



STUDENT/PARENT
HANDBOOK
2022 - 2023



Welcome!

Applying foundations in Montessori and progressive education, Discovery Academy seeks to create a unique child-centered environment where students learn self-direction, self-discipline, self-motivation, and self-reliance.

As parents and guardians, you play an important role in your child's success. Our educational approach can benefit a child best when we understand the roles played by children, parents, and teachers.

Please use this handbook to become familiar with Discovery Academy. We look forward to a wonderful and productive year!

LOCATION

175 Aspen Leaf Drive
Big Sky, MT 59716

MAILING ADDRESS

PO BOX 161548
Big Sky, MT 59716

406-580-9982

Big Sky Discovery Academy is a 501(c)3 not for profit Independent School

www.bigskydiscoveryacademy.org



Big Sky Discovery Academy was founded in 2014 by Scott and Karen Maybee. Their purpose was to provide another educational option - specifically another way of learning for students in the Big Sky community. Discovery Academy is the first, and currently only, nonprofit Montessori-based Pre-K through High School in Big Sky, Montana.

BOARD

Karen Maybee, Board Chair

Nancy Hagen, Vice Chair

Suzanne Schreiner, Treasurer

Ann Scheder-Bieschin, Secretary

Molly Carrico, Board Member

Derek Lennon, Board Member

ADMINISTRATION

Scott Poloff, Head of Schools (spoloff@bigskydiscoveryacademy.org)

Beth Marlinton, Assistant Head of Schools (beth@bigskydiscoveryacademy.org)

Our Promise

Engage. Enrich. Empower.

Our Mission

To create and support a community of learners by providing personalized educational opportunities that focus on the holistic development and academic growth of the individual.

Our Vision

To provide Big Sky students and community members educational choices so that they discover their passion, find their purpose and create meaningful lives.

Our Core Values

- **Respect and Integrity:** We honor ourselves, others, and the environment.
- **Growth Mindset:** We engage in flexible thinking, creative problem solving, and resilience.
- **Accountability:** We are responsible for our thoughts, words and actions.
- **Communication and Collaboration:** We build trust through open and honest communication and teamwork, empowering ourselves and others by considering diverse perspectives.
- **Community:** We enrich our community with empathy, compassion, leadership, and service.



- **Sustainability:** We focus on the interdependence of individual, social, economic, and environmental sustainability.

We Provide

- Pre-K -12th Grade
- Montessori-inspired and Project-based Curriculum
- Personalized Education
- Multi-age Classrooms
- Online learning/Virtual Classrooms
- Relevant Learning
- Flexible Scheduling
- Summer programs and summer school
- Community Learning

Our Approach

- Personalized instruction
- Flexible scheduling
- Rooted in Montessori principles
- Mastery based academics
- Growth mindset – not being good at something ‘yet’ but can be with time and practice; It’s okay to not have all of the answers
- Relevance - learning has meaning and connection to the world outside of school
- Service learning – community engagement, volunteer work
- Individualized learning pathways

Our Design

- Mixed age learning
- Student agency – personalized learning; voice and choice
- Opportunities to find your passion
- Freedom within limits; structured flexibility
- Clear expectations – includes freedom and trust allowing students to learn from feedback
- Social, emotional, and academic advising
- Guided resolution
- Project-based learning
- Internships and community partnerships/mentors
- Digital portfolio
- Low student to teacher ratios

Our Outcomes



- Respect and Integrity
- Growth mindset
- Accountability
- Communication and collaboration
- Community focus
- Confidence
- Sustainability

ENROLLMENT PROCESS, TUITION AND FEES

We encourage and welcome parents to become familiar with the Discovery Academy and the Montessori and project-based, personalized concept of learning. Please visit our website at www.bigskydiscoveryacademy.org

The application process:

1. Complete the online application that is under the Admissions Tab. It can be found at the following link: <https://bigskydiscoveryacademy.org/application-requirements/>
2. Once received by the school's leadership team, you will receive either an acceptance or waitlist letter, a student questionnaire and information pertaining to applying for tuition assistance.
3. Completed Applications are due back to the school by the end of March. Completed Financial Aid Applications, through the SSS Portal, are due by the end of April.
4. Tuition Contracts will be mailed to all families in May. They are due back to the school before the end of June. This signed contract secures your spot for the upcoming school year.
5. A student's place is secured once a non-refundable \$250 enrollment fee has been received.
6. Your child will be enrolled on a 6-week trial basis. If necessary, a parent/teacher conference will be held during this trial period to review your child's progress and to determine how to best meet the needs of your child.

Early Termination of Enrollment Contract School Decision

Discovery Academy reserves the right to request the withdrawal and terminate the enrollment of any child if, after a 6-week trial period or any time during the academic year, the school staff determine that the student is or will be unable to thrive in Discovery Academy's educational environment. The student shall be considered withdrawn after the last day of attendance. If tuition for the full school year has been



made, reimbursement for no more than 6 months will be refundable. The school shall retain all other fees.

Parental Decision

Written notice is required before withdrawing a child from Discovery Academy. Tuition must be paid for **30 Days (one school month) past the last day of the child's attendance and all other fees are non-refundable if you withdraw your child from Discovery Academy, unless an agreement is made between the family and the Head of Schools.**

Re-Enrollment

Re-enrollment letters will be distributed to parents of current students in January of the current school year. The submission dates for applications, contracts, and payment(s) will be included in the letter. If the school has not received all the appropriate submissions by the designated dates, your child's space may be made available to a student on the waitlist. No application will be accepted/approved if payments of tuition or fees are owed from a previous school year. In addition, any student who has not paid fees from the previous school year, will not be enrolled until all fees from the past year are paid in full.

Tuition

The school is an independent, non-profit organization. Parents/guardians are responsible for tuition regardless of illness or other absences from school (e.g., vacations/trips). No tuition allowance is made for illness, vacation, holidays or school closures. Tuition may be paid in full prior to the school year or through 10 monthly installments. If you elect to pay in installments the payment is due by the 30th of the month. A \$25 late fee will be imposed if we do not receive your payment by the first day of the month for which that payment applies. After 30 days in unpaid fees, the student may be subject to dismissal from school. In the event this is necessary, all student records will be held until payment arrangements have been made.

Please understand that when you sign the Tuition Contract, the document is legally binding. The school cannot release the parent from this contract regardless of whether or not the school is able to replace the student. In addition to other remedies the school may have under the Tuition Contract, the school reserves the right to sue for any tuition or fees not received in full by the applicable due dates.

Other Fees

Registration Fees: In addition to tuition, there are online course registration for Middle and High School students. Courses range from \$250 – \$450 per course.

Field Trips: From time-to-time there may be additional fees for field trips outside the local area. Advance notice will be provided should there be any additional costs to be incurred.

ATTENDANCE



We respect the student's need for consistency and routine. Those who benefit most from the learning environment are those who attend regularly. Please help to ensure your student's social, emotional and academic progress by avoiding unnecessary absences and getting to school on time. Please communicate planned absences with the student's teacher(s) so that they can be supported in their outside of school activities. **Students are expected to be in their classrooms and ready to learn by 8:45.**

HOMEWORK AND SCHOOL WORK

At the middle/high school level, homework is a part of staying on pace with online and other coursework. We aim to teach our high school students how to use their time effectively and efficiently while they are in school, but most of the high school courses require outside of school time to stay on track. A teacher may directly assign activities to be completed at home as needed to keep your student on pace for his or her course completion goal. **Students should expect that there will be academic work and assignments above and beyond the online coursework that align with Discovery Academy principles of fostering a strong work ethic, self-regulation, goal setting, community and societal engagement, well-roundedness, and motivation, and college or career readiness.**

At the Middle and High School level parents will receive bi-weekly reports about each individual student's progress. If parents have any other questions, they can request a conference by contacting the child's teacher or the Assistant Head of Schools.

In the EC/Elementary Classrooms, homework is not given on a daily basis. However, if a parent would like for additional work to be provided or if the classroom teacher feels the student would benefit from additional learning or practicing of a specific skill, the classroom teacher will schedule a meeting with the parents prior to any work being provided. If parents are concerned with their child's academic progress, they can request a conference with the child's teacher.

PARENT COOPERATION AND MUTUAL RESPECT

Discovery Academy believes that the foundation of a holistically harmonious school community lies in all members of the community embracing our Core Values: respect and integrity, growth mindset, accountability, communication and collaboration, community, and sustainability.

Our goal is to provide a safe and secure environment not only for our children, but for our staff and parents as well. To embrace our core values across all levels of our school-students, staff, families, and the greater community-ensures a respectful, cooperative partnership. Should a parent or parents be unable to align in conduct and communication with those values, their child(ren) may be dis-enrolled.

Respect and Integrity: We ask parents to be respectful in their interactions with staff.
Growth Mindset: We ask parents to recognize that teachers are human, and in the Discovery Academy setting are supported in taking risks, making mistakes, and reflecting on their professional growth.



Accountability: We ask parents to be accountable for their words and actions and take ownership of their role in establishing and maintaining a positive school culture.

Communication and Collaboration: We ask parents to follow the chain of communication, and to work together with staff for the success of their children.

Community: We appreciate parent involvement to support our overall efforts to be a thriving school.

Sustainability: Honor the time of teachers and staff who are dedicated to their teaching and planning, work to support all students, and create work/life balance.

PARENT AND SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

We ask all parents and guardians to attend the Open House Parent Meeting at the start of the school year. Staff will be communicating regularly about student progress through an established record keeping system, emails, phone calls, and conferences.

School-to-home communication is essential to the success of our school program. Emails or phone calls between teacher and family are encouraged; however, please remember that our teachers' main objective is to focus on the students during the school day. If you need to leave a message for your child, please call the school at 406.580.9982 and/or email your child's teacher.

The primary form of communication with your child's teacher is email. We have asked for teachers to NOT provide families with their personal cell phone number. If you have an immediate concern or emergency, please contact the school.

Any whole school information will be sent out to you from Head or Assistant Head of Schools or the monthly school newsletter. If you are not receiving communication from the school, please contact your child's teacher to make sure that your information is updated. If you need to change your contact information, please contact the school as soon as possible so we can have it updated.

Monthly teacher and all-school newsletters will help to keep families aware of programs, updates and student activities. Parent Teacher Conferences will be scheduled three times a year, November, February and May, to discuss student learning and progress.

The chain of communication should be followed:

1. Contact your child's teacher with any classroom or educational concerns first.
2. If your concerns are not addressed, then please contact the Head of Schools for Primary or Elementary Classroom concerns. For middle or high school concerns, please contact the Assistant Head of Schools.
3. The Head of Schools should be contacted when you have not heard back from the classroom teacher or are not satisfied with the outcome of your previous meetings.

Parent Grievances

Parents who have a grievance or concern relative to the school should attempt to resolve the difficulty through direct communication with the staff involved. Often this type of communication clarifies and resolves the situation immediately.



In the unusual case where, prior communication does not affect a positive outcome, you should take the concern to the Head of School for the resolution. The Head of Schools can be reached at spoloff@bigskydiscoveryacademy.org.

Student Support

Teachers and school staff do their best to meet the educational needs of each and every child at Discovery Academy. If it is determined that an additional aide or specialist staff is needed in order to meet the needs of a student, a conference will be scheduled with the family to discuss options. Families may be asked to pay for additional instructional specialist or aide support, or an alternative school setting may be recommended. If this is the case, tuition invoicing will be discontinued at the end of the month of the student's last day of attendance.

APPROACH TO DISCIPLINE AND FOSTERING POSITIVE STUDENT BEHAVIOR **Student Behavior**

In keeping with our Montessori mindset and our Core Values, expectations of courtesy, self-regulation, and respect are integral to the learning environment. Behavior is motivated by our own personal needs. We are all responsible for our own behavior, and no one makes us do anything. All behavior has consequences. Responsible behavior gives us the best chance of getting our needs met while not denying others the same opportunity to have their needs met. Even when we all try our best, we sometimes make mistakes. When a behavioral choice is made that is irresponsible, disrespectful, uncooperative, or shows poor citizenship, it is the responsibility of the school staff to intervene in an appropriate manner.

Discovery Academy - Student Expectations

- Be on time for school, work hard, and learn to the best of your ability.
- Students will show respect and be honest with teachers, school staff, and visitors, as well as to one another. All members of the school staff have the authority to correct or redirect any student.
- Students will follow the rules of the classroom and the school.
- Students will follow all safety rules while on the bus.
- Students will behave properly in the hallways, on the playground, and on school buses.
- Disruption of classes will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Disruptions result in the interference of the learning process for all students.
- Students should complete homework to the best of their ability.
- School property and the property of others are to be respected by all students.
- During a field trip or a school activity, students should remember that school rules are still in effect at all times and that chaperones will have the authority to correct students when needed.
- The use of profane language by any student will not be tolerated under any circumstances.
- Fighting and bullying will not be tolerated. It is important for all students to feel safe and comfortable in school.



- Threatening another student or staff member is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. This includes verbal, written, pictorial, electronic (cyberbullying) and implied threats.

Disciplinary Options/Responses

Possible interventions include:

- Verbal Reminder
- Changing Seats
- Loss of Privileges
- Note or Phone Call Home
- Parent Conference
- Loss of Free Time
- Confiscation of Items

Repeated inappropriate behavior requires other interventions. When previous interventions have failed or when the seriousness of a first offense warrants, the child may need to be removed from the situation.

Severely inappropriate behavior also requires additional intervention to help ensure the future safety and well-being of the other members of the school community.

The following are ways of removing the student from the situation.

- Removal from the room or other space
- Loss of bus privileges
- Exclusion from extracurricular school sponsored activities (Clubs)
- In-school suspension
- Out-of-school suspension
- Alternate seating or location

School Administration or Counselor Intervention

Certain behaviors require the immediate intervention of the principal. Some of these behaviors include: inappropriate language, fighting, aggression, defiance, disrespect, or stealing.

A child who is referred to the principal or counselor may have to develop a plan to change his or her behavior and may also be required to participate in a conference with his or her parents/guardians to encourage better choices. A flex time-out, bus suspension, in-school suspension, or out-of school suspension assignment may be necessary.

Personal Belongings

When determining whether to allow your child to bring personal belongings with him/her to school (electronics, cell phones, favorite toys, etc.), please be reminded that the school is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

The safest option is to keep those important and often expensive items at home. While we will do all we can to try to recover lost or stolen items, we cannot guarantee their safe return home. Students should not bring cell phones or smart watches to school. In



the event that a cell phone or smart watch must be brought, it must be turned off and be given to the classroom teacher.

Weapons are strictly forbidden on school grounds or in school vehicles. Toys and other personal belongings resembling a weapon could result in a disciplinary response similar to possession of an actual weapon.

DISCIPLINE RESPONSE STRUCTURE

LEVEL I

Minor misbehavior on the part of the student which impedes orderly classroom procedures or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or school sponsored activities. These misbehaviors should be handled by the individual staff member. However, such misbehaviors may be indicative of a problem that should be reported to appropriate staff.

PROCEDURES

1. There is immediate intervention by the staff member who is supervising the student or observes the misbehavior.
2. A proper and accurate record of the offenses and disciplinary action is maintained by the staff member.
3. The staff member may wish to discuss the behavior with the parents, the administrators, and/or appropriate support personnel.

EXAMPLES

- Classroom, hall, study hall, cafeteria, auditorium, locker room disturbance
- Classroom tardiness (arriving after 8:45)
- Dishonesty and lying
- Cheating/plagiarism (i.e., homework, quiz, class participation, group work, etc.)
- Abusive, profane and obscene language; agitating others
- Non-defiant failure to complete assignments or carry out directions.
- Non-defiant failure to follow school or class
- Inappropriate written, verbal comments or physical contact

DISCIPLINARY OPTIONS/ RESPONSES

1. Verbal reprimand
2. Special duties/activities – Written letter of apology and reflection
3. Classroom contract
4. Loss of school privileges
5. Community Service within the school day
6. Parent conference
7. Confiscation of inappropriate materials
8. Academic penalty

LEVEL II



Misbehavior which is frequent or serious enough to disrupt the learning climate of the school or school sponsored activities. These infractions, which usually result from the continuation of Level I misbehaviors, require the intervention of personnel on the administrative level because the execution of Level I disciplinary options has failed to correct the situation. Also included in this level are misbehaviors which do not represent a direct threat to the health and safety of others but whose educational consequences are serious enough to require corrective action on the part of administrative personnel.

PROCEDURES

1. Student is referred to the administrator for appropriate disciplinary action.
2. Administrator meets with the student and/or teacher and effects most appropriate responses.
3. Teacher is informed of administrator's action.
4. Parents are notified of student's misconduct.
5. A proper and accurate record of the offense and disciplinary action is maintained by the administrator.

EXAMPLES

- Continuation of unmodified Level I misbehavior
- Repeated tardiness to school
- Truancy
- Forgery* (i.e., absence excuse, early dismissal excuse, hall pass, student-sign in/out sheets, field trip forms, etc.)
- Plagiarism (i.e., test, exam, research paper, project, etc.)
- Cutting class, leaving building/assigned area
- Lack of respect for staff
- Possession of obscene material
- Misuse of school property
- Gambling
- Inappropriate or unwelcome sexual advances, lewd behavior, deliberate or repeated written or verbal comments, gestures or physical contact
- Harassment/ethnic intimidation/ bullying (includes electronic communication that impacts on or relates to the school environment).
- Hazing
- Possession of any incendiary devices (e.g. lighters, matches, etc.)
- Violation of User Agreement/Internet guidelines
- Defiance
- Breach of Building Security (i.e. unauthorized admittance of visitors to building).
- Unauthorized/inappropriate use of technology or electronic devices.

DISCIPLINARY OPTIONS/RESPONSES

1. Verbal reprimand by school administration
2. Schedule change



3. Exclusion from school sponsored activities
4. Parental conference
5. Community Service within Discovery Academy
6. Suspension
7. Loss of computer/Internet privilege
8. Academic penalty
9. Elevation to Level III

Level III

Acts directed against persons or property but whose consequences do not seriously endanger the health or safety of others in the school. These acts might be considered criminal but most frequently can be handled by the disciplinary mechanism in the school. Corrective measures which the school should undertake are dependent upon the extent of the school's resources for remediating the situation in the best interests of all the students.

PROCEDURES

1. Disciplinary action is initiated by investigating the infraction and conferring with the staff on extent of consequences.
2. Administrator meets with the student and notifies the parent of the student's misconduct and resulting disciplinary action. Law enforcement officials may be notified.
3. A proper and accurate record of offenses and disciplinary actions is maintained by the administrator.
4. There is restitution of property and damages if appropriate.
5. The services of and appropriate agency or resource may be utilized to aid in better understanding the reason for the student misconduct.

EXAMPLES

- Continuation of unmodified Level II misbehavior
- Assault/Battery (e.g. fighting)
- Hazing
- Vandalism (minor)
- Use/Furnishing/Selling/Possession of tobacco products or tobacco lookalikes including vapor/electronic smoking devices and associated supplies. Penalties imposed extend to smokeless tobacco regardless of the quantity.
- Petty theft (stealing)
- Threats to others
- Inappropriate using/furnishing/selling/possession of prescription drugs and/or over-the-counter drugs
- Possession/Use of smoke bombs or simple explosive devices
- Unlawful Harassment or Sexual Harassment as defined herein.
- Look-alike weapons with the intent of intimidation or misrepresentation
- Violation of electronic communication policy
- Misuse or destruction of technology (computers, audio visual equipment, telephone, etc.)



- Noncompliance of administrative direction during a school emergency
- Possession of ammunition

DISCIPLINARY OPTIONS/RESPONSES

1. Immediate removal from class
2. Loss of school privileges
3. Parental conference with Board Members and Head of School
4. Exclusion school-sponsored activities
5. Community service hours within the school setting
6. Out of School Suspension
7. Criminal prosecution if appropriate
8. Removal from school

Discipline and Disenrollment

A goal of Discovery Academy classrooms is to help each student develop self-discipline and confidence in themselves. We provide an environment that supports students in their social, emotional and academic development.

The basic ground rule of the school is respect. The students are guided daily to demonstrate respect for their peers, for the adults, for the environment and materials, and for themselves and their learning.

In the case of ongoing behavioral problems (social, academic, or other), we use the following procedures:

1. The teacher will communicate their concerns and observations with parents and the school's leadership team.
2. Parents will be asked to attend a behavior intervention conference with the teacher and a member of the leadership team.
 - a. The aim of the conference will be to exchange ideas to help the student and create a list of required expectations (desired behaviors). If there is a serious question as to whether the student can function within the classroom, the school may set a limited "probationary" period of one month.
 - b. Parents may be encouraged to consult an outside professional for behavioral or learning difficulties that cannot be handled in the context of the classroom or which are beyond the scope of the staff's training.
 - c. The Board of Directors will be made aware of the probationary period and the desired expectations that are to be completed by the student.
3. Upon completion of the probationary period, the parents, the teacher, the school's leadership team will hold a conference to determine what further action should be taken to best meet the needs of the student. In the event that the behavior continues without improvement, the parents may be asked to find another school setting for the student and can request a meeting with the Board of Directors.
 - a. In some instances, an immediate disenrollment may be necessary. Discovery Academy reserves the right to require the withdrawal of a student for reasons including, but not limited to, performance or behavior



detrimental to other students or the school community, including but not limited to using illegal substances, ongoing failure to work, frequent absences that are not communicated in advance to the school, and harmful behavior to others.

- b. For Immediate disenrollment, the parents will meet with two members of the Board of Directors within three days of the incident. Within those three days, the Board will meet the school's leadership team and staff members to gain background information and previous steps taken by the school.
- c. The final decision to disenroll a student, is then determined by the Board of Directors. The Board will consult with the school's attorney to ensure that all necessary steps were taken prior to dismissal from the school.

Physical Aggression and Bullying

Young people often act quickly and impulsively. At Discovery Academy, a student's physical or verbal actions that injure or intimidate another child or adult are considered serious in nature: this includes cyberbullying, as well as physical or verbal behavior that aims to be intimidating, harassing, or harmful to another.

When physical aggression occurs or evidence of harassment, bullying or cyberbullying, the offending student's family will be called to discuss the incident. Time away from the school or disenrollment may result from the event or subsequent occurrences of aggression towards students, adults or others.

Bullying in any form is not tolerated and may result in disenrollment.

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is an expectation, and academic dishonesty may result in disenrollment. Academic dishonesty is defined as: using a person's work, concepts, designs, data, ideas, research, or documentation without giving proper credit to the source, and includes plagiarism as well as cheating, using or providing unauthorized materials in preparation for an exam/test/quiz, and any other acts, such as theft or falsification of records or files.

Impairing Substances

Discovery Academy is committed to safeguarding the health and safety of its students. The improper use of impairing substances goes against Discovery Academy's mission, function, and the law. To use, possess, or distribute drugs and/or alcohol will not be tolerated. The use of prescription drugs during the school day will be permitted only with direct and written consent of a parent or guardian, and in keeping with Montana Law. The illegal use of impairing substances may result in disenrollment.

The Role of Technology at Discovery Academy

Technology is useful and welcome when it serves the mission of the school. Modern humans rely on technology to accomplish their objectives; technology provides



opportunities to document learning, communicate in an efficient manner, and access a vast network of resources and information.

However, our first concern as a school is the health and wellbeing of our students and community. The use of technology at Discovery Academy must be consistent with that concern. Consequently, technology use that promotes student distraction, isolation from the school community, causes unhealthy work habits, or promotes poor choices or behaviors that are harmful to self or others will be limited or eliminated. Technology use that promotes good work habits, fosters skills, and enhances student learning will be embraced.

The staff at Discovery Academy reserve the right to have the final word on technology use. The school requires that students observe common standards of decency and civility in the use of technology. Any technology use deemed inappropriate or unhealthy for the student or the community will result in a discussion with the student and parent to determine the best course of action. In the event that the misuse and behavior continue without improvement, the parents may be asked to find another school setting for the student. In some instances, immediate disenrollment may be necessary.

Student Cell Phones

Cell phones are not permitted to be used at any level other than when approved by a teacher. Phone use is prohibited during classes. Students can expect to be asked to turn off phones and place them in their bags out of sight, or in the cell phone collection basket at the beginning of each work period.

The intent of this policy is to uphold the integrity of our school's mission and our commitment to community life. If there is a perception that a student's cell phone use is resulting in isolating him/herself from others and/or is getting in the way of contributions to the school community, then his/her cell phone use will be restricted. A student abusing his/her cell phone privilege will meet with the Head of School to determine an appropriate consequence (in all likelihood, restricted phone use). Whenever cell phone use is permitted, students may not use them in any way that is harassing or disruptive to the educational environment, including making threats, using camera phones to take inappropriate photos or to videotape classes, to send text messages to other students, or in ways that would otherwise violate a school rule. Teachers and staff may confiscate devices if used inappropriately or at inappropriate times. If inappropriate use persists, Discovery Academy reserves the right to ban that student from bringing his/her phone to school. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen phones.

Should a parent need to contact his or her child during the school day for an urgent matter, he/she should call the main office at 406.580.9982 or email the student's Discovery Academy email and/or the teacher(s).

Laptops, Desktops, or other Computing Devices



Technology use at school is integral to some of the learning activities. Students are expected to use technology respectfully and only for the learning activities set forth by teachers and staff.

All high school students, teachers and staff are issued a @bigskydiscoveryacademy.org account, hosted by Google. Through this account, students receive emails from teachers and collaborate on Google Documents. Personal email should be used outside of school time. Email cannot be used to socialize, harass or threaten others, and never during the school day. Students are expected to act responsibly in their online searches and to immediately disengage from any materials that are inappropriate and to report the situation to a teacher. The school reserves the right to randomly check student email as well as monitor students' internet use.

Illness

The policy below reflects pre-COVID Policies and Procedures. Please note that additional COVID-specific policies supersede any of our regular policies if there are any COVID-related symptoms.

Please notify the child's lead teacher and the appropriate school level director by phone or email if your child will be missing school. After confirmation from your doctor, report any communicable disease to our office as soon as possible, in order that we may alert other parents and take precautions to prevent the condition from spreading. Parents of other children in the class will be notified of all communicable diseases (confidentiality will be maintained).

If your child has a fever, diarrhea, vomiting, or complains of severe pain, your child needs to be kept home until he/she is **free of symptoms for 24 hours without use of medication.**

This policy, though at times inconvenient to parents, dramatically reduces the incidences in illnesses school-wide. Your cooperation is appreciated.

Discovery Academy reserves the right to exclude and send home any child they believe is contagious from the above listed conditions and the conditions including but not limited to:

- Fever
- Hand, foot and mouth disease
- Pediculosis (Head lice)
- Pneumonia
- Pink Eye or Undiagnosed Redness/Discharge in the eye
- Polio
- Undiagnosed rash
- Ringworm
- Measles
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Green or dark yellow nasal discharge
- Flu
- COVID-19

FIRST AID & Medical Emergencies

All of our teachers are first aid and CPR certified. They know where the first aid kits are in each class and what is in them. While we do our best to ensure the safety of the children, accidents may happen. In the case of first aid treatment the child will be assessed by injury level.

Minor Injuries

The child will be comforted. If necessary, bandages and/or ice packs or towels will be applied. We will not apply antibiotic cream without prior written consent.

Family contact: We will let an adult know what happened at pick up time. Accident reports are not filled out for minor injuries which do not involve visible cuts, bruises or scrapes.

Larger (non-life threatening) Injuries

The child will be comforted. For injuries where there is bleeding or other bodily fluids, non-porous gloves (nitrile, vinyl or latex*) are used. If the injury is larger than a small scrape, direct pressure will be applied. If necessary, bandages, ice packs, or towels will be applied (*please alert Discovery Academy of any known latex allergies)

For injuries to the head or neck- We will stabilize the child's head if necessary and call the parents and/or emergency services.

If a suspected poisoning has occurred, we will call poison control and contact the family as soon as possible to inform them of the situation and let them decide the action to take.

Larger Incidents involve an accident report, in which, the teacher who witnessed the injury will complete the accident report in Transparent Classroom. The school will keep the original form in the student's digital file and a copy will be sent home digitally. The adult will also be informed either by phone after/during accident or at pick up (depending on the severity of the injury).

Major Injuries

If a child has a serious/life threatening injury or is experiencing a suspected medical emergency, we will call 911 and administer first aid/CPR and monitor the child until medical professionals arrive. We will accompany the child to the hospital if necessary. The family will be contacted immediately after contacting 911.

Medication Administration Policy

When at all possible, student medication should be administered at home. When it is necessary for medication to be given during school hours. The staff at Discovery Academy will administer medication to children who require it.

Prescription medications must be in their original containers labeled with the child's first and last name, the date the prescription was filled, the name of the licensed physician or nurse practitioner who wrote the prescription, the expiration date of the medication, and specific and legible instructions for administration and storage of the medication. All medication will be administered according to the instructions.

Non-prescription (Over-the-Counter) medications can be given with permission from the parent or guardian based on general advice received from the child's physician. Non-prescription medication will be administered from the original container labeled with the child's first and last name and according to the instructions on the label. A record of doses will be kept.

Medications will be stored at the recommended temperature, in a child proof container, in a place inaccessible to children. When the medication expires the parent will be asked to take home the medication to dispose of. If it's not picked up in a week's time, our staff will dispose of it in the recommended manner.

Medication for Asthma and Allergies (inhalers, nebulizers and EpiPens): If your child has been diagnosed with asthma or life-threatening allergies, it is essential that we have all information and medication in place BEFORE it is needed. If your child has ever needed asthma medication, or been prescribed an EpiPen, parents must hand deliver the prescribed medication to their child's teacher and give any pertinent information that may be needed regarding the purpose of the medication and any possible side effects that we should be aware of. If any staff member notices an adverse effect or serious allergic reaction, and the child is in distress, staff will call 911. Parents will also be notified.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parent Action Committee (PAC): The purpose of the PAC is to uphold the school's mission and to support and enhance the education of the children at Discovery Academy.

The primary goal of the PAC is to help initiate positive changes on behalf of the school's parents. Working together with the administration, the Parent Action Committee has the opportunity to make Discovery Academy even better and to make our children's school experience the best it can be.

PAC holds meetings throughout the year to focus on community involvement, fundraising, and Discovery Academy program enhancement.

Parent Volunteers: There are many opportunities for parents to volunteer for Discovery Academy. Parents can represent the class via PAC, as chaperones on any planned trips, or by donating snack and/or other items to the school, or supporting school

fundraising events. Check with your child’s lead teacher or the Head of School for opportunities.

PHOTO CONSENT AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Throughout the school year, we take photographs of your child working and playing at school. We like to post photos on our website, in student portfolios, Transparent Classroom and on occasion our Facebook or Instagram page so that other families can see our school and get a feel for the work that the children do. However, the safety and privacy of your child is of great importance to us. The photo consent form, included in your enrollment packet gives you the opportunity to decide under which conditions you give consent regarding photography and videography by Discovery Academy.

We ask all members of our school community-parents and guardians, students, staff, and board to respect the privacy and confidentiality of others by refraining from sharing personal information or discussing other families or students with others outside the school community.

We acknowledge that we have read and understand the 2022-2023 Discovery Academy Student/Parent Handbook.

Parent Name	Date
Parent Signature	Date
Student Name	Date