

Lori A. Sheffield

Castle Dome Middle School

2016 Rodel Exemplary Principal

Sharing stories of success

“ The flywheel effect! Our stakeholders ARE the best communicators regarding success stories. CDMS has earned a positive reputation through word of mouth, exceptional student events, activities, public recognition on TV and in the paper, and Facebook posts regarding accomplishments. While we do have parent newsletters, most communication comes from stakeholders themselves sharing successes and points of pride. A monthly Site Council meeting with representative stakeholders ensures all celebrations are shared and actions align with goals.

Being inspired to lead

“ I believe an education system must teach compassion and citizenship. The potential positive impact on the outcome of my students' lives is my inspiration. I want to create and sustain a community in which EVERY child finds success academically, socially and emotionally.

Learning from a mentor

“ I was advised to find a student every day and just have a happy, positive conversation—I do and it helps remind me of my "why." Each child matters and they each deserve a great school filled with great people.

A tip for new principals

“ Never underestimate the impact of your word and actions. People notice. It impacts trust, relationships, and reputation. Be impeccable with your word.



Lori A. Sheffield
Castle Dome Middle School
Yuma Elementary District

775 students in grades 6-8

Experience: 17 years in education including three years as a classroom teacher/counselor, eight years as a counselor, one year as a regional summer school principal, two years as an assistant principal, and five years as a principal; currently serving on District Personalized Learning Committee; recent Teacher and Administrator Evaluation Committee member; Teacher Recruitment Team Member; Hiring Committee Member for Middle School Administrators; Current Member of Oversight Committee for Yuma Sea Eagles Naval Sea Cadet Corps

Degrees: B.S. in Psychology/Creative Art Therapy Dual Major, Concentration in Music from Russell Sage College; M.S. in Rehabilitation Counseling/School Counseling Dual Major from Syracuse University; M.A. in Educational Leadership from St. Lawrence University

Rodel, in partnership with Social Venture Partners Arizona, developed the Rodel Exemplary Principal Initiative to recognize outstanding school principals and populate a pipeline of highly skilled school leaders for Arizona's most challenging schools.

The Rodel Exemplary Principals are selected for their demonstrated ability to lead high-need schools to success by inspiring their staffs to develop a campus that is high achieving, safe, orderly and welcoming.

Each cohort of Exemplary Principals provides professional development, field experience and mentorship to a class of Rodel Aspiring Principals. After learning from the best, Rodel Aspiring Principals are better prepared to lead their own high-need schools.