

DIRECTORS QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

To submit questions, email dhurley@discoverymn.org or call 651 219-4673. Questions of a personal nature will be answered through personal correspondence. Questions that are more global will be answered below with the most recent questions at the top.

Why did DCS change school hours? Why did we find out in May?

I know it was difficult to hear about the school time adjustment in my last newsletter. The plan was to keep the same hours. On **May 4, 2017**, we had a meeting with Monarch Bus Company. Management of the bus company Joe Hangge, Dan Berg, and Grant Lind; met with me and my Operational Manager Shannon Benalshaikh to discuss the bussing needs for 2017-2018. In that meeting it was discussed that in order to keep transportation we may need to change school hours. As some know, I was not happy about any change, yet to keep transportation; Mr. Berg informed us we might need to change from a Tier one to a Tier two route. Mr. Berg did mention the possibility of working with Safeway bus Co. (which serves IGH). I contacted them and they no longer serve charter schools.

The ideal model layout of the Tier system is to keep the entire fleet of busses busy throughout the day. The duration of each school, the distance between them, the size of the service area, trip lengths and other factors make this approach more complex, and in turn, it generally yields results that are less than perfect. On **May 9, 2017**, Mr. Berg informed me, in order to provide cost effective service for all of the schools the Tier system needs to work. Unfortunately to make it work, we needed to switch to a Tier two system, which required an 8:40 a.m. start time and a 4:00 p.m. pick up. **However, with five buses students will not be on the busses for extended periods.** With this information now final, I needed to inform parents immediately, which I did on **May 11, 2017**. The bus route is being set-up by Monarch, and they will provide me the stops in the near future.

What are the new hours?

Discovery Club Opens at 6:00 a.m. until 8:40 a.m. The school day would start officially at 8:45 a.m. After 8:45 a.m., students will be tardy. We would start releasing students at 3:50 p.m. so the buses can leave at 4:00 p.m. Discovery Club would be from 4:00 p.m. until 5:30 p.m. (We understand traffic; snow may affect some parents, so we will remain flexible as we were this year). We will not change the pricing of Discovery Club (\$7.00) and we are looking at making the payment system easier for parents. This puts our official school day at 7 hours and 5 minutes. Currently, we officially start at 8:00 a.m. and end at 2:40pm (6 hours and 40 minutes). This increases our official school day by 20 minutes.

Do we have options for early release?

Although I do not recommend missing our academic STEM block (it is not extra-curricular), I am willing to work with parents, if they have a hardship because of this late dismissal. The earliest release is 3:15 p.m. Parents need to contact me with their hardship caused by this time change. Again, I do not recommend early release, but please contact me if this is essential.

What do Teachers think?

In conversation with teachers, they like the idea of having more time with students, as we were lacking a strong Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) block during the day. I have assigned Mr. Xiong as Curriculum Director, and his sole duty is to create a robust academic STEM block for our students and implement our middle school for 2018-2019. Mr. Xiong has already started working on this curriculum; it will set us apart from any school in the Metro! Finally, I am working with teachers to provide additional flex days, as happy teachers are important in a school! We only have two teachers leaving this year. Mrs. Whiting is returning to Arizona and Mrs. Fliegelman has decided to spend more time with her family. This should show the level of satisfaction amongst our staff. In addition, we have excellent new teachers joining our school community. DCS is only getting better, and we will not stop until we are the best!

Where do I get uniforms for next year?

You will be able to get your logo from two stores for next year. They also can supply you with pants and shirts.

Advanced Sportswear in Newport (1632 Hastings Ave, Newport, MN 55055)

Superior Image in South St. Paul (101 Bridgepoint Way, Suite 110, SSP, MN 55075).

We are not able to order yet, as they like to have groups of orders 1st. As soon as I have pricing I will pass that information along to parents.