



DISCOVERY CHARTER SCHOOL

FAMILY HANDBOOK

2016-2017

4100 66th St E Inver Grove Heights MN 55076

DCS Family Handbook
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**Main Phone Number:
651-444-8464**

**Attendance Line:
651-444-8464**

While Discovery Charter School will make every effort to keep your school handbook current, the information and policies described/referenced in this handbook may be changed in any way at any time at the sole discretion of the Discovery Charter School Board of Directors and/or Administration. Your family is responsible to comply with current Discovery Charter School policy at all times. These policies apply to all students at Discovery Charter School.

Vision Statement

Discovery Charter School (DCS) will embrace a multidisciplinary curriculum with an emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) to provide a challenging learning environment that values creativity, diversity and multiculturalism to prepare its students for life-long learning, collaboration, critical thinking and problem solving.

Mission Statement

Discovery Charter School's (DCS) mission is to prepare students to become excellent questioners, scientific thinkers and responsible citizens. Students will work respectfully and collaboratively applying scientific, technological and mathematical concepts and principles to develop a strong work ethic and critical thinking skills needed to solve problems in the real world and to prepare them for future academic success.

SCHOOL CONTACT INFORMATION

Main Number: 651-444-8464
Absentee Line: 651-444-8464
Attendance email:
alanda@discoverymn.org

Email: info@discoverymn.org.
Website: www.discoverymn.org

SCHOOL HOURS

The 2016-2017 school hours are 8:00 a.m. to 2:40 p.m. for all grades Monday through Friday. Students will not be permitted to enter the building prior to 7:45 a.m., unless part of Discovery Club (the before/after school program). All doors are locked throughout the school day. Students must be picked up from the school at 2:40 p.m. unless they are part of the Discovery Club. Parents/guardians may enter the building for parent pick-up at 2:40p.m. and no sooner. For security and safety reasons, the entryway doors will not be unlocked until 2:35p.m. After 2:45 p.m. your child will be placed at Discovery' Club and fees will apply and will be billed. The fee will be \$15.

SCHOOL VISITORS

Visitors are welcome! DCS desires a partnership between teachers, students, parents, and community. When arriving at the school, all visitors must check in at the school office, sign in, and take/wear a visitor lanyard or sticker. The lanyard/sticker must be worn at all times. Volunteers must have scheduled volunteer times in advance with a classroom teacher/staff member or school Volunteer Coordinator.

EMERGENCY AND HEALTH FORMS

Parents have received Emergency and Health Forms to be filled out and returned to the school office by the first day of school. It is very important that the emergency contact information be accurate and up-to-date. If the information changes, please notify the schools' office as soon as possible at 651-444-8464 or alanda@discoverymn.org

CHANGE OF ADDRESS/PHONE NUMBERS

Parent/guardian should notify the school office as soon as possible concerning changes in the home/work phone numbers and/or addresses.

SCHOOL CLOSING ANNOUNCEMENTS

Discovery Charter School students are transported by Monarch Bus Company; our school will not be open if ISD 199 schools are closed. Discovery Charter School closing will be announced on WCCO 4, WCCO radio, KSTP 5, Fox 9, KARE 11, and our website at www.discoverymn.org.

VOLUNTEERS AND BACKGROUND CHECKS

Discovery Charter School authorizer is the Novation Education Opportunities (NEO). Both NEO and DCS strive for community involvement. Because DCS strives to maintain a safe and healthful environment in order to promote the physical, social and psychological wellbeing of its students, we are requiring all volunteers to submit to a criminal history background check that they have responsibility for completing. Background check forms can be obtained from our Main office. Volunteers must have scheduled volunteer times in advance with a classroom teacher/staff member or school Volunteer Coordinator.

THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE POLICY

All students will be led in the Pledge of Allegiance at least once a week. Anyone who does not wish to participate in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance for any personal reasons may elect not to do so. Please refer to Discovery Charter School policy manual for the complete policy which can be found on our website at www.discoverymn.org

STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

The DCS Board believes that regular school attendance is directly related to success in academic work. Class attendance is a joint responsibility to be shared by the student, parent or guardian, teacher, and administrators. It is the student's responsibility to attend all assigned classes every day that school is in session and to request any missed assignments due to an absence. Please refer to Discovery Charter School's policy manual for the complete policy which can be found on our website at www.discoverymn.org.

PARENT/GUARDIAN ABSENCE

If parents/guardians will be away from home and the student will be under the supervision of another person, parents/guardians are asked to call or send a note to the office giving the dates they will be away, the name of the person with whom the student will be staying, along with telephone numbers where this caretaker may be reached during the school day.

EXCUSING EARLY FROM SCHOOL

For the security of our students, please follow these guidelines when you need to have your child excused early from school. These same safety measures apply if a student will be leaving school at the end of the day by means other than their “regular” way.

1. The school will accept a phone call, e-mail, a note from home, or the parent coming in when the need arises to excuse a student from school early.
2. In all cases the student must be signed out in the office by the person picking up the child.
3. The person requesting the student to be excused early will need to show a valid I.D.
4. Students must be picked up from the office and not from the classroom unless under special circumstances.
5. All students will need written or verbal permission from the parent/guardian if the child is to be picked up by someone other than their parent or legal guardian if this information is not on the dismissal form.
6. If parents are picking up early, they must use DCS’s main entrance. The main entrance doors will be locked for security.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

Monarch Bus Company and SAAFRI Transportation will provide school bus transportation for students. Transportation forms must be completed yearly. For temporary changes contact Alicia Landa via email alanda@discoverymn.org. Bus drivers cannot accept notes for changes.

No student is allowed to ride a bus other than the bus to which he/she was assigned. Students can only be dropped off at their designated spot on the bus route.

LOST AND FOUND

DCS is not responsible for replacing lost or stolen property. Securing valuable items in the school setting is difficult. The lost and found is located by the main office at the school. It is emptied several times a year, with notice to parents. All items are brought to a local donation drop site, shelter or donated to another school.

SCHOOL UNIFORM POLICY

As part of our focus on safety and academic excellence, children attending Discovery Charter School are required to wear uniforms. The purpose of this policy is to minimize distraction, promote appropriate student behavior, alleviate peer pressure, and promote and encourage school spirit.

Boys Grades K-6 Uniforms:

Slacks: Khaki or navy blue (**No** sweatpants or jeans please)

Shorts: Khaki or navy blue

Shirts: white or navy blue or light blue with school logo, long or short sleeve—white, navy blue or light blue with school logo. Please visit <http://discoverychartermn.epluno.com/>

No sweatshirts (DCS sweatshirts and/or school colors Navy, White, Light Blue are acceptable)

No ribbed or cable knits

Socks: Solid colors—navy blue or white

Shoes: Any dress shoe, sandal or athletic shoe is acceptable **No** flip flops, roller shoes.

Girls Grades K-6 Uniforms:

Pants/Capris: Khaki or navy blue (No sweatpants, jeans or leggings please)

Shorts: Khaki or navy blue

No short shorts, camp shorts, gym shorts, tennis shorts, or cut-offs

Jumpers/Skirts/Skort: Jumper, skirt, or skort—khaki or navy blue (Jumpers must have school logo)

Blouses: White or navy blue with school logo Knit shirts with collar, long or short sleeve—white or navy blue with school logo

Navy blue fleece pullovers with a DCS logo

No sweatshirts (DCS sweatshirts and/or school colors Navy, White, Light Blue are acceptable)

No ribbed or cable knits

No shawls or ponchos

Socks/Tights: Solid colors—navy blue or white

Shoes: Any dress shoes, sandal or athletic shoe is acceptable No flip flops, roller shoes.

STUDENT DRESS AND APPEARANCE POLICY

It is the policy of DCS to encourage students to be dressed appropriately for school activities and in keeping with community standards. This is a joint responsibility of the student and the student's parent(s) or guardian(s). Any apparel that is sexually suggestive, promotes alcohol or drug use, or bearing a message that is lewd, vulgar or obscene is not acceptable. If students violate this policy, they will be sent to the office to change clothes before continuing the school day. Students who refuse to change will be sent home. Repeated infractions or failure to comply with administrators or staff members will result in further disciplinary action. Please refer to Discovery Charter School policy manual for the complete policy.

CELL PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONICS

All types of electronic devices are a distraction to the learning environment and must be off and out of sight during school hours in the school building or at school related events unless given special authorization by administration. Any staff member can confiscate them.

The following procedures will be used for noncompliance:

1. First offense, confiscate for remainder of day.
2. Second offense, confiscation and only returned to parent/guardian.
3. Repeated infractions or failure to comply with administrators or staff members will result in further disciplinary action.

The school is not responsible if such items are lost, stolen or damaged. We recommend that students not bring them to school.

SEARCH OF STUDENT LOCKERS, DESK, AND PERSONAL POSSESSIONS AND STUDENT'S PERSONS

Search of Student Lockers, Desks, Personal Possessions and Student's Person, which can be found on our website, www.discoverymn.org.

KINDERGARTEN LOTTERY POLICY/ENROLLMENT POLICY

DCS practices an enrollment process that is fair and balanced. DCS will not limit admission or establish any criteria or requirements for admission that are inconsistent with MN Statutes 124D.10 subdivisions 9. The application for the upcoming school year will be available on our website or in the front office in December. All applications must be received by the last business day in January to be included in the lottery. The lottery for children eligible to enter Kindergarten in September will be held each year on the first business day in February. The lottery system will also be utilized to create the waiting lists for new students entering DCS.

WITHDRAWALS/TRANSFERS

Parents/guardians of students transferring to another school are asked to notify the office in writing at least five days before the student's last day of attendance. The student must turn in any textbooks or other school property. The parent/guardian is financially responsible for any damaged books or property and will be expected to bring to balance any delinquent lunch accounts.

ILLNESS GUIDELINES

DCS wishes to maintain a healthy environment for our students and staff. Please follow these guidelines when evaluating your child's attendance at school:

Common colds: We recommend that students stay home for the first day or two of a cold when they are the most contagious.

Do not send your student to school if:

1. The student has had a fever of 100 degrees or more, they must stay home for 24 hours after their temperature is below 100 without fever reducing medication.
2. The student has vomiting or diarrhea, they must stay home for 24 hours after the last episode.
3. The student has a rash of unknown origin. Rashes can be a symptom of a contagious disease. Have the student evaluated by a medical care provider before returning to school.
4. For each day that your child is ill and will not be attending school, call the school office or email alanda@discoverymn.org to report the absence by 7:30 a.m. Calls to parents/guardians of students noted as absent by their teacher will be made if the office has not been informed prior to 8:00 a.m. and will be considered an unexcused absence.

STUDENT MEDICATION POLICY

The administration of prescription medication at school requires a completed signed request from the student's parent/guardian and licensed medical provider. The administration of over the counter medication at school requires a completed signed request from the student's parent/guardian and, at the discretion of the school, or the signature of a licensed medical provider.

CLASSROOM TREATS

Special occasions, such as the student's birthdays, may be recognized in the classroom by the sharing of treats. Any food brought from home for this event or any event must be commercially prepared and in a sealed, unopened package and **should not contain peanuts**. If your child has any food allergies, please inform the student's teacher and notate this on the Discovery Charter School Health Form. Please be aware that there may be students in your child's class who have food allergies. Families will be notified by their classroom teacher if this pertains to your child's class. Please keep this in mind as snacks are sent to school.

FREE AND REDUCED LUNCH PROGRAM

The Free and Reduced-Price School Lunch Program is a state and federally funded plan to help student(s) who come from families whose financial situation might prevent the student(s) from receiving a healthy meal. Discovery Charter School offers Free and Reduced lunches for families that qualify. Please contact Shannon Benalshaikh at sbenalshaikh@discoverymn.org or 651 219-4661 with questions. Application forms can be found in DCS's main office. A new application must be filled out every year.

FIELD TRIPS POLICY

It is the general expectation of the DCS Board of Directors that all field trips will be well planned, conducted in an orderly manner and in a safe environment. The field trip will relate directly to the objectives of the class or activity for which the trip is requested. Please refer to our website at www.discvoerymn.org

CHAPERONES

Discovery Charter School strives to give each enrolled family an opportunity to attend a field trip as a chaperone. Unfortunately, families with multiple children may not be able to be selected as a chaperone for each of their children's field trips. All chaperones must provide a criminal background checks prior to attending the field trip.

Field trips offer a limited number of free chaperone positions. We will do our best to be fair and spread the chaperone responsibilities amongst the families. Please check with your teacher to see if additional parents may attend the field trip at their own expense. Parents in this category can only be responsible for their own child in this scenario and must provide for their own transportation.

PARENT FIELDTRIP TRANSPORT FORM

If you wish to transport your child to and/or from a field trip in your own vehicle, a Parent Transport Form must be filled out in the office for safety reasons prior to the field trip.

MOVIES

At times, a G rated movie is educationally beneficial or may be viewed as a reward. In order to show a video with a "PG" rating to students, parents/guardians will be notified prior to showing the video. We will never show a "PG- 13" or "R" rated video.

OUTDOOR RECESS

Attire: Students will go outside for recess in suitable weather above 0 degrees (including wind-chill). Boots, scarves, jackets, mittens, and other appropriate seasonal clothing may be needed. Please mark your child's outerwear with their name for identification purposes. Children who do not have suitable weather dress may need to remain indoors for recess.

- 1. Behavior:** To insure a safe and enjoyable recess for all students, certain conduct will not be tolerated.
 - **Disrespect** to other students, parent volunteers, staff, and equipment.
 - **Verbal abuse** is statements made directly or indirectly to other students or staff that is obscene, degrading, or meant to intimidate, embarrass, or humiliate.
 - **Physical abuse** is an assault. Each student attending DCS is entitled to feel personally safe at school. Personal safety concerns will be addressed and investigated by school personnel, local police, and/or social service agencies.
- 2. Health Issues:** Recess is an important part of the student's day. There are many positive benefits of physical activity for children. If a student is unable to participate in recess due to health concerns, a physician's note needs to be kept on file with the school nurse and the WLA office.
- 3. Recess Supervision:** No child will be allowed outside during the regular school day without adult supervision by school personnel or qualified volunteer staff.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY

DCS recognizes that individual responsibility and mutual respect are essential components of the educational process. All students are entitled to learn and develop in a setting which promotes respect of self, others, and property. Proper positive discipline can only result from an environment, which provides options and stresses student self-direction, decision-making, and responsibility. Teachers, the Dean of Students, and the Director handle student discipline when necessary. Please refer to Discovery Charter School policy manual for the complete policy which can be found on our website at www.discoverymn.org

CLASSROOM PLACEMENT

It is our goal at Discovery Charter School to place students in a classroom that will best meet their needs. In doing this, we take the following information into account: academic achievement, gender balance, social needs, learning styles, parental input and special needs. While it is our responsibility to make up class lists, parents may have particular needs or concerns that would be helpful to us in preparing classes for the next school year. If you have information that would be helpful to us, please pick up a classroom placement form in the office to fill out. **The deadline for this information is the second Friday in April. Because we must consider many factors in preparing lists, specific teacher requests are discouraged and cannot always be honored.**

HARASSMENT AND VIOLENCE

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from harassment and violence on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or disability.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. The policy of Discovery Charter School is to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from harassment and violence on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or disability. Discovery Charter School prohibits any form of harassment or violence on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or disability.
- B. A violation of this policy occurs when any pupil, teacher, administrator, or other school personnel of Discovery Charter School harasses a pupil, teacher, administrator, or other school personnel or group of pupils, teachers, administrators, or other school personnel through conduct or communication based on a person's race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or disability, as defined by this policy. (For purposes of this policy, school personnel include school board members, school employees, agents, volunteers, contractors, or persons subject to the supervision and control of the district.)

- C. A violation of this policy occurs when any pupil, teacher, administrator, or other school personnel of Discovery Charter School inflicts, threatens to inflict, or attempts to inflict violence upon any pupil, teacher, administrator, or other school personnel or group of pupils, teachers, administrators, or other school personnel based on a person's race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or disability.
- D. Discovery Charter School will act to investigate all complaints, either formal or informal, verbal or written, of harassment or violence based on a person's race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or disability, and to discipline or take appropriate action against any pupil, teacher, administrator, or other school personnel who is found to have violated this policy.

III. DEFINITIONS

- 1. has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or academic environment;
 - 2. has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance; or
 - 3. otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment or academic opportunities.
- B. "Immediately" means as soon as possible but in no event longer than 24 hours.
- C. Protected Classifications; Definitions
- 1. "Age" means the person is over the age of 25 years.
 - 2. "Disability" means any condition or characteristic that renders a person a disabled person. A disabled person is any person who:
 - a. has a physical, sensory, or mental impairment which materially limits one or more major life activities;
 - b. has a record of such an impairment; or
 - c. is regarded as having such an impairment.
 - 3. "Familial status" means the condition of one or more minors being domiciled with:
 - a. their parent or parents or the minor's legal guardian; or
 - b. the designee of the parent or parents or guardian with the written permission of the parent or parents or guardian. The protections afforded against harassment on the basis of family status apply to any person who is pregnant or is in the process of securing legal custody of an individual who has not attained the age of majority.

4. “Marital status” means whether a person is single, married, remarried, divorced, separated, or a surviving spouse and, in employment cases, includes protection against harassment on the basis of the identity, situation, actions, or beliefs of a spouse or former spouse.
5. “National origin” means the place of birth of an individual or of any of the individual’s lineal ancestors.
6. “Sex” includes, but is not limited to, pregnancy, childbirth, and disabilities related to pregnancy or childbirth.
7. “Sexual orientation” means having or being perceived as having an emotional, physical, or sexual attachment to another person without regard to the sex of that person or having or being perceived as having an orientation for such attachment.

D. Sexual Harassment; Definition

1. Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical conduct or other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature when:
 - a. submission to that conduct or communication is made a term or condition, either explicitly or implicitly, of obtaining employment or an education; or
 - b. submission to or rejection of that conduct or communication by an individual is used as a factor in decisions affecting that individual’s employment or education; or
 - c. that conduct or communication has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual’s employment or education, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive employment or educational environment.
2. Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to:
 - a. unwelcome verbal harassment or abuse;
 - b. unwelcome pressure for sexual activity;
 - c. unwelcome, sexually motivated, or inappropriate patting, pinching, or physical contact, other than necessary restraint of pupil(s) by teachers, administrators, or other school personnel to avoid physical harm to persons or property;
 - d. unwelcome sexual behavior or words, including demands for sexual favors, accompanied by implied or overt threats concerning an individual’s employment or educational status;
 - e. unwelcome sexual behavior or words, including demands for sexual favors, accompanied by implied or overt promises of preferential treatment with regard to an individual’s employment or educational status; or

E. Sexual Violence; Definition

1. Sexual violence is a physical act of aggression or force or the threat thereof which involves the touching of another's intimate parts, or forcing a person to touch any person's intimate parts. Intimate parts, as defined in Minn. Stat. § 609.341, includes the primary genital area, groin, inner thigh, buttocks, or breast, as well as the clothing covering these areas.

2. Sexual violence may include, but is not limited to:

- a. touching, patting, grabbing, or pinching another person's intimate parts, whether that person is of the same sex or the opposite sex;
- b. coercing, forcing, or attempting to coerce or force the touching of anyone's intimate parts;
- c. coercing, forcing, or attempting to coerce or force sexual intercourse or a sexual act on another; or
- d. threatening to force or coerce sexual acts, including the touching of intimate parts or intercourse, on another.

F. Violence; Definition

Violence prohibited by this policy is a physical act of aggression or assault upon another or group of individuals because of, or in a manner reasonably related to, race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or disability.

IV. REPORTING PROCEDURES

A. Any person who believes he or she has been the victim of harassment or violence on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or disability by a pupil, teacher, administrator, or other school personnel of Discovery Charter School, or any person with knowledge or belief of conduct which may constitute harassment or violence prohibited by this policy toward a pupil, teacher, administrator, or other school personnel or group of pupils, teachers, administrators, or other school personnel should report the alleged acts immediately to an appropriate school official designated by this policy. Discovery Charter School encourages the reporting party or complainant to use the report form available from the Discovery Charter School Dean of Student, but oral reports shall be considered complaints as well. Nothing in this policy shall prevent any person from reporting harassment or violence directly to a school human rights officer or to the administration.

- B. **In Each School Building.** The Director, the Director's designee, is the person responsible for receiving oral or written reports of harassment or violence prohibited by this policy at the building level. Any adult school personnel who receives a report of harassment or violence prohibited by this policy shall inform the building report taker immediately. If the complaint involves the building report taker, the complaint shall be made or filed directly with the administration or Discovery Charter School human rights officer by the reporting party or complainant. School personnel who fail to inform the building report taker of a report of harassment or violence in a timely manner may be subject to disciplinary action.
- C. Upon receipt of a report, the building report taker must notify Discovery Charter School human rights officer immediately, without screening or investigating the report. The building report taker may request, but may not insist upon, a written complaint. A written statement of the facts alleged will be forwarded as soon as practicable by the building report taker to the human rights officer. If the report was given verbally, the building report taker shall personally reduce it to written form within 24 hours and forward it to the human rights officer. Failure to forward any harassment or violence report or complaint as provided herein may result in disciplinary action against the building report taker.
- D. **In the School.** The school board hereby designates the Director as Discovery Charter School human rights officer(s) to receive reports or complaints of harassment or violence prohibited by this policy. If the complaint involves a human rights officer, the complaint shall be filed directly with the administration.
- E. Discovery Charter School shall conspicuously post the name of the human rights officer(s), including mailing addresses and telephone numbers.
- F. Submission of a good faith complaint or report of harassment or violence prohibited by this policy will not affect the complainant or reporter's future employment, grades, or work assignments.
- G. Use of formal reporting forms is not mandatory.
- H. Reports of harassment or violence prohibited by this policy are classified as private educational and/or personnel data and/or confidential investigative data and will not be disclosed except as permitted by law. Discovery Charter School will respect the privacy of the complainant(s), the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and the witnesses as much as possible, consistent with Discovery Charter School's legal obligations to investigate, to take appropriate action, and to comply with any discovery or disclosure obligations.

V. INVESTIGATION

- A. By authority of Discovery Charter School, the human rights officer, upon receipt of a report or complaint alleging harassment or violence prohibited by this policy, shall immediately undertake or authorize an investigation. The investigation may be conducted by school officials or by a third party designated by Discovery Charter School.
- B. The investigation may consist of personal interviews with the complainant, the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and others who may have knowledge of the alleged incident(s) or circumstances giving rise to the complaint. The investigation may also consist of any other methods and documents deemed pertinent by the investigator.

In determining whether alleged conduct constitutes a violation of this policy, Discovery Charter School should consider the surrounding circumstances, the nature of the behavior, past incidents or past or continuing patterns of behavior, the relationships between the parties involved, and the context in which the alleged incidents occurred. Whether a particular action or incident constitutes a violation of this policy requires a determination based on all the facts and surrounding circumstances.

- C. In addition, Discovery Charter School may take immediate steps, at its discretion, to protect the complainant, pupils, teachers, administrators, or other school personnel pending completion of an investigation of alleged harassment or violence prohibited by this policy.
- D. The investigation will be completed as soon as practicable. Discovery Charter School human rights officer shall make a written report to the administration upon completion of the investigation. If the complaint involves the administration, the report may be filed directly with the school board. The report shall include a determination of whether the allegations have been substantiated as factual and whether they appear to be violations of this policy.

VI. SCHOOL ACTION

- A. Upon completion of the investigation, Discovery Charter School will take appropriate action. Such action may include, but is not limited to, warning, suspension, exclusion, expulsion, transfer, remediation, termination, or discharge. School action taken for violation of this policy will be consistent with requirements of applicable collective bargaining agreements, Minnesota and federal law, and school policies.

- B. The result of Discovery Charter School's investigation of each complaint filed under these procedures will be reported in writing to the complainant by Discovery Charter School in accordance with state and federal law regarding data or records privacy.

VII. REPRISAL

Discovery Charter School will discipline or take appropriate action against any pupil, teacher, administrator, or other school personnel who retaliates against any person who makes a good faith report of alleged harassment or violence prohibited by this policy or any person who testifies, assists, or participates in an investigation, or who testifies, assists, or participates in a proceeding or hearing relating to such harassment or violence. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal, harassment, or intentional disparate treatment.

VIII. RIGHT TO ALTERNATIVE COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

These procedures do not deny the right of any individual to pursue other avenues of recourse which may include filing charges with the Minnesota Department of Human Rights, initiating civil action, or seeking redress under state criminal statutes and/or federal law.

IX. HARASSMENT OR VIOLENCE AS ABUSE

- A. Under certain circumstances, alleged harassment or violence may also be possible abuse under Minnesota law. If so, the duties of mandatory reporting under Minn. Stat. § 626.556 may be applicable.
- B. Nothing in this policy will prohibit Discovery Charter School from taking immediate action to protect victims of alleged harassment, violence, or abuse.

X. DISSEMINATION OF POLICY AND TRAINING

- A. This policy shall be conspicuously posted throughout each school building in areas accessible to pupils and staff members.
- B. This policy shall be given to each school employee and independent contractor at the time of entering into the person's employment contract.
- C. This policy shall appear in the student handbook.
- D. Discovery Charter School will develop a method of discussing this policy with students and employees.
- E. This policy shall be reviewed at least annually for compliance with state and federal law.

VIOLENCE PREVENTION POLICY

DCS is committed to promoting healthy human relationships and learning environments that are physically and psychologically safe for all members of the school community. It further believes that students are the first priority and they should be protected from physical or emotional harm during school activities, and on school grounds, buses, or field trips while under school supervision.

INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE AND SAFETY POLICY

DCS is providing students and employees with access to the DCS computer system, which includes internet access. The purpose of the system is more specific than providing students and employees with general access to the internet. The DCS computer system has a limited educational purpose, which includes use of the system for classroom activities, educational research, and professional or career development activities. Users are expected to use internet access through the school to further educational and personal goals consistent with the mission of DCS and school policies. Uses which might be acceptable on a user's private personal account on another system may not be acceptable on this limited-purpose network.

Students and parents/guardians are required to sign an internet acceptable use form allowing their child to utilize DCS internet access. The forms will be provided to students by their classroom teacher. The signed forms must be returned prior to students having access to the DCS computer system.

BULLYING POLICY

A safe and civil environment is needed for students to learn and attain high academic standards and to promote healthy human relationships. Bullying, like other violent or disruptive behavior, is conduct that interferes with students' ability to learn and teachers' ability to educate students in a safe environment. Discovery Charter School cannot monitor the activities of students at all times and eliminate all incidents of bullying between students, particularly when students are not under the direct supervision of school personnel. However, to the extent such conduct affects the educational environment of DCS and the rights and welfare of its students and is within the control of DCS in its normal operations, it is DCS's intent to prevent bullying and to take action to investigate, respond, remediate, and discipline those acts of bullying which have not been successfully prevented. Appropriate administrative and staff follow-up will be provided for targets and offenders of bullying. The purpose of this policy is to assist DCS in its goal of preventing and responding to acts of bullying, intimidation, violence, and other similar disruptive behavior.

SCHOOL WEAPONS POLICY

Discovery Charter School takes a firm "Zero Tolerance" position on the possession, use or distribution of weapons by students, and a similar position with regard to nonstudents. Please refer to Discovery Charter School's policy manual for the complete policy which can be found on our website at www.discoverymn.org

CHEMICAL USE/POSSESSION

Discovery Charter School will not allow the use, possession, or distribution of illegal drugs, over-the-counter medications, and alcohol by students as it jeopardizes personal safety and interferes with the learning process. A written and signed permission slip for some over-the-counter medications that are deemed necessary for the student to remain in school may be turned into the school nurse. **All** over-the-counter medications must be kept in the main office.

TOBACCO-FREE ENVIRONMENT

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to maintain a learning and working environment that is tobacco free.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. A violation of this policy occurs when any student, teacher, administrator, other school personnel of Discovery Charter School, or person smokes or uses tobacco, tobacco-related devices, or electronic cigarettes in a public school. This prohibition extends to all facilities, whether owned, rented, or leased, and all vehicles that a school owns, leases, rents, contracts for, or controls. In addition, this prohibition includes vehicles used, in whole or in part, for work purposes, during hours of school operation, if more than one person is present. This prohibition includes all school property and all off-campus events sponsored by Discovery Charter School.
- B. A violation of this policy occurs when any elementary school, student possesses any type of tobacco, tobacco-related device, or electronic cigarette in a public school. This prohibition extends to all facilities, whether owned, rented, or leased, and all vehicles that a school owns, leases, rents, contracts for, or controls and includes vehicles used, in whole or in part, for work purposes, during hours of school operation, if more than one person is present. This prohibition includes all school property and all off-campus events sponsored by Discovery Charter School.

III. TOBACCO AND TOBACCO-RELATED DEVICES DEFINED

- A. “Electronic cigarette” means any oral device that provides a vapor of liquid nicotine, lobelia, and/or other similar substance, and the use or inhalation of which simulates smoking. The term shall include any such devices, whether they are manufactured, distributed, marketed, or sold as e-cigarettes, e-cigars, e-pipes, or under another product name or descriptor.

- B. “Tobacco” means cigarettes and any product containing, made, or derived from tobacco that is intended for human consumption, whether chewed, smoked, absorbed, dissolved, inhaled, snorted, sniffed, or ingested by any other means, or any component, part, or accessory of a tobacco product; cigars; cheroots; stogies; perique; granulated, plug cut, crimp cut, ready rubbed, and other smoking tobacco; snuff; snuff flour; plug and twist tobacco; fine cut and other chewing tobacco; shorts; refuse scraps, clippings, cuttings and sweepings of tobacco; and other kinds and forms of tobacco.
- C. “Tobacco-related devices” means cigarette papers or pipes for smoking.
- D. “Smoking” means inhaling or exhaling smoke from any lighted cigar, cigarette, pipe, or any other lighted tobacco or plant product. Smoking also includes carrying a lighted cigar, cigarette, pipe, or any other lighted tobacco or plant product intended for inhalation.

IV. EXCEPTIONS

- A. A violation of this policy does not occur when a Native American adult lights tobacco on school property as a part of a traditional Native American spiritual or cultural ceremony. A Native American is a person who is a member of an Indian tribe as defined under Minnesota law.
- B. A violation of this policy does not occur when an adult nonstudent possesses a tobacco or nicotine product that has been approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration for sale as a tobacco cessation product, as a tobacco dependence product, or for other medical purposes, and is being marketed and sold solely for such an approved purpose.

V. ENFORCEMENT

- A. All individuals on school premises shall adhere to this policy.
- B. Students who violate this tobacco-free policy shall be subject to school discipline procedures.
- C. School administrators and other school personnel who violate this tobacco-free policy shall be subject to school discipline procedures.
- D. School action taken for violation of this policy will be consistent with requirements of applicable collective bargaining agreements, Minnesota or federal law, and school policies.
- E. Persons who violate this tobacco-free policy may be referred to the building administration or other school supervisory personnel responsible for the area or program at which the violation occurred.

- F. School administrators may call the local law enforcement agency to assist with enforcement of this policy. Smoking or use of any tobacco product in a public school is a violation of the Minnesota Clean Indoor Air Act and/or the Freedom to Breathe Act of 2007 and is a petty misdemeanor. A court injunction may be instituted against a repeated violator.
- G. No persons shall be discharged, refused to be hired, penalized, discriminated against, or in any manner retaliated against for exercising any right to a smoke-free environment provided by the Freedom to Breathe Act of 2007 or other law.

VI. DISSEMINATION OF POLICY

- A. This policy shall appear in the student handbook.
- B. Discovery Charter School will develop a method of discussing this policy with students and employees.

SEARCH OF STUDENT LOCKERS, DESKS, PERSONAL POSSESSIONS AND STUDENT'S PERSON POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to provide for a safe and healthful educational environment by enforcing Discovery Charter School's policies against contraband. DCS has the right to search a student's lockers, desks, personal possessions or person if DCS officials have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover a violation of law or school rules. Please refer to Discovery Charter School's policy manual for the complete policy which can be found on our website at www.discoverymn.org

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that equal educational opportunity is provided for all students of DCS. Please refer to Discovery Charter School's policy manual for the complete policy which can be found on our website at www.discoverymn.org

DATA PRIVACY CONSIDERATIONS POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to provide due process and privacy rights of individuals under the law. Please refer to Discovery Charter School's policy manual for the complete policy which can be found on our website at www.discoverymn.org

MANDATED REPORTING OF CHILD NEGLECT OR PHYSICAL OR SEXUAL ABUSE

It is the requirement of the school to fully comply with Minnesota statute requiring school personnel to report suspected child neglect or physical or sexual abuse. It shall be a violation for any school personnel to fail to immediately report instances of child neglect, or physical or sexual abuse when the school personnel knows or has reason to believe a child is being neglected or physically or sexually abused or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused within the preceding three years.

Mandated Reporters means any school personnel who knows or has reason to believe a child is being neglected or physically or sexually abused, or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused within the preceding three years.

DISTRIBUTION OF NONSCHOOL-SPONSORED MATERIALS ON SCHOOL PREMISES BY STUDENTS, FAMILY MEMBERS OF STUDENTS AND EMPLOYEES POLICY

To protect First Amendment rights, while at the same time preserving the integrity of the educational objectives and responsibilities of DCS, the DCS Board of Directors adopts regulations and procedures regarding distribution of non-school-sponsored material on school property and at school activities. Please refer to Discovery Charter School's policy manual for the complete policy which can be found on our website at www.discoverymn.org

SECTION 504 SERVICES FOR STUDENTS

All school districts must provide a free appropriate public education to eligible students. "Appropriate" means an education comparable to the education provided to non-handicapped students, but which may require reasonable accommodations.

Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 directs districts to provide these special accommodations or related services in the regular setting to identified students who do not qualify for special education (Individuals with Disabilities Act -IDEA) services."

Section 504 services could apply to any school-age child who (1) has or (2) has had a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits a major life activity, or (3) is regarded as handicapped by others. Major life activities include walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, working, caring for oneself, and performing manual tasks.

STUDENT DISABILITY NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to protect disabled students from discrimination on the basis of disability and to identify and evaluate learners who, within the intent of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, need services, accommodations, or programs in order that such learners may receive a free appropriate public education. Please refer to Discovery Charter School's policy manual for the complete policy which can be found on our website at www.discoverymn.org

STUDENT SEX NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

Students are protected from discrimination on the basis of sex pursuant to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and the Minnesota Human Rights Act. The purpose of this policy is to provide equal educational opportunity for all students and to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex. Please refer to Discovery Charter School's policy manual for the complete policy which can be found on our website at www.discoverymn.org

UPDATING POLICIES

The Director, with the DCS Board of Directors approval, has the right to change policies and procedures at any time without giving notice.

DCS Family Handbook

**Discovery Charter
school
4100 66th St E.
Inver grove heights, MN
55076
PHONE 651-444-8464**

Receipt of Family Handbook 2016-2017

Our DCS family has received and read the DS Family Handbook. We understand the rights, responsibilities and guidelines pertaining to students at DCS. We agree to abide by the rules, guidelines, procedures and policies of the school so that a safe learning environment is possible. Please return this signed form to the DCS Office. Thank you.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

Date _____

Student(s) attending DCS Signature(s) _____ Grade Level _____