



**Handbook for
Students and Families**

2026-2027

Discovery School
855 Millsboro Road
Mansfield, OH 44903-1997
419-756-8880
www.discovery-school.net



Dear Discovery School Families,

Welcome, welcome, welcome to the 2026 - 2027 School year. Discovery School is a very special place. Whether your family is new this year or returning to us, we are all very, very glad that you are here.

Discovery School holds many special attributes. We are an International Baccalaureate (IB) school. We are accredited by Cognia. We are nestled on 40 acres of old growth forest. Engaging in progressive, constructivist approaches to learning, Discovery School makes use of experiential, hands-on, child centered learning in an environment where outdoor education is coupled with strong academics and complemented by specials such as Spanish, Music, Art, Woods, and physical education. This is all overlain by the IB program, guiding children to be knowledgeable, risk-takers, balanced, reflective, caring, open-minded, and knowledgeable thinkers and communicators with a globally-minded perspective.

We partner with families, and this handbook is a useful resource for parents and students who are seeking information or clarification about Discovery School policies. It is based on the Board of Governor's Book of Standards and is our official record of school policies.

Please take the time to review the school agreements with your student(s), and if you have any questions or suggestions about what you find in this guide, please do not hesitate to contact me. Once you have reviewed the information, please sign and return the Parent/Student Acknowledgement of the Student/Parent Handbook.

We very much look forward to the coming school year and all that it will bring for our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Clark'.

Kevin Clark
Head of School

The governing board of Discovery School located at 855 Millsboro Rd in Mansfield, Ohio, 44903 has adopted the following racial nondiscriminatory policies.

Discovery School recruits and admits students of any race, color or ethnic origin to all its rights, privileges, programs and activities. In addition, the school will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, employment, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school administered programs.

The Discovery School will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or ethnic origin in the hiring of its certified or non-certified personnel.

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

2026 - 2027

BOARD OFFICERS:

Jay Goyal - Chairperson
Monica Phillips - Vice Chair
Cameron Haring - Treasurer
Lisa Cook - Secretary

BOARD MEMBERS:

Flip Wisdom
Dr. Michael Subit
Bailey Dewitt
Jared Mawhorr
Margaret Black

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Mission Statement

Discovery School: To provide each child the educational opportunity to discover, with perseverance and imagination, the joy of learning and the interconnectedness of our world.

CORE VALUES: Integrity, Inclusion, Innovation, Adventure, Community

Incorporated in 1975 and chartered by the Ohio State Department of Education, Discovery School is an independent, non-profit, educational school enrolling children in preschool through sixth grade.

Discovery School's Vision

- Pursue continuous academic excellence through student centered, constructivist learning experiences using the inquiry cycle as the vehicle for these lessons.
- Provide all students with the skills to become healthy, well-rounded global citizens.
- Promote a safe, caring, and positive learning environment that includes administration, staff, students, and community members.
- Create an atmosphere that celebrates student successes and promotes the development of positive self-worth.
- Empower all students to reach their full potential.
- Establish an appreciation for the fine arts.
- Create a love of nature and willingness to responsibly care for our world.
- Use technology to enhance learning while recognizing children between the ages of three and twelve need many different types of experiences that technology may not always provide.

“Every child deserves a champion – an adult who will never give up on them, who understands the power of connection and insists that they become the best that they can possibly be.”

- Rita Pierson

Discovery School enrolls students who demonstrate the ability to benefit from a flexible but challenging program. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, disability, religion, gender, or national or ethnic origin. Discovery School is proud of its culturally diverse student body. In addition, financial assistance assures a broad socio-economic school community.

Philosophy of Curriculum

Our curriculum is based on the philosophy and goals of Discovery School. Teachers are empowered to implement the day-to-day operation of the curriculum. They choose specific instructional activities, materials, and strategies that they believe assist children in achieving the goals of the curriculum. Teachers spend a great deal of time in collaborative planning sessions to develop a curriculum that is student-centered, constructivist in nature, and accounts for the learning needs of each individual child. Classroom specific information will be given to parents at Curriculum Night each school year.

International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program

We use the International Baccalaureate Scope and Sequence for our core subjects: Language (including home language, reading, writing, and second language studies), Math, Social Studies, and Science as well as state standards. A link to these documents can be found on our website in the Forms section. A link to our Language Policy can also be found in Appendix B of this handbook.

Communication Policy

Parents and teachers are partners in promoting quality education. Through supportive relationships between the home and school, the student gains a broader opportunity to develop his or her potential as a total person. An open dialogue should be maintained among the Head of School, teachers, parents and students. This communication may include emails, phone calls, or scheduling a meeting.

The parent should first bring any questions or concerns regarding a child or classroom activity to the attention of the teacher involved. The teacher should make every reasonable effort to answer the question and/or resolve the problem or complaint in an expeditious and confidential manner. Involvement of children in the parent-teacher discussion will be based on the professional judgment of the teacher.

Should a problem or complaint remain unresolved between parent and teacher, the matter will be referred to the Head of School. The Head of School will attempt to resolve the situation with the teacher, parents and/or the student.

In the event that a problem cannot be resolved by the Head of School, the teacher and parents involved may submit separate written statements to the Chair of the Board of Governors, who will bring the matter before the board at its next regularly scheduled meeting. The board shall make such decisions and take such action thereafter as is appropriate under the circumstances.

Ombudsman

The Ohio Department of Education requires that parents of preschool students be informed that they may call an ombudsman to intervene when the staff or principal has not satisfactorily resolved problems. The number for the ombudsman is 614-466-0224 (That number connects you with Early Childhood, a division of the Ohio Department of Education).

Confidentiality

Maintaining confidentiality is critical in maintaining the comfort and safety and privacy of all of our students.

As a volunteer at Discovery School, parent volunteers must:

- Sign in and out of the office
- Respect the privacy of all children by keeping observations, experiences and information confidential.
- Respond impartially with students regardless of background, ability, physical or emotional maturity.
- Refrain from discussing a student's progress or behavior with others.
- Refrain from photographing, touching, or reprimanding children.
- Model positive behaviors by using respectful, encouraging and appropriate language when speaking with adults and students; remain calm and polite at all times.
- Maintain confidentiality of Discovery School staff members.
- Refrain from any and all discriminatory actions, words or gestures against students and staff.
- Speak constructively of all school staff; however, report difficulties involving the welfare of students or the school to the administration.
- Retain a sense of perspective regarding comments heard and actions observed. Understand that not all information can and will be shared with volunteers, due to legal considerations including state and federal law

Family Policy

In accordance with Ohio regulations, a certified copy of a student's custodial parent agreement, when applicable, must be on file at the school. Discovery School encourages the appropriate involvement of both the custodial and noncustodial parent(s) in the education of their child.

The school will observe the particular custodial arrangements established for the child or divorced parents, insofar as such arrangements are made known to school officials. This information should be in the form of a certified copy of the pertinent judgment order.

A non-custodial parent may see his or her child's records unless specifically forbidden by the court to do so. A non-custodial parent may also confer with the child's teacher with the same qualifications. Non-custodial parents may **not** visit children at school, send mail to them in care of the school or telephone them at school. A stepparent who has not adopted a child must have permission from a custodial parent to examine records.

Transportation Policy

All students on field trips shall be transported by a school bus, charter bus, or public transportation, unless otherwise noted in the field trip information given by the teacher. Parents are able to drive students to and from field trips if the office has a copy of their insurance (must meet our criteria in regards to coverage), a copy of their driver's license, and a copy of the driving record on file. If a parent does not want his child to attend a field trip, she/he must contact the teacher and the Head of School stating that his/her child will not be in attendance on this date and will not be going on the school field trip.

24 hour rule: If a parent wants to transport his child home *from* the field trip to another location at the completion of the designated trip time, or perhaps to stay longer at the trip location, notice must be given to the Head of School **24 hours** prior to the trip. Students will not be dismissed from the trip location and permitted to be transported home with their parents if written notification was not received.

Cell Phones and Portable Electronic Devices Policy

All portable electronic equipment is only permitted to be used for academic purposes. Students must have a signed Internet Parental permission form on file to be able to utilize these devices during the school day. Any personal lost or stolen electronic devices are the responsibility of the individual student.

Technology Policy

Discovery School recognizes the opportunities available to us through the use of computers and other technology, and we encourage the appropriate use of it. Teachers and other staff members make every effort to monitor the use of technology. Students have access to the technological resources for school use only and, as with all school property, are expected to treat them with care and respect. Students must have parental permission (See Acceptable Use Policy) on file to access the Internet and to bring their own devices to school. Students will be held responsible for the appropriate use of any devices (school issued or personal).

Acceptable Use Policy

All students at Discovery School who use computers must have an Internet Parental Permission Form signed by a parent or guardian, as well as the student, on file in the main office. This form releases Discovery School and its employees and representatives from any liability arising from, or related to, the student's use of the Internet and other networked information resources.

Records Policy

All permanent student records are kept in the main office. Only the office manager, Head of School, and those mandated by state law have access to these records. Additionally, specific classroom teachers may keep their own student records. Parents may view the records of only their own child and may not remove anything from the records, but may request copies of documents. All contents of records remain the property of Discovery School. Discovery School has the right to deny transferring student records to other schools if there are outstanding invoices for the current school year.

Pet Policy

Pets may not be brought to Discovery School without the prior permission of the classroom teacher and Head of School. Such permission will be given only in special situations (such as show-and-tell) and will be for a limited time period.

Vehicle Idling Policy

Exhaust from idling school buses and cars can accumulate in and around the vehicles, posing a health risk to both children and drivers. Drivers who are waiting prior to scheduled school opening and dismissal should place their vehicles in "P" (park) position and turn them off during drop off and pickup, for safety and health reasons.

Academic Agreements

Responsibility of the Learner

Each student is expected to be an active participant in their learning. Students are expected to participate fully to the extent to which they are able. This may include arriving to class prepared, well-rested and to ask when they do not understand something or need assistance.

Progress Reports

Three major grading periods or trimesters are established for each school year. As well as a written report, the first two grading periods have a student-led parent conference. The third trimester includes a progress report that will be mailed home. The progress report will include feedback on knowledge and understanding and effort and participation in foundation subjects as well as some specialist classes.

Arranging a Conference

Parents who have any concerns about their child during the school year are encouraged to contact the child's teacher to schedule an additional conference. **Please do not hesitate to call or email the teacher or Head of School with questions or concerns.**

Assessment

Assessment, both formative and summative, is a continuing process at Discovery School, measured by a variety of criteria, including student portfolios, anecdotal records, oral and written tests, student participation and teacher observations. Together, these measures reflect an honest assessment of the child's progress and should encourage development in

necessary areas. Discovery School's Assessment Policy is available on our website in the [Parent Resource section](#) and under Appendix A of this handbook.

Grading systems are used to report the child's mastery of skills and standards, as well as areas where the student needs to improve. The faculty and administration of Discovery School work hard to develop a unique system of assessment that benefits each child based on their developmental level. This system is revised as deemed necessary by the staff. The teacher's grading system will be communicated to families during our Open House at the beginning of each school year.

Promotion and Retention

The promotion or retention of a student at any grade level will reflect the best interest of that child. If a child fails to meet minimum levels of knowledge and skills at grade level, or minimum goals prescribed on service plans, that child may be considered for retention at their current grade level. However, academics will not be the sole factor in determining whether a student is promoted or retained.

The student's age, maturity, emotional development and social interaction will also be considered on an individual basis. Retention will occur only if it offers the student the possibility of functioning successfully at grade level. The Head of School may place the student in the next grade if they feel that placement will be of greater benefit to the student than retention.

Standardized Testing

Students are administered the state and national tests on an annual basis, which are reviewed to assist in monitoring student progress and curriculum review. The school uses the State Achievement Tests and MAP as its main form of standardized testing.

Discovery School follows the testing schedule assigned by the State Department of Education. The dates will be shared in early March. Please ensure your child's attendance on these days.

Students with Special Needs

Students who have IEPs, 504 plans, and other individualized plans will be given the attention and direction necessary to meet the goals and objectives established on these plans. For specific special needs policy information, please refer to Appendix C of this handbook.

Homework

Successful study habits foster the fullest development of each student's academic potential. Although the amount and frequency of homework varies according to grade level and subject, parents and students can expect occasional homework, particularly if classwork is left unfinished, in addition to daily reading.

Students are expected to complete all study and homework assignments. **If parents feel homework assignments are either too challenging or not challenging enough, they should discuss this matter with the child's teacher.**

School Calendar

A school calendar will be distributed via email to all enrolled families. Additionally, families may request a paper copy to be given to them. Students new to Discovery School will receive a calendar with their admissions materials. The schedule of events listed on the calendar applies to all students in preschool through sixth grade. A downloadable annual calendar can be found on our website: www.discovery-school.net

Arrival and Dismissal

During arrival and dismissal time, the school parking lot becomes congested. Please respect the following guidelines to ensure every child's safety:

- School begins at **8:20 AM** for the elementary school students. Please do not drop your child off any earlier than 7:30 AM for students in Kinder to 6th Grade or 8:00 AM for students in preschool to pre-kindergarten.
- Preschool and Pre-K children may be escorted to their classroom by a parent or guardian. **To do this, park in the parking lot. Do not park in the fire lane** at any time.

2-Day Preschool - three/four year olds
Meets Tues. & Thurs. 8:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

3-Day Preschool a.m. - three/four year olds
Meets M, W, F 8:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

5-Day Preschool - three/four year olds
Meets daily 8:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

5-Day Pre-K a.m.- four/five year olds
Morning class Daily 8:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

5-Day Pre-K full day - four/five year olds
All day Daily 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

- School ends at 3:45 p.m. for kindergarten through sixth grade and at 3:30 for full day Pre-K and Preschool Extended Care. Please pick up your child promptly at dismissal. Kindergarten - 3rd Grade students will be picked up from the pick-up line in the front parking lot. 4th-6th grade students will be dismissed from the parking lot behind the school. Students with siblings should follow the youngest sibling's dismissal assignment location unless otherwise noted.
- Please instruct your child to enter and exit your car quickly. At no time should a child be left in the parking lot unattended. **PLEASE ONLY LOAD AND UNLOAD FROM THE DRIVER'S SIDE OF YOUR VEHICLE.**
- The pick up line will utilize three lanes in our new driveway. These lanes will "zipper" to form one pick up line just before the Early Learning Center. In general, this is an A, B or A, B, C pattern, but all drivers should also be aware, alert, and follow all instructions from any school staff member helping with this process.
- The main sidewalk is the fire lane and drop-off and pickup zone. At no time should cars be parked in this zone. Please pull forward to allow the maximum amount of cars to utilize this space.
- Children will be released only to persons who have been authorized by the parents.

If transportation plans for a student deviate from the above drop-off and pick-up protocol (including plans for students to ride the bus or walk home from school), parents must notify the school at the start of the school year or as soon thereafter as the new transportation plan takes effect.

The school will adhere to the transportation plan for each child each day unless notified by the parents/guardians of an exception on any particular day. **Notification of a change in transportation should be made to the front office either by phone or email no later than 2:00 p.m. the day the change is to take place. You may leave a message for this change on the school phone.**

If your child has an after-school function, please arrange to have brothers and sisters not involved in that function picked up by 3:45 p.m. After 3:45 p.m., students who are not involved in after-school functions will be placed in our After School program and charged accordingly.

Aftercare/After School Program

Any child (pre-K-6) remaining after 3:30 will be checked into our after school program. Our after school program is offered from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. every day at a fee of \$6.00 per half hour. Hours are totaled monthly and are handled separately from tuition. Families can pre-pay to use this service on an unlimited basis by contacting the business office at the beginning of the school year to schedule. Families can also use as needed and the usage will be billed to the family account in Tuition Management. The Aftercare program offers a quiet time for homework and/or reading, recreational time, snack time (as provided by the family) and opportunities for games and activities.

A Discovery School staff member supervises our Aftercare program. Students are to remain with their supervisor at all times. School-wide policies and expectations will also be enforced during the Aftercare program. We reserve the right to revoke a student's Aftercare program privileges if that child does not respect the rules or if parents are delinquent in their payments. **Students must bring their own snack to Aftercare.**

Punctuality and Attendance

Legally excused absences are defined by the Ohio Revised Code as absences for personal illness, illness, or death in the family, medical or dental appointments, quarantine or religious holidays. The school relies on parents to ensure that unnecessary absences are avoided and that requests for special excuses are kept at a minimum.

Absences up to 3 hours will be marked as ½ day absent.

Absences of 3 hours or greater will be marked a full day absent.

Recently, the Ohio Legislature passed House Bill 410 which redefines truancy for school age children in the state of Ohio.

Important changes include:

- Bases the measure for "habitual truancy" on the number of hours, instead of the number of days, absent. Requires the school to notify a student's parent, guardian, or custodian in the event the student is absent **with or without legitimate excuse for 38 or more hours in one school month or 65 hours in a school year.**
- Requires a school district or school to (1) make at least three meaningful, good faith attempts to secure participation of the student's parent within a specified time period and (2) investigate whether failure to respond to those attempts triggers mandatory reporting to child protective services.
- Requires each school district and school to report to the Department of Education the occurrence of certain triggering events with respect to a student's absences, including whenever a child has received enough unexcused absences that the child is considered an habitual truant.

Consequences as defined by the legislature:

- Specifies that an act that contributes to an adjudication of a child as a delinquent child because of the violation of a court order with respect to truancy is a first degree misdemeanor.
- Clarifies that the parent, guardian, or custodian of an adjudicated truant child must provide a surety bond in the sum of not more than \$500 as required by the court.

We understand that children get sick and need to stay home to recover. It is not our intention to file any truancy charges for legitimate illnesses that your child may face during the upcoming school year. Please **provide a doctor's excuse** so that we have this as evidence that the absence was deemed necessary by a physician.

As well, we know we have families whose extended families live out of the country. We want you to be able to visit and connect with your families. Please provide us with **a minimum of 30 days notice if your child will embark on a family trip that may violate the state truancy legislation.** We want to work with you on these types of issues.

If your child has multiple absences and a number of tardies in addition to that, this could put your child at risk of qualifying under the "habitual truancy" category. The combination of these events can add up quickly.

We do understand that there are many factors that contribute to a child's absence. We want to work together to ensure we minimize these factors as best we can for the 2025-2026 school year. Please let us know what we can do to help you with any issues in this area. Thank you for your support and understanding.

Please note our school-wide testing dates and ensure that your child attends school during this time.

Excused Absences

In order to comply with the Missing Child Law, we require parents or guardians to call the school promptly to report a student's absence and the reason for it. **Please notify the school office before 9:00 a.m. at 419-756-8880 if your child will be absent or tardy for the day. You may leave a message on the school phone by pressing 1 when you call.** Please notify the office if you will be picking up your child's missed assignments.

Tardiness

K-6 students are expected to arrive at school and be in their classrooms by **8:20 a.m.** so that morning instruction, lunch count, and attendance can be completed by 8:30. PS and PreK students are expected to arrive at 8:30 a.m.

Students who arrive at school after 8:20 but by 8:45 a.m. must report to the main office. Students arriving after 8:45 a.m. must report to the main office and must be accompanied by a parent or guardian, before receiving permission to join their classes, and will be marked tardy. Teachers will not allow late students to join class without a permission slip from the office.

Excessive, unexcused tardiness shows a lack of consideration for others. **The family of a student who is tardy more than eight times in any one grading period may be asked to conference with the Head of School to develop a plan to prevent future instances of tardiness.**

Note: Students will not be marked tardy on inclement weather days.

Other Absences

Arrangements for absences other than illness or appointment must be made in advance with the Head of School. **The Head of School must approve vacation-related absences. If approved, parents must fill out a vacation form at least thirty days before leaving.** This form will be used to notify teachers of the student's excused absence. Parents should discuss make-up tests and assignments with classroom teachers prior to leaving. The teachers must have one week's notice in order to properly prepare assignments.

When a student returns from an absence, he or she is expected to submit all classwork within a reasonable amount of time and is responsible for all lessons and materials covered during the absence.

Appointments

A student may be excused from school for dental and medical appointments when these appointments cannot be scheduled during non-school hours. A student who is excused from school must notify his or her classroom teacher and report to the main office before leaving and upon returning.

When picking up and dropping off students for excused appointments **parents must receive a visitor's badge from the main office and sign their child(ren) in and out.** Upon returning to school, the student must provide the school with a doctor or dentist's excuse.

Field Trips, Assemblies and Guest Speakers

Field trips, assemblies and guest speakers are an integral part of a child's education and enrich the child's cultural, environmental, social and academic world. Participation in these trips and assemblies is a privilege, which students earn by exhibiting responsible and cooperative behavior throughout the year. Those who participate will share costs for these trips and assemblies equally.

The school has established the following guidelines for field trips:

- A parent or guardian for each child will fill out permission slips. Information about the destination, date, time and means of transportation, as well as any other pertinent information, will be supplied by the teacher as early as possible.
- If a parent or guardian prefers their child not attend a particular field trip, the parent or guardian needs to notify the teacher and Head of School, provide supervision, and make arrangements for the child to complete any missed assignments.
- Parents or guardians may attend some field trips. Other responsible adults are permitted to attend in place of the parent or guardian with the parent or guardian's written permission.
- Any parent that is invited to drive for a field trip is required to provide copies of the following to the front office:
 - Current auto insurance that details the coverage
 - Drivers license
- Younger siblings or other extended family members are not permitted on field trips. They are chosen carefully for the skill level and development abilities of the classes involved. The addition of other friends or siblings can detract from the experience for the school group as a whole.
- Parents or guardians accompanying students on a field trip must abide by the school rules.
- Participation in field trips is contingent upon a student's compliance with school-wide policies on and off school grounds. Infractions during field trips will result in contact with the parent to retrieve the student.

Dress and Appearance

Appropriate dress positively influences the attitude a student has toward both school and schoolwork. To that end, no clothing worn at Discovery may display profane or obscene language, gestures, or pictures, or advertisements for drugs, alcohol, or tobacco. No clothing or accessories should be worn that may present a health or safety hazard. Dress should be governed by good sense and should reflect pride in our school. **Given that our students are active participants in their learning, footwear should be safe and appropriate for the class at hand.** Students wearing inappropriate attire may be asked to call home to have a change of clothes brought to school.

Outdoor Learning

As often as possible, students will spend part of their class time outside, supervised by a staff member, to enrich their learning and appreciation of the outdoors. Outdoor activities are applicable to various curriculum areas: i.e. practical life, environment education, science, language, math and gross motor development. Outdoor learning is guided by the same principles, expectations, and rules that guide indoor learning.

Lost and Found

Please mark your child's clothes and other personal items with his or her name. Our lost-and-found area is located in the main hallway closet by the gym. All lost-and-found items will be kept and displayed in the hallway during student-parent-teacher conferences. Following the conferences, unclaimed lost-and-found items will be donated to charity.

Holidays and Birthdays

Discovery School, by design, serves a diverse ethnic and religious population. We try to recognize and support the uniqueness of each child and family we serve. While remaining true to the culture of which we are a part of, we choose to keep holiday celebrations to a minimum. We believe that it is best for the children to keep the aspects of commercialism and over-excitement at a minimum at our school during holiday times.

We ask parents to celebrate holidays and birthdays at home. To make sure that we carry out all of our planned educational activities, we prioritize the use of classroom time for curriculum.

In the interests of prioritizing learning and fairness between students, we kindly ask that parents DO NOT ask to celebrate student birthdays in-school. Classes often have their own traditions to celebrate this together.

Lunch and Snack

Studies have shown that children learn more easily and have an increased ability to concentrate when they are not hungry. Discovery's teachers provide time at least once each day for students to eat a healthy snack. Children may have a water bottle with water only in their classroom or cubby but other types of drinks, including energy drinks, hot chocolate, soda/pop, etc. should be avoided.

Discovery does not have the facilities to be able to provide lunches each day for its students. Parents should send a packed lunch with their child each day. Juice or milk will be provided for those students who would like them. The students do not have access to a refrigerator, but they are permitted to ask the lunch supervisor to warm up a food item in the school's microwave. Additionally, on the first Friday of the month pizza is served. On those days, pizza is ordered from a local restaurant; the cost for this is incorporated into our enrollment fee.

Recess

All Discovery students are expected to participate in outside recess if the weather permits and should therefore dress accordingly. If a child is well enough to attend school but has a medical reason for needing to stay indoors for recess, the parents must notify the school in writing, and an adult will supervise the child. Recess will be held indoors when conditions are rainy, icy, or muddy, and when temperatures (including wind chill) are below 20 degrees fahrenheit. Additionally, recess may be held indoors whenever the Head of School feels that outdoor play is not safe or appropriate.

The IB Learner Profile

Discovery School believes the citizenship of its students is equal in importance to academic achievement. Discovery School actively uses the IB Learner Profile in order to help our students demonstrate the following attributes: **thinker, caring, reflective, courageous (risk taker), inquirer, communicator, knowledgeable, principled, open minded, and balanced.**

Individual classrooms establish their own sets of agreements that are created in partnership between the teacher and the students. Individual classroom agreements will follow these principles:

- The student will learn from his or her problems
- The student will establish ownership of his or her problem
- The student will be encouraged to make decisions
- The student will be helped to solve a problem in a way that does not make a problem for others
- The student and situation will be dealt with on an individual basis

Failure to abide by acceptable standards of citizenship will result in disciplinary action. Individual teachers will handle minor infractions. Serious or repeated disciplinary infractions will be referred to the Head of School for disciplinary action.

Major infractions will be considered grounds for suspension or expulsion. In all cases, parents will be informed of their child's serious or repeated difficulties. **Parents may be contacted at any time to remove their child from school premises.**

Plagiarism

Students will receive no credit for any assignment, test, quiz or other work that is not the student's own original work. Plagiarism is typically described as taking the writing or ideas from other people or sources and claiming them or it as one's own ideas or writings. The Head of School will handle repeated instances of plagiarism. Further information around this can be found in the Academic Honesty Policy on the [Parent Resource](#) section of Discovery School's website.

Suspension and Expulsion

Suspension and expulsion are serious penalties that we hope your child will never face. However, each student should understand the consequences of failing to follow our school's important regulations.

At the Head of School's discretion, a student may be suspended from school if he or she is unable or unwilling to adhere to school rules and regulations. Each suspension will be limited to a maximum of 10 days, and will be reported to the student and parent in writing. After a student's fourth suspension, he or she will be considered for expulsion from Discovery School. Additionally, some students may re-enroll to Discovery on a probationary status due to ongoing behavior difficulties. Probationary status may mean that these students are afforded fewer suspensions before expulsion because of prior concerns.

At the discretion of the Head of School, a student may be expelled for gross misconduct or repeated violations of normal school rules and regulations.

If a student is expelled from school, **no refund** will be given for the remainder of the trimester during which the student was enrolled. The financial obligation for the full trimester in which the student was enrolled is unconditional, and no portion of such fees and charges will be refunded or canceled.

Good Citizen Family Clause

The Head of School may expel a student from the school if his or her parents/family members are repeatedly disrespectful to the staff and students of Discovery School or or if the parent relationship with Discovery School becomes unproductive.

Due Process

When a student is being considered for an out-of-school suspension by the Head of School:

1. The student will be informed of the potential suspension and the reasons for the proposed action.
2. The student will be afforded an opportunity for an informal hearing/meeting to discuss the reason for the intended suspension and to explain his/her actions.
3. An attempt will be made to notify parents or guardians by telephone if a suspension is issued.

If the assigned school discipline is served entirely in the school setting, it will not require any notice or meeting or be subject to appeal.

Bullying

The word 'bullying' in this handbook refers to "*... unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time.*" Discovery School believes that bullying of any type is inconsistent with our mission. Bullying is prohibited at all times in school facilities, as well as on and off school property when the misconduct is connected to activities that have occurred on school grounds. No administrator, faculty member or board member shall encourage, permit, condone or tolerate any bullying activities. No student shall plan, encourage or engage in bullying at any time. **Students who feel they have been the target of bullying are highly encouraged to speak to their classroom teacher about the situation.** Parents who are aware that their child has been the target of bullying are also highly encouraged to speak to their child's classroom teacher about the incident. It is difficult to address situations that we are unaware of so it is imperative it is brought to our attention.

Weapons and Dangerous Instruments

Discovery students are prohibited from using, possessing, handling, manufacturing, transmitting, selling, or concealing any object that can be classified as a weapon or dangerous instrument, including explosive or corrosive materials. Discovery students are also prohibited from possessing, using, or igniting a match or lighter not related to official school assignments while on school premises, at school related functions off school grounds, on a school bus, or at any time the student is subject to the authority of the school. Such weapons and dangerous instruments include any object that may be used or is used to inflict physical harm. Possession of any firearm or dangerous instrument will result in immediate suspension and possible expulsion.

Certified staff members are entitled to search for and seize weapons or other dangerous or illegal objects if they have reasonable grounds. In addition, certified staff members may make reasonable searches in an effort to uphold school policies or basic classroom rules. Lockers, desks, and other school property are subject to search at any time.

Sexual Harassment and Intimidation

Sexual harassment or intimidation is prohibited among all members of the Discovery community. Sexual harassment includes all unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors and verbal or physical contacts of a sexual nature. Other prohibited conduct includes behavior that has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile,

discriminatory or offensive learning environment on the basis of gender, religion, race, color, ethnicity, age, disability, sexual orientation and/or other characteristics.

Fire Drills

Fire drills are conducted each month. An evacuation plan is posted in each classroom by the main door. During drills, students are to leave the classroom in single file quickly and quietly. Attendance will be taken after students have evacuated the building to ensure that all students are accounted for.

Tornado Drills

Tornado drills are conducted during the tornado season. During these drills, students are expected to follow instruction carefully. Along with the fire drill evacuation plan, in each room is the safety plan, which states the designated areas to which students should report during a tornado drill.

Lockdown Drills

Lockdown drills are conducted regularly each year. Discovery staff and students have the lockdown procedure posted in their classrooms and their lockdown keys hung by their doorways. Records will be kept on the lockdown drills and submitted to the Mansfield Police Department at the conclusion of the school year. Discovery staff will be sensitive in addressing student fears related to the drills.

Inspection Reports

Discovery School is inspected on an annual basis by the Fire Department, Health Department and State Department of Education. Copies of inspection reports from the Ohio Department of Education, Fire Department and Health Department are available from the Head of School.

After-School Activities

Since school rules are still in effect during all after-school activities (Drama club, Academic Challenge, etc.), students are expected to behave in a manner that reflects positively upon the school. If students are absent during the school day, they may not participate in an after-school activity without prior permission of the Head of School.

Library Use

Each student is responsible for the care of all library books issued to him or her. Each child is expected to pay for the damage or loss of any library book under his or her control.

Toilet Training

All students who attend Discovery School must be completely independently toilet trained/learned. Teachers will be sensitive to the need to remind children to use toilet facilities, but cannot be expected to carry out a toilet training program and cannot help wipe or otherwise toilet children. A full change of clothes stored at Discovery School is required for students in preschool and pre-kindergarten.

Teacher/Student Ratio

We try to maintain a ratio of one teacher per 22 students in second through sixth grade, per board policy. Kindergarten to first grade maintains one teacher/teaching assistant for every 12 students (24 students total). The ratio in pre-kindergarten is one teacher/teaching assistant per 8 students (24 students total) and in preschool is one teacher/teaching assistant per 7 students (14 students total).

Use of Security Cameras and Release of Videotapes

In the interest of providing security to students, staff, and visitors, Discovery School has installed security cameras at various locations throughout the building and property. Any person coming to school property is subject to being recorded on videotape. A notice of the presence of these cameras is posted. No videotape shall be viewed or released without the approval of the Head of School and board officers. The need for viewings and/or releases will be decided on a case-by-case basis. This policy does not limit the use of any tape for administrative purposes by school officials, but only insofar as may be necessary to enforce the Student Code of Conduct and to protect students, employees, visitors and school property.

Curriculum and Parents

The Head of School and faculty are given autonomy to review, implement and incorporate any changes of the curriculum they deem appropriate. Parents' comments and questions regarding school curriculum are encouraged at any time.

Family Responsibilities

When parents enroll their child at Discovery School, they make a commitment to support the policies developed by the Board of Governors, staff members, as well as the manner in which the policies are implemented by the Head of School and faculty. In keeping with Discovery's philosophy that the school and the families must work together to create an effective learning environment for each student, Discovery expects that families will support their child and the school by:

- Supporting Discovery's mission and vision by teaching, modeling, and reinforcing concepts at home such as the IB Learner Profile.
- Supervising their child's progress, monitoring whether the child is meeting academic expectations, and guiding the child toward effective habits for studying, organizing materials, and learning responsibility for his/her belongings and classroom information.
- Attending all family/teacher conferences.
- Participating in and supporting all fundraising activities to the best of the families' ability.
- Volunteering time and/or talent for the benefit of the school and the child's classroom to the best of the families' ability.
- Maintaining open and frequent communication with teachers and other staff members as necessary.
- Ensuring that the child is at school each day, on time, ready to learn with the proper materials for learning.
- The past school year's fees and tuition need to be paid in full, as well as the school fees for the current school year.
- In cases in which wait lists are established due to enrollment, families who demonstrate the aforementioned behaviors will be given priority. Families who do not participate in these objectives may ultimately lose their child's spot at Discovery School. Family and school partnerships are extremely valuable. Discovery School staff members will do their part to ensure these partnerships are positive and working in the best interest of the child. Family members must be willing to do the same.

Tuition

The cost of a Discovery School education is not fully covered by tuition and fees. Income from the school's endowment, annual gifts, and fundraising all help meet the full cost of educating a student. Our annual giving campaign plays a vital role in meeting costs that exceed tuition and fees. Alumni, friends, and parents are invited to support the school with tax-deductible gifts to help ensure quality education for every student of Discovery School. **In the event that your child is withdrawn from the school there will be no refund of tuition paid, and the parent will be responsible for paying the entire year's tuition balance.** Final grades and transcripts may be withheld until all payments have been made.

Termination of Students

It is expected that a child enrolled in Discovery School will remain in the school until the end of the school year. However, the school may occasionally terminate the enrollment of a given student because of academic, physical or social difficulties. The Head of School is authorized to terminate the enrollment of a student at any time for reasons judged professionally sound. For serious infractions, termination can occur with no prior suspension. No refund will be given for the remainder of the trimester during which a student is expelled, or for trimesters following termination.

Billing

Tuition is the main source of income for Discovery School. Our Accountant and the Board Treasurer effectively manage our tuition payment program. This allows parents to choose the payment method with which they are most comfortable. Parents can pay by cash, check, ACH, money order, or credit card. Parents may elect to pay in full prior to the start of school, in 2 payments representing 2 payments of 50% of the tuition, or monthly over ten months or twelve months utilizing pre-authorized drafting.

In accordance with the policy of the Discovery Board of Governors, enrollment for the new school year is dependent upon the successful completion of the current academic year, full payment of previous years' tuition and fees, full payment of previous years' invoices, policies outlined in the Discovery School Handbook for Students and Parents, and the recommendation of the Head of the School.

Scholarships

Discovery School accepts the EdChoice (Traditional) Scholarship, the Ed Choice Expansion Scholarship, as well as the Autism and JP scholarships for eligible students.

The Ed Choice (Traditional) scholarship is only for families living in a failing school district (currently the Mansfield City School District). The EdChoice Expansion Scholarship Award is income based, and all families qualify for some level of this scholarship.

Any tuition amount not covered by the student's scholarship is the responsibility of the family

Intervention

Discovery School accepts the Autism and JP Scholarships for eligible students (subject to availability of support staff).

Intervention Services are billed as follows:*

IEP creation and writing: \$250 paid with the enrollment fee or when a family has received a copy of the final IEP.

Intervention Services: \$68.20 per hour calculated based upon IEP requirements

Intervention Assistant Services: \$37.80 per hour for general support services

Speech and Language Services: \$75.00 per hour

Occupational Therapy Services: \$75.00 per hour

Physical Therapy Services: \$75.00 per hour

Vision Support Services: \$100.00 per hour

Nursing Support Services: \$40 per hour

*Amounts billed are based on IEP requirements and calculated based on scheduled appointments

Any tuition amount not covered by the student's scholarship is the responsibility of the family

Late Payments

Anyone falling more than 30 days behind in tuition payments will be contacted immediately. Any family whose account becomes more than 60 days delinquent will be turned over to the Board of Governors. A \$40.00 late fee will be applied for each payment received after 10 days of the due date.

Tuition Payment Options:

- *1. Full Payment
Payment due June 1
4% discount will apply to payment received by April 1.
2% discount will apply to payment received by May 1.
- *2. **50/50**-Payment
First payment due June 1
Second payment due January 1
- *3. Ten Monthly Payments
Payments are made using pre-authorized drafting
First payment due in August, final payment due in May
- *4. Twelve Monthly Payments
Payments are made using pre-authorized drafting
First payment due in June
Final payment due in May

*A \$40.00 late fee will be applied for each payment not received in the month in which tuition or fees are due.

*A 10% finance charge will be applied to Options 2, 3 & 4.

Payment terms -- cash, check, money order at the school; online ACH payments are accepted, and credit cards are accepted with 3.05% processing fee. There is a \$30 fee for a failed ACH payment.

Financial Aid

Discovery School firmly believes that its diverse socio-economic community is an important part of its strong educational program. Because tuition for an independent school is beyond the means of many well-qualified students, each year the Board of Governors sets aside funds to offer financial aid to eligible students. The board's financial aid committee

determines the amount granted to each applicant. Scholarship application forms can be obtained from the school's office. Any family may apply for financial aid, although funds are limited, and are allocated as equitably as possible. Scholarship opportunities from outside agencies will be shared with families via our email lists as they become available and known.

Internally, Discovery School is a recognized Scholarship Granting Organization (SGO) in the state of Ohio. Families may choose to contribute to the SGO Scholarship Fund and receive a dollar for dollar tax credit in return from the state. For more information or to contribute, please contact our business manager, Susanne Carmack.

Applications from Discovery School families hoping to receive SGO Scholarship monies for the year ahead should fill out a scholarship application as a part of their enrollment / reenrollment in the spring of each year. Applications must be received and students applied for enrollment by June 1st of the calendar year to be considered for scholarship for the next academic year. More information on applying for internal scholarships is available from Mrs. Carmack.

Fundraising

Discovery School is a not-for-profit school, and tuition dollars do not meet the annual cost of educating the students and operating the facilities. Discovery has chosen to try to keep tuition costs reasonable and to have fundraisers to cover the additional expenses. The Board of Governors must approve all Discovery School fundraisers. All families are encouraged to participate in all fundraisers to the best of their abilities.

Admission of Students

Students are admitted to Discovery School on the basis of interviews, student and parent visits, testing, and previous school records. Discovery School does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, religion, gender, sex, disability, or national or ethnic origin. However, because a diverse student body benefits the school and enhances the learning experience for all students, school and classroom diversity is a cornerstone of Discovery's philosophy. Therefore, we reserve the right to consider diversity and gender balance when making placement decisions. Whenever possible, priority is given to siblings of current students and to children of current staff or faculty. Please note that Discovery's teachers are not trained in all areas of special education, and therefore Discovery reserves the right to deny admission or re-enrollment to a child whose needs exceed the services available at Discovery.

The admissions process for new students includes:

- A personal interview and visit to the school by the parents and child. Progress reports from the previous school should be brought to the interview.
- An online enrollment form completed in full. A link to access our online system will be provided upon payment of the \$50 application fee. Admittance is conditional until all testing has been completed, previous school records have been received and the results of a physical examination have been turned in at the office.

In the event that Discovery School receives more applicants than spots available in a given grade, the admission acceptance team will use the following criteria:

- Academic assessment
- Age (Students entering Discovery School's Preschool must be 3 before the first day of school. Pre-kindergarteners must be four years old before September 30th, and kindergarten students must be five years old before September 30th.)
- Siblings currently enrolled at Discovery School
- Parents on the staff or faculty of Discovery School
- Evidence of developmental readiness
- School and classroom diversity and gender balance
- Date and time that deposit is tendered after re-enrollment period begins
- History of family participating in their child's education/willingness of family to partner with Discovery School.

Upon acceptance to Discovery School, all students are subject to a **six-week probationary period**. During this time, students, parents, teachers and the Head of School/Assistant Head of School will do all they can to ensure that the child will thrive in Discovery School's atmosphere and contribute appropriately to the environment of all learners. During this six-week probationary period, a partial refund of tuition will be awarded if the student is withdrawn by the parents or deemed not to be a good fit by the school leadership.

Re-Enrollment of Students

Currently enrolled students who continue to exhibit behaviors that are expected of Discovery School students will be invited to re-enroll. These students have until January 31st to re-enroll for the following school year. After this time period, students who have been invited may still re-enroll; however, enrollment will open to new families after January 31st and spots will not be held without the appropriate paperwork and fees. Re-enrollment is dependent upon the successful completion of the current academic year and remaining in good financial standing. To remain in good financial standing, a student must be current with all payments during the month of re-enrollment and each month thereafter of the academic year.

Withdrawal of Students

The school year is divided into three trimesters or grading periods. These trimesters vary slightly in length and the dates vary from year to year based on the school's calendar. **No tuition refund will be made for any trimester in which a student is withdrawn, or for trimesters following withdrawal.** In order to ensure that the school can fully fund its operations, the financial obligation for the full trimester and remaining school year in which the student is enrolled is unconditional. No portion of such fees and charges will be refunded or cancelled, notwithstanding the absence, withdrawal or dismissal of the student. Nor will student grades be released until all obligations to the school have been discharged. **Families who withdraw their child after August 15th, and prior to the last day of school are still responsible for the full year's tuition. No tuition will be refunded after August 15th,.**

The above policy of non-refundable tuition does not apply in situations where a student's parent or guardian is involuntarily relocated for assignment or training as a result of his or her position in the active duty military. In the case of such relocation, the student's tuition for the relevant trimester will be prorated, and the tuition charged will be only for the days that the student is actually in attendance at Discovery School.

Termination of Students

It is expected that a child enrolled in Discovery School will remain in the school until the end of the school year. However, the school may occasionally terminate the enrollment of a given student because of academic, physical, or social difficulties. The Head of School is authorized to terminate the enrollment of a student at any time for reasons judged professionally sound. For serious infractions, termination can occur with no prior suspension. No refund will be given for the remainder of the trimester during which a student is expelled.

Communication and Concerns

Effective communication between home and school is vital to the success of our educational program. The degree and form of communication may vary according to the grade level of your child. There is generally more communication during the early years. In upper levels, children are expected to be more self-directed and responsible for their learning.

Discovery School will use several tools to keep the lines of communication open such as our website, social media including [Facebook](#) and Instagram, FACTS text service, and email. Families without access to e-mail may request that hard copies of communication be sent home with their child. Parents are responsible for all of the information contained in the weekly emails. **If a family does not have Internet access at home, it is their responsibility to notify the school office staff so that alternate arrangements can be made to send home this information.**

From time to time, parents may have concerns either about their child's progress or about the school program. When concerns do arise, it is important that you share them with the school so that misunderstandings can be sorted out and strategies developed for resolving any remaining issues.

To aid families in tracking student's progress, students in grades K-6 will have their assignments and grades accessible through Blackbaud. Details on using this website will be given out by our teachers at Curriculum Night.

Health and Safety Guidelines

All students must have a current record of a physical examination on file. New students must file an examination record before the start of school. All preschool, pre-kindergarten, after school and extended care staff will receive training in CPR/First Aid, signs and symptoms of illness and in hand washing and disinfection procedures.

A child with symptoms of a communicable disease will be isolated from the other children and will be cared for by a staff member until parents can be notified and he/she can go home.

To protect all students, any child with an infectious or contagious disease such as red measles, mumps, "pink eye," chicken pox, influenza, strep, pharyngitis, whooping cough, or active tuberculosis should not attend school until the disease is cured, is under treatment, or has run its course. If your child develops a contagious disease, please notify the office at once so the school may notify parents of other children who may have been exposed.

Parents will be notified if their children have been exposed to a serious communicable disease either by email, a letter, or text alert.

Children exhibiting the following symptoms, or other symptoms of serious illness, should not attend school:

- Diarrhea (more than one loose stool in 24 hours)
- Severe coughing, causing the child's face to become red or blue, or to make a whooping sound
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Temperature at or above 100 degrees in combination with any other sign of illness
- Untreated infected patch of skin
- Unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool
- Stiff neck
- Unusual spots or rashes
- Sore throat or difficulty in swallowing
- Vomiting
- Evidence of lice, scabies, or other parasitic infection

Students may return to school when they are free of symptoms for **24 hours** and are well enough to benefit from instruction. When a child returns before the 24-hour period, a doctor's note is needed that clearly states they have examined the child, and that they are cleared to return to school in a group setting with a date of return clearly stated.

The mildly ill child (who is experiencing minor common cold symptoms, but who is not exhibiting any of the symptoms listed above) or a child who does not feel well enough to participate in activities will rest in the clinic.

If a child requires medication, ointment, vitamins or a special diet, the appropriate form must be completed in full before administration of any of the above. The school assumes that parents will administer these items at home, except in very rare instances.

If an illness or injury is serious enough to warrant immediate medical attention, the student will be transported to the emergency room of Ohio Health Hospital. In such instances, the student's family will be notified promptly and requested to meet the school representative at the hospital. It is imperative that the school has an emergency medical release form on file for your child so that the emergency room physician can begin treatment. Without this form, the physician must withhold treatment until a parent or guardian arrives. These forms are handed out at the beginning of each school year and to all new students upon registration, and are available in the school office.

Immunizations

The parent shall provide, prior to the date of admission, or not later than thirty days after date of admission, and annually from the date of examination thereafter, a report from a licensed physician affirming that the child is in suitable condition for enrollment in the program. "Suitable condition for enrollment" means that the child is free from communicable disease and has had the immunizations required by statute for admission to school, or a signed letter of exemption, under section 3313.671 of the Revised Code established by the State Department of Health.

Prescription Medicine

Some students are able to attend school only through effective use of medication for disabilities or illnesses that do not hinder the health or welfare of others. The Head of School will designate the person responsible for administering the medications and will provide locked storage space for that medication. If possible, the parent should administer all medication at home. If this is not possible, written instructions signed by parent/guardian and physician will be required and will include the following:

- Child's name
- Name of medication
- Purpose of medication
- Time to be administered
- Dosage
- Possible side effects
- Termination date for administering the medication

- A release for and/or written permission from the parent/guardian requesting that medication be given during school hours.

The parent must personally bring to school the medication, which should be placed in a container appropriately labeled by the pharmacy or physician. Parents are responsible for informing the school of their child's illness, including any allergies or disabilities.

Nonprescription Medicine

Authorized personnel can administer children's strength Tylenol or other nonprescription medication if we have the Nonprescription Medication Permission Form on file in the main office. Medication will be administered only after approved Discovery personnel contact a parent and receive parental approval to administer the medication.

Inhalers

Students who use inhalers for medical conditions are permitted to carry them during school, upon completion of the proper forms.

Change of Address

Please inform the office if you change your email address, physical address or phone number. This ensures that we can contact you quickly in case of emergency and that you will receive all school mailings.

Parental Visits

Visitors to our classrooms are permitted, **however, we request that these visits be arranged in advance**, in order to avoid conflicts with planned trips, tests, and special activities. We also ask that parents do not disturb the class or the teacher during instructional times.

If needed, the main office can assist you in getting a message to your child. Alternately, you may speak with your child during their lunch and recess break. If you choose this option, please check in at the school office to receive a visitor's badge. **We encourage family involvement in your child's school day and education; however, family members should not plan on visiting with your child during lunch and/or recess on a consistent, habitual basis. Only under special circumstances, as determined by the HOS and the child's classroom teacher, will this be permitted.** Children need time to establish and build bonds with their peers in the relaxed, non-academic setting that lunch and recess provide.

Each teacher will offer parents instructions on how best to contact them to arrange class visits or individual conferences. Meetings after 3:30 p.m., by phone, or by e-mail are preferred.

Early Dismissal

The Head of School shall not excuse a student before the end of the day without a request for early dismissal by the student's parent or guardian. Telephone requests for a student's early dismissal will be honored only if the caller can be positively identified as the student's parent or guardian.

Reasons for early dismissal must adhere to state regulations regarding attendance. The main office must sign out students. The parent must come to the office and sign the student out before picking up the student.

Students who know in advance that they will leave early must present a note to the office before classes begin. The student should report to the office to sign out and be picked up by his or her parent or guardian.

Child Abuse/Neglect

School personnel are required by law to report any evidence of child abuse or neglect to Children's Services. The school will cooperate completely with government officials.

Volunteers and P4D

Discovery School's P4D aims to support those who offer academic, social, cultural and physical growth to the students of Discovery School. Members of PTO (both parents and friends of the school) work with teachers, students, the board and its committees to maintain the school's caring, challenging and enthusiastic environment. Interested members of our community are encouraged to contact our Head of School for further information.

Religion

Discovery School is a non-sectarian school and is not affiliated with any church or denomination. Discovery will not attempt to indoctrinate students into any religion or sect. Discovery does, however, recognize the importance of religion in history and in life today.

Curriculum content will be designed to allow students to gain knowledge and respect not only for the major religions of this nation, but also for the important religions of other parts of the world. Discovery will take note of, and commemorate, important religious events and holidays as appropriate.

Unplanned Closings, Delays and Dismissals

Whenever we face the possibility of school closure, the decision will be made by 7:00 a.m. when possible. Please listen to your radio or TV for the official notification. An email message will be sent out and the information will be sent as a tweet and will be posted on Facebook. As well, as sent out through mass text communication.

Bus Transportation

According to Ohio law, public school districts are required to provide transportation for students living at least two miles, but not more than thirty minutes direct drive time, from the school. By law, parents are required to contact their local school board to request bus service or, in exceptional cases, fee reimbursement. The school district retains the right to determine if transportation is necessary and reasonable.

Our students are currently eligible to receive free bus transportation from Mansfield, Ashland, Crestline, Madison and Ontario public school districts. For further information, please contact your local Board of Education.

Procedures: Board of Governors

Function

The functions of the Board of Governors of Discovery School are to:

- Establish the mission, vision and strategic plan for the school
- Determine the major policies and ensure conformance with laws and legal requirements
- Select and annually evaluate the Head of School
- Ensure the financial viability of the school by creating and overseeing the operating budget and participating actively in fundraising

Board of Governors members are not involved in the daily administration of the school. Accordingly, all questions regarding school policies and practices should be directed to the Head of School.

Selection of Board Members and Terms of Office

The Board of Governors of Discovery School consists of individuals who are committed to ongoing excellence at Discovery School. Board members are selected based upon their commitment to Discovery School, their desire to become involved, their ability to participate and their particular area of expertise. Any parent interested in becoming involved on the board or one of its committees should contact the Head of School. In selecting board members, every attempt is made to maintain diversity. Terms are staggered and last three years.

Committees of the Board

The board maintains both standing and ad hoc committees to focus on the specific needs and goals for the school. These committees consist of board members, the Head of School, staff, parents, and outside experts as appropriate.

The Board of Governors must approve all Discovery School fundraisers.

Board Meetings

Board meetings are held monthly with the exception of the month of July, December, and April.

Book of Standards

A document called the Book of Standards outlines the guiding principles which drive the school's educational, administrative, and governance policies and practices. This document, which was largely authored by Discovery's co-founder Dr. Shirley Heck, is amended from time to time by board action. A copy is available in the Head of School's office.

Appendix A

Discovery School PYP Assessment Policy

Discovery School Mission Statement

To provide each child the educational opportunity to discover, with perseverance and imagination, the joy of learning and the interconnectedness of our world.

As an International Baccalaureate (IB) World School, we are also aligned with the IB Organization's mission and their IB Learner Profile.

- The IB mission statement can be viewed at: <http://www.ibo.org/mission/>
- The IB learner profile can be viewed at: <http://www.ibo.org/programmes/profile/>

Our philosophy on assessment

Assessment is integral to all teaching and learning. The prime objective of assessment in the PYP is to provide feedback on the learning process. Assessment involves the gathering and analysis of information about student performance and is designed to inform practice. It identifies what students know, understand, can do, and feel at different stages in the learning process. Students and teachers should be actively engaged in assessing the students progress as part of the development of their wider critical-thinking and self-assessment skills. The PYP approach to assessment recognizes the importance of assessing the process of inquiry as well as the product(s) of inquiry, and aims to integrate and support both. (Making the PYP Happen, 2009).

At Discovery School, we believe that assessment provides information through its diagnostic, formative and summative components. Assessment is ongoing, authentic, varied and purposeful. It is a collaborative and informative process that involves students, families, teachers and community.

Instructional and curricular decision making is driven by our assessments.

Purpose of Assessment

The purpose of assessment is to inform and involve students, parents, teachers and administrators.

Effective assessments allow:

- Students to be an active part of the learning process through reflection and demonstration of their understanding.
- Teachers to guide their instruction and to communicate progress with students and families.
- Parents to see evidence of their child's learning and development, while supporting and celebrating their child's learning.
- Administrators to build a sense of community within the school and communicate the school's progress.

Types of Assessment used at Discovery School

Diagnostic/pre-assessment

Diagnostic assessment prior to teaching helps teachers and students find out what the students already know and can do. For students in preschool and prekindergarten, the Brigance Screening Tool is used in the fall.

Formative assessment

Formative assessment is interwoven with daily instruction and assists the teacher in planning for the next stage of learning. It provides regular and frequent feedback to the teacher and the student. It also gives students an opportunity to improve their understanding and to cultivate enthusiasm for learning.

Teachers use various assessment tools to keep a record of student progress.

Summative Assessment

Summative assessment takes place at the end of the teaching and learning process and provides students with an opportunity to show what they have learned. It also shows how effectively students understand the central idea of the unit.

Assessment of the Elements of the PYP

The elements of the PYP are recorded on the planner for each unit of inquiry and are referenced on the report card.

- **Knowledge:** assessment of the knowledge learned in each unit is done through the summative assessment. It reflects an understanding of the central idea.
- **ATLs and concepts:** Each unit provides opportunities for different skills and concepts. Reflection on growth in these areas is recorded on the planners and self-assessments are completed by the students.
- **Action:** Student actions that are initiated beyond the scope of the unit are recorded on the planner.

The 6th Grade Exhibition

The 6th grade students are expected to develop and present their own collaborative unit of inquiry that showcases the elements of the PYP (knowledge, ATLs, concepts, and action).

This is an opportunity for the students to exhibit the attributes of the learner profile which they have been developing throughout the Primary Years Program.

Practice (Strategies for recording and reporting)

- **Observation:** Students are observed regularly with teachers noting the growth and progress of individuals, groups and the whole class.
- **Performance assessment:** Students apply what they have learned by completing authentic tasks that have more than one acceptable solution.
- **Process-focused assessment:** Teachers observe students with a particular skill in mind, noting students who are meeting, exceeding or struggling to meet the expectations.
- **Open-ended tasks:** Students are asked to complete or communicate an original response. This can be a drawing, written response, diagram or a solution.
- **Test/quiz:** These assessments provide a snapshot of students' subject-specific knowledge.
- **Student reflections:** Students are asked to reflect on what they have learned at the end of a lesson/unit.

School-wide Assessment Tools

- **Exemplars:** samples of students' work that serve as a concrete standard against which other samples are judged.

- Checklists: lists of information, data, attributes or elements that should be present in students' work or performance.
- Rubrics: an established set of criteria for rating students in all areas. The descriptors tell the assessor what characteristics or signs to look for in students' work and then how to rate that work on a predetermined scale. Rubrics can be developed by students as well as teachers.
- Anecdotal records: brief, written notes based on observations of students.
- Continuums: visual representations of developmental stages of learning that show a progression of achievement or identify where a student is in a process.

Reporting to Stakeholders (Parents, Administrators and Students)

The Written Report

- Teachers will complete the Discovery School report card at the completion of each trimester. The report card includes grades for all curricular areas. The school stores a copy of each student's report card.
- The Early Learning Assessment is given to our preschool and prekindergarten students. The results are reported to our families twice a year: in the fall and in the spring.
- Students in grades K-6 are assessed in Reading, Writing, and Math using Fountas and Pinnell, Words their Way, Everyday Math Beginning and End of the Year Assessments, and using the Units of Study Beginning and End of the Year Assessments.
- The IB learner profile attributes and approaches to learning are reported on anecdotally in each child's report card.

Parent/Teacher/Student Conferences

- Fall: Goal setting. This is a relationship-building conference with the parent, student and teacher. The purpose of this conference is to discuss and identify social, emotional and academic strengths or areas for improvement. Goals will be written to determine how everyone involved can support the achievement of these goals. Individual Learning plans will be created at this time.
- Spring: This is a conference between the parent, student and teacher that reviews the progress of the goals that were set in the fall, in addition to sharing academic information and work samples.

PYP Portfolios

Each student at Discovery School has a digital portfolio that is kept in Google Drive. It is a cumulative collection of student work that travels with them from Preschool to 6th grade. Students and teachers collaborate together to add work to it and ensure that it provides an overview of the students learning.

- Portfolios are a purposeful collection of a student's work that is designed to demonstrate successes, growth, higher-order thinking, creativity and reflection.
- Portfolios are updated at the end of each unit, although the students are by no means limited to select work from their unit of inquiry. A reflection piece is included with each sample of work in the portfolio.

References

(2009). PYP - Making it happen: A curriculum framework for international primary education. www.ibo.org

Appendix B

Discovery School PYP Language Policy

Discovery School Mission Statement

To provide each child the educational opportunity to discover, with perseverance and imagination, the joy of learning and the interconnectedness of our world.

Our philosophy on language:

We believe that language is a vital component to the success of all student learning. Language is defined as the ability to express oneself through speaking, reading, writing, performing, drawing, etc. We also recognize that each discipline carries its own language, such as the language of science, the language of math, the language of the arts. Language

connects all curricular areas. Discovery School believes that all teachers are responsible for teaching language. Language, as with other concepts, cannot be learned in isolation; rather, language must be taught as a purposeful, integrated part of all curricular areas.

Language A Policy:

Literature is an integral part of the curriculum, students are assessed formally several times throughout the year to establish reading and writing levels, writing is as much about meaning as it is about structure and form, self expression is encouraged by regular intervals of reflection, opportunities for presentation skills and other oral language opportunities, skits, songs, debates. Teachers model speech, vocabulary, and other forms of the spoken word. Selection of materials are made to reflect the units of study, matching reading levels and moving into more challenging texts focusing on fluency, comprehension, recognition, and the writing process. Special attention is given to ensure the resources are relevant and engaging

Learning is differentiated in the classroom in a variety of ways. Students are individually assessed in their reading ability using the Fountas and Pinnell system, organized into groups, book clubs, and literature studies. Spelling is assessed individually using Words Their Way and organized into groups focusing on spelling pattern and transfer. Writing is used to focus on meaning as much as technical skill, and self-expression is encouraged by regular intervals of written and oral reflection. Writing is taught using Units of Study, an inquiry-based writing program (6+1 traits of writing).

Language B Policy:

Spanish, as our language B, is taught to students through several formats to all students from Preschool-Grade 6. Preschool and prekindergarten students attend biweekly classes for 30 minutes, while students in Kindergarten and above have lessons for 55 minutes a week.

Spanish is supported throughout the school environment by labelling objects, using common greetings, hallway displays and through other cultural experiences connected to subjects such as art, music, and dance.

Identification of Language Needs:

Through inquiry, teachers provide students with opportunities to use language in many different forms: role-play, debate, acting, and art, as well as the traditional teaching of language through the planners. Students read materials that match their levels. Student writing samples are taken throughout the school year to demonstrate growth in all six traits of writing: ideas, organization, word choice, sentence fluency, voice, and conventions. Reading and writing are also interwoven into all curricular areas as students read materials that are generated from the planners and write in response to activities generated from these. The focus of the learning is for the experience to be relevant, engaging and challenging to each student.

Students whose growth is not as anticipated are screened and intervention is provided regarding the specific language areas in which they are demonstrating difficulty.

Home Language Support:

Discovery School seeks to encourage our families to continue using their home languages with their children. We celebrate the cultural diversity that all languages bring to our school and our community. In order to understand better what languages are spoken in the homes of our students, we send home an annual survey to collect this information. As well, we encourage our parents and families to come into school and share their language with our students. We feel that having access to multiple languages gives our students different perspectives which are invaluable to their learning. We encourage international-mindedness in our families, students, and staff.

Some members of our faculty possess their English Second Language (ESL) certifications and have taught in countries whose language of instruction was in a language other than English. Each fall, parents will be asked to complete a Student Language Portrait the results of which will be shared with homeroom teachers.

Language Resources:

An effective library skills curriculum is an integral part of the total language program at Discovery School. It promotes a lifelong love of reading and supports students in their personal reading needs. The library offers a safe, quiet, welcoming place where students can acquire or extend knowledge, gain insight through literature and research and select books for home use. This area serves as a resource center, offering support for students and staff in their exploration of Discovery School's Program of Inquiry.

The Discovery School library provides support for the mother tongue, while offering exposure to books in other languages. Our library is an area we are continuing to develop due to funding challenges, which ultimately affects resource expansion and flexibility in scheduling. Currently, we have a part-time librarian who works to supplement the needs of our school through an annual book fair fund-raiser and auxiliary school funds.

Our classrooms are rich in print and provide many options for students at various reading levels. All teachers have access to an online resource: ReadingA-Z.com, that provides numerous resources, both in English and in Spanish, for students reading at an emergent level to those reading chapter books. Finally, all teachers have access to Brainpop, another online resource for teachers to use across the curriculum.

Language Policy Review

As a staff, we review our assessment agreements and policy annually.

Adopted: 11/19/2014

Revisited: 8/18/2015

Revisited: 8/16/2016

Revisited: 9/7/2017

Edited: 2/17/2020

Edited: 1/17/2022

Revisited: 8/16/2022

Edited 8/7/2023

Appendix C

Discovery School PYP Language Policy

Discovery School Mission Statement

To provide each child the educational opportunity to discover, with perseverance and imagination, the joy of learning and the interconnectedness of our world.

Our philosophy on inclusion:

Simply put, we believe that all children can learn, and that all children have the right to learn and be taught in a way that is meaningful for that individual child. The PYP will be implemented for students to the degree that it is impactful and beneficial for that child. All teachers at Discovery School are trained to implement the PYP. Teachers will design the optimal learning experiences for each child,

including those with special needs, so that the PYP framework is experienced. Differentiated instruction is at the core of Discovery School and this shapes our curriculum and instruction to maximize learning potential for all students in different ways. We feel strongly that students should work in an inclusive setting and deliver our special education services directly in the general education setting as much as possible.

Discovery School implements an instructional approach, Response to Intervention (RtI) that applies the Primary Years Programme (PYP) utilizing inclusive teaching techniques, which provides all students with the instruction they need for learning success. The goal of RtI is to intervene early – when students begin to struggle with learning – to prevent them from falling behind and developing learning difficulties.

Discovery's framework for providing high-quality instruction built on these essential components with fidelity and in a rigorous manner:

- High-quality, scientifically based classroom instruction. All students receive high-quality, research-based instruction in the classroom.
- Ongoing student assessment. All students' progress is monitored frequently to examine student achievement and gauge the effectiveness of the curriculum.
- Tiered instruction. A multi-tiered approach is used to efficiently differentiate instruction for all students. The model incorporates increasing intensities of instruction offering specific, research-based interventions matched to the individual student needs. Our school response to RtI is a multi-tiered approach that creates a well-balanced system of support for diverse student learners.

The RtI Process

Students who are having difficulty in class, either academic, social, or behavioral or a combination of these are referred to the RtI team using the Discovery School Request for Assistance form. A teacher may make this determination based on results from the Brigance screening, Fountas and Pinnell data gathered, and any other screening devices.

The RtI team consists of the Head of School, the intervention specialist, family members, and the general education teacher. If needed due to the items noted on the referral, the SLP (speech therapist) and OT (occupational therapist) may be invited to be on the team. After receiving the referral request from the teacher, a meeting is scheduled and held within five school days of the receipt of the referral.

During the referral meeting, the team decides what research based intervention to try. A data collection system is put in place to ensure the results of the intervention are clear to the team. A follow-up meeting is scheduled for six to eight weeks following the first meeting. At the follow-up meeting, data is presented and the team decides if the intervention has worked well enough to stop it, or if the intervention needs to continue, or if there needs to be another type of intervention implemented.

This process continues until all classroom interventions have been exhausted. At this time, typically, the student is referred for special education testing. If parents/family members agree with this referral for testing, the student undergoes a multi-factored evaluation performed by a school psychologist (contracted by Discovery School). These results are shared with the team which consists of the family, the general education teacher, the intervention specialist, and SLP/OT/PT or other providers as needed in the Evaluation Team Report (ETR) meeting. If the team determines that the child qualifies for an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), an IEP is written and put into place within 30 days of the ETR.

Services Provided

Discovery School currently provides intervention services (which include modifications of assignments, direct teaching, support services), occupational therapy services, physical therapy services, vision, and speech/language services. These services are provided to students who have IEPs and who have goals and objectives that require one or more of these services. All service providers are licensed in their area of service and delivery of these services is individualized to meet the needs of the student as outlined on his/her IEP.

Communication of student progress

Progress Reports are completed by the classroom teacher and Intervention Specialist on each of the student's written IEP goals and reported to both the students' parents as well as to the Ohio Department of Education on a quarterly basis.

Inclusion Policy Review

As a staff, we will review our policy annually.

Date of Approval: 8/20/2014

Revisited: 8/16/2016

Revisited: 9/7/2017

Edited: 2/17/2020

Reviewed: 8/16/2022

Student/Family Acknowledgement of the Student/Family Handbook

We, _____ and _____
Parent/Guardian Student(s)

Have received and read the Student/Parent Handbook for the 2026-2027 academic year. We understand the rights and responsibilities pertaining to students and agree to support and abide by the rules, guidelines, procedures and policies of Discovery School. We also understand that this handbook supersedes all prior handbooks and other written material on the same subjects.

Parent/Guardian Signature Date_____

Student(s) Signature Date_____

***Please sign this page and return it to your child's classroom teacher no later than September 25th, 2026.**