valuable educational experiences and also foster camaraderie and personal growth among our students.



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MAY FAIRE MILESTONE

A significant milestone, our school hosted its 20th May Faire at Windmill Park. This year, the fair took on a picnic format, offering a range of enjoyable activities for everyone. All activities were free, and parents and teachers united to make sure students had fun tie-dying, making wands, painting rocks, and creating enormous bubbles among other things.





FACULTY DEDICATION

A noteworthy accomplishment this year was the dedication of our teachers to their professional growth. Every teacher in our school possesses either a Waldorf certificate or is currently enrolled in the ACWE Teacher Training program for the Arizona Council for Waldorf Education. This investment in Waldorf training ensures that our educators are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to provide a high-quality education to our students.

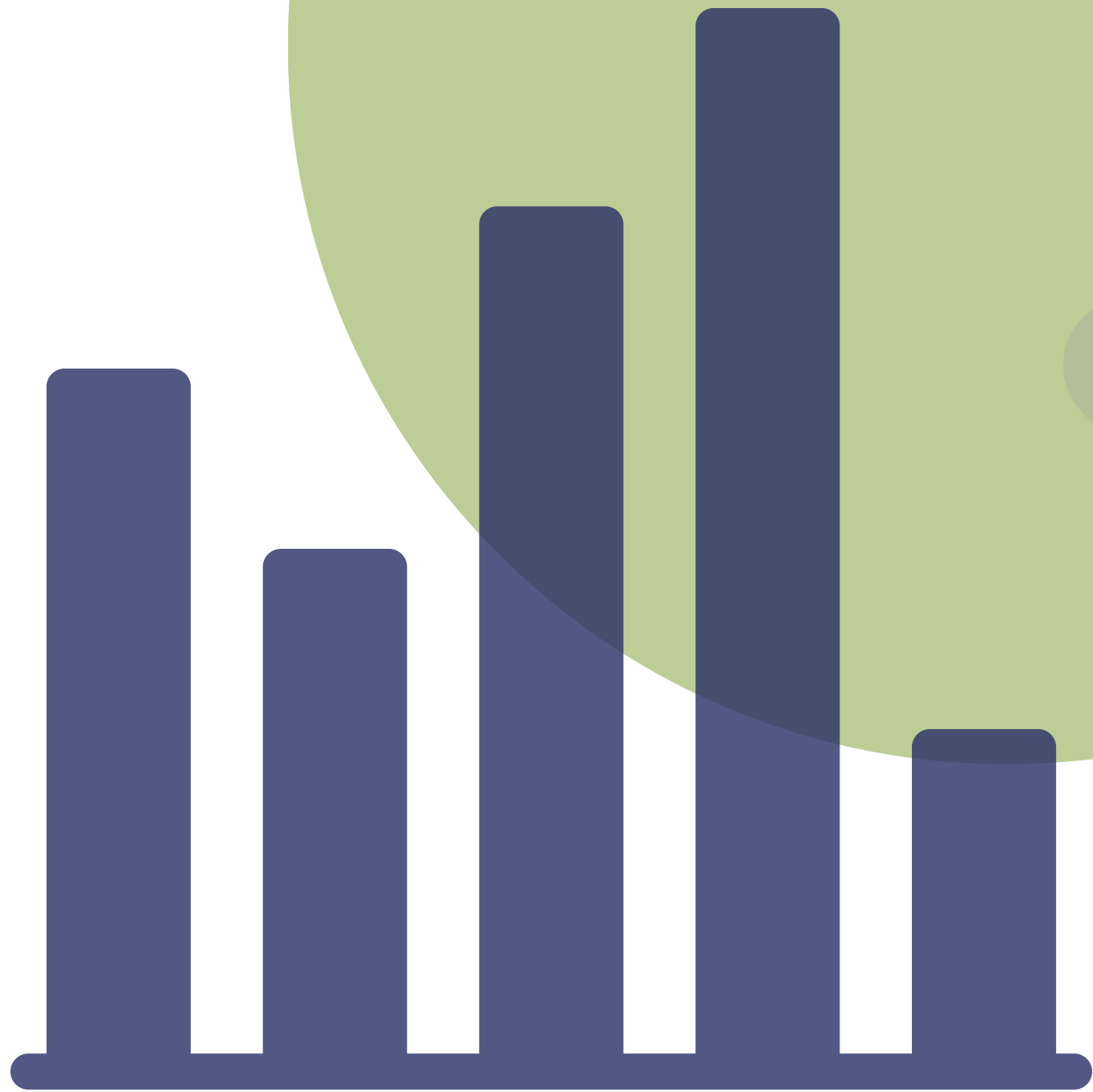




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PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD



FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



Public charter schools are required to publicly share their financial results each year. (See ADE's website.) The school's financial year is from July 1 through June 30 of each year, so FY2023 just finished and we are starting FY2024.

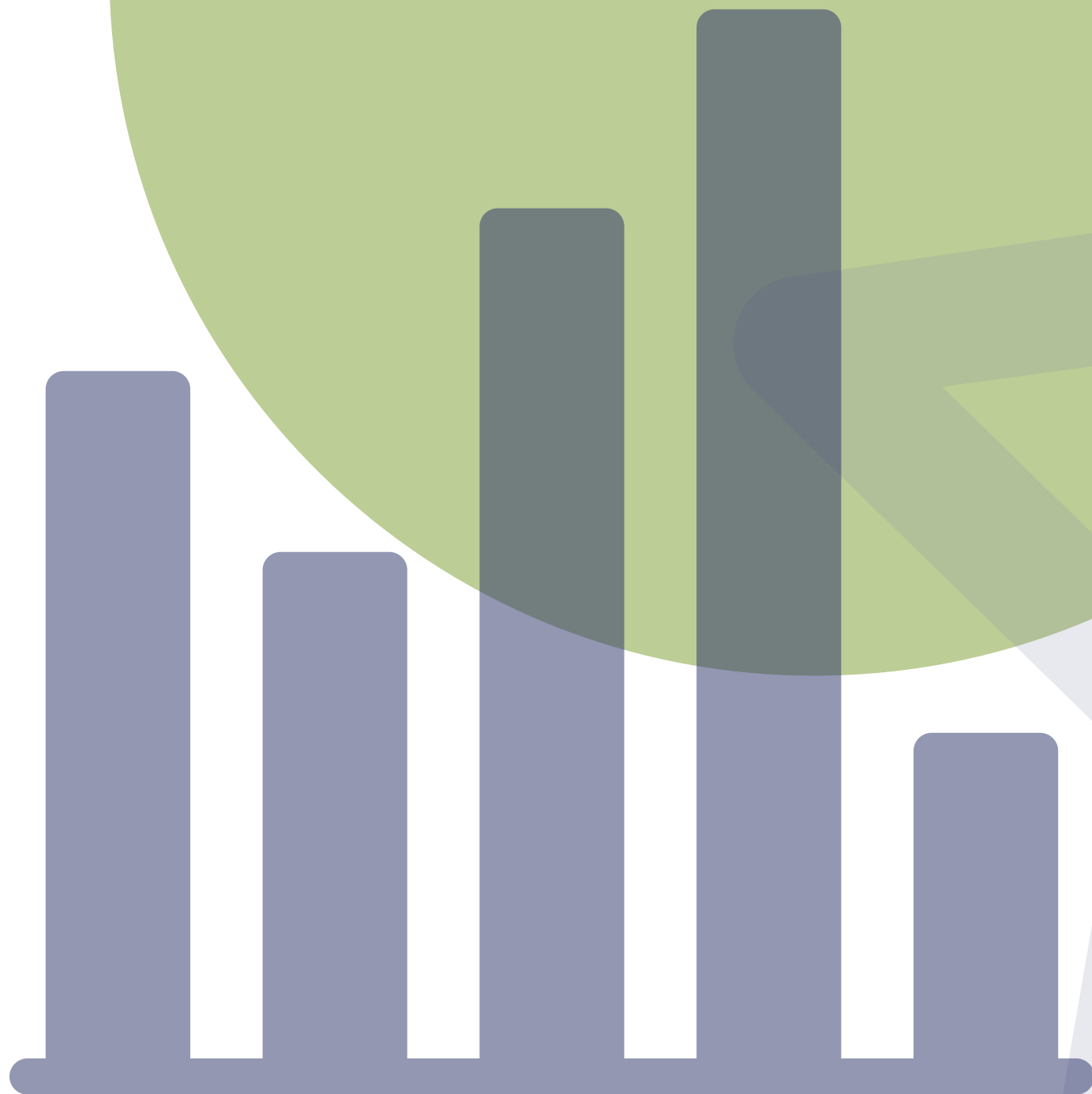
For FY2023, the school had \$1.65M of revenue and \$1.73M in expenses (unaudited, before depreciation), of which approximately 90% percentage historically goes directly to supporting students and teaching staff. The cash balance of the school at the end of FY2023 was \$536,000, including restricted debt reserves.

BALANCING THE BUDGET



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The school is also required by ADE to have a budget for each year, also available on ADE's website. For the upcoming school year, FY2024, the school projects \$1.70M in income and \$1.65M in expenses (before depreciation), and enrollment of approximately 170 students. The net result is close to a break-even position.



ENROLLMENT AND ATTENDANCE



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School enrollment is the key driver of our income. Providing more than 90% of the total school income each year, ADE's equalization payment is based on enrollment and attendance. The per student rates that are paid to the school are set each year as part of the state's budgeting process and are also available from ADE's website.

The sustainability of the school's enrollment is key to its overall success, as well as embarking on Campus Development projects, such as the planned Phase III construction project in SY2024.

PRIMARY KEYS TO SUCCESS

A balanced budget and consistent oversight of income and expense are keys to the ongoing vitality of our school. The Finance Committee meets monthly and consists of Board, Administration and Community members committed to the responsible financial stewardship of Desert Star.



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CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT

FACILITY ENHANCEMENTS



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Desert Star applied for and received a grant that will provide funding for A/V upgrades in the Multi Use Building. These upgrades will include a built-in projector screen and projector, as well as a sound system and microphones.

USDA CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT PHASE III



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The long-term vision for campus development currently includes improvements to existing facilities and brings the kindergarten onto the main campus. The Board is currently in Phase III of the long-term campus development plan.



USDA CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT PHASE III



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USDA Campus Development Phase III includes a permanent building for administration. The community building will connect to the administrative building with a controlled gate between the two buildings to enhance security.



USDA CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT PHASE III



The savings resulting from replacing the rented administrative offices with a permanent building will partially offset the costs of the project.



USDA CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT PHASE III



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It also includes updating an existing classroom with a modern building and a shared restroom space for multiple grades.



USDA CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT PHASE III



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USDA CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT PHASE III



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IT TAKES A COMMUNITY!

**WE CAN ALL WORK TOGETHER TO ENSURE THE
PRESENT AND FUTURE SUCCESS OF OUR SCHOOL!**



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IT TAKES A COMMUNITY!

The continued success of Desert Star depends on everyone.
Here are some of the ways *YOU* can help to support *OUR SCHOOL!*



IT TAKES A COMMUNITY!

GET INVOLVED

Your volunteer hours are incredibly important, and there are lots of ways you can help! Reach out to your student's classroom teacher or contact the office to find out what needs you can fulfill for Desert Star! Have an idea for a fundraiser or a special skill that could benefit the school?

Everyone has a way they can support Desert Star!



IT TAKES A COMMUNITY!

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Desert Star is a Tuition-Free Charter School, and for this reason we request certain financial support throughout the year, including supply fees and bus fees, as well as support for festivals and class trips. It is important to pay these fees, and there is support available to families that are unable to pay these fees in full (contact the office to learn more about these options).



IT TAKES A COMMUNITY!

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

There are opportunities throughout the year to support the school with tax-deductible donations, including Tax Credits, AZ Gives Day, the Amazon Smile program and more. Please visit desertstarschool.org to learn more about these and other opportunities!



**IT TAKES A
COMMUNITY!**

SPREAD THE WORD

Enrollment and Attendance of students is the #1 way to ensure that Desert Star receives the necessary income to provide a public, tuition-free Waldorf-inspired education for our children.



IT TAKES A COMMUNITY!

SPREAD THE WORD

**Helping your student arrive on-time to school consistently and sharing the news about Desert Star with other families in your personal network are two of the most beneficial things you can do to help support the school, and best of all...
it doesn't cost a thing to spread the word!**



**IT TAKES A
COMMUNITY!**

SPREAD THE WORD

**Know someone in our community that would love to help support?
You don't have to have a child in school to benefit from
tax deductible donations to Desert Star!**



**ON BEHALF OF YOUR DESERT STAR COMMUNITY SCHOOL
VOLUNTEER BOARD OF DIRECTORS,
WE WISH YOU A WONDERFUL YEAR!**

Jason Vargo - President

Kris Mattson - Vice President, Faculty Rep

Pat Jansen - Secretary

Yvan Rochon - Treasurer, Charter Holder

Kim Koistenen - Board Director

Emily Snelling - Board Director



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