



Established 2002  
Location: 822 Grand Avenue  
Delta, Colorado 81416

### Background

Delta Academy of Applied Learning (DAAL) is a school of choice contracted with Delta County School District. It was established in 2002 with one teacher and 15 students to serve 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> graders. Through the years, DAAL has grown to employ two full-time teachers serving 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students with a total average enrollment of 24.

### Mission Statement

Delta Academy of Applied Learning exists to create a safe and supportive environment that promotes self-discipline, motivation and a commitment to academic and moral excellence so that students are well-prepared for high school and may become productive members of society.

### Single Greatest Achievement

As a small middle school within the community of Delta, our greatest achievement is creating an environment where students are engaged, focused and enjoy learning.

### Goals & Objectives

- DAAL is specialized middle school where the curriculum is geared to individual needs, rather than dictated by grade level.
- Each student is helped to progress in mastering the basic academic skills and encouraged to strive for a higher standard of excellence in education.
- Each individual is encouraged to realize his/her whole potential and discover his or her own gifts and talents.
- Students are allowed to progress at their own pace.
- DAAL provides a nurturing, loving environment in which children foster respect for themselves, fellow students, parents, educators, visitors and the community in which we participate.
- DAAL helps students meet or exceed state and national standards in all content areas.
- DAAL is dedicated to encouraging self-motivation as an integral part of the learning process. Students will learn to set their own goals and are guided and encouraged to meet those goals.

## Pupil Performance

- Each student is expected to fully participate each day to their full potential.
- Students are expected to complete their assignments on time, to contribute and interact in the classroom, and be willing to learn. Students who do not have their assignments turned in will not participate in field trips. Habitual neglect of school work will require a conference with parents and an immediate plan for improvement of student performance.
- Each student is part of the school community and must be encouraged to participate as a whole and serve others. Therefore, students who have an understanding of a subject will be encouraged to help others gain a better understanding.
- Through daily observations, the teachers determine the degree of student comprehension and skill, self-motivation, ability to complete projects and the overall contribution to the class. These observations are used to motivate and encourage proper student behavior.
- Student performance will be assessed at the end of each semester with report cards issued. Teachers evaluate and grade students' efforts, growth, progress, attendance, attitude, and overall accomplishments. Teachers, students and parents meet to determine if corrective action is needed.
- DAAL views testing as a way to help students, teachers and parents understand a student's progress. In accordance with Colorado State Law, DAAL students will participate in the state testing program. DAAL students will also participate in other assessment opportunities, if available, and approved by the DAAL Board.

## Attendance, Conduct & Discipline

- Attendance: Attendance is the most important part of success in any given class. DAAL places a high value on student attendance in all classes. Absences have the potential of interfering with a student's academic progress and possibly lowering the student's grades.
  1. DAAL will follow the calendar set by the Delta County School District (with a few exceptions).
  2. Although attendance is important and necessary for success, students who are ill are unable to participate fully. Students who are sick with any contagious illness need to stay at home. Students who become ill while at school will be asked to call their parents and go home, thus preventing the spread of the illness.
  3. If a student is going to be absent, please call and notify the school.
- Dress Code: Appropriate dress and grooming are examples of good citizenship and are expected of all students. DAAL accepts and adheres to all Dress Code policies as stated in the Delta County School District Select Policies Manual. The Dress Code prohibits wearing the following: see-through material, items which disrupt class, gang-related clothing, clothing with inappropriate language or displays, items that expose underwear or an excessive amount of skin, spaghetti straps, and shorts or skirts shorter than fingertip length. Sunglasses and caps are not to be worn inside.
- Conduct: Violence, in any form, is not tolerated. Students are expected to take responsibility for their own actions and for their life choices. DAAL expects students to act responsibly and to always be respectful to those around them, including the school property, educational materials, and equipment.
  1. DAAL accepts and adheres to all Conduct Policies as stated in the Delta County School District Select Policies Manual.
  2. DAAL has no tolerance for any bullying acts, disrespectful behavior, harmful behavior, or foul language.
  3. In accordance with school district policies, smoking, drinking of alcohol, or being under the influence of any illegal substance is strictly forbidden on school premises or on any school activity. Any student arriving at school suspected of engaging in

the aforementioned activities prior to class will be suspended from school immediately.

- Student Discipline: Conduct negatively affecting the student's own positive development or that of others will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Constructive conflict resolution techniques are taught and implemented when necessary. Students will take responsibility for their choices and recognize the natural and logical consequences of their actions.
  1. In case of inappropriate behavior, a warning may be given, and/or a parent conference scheduled.
  2. Continued inappropriate behavior or willful disobedience will result in suspension from school. This is known as the "Three Strikes" rule.
  3. Any student arriving at school with drugs, alcohol or weapons will be immediately suspended and referred for expulsion.
- Student Welfare: In compliance with Colorado State Law and the directives of the Colorado Department of Education, all DAAL employees have a legal and moral obligation to report suspected child abuse or neglect. Such a report should not be construed as an accusation, but is to be viewed as an attempt to support the student. Also, if any parent feels that the behavior of any teacher, staff member or another parent goes beyond the bounds of appropriateness, they should immediately contact the Director and express their concerns.

## Curriculum

Curriculum is organized around the Core Knowledge Sequence. Core Knowledge is a very broad-based curriculum developed with the philosophy that the more a person knows, the more they can learn.

- DAAL creates a schedule of monthly unit studies that incorporate the Core Knowledge Sequence, including the required Colorado Model Content Standards.
- An individualized student learning plan is developed to meet each student's long and short-term goals and the steps needed to achieve them.
- Student learning plans will include goals following appropriate grade level Colorado Model Content Standards and are based upon each student's ability, need, and talent, stressing the quality of the process of learning with hands-on exploration and individual choice.
- Specific curriculum programs used:
  1. Science: Baltimore Core Knowledge Curriculum, with supplementary materials from a variety of sources. Many hands-on projects and experiments.
  2. History/Social Studies: Baltimore Core Knowledge Curriculum, with History Alive! and Geography Alive! textbooks, along with additional supplementary materials from a variety of sources.
  3. Math: Saxon 7/6 and 8/7 Math and Prentice Hall Pre-Algebra and Algebra 1 books
  4. Language Arts: Core Knowledge Curriculum, Shurley English and Grammar, Step Up to Writing, Literature, and Accelerated Reader.
  5. Technology: keyboarding, desk-top publishing, presentation software and Internet literacy
  6. Art: cross-curricular activities incorporating science and social studies
  7. Physical Education class at least twice weekly.
  8. Character Education lessons from What Do You Stand For?
  9. Service Learning: Students clean our facility and grounds on a daily basis, in addition to volunteering for various community service projects, including work with BELA.
  10. Other Electives: Students have the option of participating in some elective classes at Delta Middle School for an additional fee assessed by the School District and paid by the parent.

## Admissions Policy

Students must neatly complete and return an application to DAAL by May 1st. Enrollment procedures for the following school year begin at that time. Potential middle school students ages 11-14 years will be contacted for an interview with teaching staff. Applicants are asked to do the following before consideration for enrollment:

### **I. DAAL Application Form**

The application deadline for the following school year is May 1<sup>st</sup>. The application must be completed by the prospective 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, or 8<sup>th</sup> grade student and include a fully refundable fee of \$75.00. (This amount will be refunded should the prospective student fail to be admitted.) The remainder of DAAL fees of \$75.00 will be due on the first day of school. There are **often** small fees required for various field trips throughout the year, which the parents will have to pay. Parents will provide individual school supplies and various paper products for school use as deemed necessary.

### **II. Interview with DAAL Staff**

Interviews will take place prior to the first year of enrollment. A parent is required to attend the interview. Students will be asked about their commitment to attend DAAL. Students and parents should realize and agree to the strong emphasis on academic achievement at DAAL and that the instruction is geared to 6<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> grade academic levels. The students and parents are encouraged to personally visit the school and observe the environment and how the programs are facilitated.

### **III. Letters of Recommendation**

One letter from a teacher or resource person and another from a non-family member will be required. There may be a telephone follow-up with a DAAL staff member and the person making the recommendation.

### **IV. Report Card**

Applicants must provide a copy of the student's most recent report card at the time of the interview.

### **V. State Test Results**

Applicants must provide a copy of the student's most recent state test scores at the time of the interview.

### **VI. Volunteering**

A parental commitment to volunteer is a requirement.

### **VII. Scoring Rubric**

The maximum score an applicant can receive on the scoring rubric is 25. Those with a score of 17 or higher will be placed in a random drawing for available enrollment slots.

### **VIII. Drawing**

A drawing will occur during May. Applicants will be notified of their enrollment status by May 20<sup>th</sup>. If more applicants are available than vacancies, those applicants not drawn in the first round will be drawn as alternates. These alternates will be used to fill spaces that may become available during the summer months. Students with exceptional circumstances may be granted a place in the drawing pending a review by the DAAL staff and/or Board of Directors. Total student enrollment at Delta Academy of Applied Learning, however, will be capped at 26 students.

### **IX. Subsequent School Years**

Students that complete this application process and remain enrolled at DAAL will not have to re-apply each year thereafter. Students that re-enroll must pay \$75.00 and return the "Intent to Enroll" paperwork by April 1<sup>st</sup>. The \$75.00 remainder is due by the first day of school. Failure to pay fee money will result in the enrollment of another student.

### **X. Siblings**

Siblings of enrolled students may automatically be enrolled at DAAL provided that there is a vacancy, paperwork is properly filled out by April 1<sup>st</sup> and fees are paid on time.

### **XI. Children of DAAL Staff Members**

Children of DAAL staff members must complete the application process just as any other new student would.

DAAL does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, sex, or ethnic background.

## Governance & Operations

DAAL operates on a decision-making process in which all participants share their views and evaluate alternatives until they reach a decision that everyone accepts. Consensus encourages each participant to voice their opinion and to listen to other opinions openly and objectively. The final goal is to create agreements that are for the greatest benefit to the students. The governing board of DAAL will be comprised of parents and community members, including faculty and staff in a non-voting status. Terms for Board Members will extend for two years, and a member may be re-elected for additional terms. A term will commence upon appointment by the parent members at the parent meeting at the beginning of the school year. Board Members are not paid for their membership on the Board. The DAAL Board will meet monthly to guide the overall operation of the school, review the budget, and assess staff performance. All Board meetings are subject to the open meeting laws. The Board will make decisions regarding the following:

- Staff employment: hiring, evaluation, discipline, termination, salary issues and student management.
- Budgeting and expenditures
- Approval of all public presentations
- Policy concerns affecting the unique mission and philosophy of DAAL.
- Decisions of the DAAL Board are final.

## Communications

The small size of the school ensures that the concerns of each individual student, parent, teacher or community members are heard and dealt with respectfully and always with the purpose of serving the optimum development of each student.

Parents and students are encouraged to speak often with the teachers and Director.

- Any concern or conflict should first be addressed with the teacher involved and, if no resolution is made, taken to the Director. If no resolution of the matter is made, the issue will then be taken to the Board of Directors. Decisions made by the Board will be final.
- Parental involvement in all parent meetings is recommended in order to keep informed of school activities.
- Weekly DAAL newsletters will be sent home to inform parents of activities in and out of the classroom.
- Teachers meet regularly to coordinate plans, share ideas, discuss problems and support each other.

## Accountability

DAAL will follow all accreditation requirements of the Delta County School District and the State of Colorado Department of Education. Periodic review of goals to measure if progress is being made and reaching for success:

- Student Assessment: DAAL will use a variety of assessments including, but not limited to:
  1. State test scores
  2. Frequent testing of material
  3. Student demonstration of skills aligned with the Colorado Content Standards
  4. Samples of student work exhibiting progress in abilities
- School Assessment:
  1. DAAL prides itself in obtaining feedback from the students and parents regarding overall school performance. Annual parent questionnaires allow parents to express what they like about the school, concerns and offer suggestions for improvement. All suggestions are taken into consideration by the Board for future development.
  2. Overall student state test scores and other forms of assessment are a measurable indicator of success in classroom instruction. DAAL strives to have 80% of it's students perform at Proficient or Advanced such tests.
  3. Annual "Unified Improvement Plan" reports will be compiled by the Director and submitted to the School District Office by April 15<sup>th</sup> of each school year. The Unified Improvement Plan will include measurable goals for the next year.

## Employment Policies & Staff Assessment

DAAL is proud of the diversity of experience of our professional staff and depth of commitment to each student's education and growth. The DAAL Board is responsible for hiring a Director who, together with the Board, hires and supervises all teachers and other school personnel. The Board decides on:

- Yearly employee salaries, benefits and contracts
- The Director is responsible for ongoing supervision of the teachers throughout the year, discussing progress with the Board at regular intervals.
- The Director will hold an annual formal evaluation of performance for each staff member.
- Teachers will be considered for employment based upon past experience, certification, degree in area in which they are hired to teach, and willingness to embrace the philosophies of DAAL.
- All teaching staff members hold licensure with the State of Colorado as Professional Certified Teachers and are qualified to teach in their chosen subject areas.
- Part-time staff is/are well qualified in their employment areas.
- Background checks are satisfactorily completed on all staff members prior to employment.