

DISCOVERY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HANDBOOK

“As a member of the Discovery Fox Community, I will be safe, I will be respectful, I will be responsible. I will act in such a way that I will be proud of myself and others will be proud of me, too. I came to school to learn, and I will learn. I will have a great day.”

Belief Statement

1. We believe that students can be more successful when their basic physical and emotional needs are met.
2. We believe that all who enter Discovery Elementary School have the right to be in a safe environment.
3. We believe students should be responsible for their behavior, work habits, social skills and academic progress.
4. We believe parents’ attitudes and support play a very important part in students’ success.
5. We believe that students learn in different ways and at different rates and levels; thus the educational program should address those variables.

6. We believe that students, parents, and staff should show respect and work together toward common goals.

School Community Council

As required by law, Discovery has a Community Council made up of parents and school level participants. The Community Council will meet a minimum of four times during the school year. We welcome other parents who would like to be a part of this Council and input from all parents and constituents. Community council members are elected, but all are welcome to attend meetings. Nominations take place during registration and up until August 21st when voting starts. Elections will end on August 29th.

Parent Teacher Organization (PTA)

Discovery also has a Parent-Teacher Association focused on supporting our students. All parents are invited to join and contribute to this organization. Working together, we can assure success for all of our students! You may sign up at registration.

School Starting and Ending Times

The late bell rings at 8:30 A.M. at Discovery. School ends at 3:30 P.M. each day. Students who are late miss critical morning instruction in reading and math.

Dropping Off and Picking Up Students

To guarantee the safety of students, please observe the signs at the school and use the “drop off loop” on

the north side of the school to drop off and pick up students. Please do not drop off or pick up students in the bus parking lot or on the east side of the school. If you park across the street to drop off or pick up your child, you must walk your student to the school in the morning, or come to the school to walk your child back across the street after school. Students are at great risk if they attempt to cross to the other side of the street - we have had several “near tragedies” with students attempting to cross the street before and after school.

Riding Buses

Please refer to the Uintah School District transportation policy.

School Visitors and Check-In and Check-Out Procedures

We welcome parents and volunteers in our school. Please sign the volunteer page at registration if you wish to volunteer at school. For safety purposes, however, *all visitors must sign in at the school office when they enter the school.* In order to check out a student from school, an adult’s name must be on the “Check-Out List” filled out at registration. An adult must come into the building to sign for the student at the time of check-out. Students will not be called out of class until the parent/guardian appears in the office. Please make sure that all names of persons whom you wish to be able to pick up your student from school appear on the list.

Volunteering

To volunteer in the classroom, please talk with your child's teachers. Any volunteer that will be working unsupervised with students needs to have a background check. Each teacher is allotted 1-2 free background checks each year, so please act fast if interested. These Background checks are valid for up to 5 years. All parents attending field trips with the school need a background check.

Deliveries of Flowers and Gifts:

We have notified local businesses that we do not deliver flowers or balloons to students during the school day. These deliveries are disruptive to classroom instruction and are difficult for students who never receive such gifts. If you wish to provide treats for your student's birthday, you are welcome to make arrangements with your student's classroom teacher.

Messages

We understand that extenuating circumstances occasionally require that students receive messages during school hours. The only messages that will be delivered from the front office are "true emergency" messages. All other messages should go to the classroom teacher's voicemail. Teachers will send home their extensions the first week of school. Teachers will be asked to check for "voicemail messages" every day at pre-determined times. Please plan ahead to let your student know such things as whether to ride the bus or wait for a parent. If necessary, these kinds of messages should go to the

teacher's voicemail; the school secretary cannot deliver the volume of these kinds of messages.

Telephone Use

Each teacher has a telephone in his/her classroom from which students may call if they are ill. Teachers allow students to use the phone for non-emergency purposes during recess times. During the school day, teachers' telephones will not ring into the classroom for obvious reasons, but you may leave messages on a teacher's voice mail at any time.

School Attendance Policy and Procedures

There is a direct and high correlation between school attendance and academic success. No amount of worksheets can make up for the direct instruction and classroom interaction missed when a student is absent from school. *Uintah School District Policy requires that students be in school a minimum of 93% of the time, which is 55 of 60 days each trimester. Parents should notify the school of a student's absence within 24 hours of an absence. Absences without notice from parents within 24 hours of the absence will be considered truancies. If a student misses more than five days during a trimester, the parent must contact the school principal (781-3146 Ext. 1501) to discuss the absences and/or provide documentation (medical or otherwise).*

The principal will identify and work closely from the beginning of the year with students whose attendance histories show excessive absenteeism and/or tardies. ***Perfect Attendance*** certificates will be awarded only to students who have **zero absences and tardies.**

Late buses will not affect a student's attendance record.

School Protocol for Dealing with Excessive Absenteeism/ Educational Neglect:

1. Teacher contacts family to discuss absences.
2. 1st Intervention Letter: 4 absences per school year –. Attendance office will send a letter and parent is responsible to talk to the teacher.
3. 2nd Board of Education Letter: 8+ absences- Within five days Parent must contact one of the school Secretaries to discuss pattern of absences.
4. 3rd Notice of Compulsory Education Violation Letter: 13 absences per school year. Parent has 5 days to schedule an appointment to meet with Mr. Morris to discuss this pattern of absences and to sign an attendance contract. If the pattern of unexcused absences continues after the school has made reasonable efforts to intervene, a referral for educational neglect will be referred to Eighth District Juvenile Court and the Division of Child and Family Services.
5. 4th Notice of Court Referral: This case has been referred to the Court.

Tardy

Students with 5 or more tardies in one trimester, or 15 total tardies for the year will be required to eat their lunch in the library. During lunch recess, students will be expected to complete learning tasks assigned by the

teachers which will make up for loss of instruction when the tardy occurred.

School Recognition and Rewards

1. Students at Discovery may earn *Discovery Detective Tickets* from adults in the building for good choices, including but not limited to: courteous behavior, “random acts of kindness”, academic improvement”, etc. A drawing from these tickets is held at the end of the trimester with prizes such as a bicycle, books, calculators, etc.
2. Many teachers at Discovery offer students the opportunity to become a *Self-Manager*. Students may earn the privilege of using the restroom or getting a drink of water when needed without permission, lining up first for lunch and recess, etc. by fulfilling the requirements of becoming a *Self Manager*. These requirements will be sent home by the teacher. Please encourage your student to work hard to become a “Self-Manager.”
3. Students will be recognized by the principal each trimester with certificates for *Most Improved Student* in each class and for *Outstanding Academic Achievement*. Kindergarten teachers will provide their own recognitions.
4. Other recognition such as *Accelerated Reader Rewards* given by the media aide and individual classroom teachers

5. **Perfect Attendance:** By trimester and year. Year end drawing for bicycles for all-year perfect attendance (no tardies or absences).

School Discipline Plan - “Think Time”

Our school behavior plan is predicated on three school-wide rules:

1. *I will follow directions the first time I am asked.*
2. *I will be respectful of all adults.*
3. *I will help keep the school clean and safe.*

Think Time Procedures

1. The teacher will give two classroom warnings by asking a student to “pull a card”. On the third warning, the student will go to “Think Time” to another teacher’s classroom. When the student has written an acceptable “Think Time” plan, the student will be allowed to return to his/her classroom. If a student receives two “Think Time” referrals in one week, lunch recess will be forfeited and the student will call a parent.
2. If a student’s behavior escalates beyond “Think Time” parameters, including, but not limited to: fighting, refusals, cursing, threatening, habitually disruptive behavior, etc., the student will go to the principal’s office.
3. Parents may be called to take students home for the remainder of the day or longer for the following behavior infractions or other comparable behaviors: physically hurting another student or school employee, being emotionally out of control, using profane language or gestures, or refusing to do as he/she is asked.

“Discipline Essays” may be assigned for these and other behaviors with which the principal is involved.

SEP Meetings

By law, teachers are required to schedule Student Education Plan meetings with individual students and parents three times each year to review students’ progress and to set educational goals. It is imperative that parents attend these meetings so that the parent, the student, and the teacher can become a “team” to help ensure the success of every student. These meetings are set up through a website called Canyon Creek Software. Please look for directions from the school on how and when to set up your SEPs. We welcome ongoing communication with parents concerning their students’ progress in school; hence, you may also call or meet with your student’s teacher at any time you wish to make an appointment. Teachers are available to take phone calls after 3:30 P.M. each day.

Homework Policy and Planners

There are several reasons for assigning homework to students. The first is to provide time for students to practice what they have learned in class. The second might be to prepare for new information or elaborate on information that will be introduced. The third, and just as important, is to establish and reinforce an “independent work ethic”. A given at Discovery Elementary is that students need to practice oral reading fluency each evening for 20 to 30 minutes with someone listening , interacting, and giving

feedback– especially students who are below grade level in reading. The following are guidelines to help parents reinforce meaningful homework practice with their students:

1. Help set up a consistent organized place for homework to be done.
2. Help your child establish a consistent schedule for completing homework and review the week's learning goals and expectations each week when the **“Tuesday Folder”** comes home.
3. Encourage, motivate, and prompt your child, but do not sit with her the full time and do the homework with her. The purpose of the homework is for your child to practice and use what she has learned. If your child is consistently not able to do the homework by herself, please contact the teacher.
4. If your child is practicing a skill, ask him to tell you which steps are easy for him, which are difficult, or how he is going to improve. If your child is doing a project, ask him what knowledge he is applying in the project. If your child is consistently unable to talk about the knowledge he is practicing or using, please call the teacher.

Although there might be exceptions, the minutes your child should spend on homework should equal approximately 10 times her grade level (a 2nd grader would spend 20 minutes, a 3rd grader would spend 30 minutes, and so on). Certainly, there will be exceptions based upon what the student chooses to finish at school during the time given. If you feel your child is spending

too much or too little time on homework, please contact the teacher.

SIS or Other Online Gradebook System

Your student's teacher will keep you informed of your student's progress. Please feel free to contact the teacher at any time concerning your student's academic progress.

Power Standards

There are *critical learnings* in each grade K-5 that a student must master to move on successfully to the next grade level. Your student's teacher will give you a copy of these objectives and discuss those with you during the Back to School Night and/or Fall SEP Conference.

Standards-Based Report Cards

All elementary report cards in the district are "standards-based". The standards are taken from the required Utah Core Curriculum. Students will receive a number from 4 to 1 (4= high on district rubric), reflecting to what extent the student has "mastered" a standard or objective. Report cards will be different this school year.

Student Cell Telephones and other Electronic Devices at School

Cell phones are becoming more and more commonplace among students. We understand that parents may want their student to be able to contact them at any time; however, *we cannot allow cell phones to be used during school hours*. If a student

brings a cell phone to school, it must remain off and in a book-bag. Students are allowed to use the classroom telephone when there is a need. We also respectfully ask that students not bring such items as iPods/MP3 players, toys, cards, and electronic game devices to school. We encourage physical activity at recess rather than sedentary activities. If a student brings and uses such a device as an electronic game or cell phone during school, we will keep the device until a parent picks it up. A second offense will result in forfeiting the item until the end of the school year. The school will not be held responsible for the theft of such items as cell phones, personal stereos, electronic games, or other personal items brought from home. Teachers may allow the use of electronic devices for educational purposes.

Food, Candy, and Gum

We have earned the recognition in the past of being a “Gold Medal School” through daily physical activity, giving non-food rewards, and teaching and encouraging our students to follow “healthy lifestyles”. With the alarming rise in the rate of childhood obesity and diabetes, we have become a “non-food reward and healthy lifestyle school”. Although you may choose to send lunch or snacks from home for your child, we respectfully ask that you not send with your student either as a snack or lunch *non- healthy foods such as candy, gum and soda*, since these foods are not offered or served to students by the school. Gum is not allowed at school due to the extra burden it places on maintenance staff.

Counseling Services

Uintah School District has no elementary school counselors. If you have concerns about your child's emotional well-being, please come in and speak with the teacher and/or principal.

Student Placement and Classroom Changes

Students are placed in classes based on balancing classes according to reading level, boys and girls, etc. No class changes will be considered before the second grading period. If you have a concern regarding your student's teacher, the following process should be followed:

1. Write down your concerns and what you feel needs to happen to resolve the problem.
2. Make an appointment with the classroom teacher to discuss concerns and solutions and agree to a plan with your student and the teacher.
3. Observe the class. No class change will be made until the parent has observed the interaction between teacher and student and has provided feedback to the teacher to help rectify the problem.
4. If the above efforts have not been effective, the parent may request a meeting with the principal

Parent Input for Teacher and Administrators Evaluations:

The Uintah School District homepage provides a link to an evaluation form for parents to use at any time for their students' teacher and school administrator.

You may print the form and bring it to the school. A hard copy will also be available at the front office in each school.

Emergency Evacuation Procedures

Discovery has in place an emergency evacuation plan for fire, natural disasters, and intruders. In the case of a dangerous intruder, we have a “lockdown” plan in place until evacuation is considered safe. We are required to practice for one of these emergencies once each month. If it is necessary to evacuate students permanently for the day and buses cannot pick up students to deliver them home, the automatic calling service from the school district office and media will notify parents of when and where to pick up their students from Discovery Elementary.

Student Dress Code

In the interest of health, safety, cleanliness, decency, and decorum among students in the Uintah School District, the school board has adopted the following regulations:

1. Student(s) working in areas where rotating machinery is used, shall wear appropriate head coverings or have his/her hair cut so it cannot be caught in any part of a machine.
2. Students working in a cafeteria (or any other food service area) shall wear appropriate head coverings.
3. Immodest clothing which results in the disruption of the educational climate such as **baggy, low-hanging pants**, tank tops, halter tops, tube tops,

excessively tight or excessively short clothing is prohibited. Skirts, shorts, etc. must be no shorter than the top of the knee. Administrators and staff will make the necessary judgment.

4. Clothing, accessories, and other personal adornments which display inappropriate language or illustrations, or which promote violence, alcohol, drugs, or tobacco are prohibited at school or at school-sponsored activities.
5. Clothing, accessories, and personal adornments which display gang symbols are prohibited at school or at school-sponsored activities.
Definition: Gang symbols include any article **or color** of clothing, badge, sign, lettering, hairdo, jewelry, emblem, symbol or other personal display or adornment, which is intended by a student, or is recognized or acknowledged by students, to designate a gang or to signify affiliation with, participation in, or approval of a gang.
6. No hats are to be carried or worn in the building except for special school activities.
7. In all matters relating to individual dress and grooming, students in the Uintah School District are required to exercise good judgment, exhibit responsible behavior, and endeavor to reflect respect for themselves, their school, and their community.
8. Nothing in these regulations is intended to intrude on the constitutional or statutory rights of any student, as long as, on the exercise of these rights, students do not create a threat to the good order of the school or cause the disruption of any

recognized school function. The exercise of such rights by students must be consistent with the public purposes for which the public schools have been established.

Any student coming to school dressed inappropriately according to the Uintah School District Policy and the criteria listed above will be sent to the office, their parents/guardian called, and the unacceptable clothing will be changed so the student can stay at school. The entire policy (007.0215) is available for review at each school or online at www.uintah.net under “district information”.

Based on safety concerns, Discovery Elementary asks that students not wear “**flip flops**” and shoes that are not tied or secured to the foot. Students suffer toe and foot injuries when the foot is exposed or shoes are not tied.