
Student Handbook



2026-2027

Mission, Vision, & Values



Mission Statement

Discovering God, a love of learning, and a servant's heart.

Vision

- To develop creative and passionate life-long learners who demonstrate the love of God, wisdom of the Holy Spirit, and compassion of Jesus.
- To provide opportunities for students to grow as Jesus did (academically, physically, spiritually, and socially - Luke 2:52) through a strong academic foundation with hands-on projects and STEM based learning.

Values

We value LOVE: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind... and love your neighbor as yourself." Matthew 22:37-38

We value LEARNING: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Proverbs 22:6

We value SERVICE: "Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." Matthew 25:40

Statement of Faith:

At Discovery Christian Academy our values of love, learning, and service are based on the understanding that the Bible is the inspired Word of God. We believe that Jesus is the Son of God and that He was born of a virgin through the Holy Spirit. We believe that Jesus died on the cross and was raised on the third day so that we can live eternally in heaven with Him. Our view of morality is defined by following the examples that Jesus showed us on earth. Through Him, we can love God and others, learn to live the way He wants us to live, and give of ourselves to those in need. We also understand that God's grace and His forgiveness is the reason that we can follow Him.

2026-2027 School Calendar



August/September

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26

October

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
27	28	29	30	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

November

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

December

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

January

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

February

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

March

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

April

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	1

May

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

June

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

IMPORTANT DATES

August/September

- 26 First Day of School
- 7 No School: Labor Day
- 25 Picture Day

October

- 8 Field Trip: TBD
- 23 Fall Open House

November

- 11 No School: Veteran's Day
- 20 Thanksgiving Feast (12pm P/U)
- 23-27 No School: Thanksgiving Vacation

December

- 11 Christmas Dinner Theater
- 18 Class Christmas Party (12pm P/U)
- 21-31 No School: Christmas Vacation

January

- 1 No School: Christmas Vacation
- 18 Field Trip: TBD

February

- 5 TK-1st: 100th Day of School
- 11 All School Valentine Party
- 12 & 15 No School: President's Weekend

March

- 5 Spring Open House
- 25 Read-a-Thon Reward Field Trip
- 26-31 No School: Easter Vacation

April

- 1-2 No School: Easter Vacation
- 30 Field Trip: TBD

May

- 26 Year End Open House & Awards Ceremony
- 31 No School: Memorial Day

June

- 1 Field Day at Dos Vientos Park
- 2 Last Day of School (Min. Day)

* Some dates and events may vary slightly. Your family will be notified of any changes.

Daily Schedule



8:00 AM	Doors Open for Dropoff
8:15 AM	Bible Time (Prayer, Flag Salute, Worship, and Bible Lesson)
8:45 AM	Language Arts
9:45 AM	Snack and Morning Recess
10:15 AM	Calendar (TK-1 st) Silent Reading or Literature (2 nd -5 th)
10:45 AM	Mathematics
12:00 PM	Lunch / Afternoon Recess / Physical Education
1:15 PM	Science / Social Studies – Projects
2:15 PM	Clean Up / Pack Up
2:30 PM	Dismissal

*The above Daily Schedule is a general guideline and may vary slightly based on the needs of specific grade levels, special events, or other circumstances.

Required Student Supplies List



- 3 Boxes of Crayola Crayons (24 ct.)
- 1 Box of Crayola Broad Line Washable Markers (10 ct.)
- 6 Elmer's Glue Sticks
- 2 Packages of USA Gold #2 Pencils (12 ct.)
- 1 Pair of Scissors (5" for TK-1st, 7" for 2nd-5th)
- 1 Package of Pink Erasers (3 ct.)
- 1 Package of Black Sharpies, Fine (5 ct.)
- 1 Package of Expo Markers (chisel tip)
- 1 Set of Crayola Watercolor Paints
- 1 Pair of Child Headphones w/3.5mm connector
- 4 Pack Kleenex Tissue Box Cubes
- 2 Reams 8 ½" x 11" Copy Paper

All students also need a 16" backpack and lunchbox that they can easily open and close without help.

Optional Classroom Donations

(These are things we use regularly at school. The following items are not required school supplies, but the donations are appreciated.)

- Hand Soap
- Clorox/Lysol Cleaning Wipes
- Huggies Baby Wipes
- Band Aids
- 8 ½" x 11" Colored Copy Paper
- White Cardstock
- Scotch Tape
- Jumbo Paper Clips
- Rubber Bands (Any Size)
- Staples
- Blue Painter's Tape
- Command Strips
- Velcro Dots
- Stickers
- Ziploc Bags, all sizes
- Paint Brushes
- Tissue Paper (Any Color)
- Popsicle Sticks (Any Size)
- Pipe Cleaners
- Wiggle Eyes (Any Size)

Academics

We pray that your child's God-given desire to learn is brought to life because of our approach to academics at Discovery Christian Academy.

Multi-Grade Clusters

Discovery Christian Academy is a one-room schoolhouse, reimagined to create classes and small groups using multi-age clusters. Allowing students to work with different grade levels benefits children in many ways. In a Project Based Learning environment, students are challenged by individual abilities. They will learn from older and younger classmates, as well as support their peers. This learning model also gives older students opportunities to build and expand their leadership skills. Our teaching philosophy encourages students to advance in academics, self-esteem, and social skills.

Solid Foundations

Bible Time: We use the *NirV Adventure Bible for Early Readers* by Zonderkidz in most of our daily lessons as well as weekly memory verses. We teach the Bible and build a relationship with Jesus through object lessons, class discussion, prayer and worship. We also teach monthly character traits: obedience, reverence, gratitude, joy, trust, kindness, self-control, perseverance, patience, and optimism.

Language Arts: We believe that reading and writing are two of the most important academic skills that young children need to learn. Also, a love of reading will make learning other subjects more enjoyable. To create a solid foundation, we primarily use Purposeful Design's language arts curriculum by Association of Christian Schools International. We also use some Abeka materials, teacher created lessons, manipulatives, games, journals, age-appropriate learning apps, and a multitude of leveled reading books and literature. In addition, language arts is often integrated into our Project Based Learning through research and writing assignments.

Mathematics: At Discovery Christian Academy, we want to inspire children to excel in math. We build confidence by placing students where they can succeed while offering obtainable challenges. We teach to mastery and use the spiral approach as a form of review. This means that the children can understand a concept and apply it. Then we move on, circling back so that students don't forget what they have already learned.

Mathematics Continued: In mathematics, we also use Purposeful Design by ACSI as a primary curriculum. Additionally, we incorporate games, hands-on learning opportunities, age-appropriate and educational apps, and teacher created materials. Math concepts are sometimes incorporated into Project Based Learning themes. For example, students might make measurements of a dinosaur's foot and compare it with measurements of their own.

Science and Social Studies through Project Based Learning

Project Based Learning starts with a question. For example, "How can we create rules for our class to learn in a safe and fun environment?" Students discuss and brainstorm what they know and what they need to know to answer the question. Students learn through inquiry-based research, mini-lessons, and hands-on learning opportunities. In a social studies unit, children might learn about rules and laws, why they are important, and how they are created. They learn about God's laws and what the Bible says about following rules. Then the students might create a government that writes and passes bills into law. Because this question is relevant to the students, they will gain a deeper understanding of information that applies to their young lives. Because a huge part of Project Based Learning is working to solve a problem through multiple disciplines, most units either incorporate or center around STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math). On-lookers may view our classroom as controlled chaos, but we believe students learn best when they are engaged, which can get messy.

Discover STEAM Lab

In addition to our regular curriculum, we have a STEAM Lab where older students can engineer projects and works of art. Learning in our Discover STEAM Lab cultivates inventive thinking that flows into other subjects. Through trial and error, students develop a growth mindset by reworking a problem for the best solution. In the Discover STEAM lab, projects are open-ended, without a definitive correct or incorrect solution. This encourages students to think more independently, with less direct instruction because they are learning to problem solve.

Visual and Performing Arts

Within other subjects, we integrate visual and performing arts. For example, we may incorporate music during Bible Time through praise and worship, or we might use different art mediums to make a social studies unit come alive. At Open Houses, students often have opportunities to present information through speeches, skits, or songs.

Physical Education

Students participate in organized physical education each week. Younger students focus on building specific skills like throwing, catching, kicking, hitting, and balance. Older students will build on the skills above and may incorporate these abilities in organized games. Hybrid homeschool students also log physical education hours through organized sports or family activities.

Homework

Reading with your child each day is our top priority when it comes to homework. We try to make time for every child to complete their work at school, but some students may need to finish an occasional assignment at home. Once in a while, your child might have a homework assignment that involves family resources. For example, he/she may be asked to complete a task like visiting the grocery store to calculate the total grocery bill. When learning about rocks and minerals, we created pet rocks, and students took them home each night to care for them. Some of the “pets” had amazing experiences!

Hybrid-Homeschool

For students who are a part of our hybrid-homeschool program, we do have specific course work to be completed each day your child is learning from home. Please check your Parent Portal at SparkYourSchool.com often for up-to-date information on homeschool assignments. It is our expectation that you guide your child through the homeschool material. Younger children will need more direct attention, while older students may be able to be a little more independent. The required assignments should take about three hours each day, which leaves plenty of time for special activities to make your homeschooling experience exceptional.

Grading Policies

We believe that students can learn and demonstrate their knowledge through many forms. Although, quizzes and tests are a part of our regular math and language arts curriculum, an understanding of academic standards is evident in daily activities and final projects that students create. At our Open House events, for example, you will see how much your child knows about simple machines when he/she takes you through each of six models, demonstrating and discussing their real life uses along the way. Final products for each Project Based Learning unit are only one part of our grading system. Daily assignments, student journals, portfolios, and class discussions also illustrate learning and continued growth. For more official records, your child will receive two report cards each year based on grade-level standards. In addition, third through fifth graders take a nationally accepted standardized test each spring.

Attendance

Attendance Policy

We value students being present at school, especially with our hands-on and cooperative learning that takes place. Alternatively, we understand the importance of keeping your child home if he/she is ill. We appreciate that our families work with us to keep our school healthy. This especially helps colds and coughs not to run rampant. Please keep your child home if he/she has a fever and for at least 24 hours after the fever breaks. Thank you for your cooperation. Although attendance at school is important, we understand that families sometimes take trips. We believe that family vacations can be amazing learning opportunities and a time to build special connections. If your family is planning to take a vacation during the school year, please let us know ahead of time. We will prepare assignments for your student to complete. If possible, we will even create a Project Based Learning opportunity based on your travels.

Reporting Absences or Tardiness

Class begins promptly at 8:15 AM. Please plan to have your child at school on time as excessive tardies may affect student performance. If your child will not be at school, we require written communication from a parent in the form of a text or email. We ask that you contact us the same morning your child will be absent, if not before. Because our curriculum incorporates Project Based Learning, make-up work will likely vary from the assignments the child would have completed if present. Students have one day for every day that he/she is absent to complete all assignments. If more time is needed, requests can be made and will be granted on a case-by-case basis. Failure to complete assignments may affect the student's grades on his/her report card.

Pick-Up and Drop-Off

Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures

Each morning, we open our doors at 8:00 AM. Please bring your child inside and connect with one of our teaching team before leaving him/her. School begins at 8:15 AM with drop-off as early as 8:00 AM. The school day ends at 2:30 PM. We ask that you wait outside until we open the doors to release the students. **To avoid a late fee, please plan to pick up on time each day.**

Health and Safety

Medications

When it is necessary to administer a prescription or over-the-counter medication to your child during school hours, a parent will be asked to sign a medical release waiver. Both the waiver and the medication will be stored in a locked cabinet. The parent will be contacted with each dose administered. All medications must come to school in original packaging. Personal inhalers may be kept on the student's person or in his/her backpack, but a waiver allowing school personnel to help administer it must still be signed by the parent/guardian. Unless medically necessary, please apply any lotions, sunscreen, etc. before coming to school. We DO NOT allow personal lotions to be kept in your child's backpack.

Student Property

Teachers may ask students to bring items from home to share with the class. We are happy to be able to incorporate these into the classroom learning. However, on a general basis, we ask that students keep personal items at home to protect them from getting lost or damaged. On the occasion that a toy or other item does come to school, we will ask that it remain in your child's backpack. Please label all backpacks, lunch boxes, jackets, and water bottles that come to school each day.

Student Lunches & Snacks

As our school is small, we do not offer cafeteria options. Please pack your child a healthy snack and lunch, so your child has enough food for both morning snack and lunchtime. On occasion, we might have food brought in from local eateries. In this case, you will have plenty of notice, and you are always welcome to opt out.

Food & Allergies

It is the parent's responsibility to notify the school if your child has an allergy to food or nature. Most parents provide cupcakes or cookies to share with the class on a child's birthday. For children with severe allergies, we will communicate with you before serving your child a birthday treat. When food is part of our school program (i.e., class Thanksgiving feast), we will discuss options with you. In this case, substitutions can be sent from home to accommodate a child's allergies.

Communications

We make an effort to stay in close communication with families. We send announcement and reminder texts through TalkingPoints, our communication app. We also send home occasional newsletters and flyers of specific events. You can access hybrid-homeschool assignments, billing information, and calendar information in your Parent Portal via SparkYourSchool.com. Follow us on FaceBook and Instagram (@DiscoveryCA91320) for photos and announcements. You can also contact us in-person, by phone/text at (805) 807-6911, or by email at info@DiscoveryCA.org. Most information can be found on our website (DiscoveryCA.org). Parent/Teacher conferences are also available upon request.

Discipline

Because Project Based Learning is highly student-driven, it is crucial that we maintain discipline. Our students are a big part of the rule making process at the beginning of the school year. Because they are involved in creating the rules, they feel a sense of ownership to uphold them. Often, peers keep their friends in line with gentle reminders about school rules.

One method to encourage students to build strong work habits is our “super tickets and strikes” method of discipline. Super tickets are rewarded for things like exhibiting good behavior, completing assignments, being a kind friend, helping with clean up, or saying a Bible memory verse. One day each week, students can exchange their super tickets for prizes at our Discovery Store. When a student makes choices contrary to our class rules, he/she earns a strike, which results in one minute of lost recess time. A teacher always takes time with the student to discuss the actions made, as well as appropriate alternatives should a similar situation arise in the future. We make every effort to use positive reinforcement through words and support. To set every student up for success, children with habitual discipline issues may be placed on individual behavior plans. These will be created and implemented through student/parent/teacher collaboration.

Some of our students, along with one of our teachers, developed a “crank tank” to keep groups engaged. Simply put, when students are “cranking” on their work, the teacher fills up the jar with “crank juice”. Technically, this is a shape on the corner of the whiteboard that is slowly colored in with dry-erase markers every time the group focuses well to complete a task. Students vote on the class reward for when the tank gets full. Crank tanks are generally only used for our older classes as younger students are highly motivated by super tickets.

Dress Code

Uniforms

Uniforms are required at Discovery Christian Academy. Polo shirts and dresses in assorted colors with our school logo can be purchased directly through the school. Boys' polos are offered in navy, red, and athletic heather. Girls' polos and dresses are offered in navy, red, and light blue. Color selection is based on availability, but we do make an effort to accommodate requests. Athletic gray pullover sweatshirts for boys and girls are also offered with limited availability. Uniforms are to be worn every day, unless otherwise specified.

Non-Uniform Apparel

In addition to the required uniform polos, boys may wear long pants or shorts. Girls may wear long pants, shorts, or skirts. To avoid cartwheel embarrassments, please make sure girls have shorts or leggings on under their skirts and uniform dresses. All students are required to wear closed-toed shoes. If your child has not yet learned to tie shoes, please send them in shoes that they can manage easily and be worn all day. We do walk to local parks on a regular basis so tennis shoes are preferred. Long-sleeved tees may be worn under polos on colder days. We ask that jackets, apparel, and other personal belongings refrain from inappropriate logos or sayings. Jewelry and watches that become a distraction from learning are not permitted. Hats are only permitted to be worn when at recess, and they must be kept in student backpacks during class time.

Please complete this page, remove it from the handbook and return it or with registration or on the first day of school.



Student's Name: _____ **Grade:** _____

I give Discovery Christian Academy permission to include my family in the school directory with the understanding that this directory will only be shared with other Discovery Christian Academy families for the purpose of building school community. Often, this is used for birthday or play-date invitations.

By signing below, you are acknowledging that you have taken the responsibility to review the Discovery Christian Academy Student Handbook and agree to work with us to help your child abide by these policies and procedures.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ **Date:** _____