



**Discovery Academy of Lake Alfred**

**2009 Renewal Document**

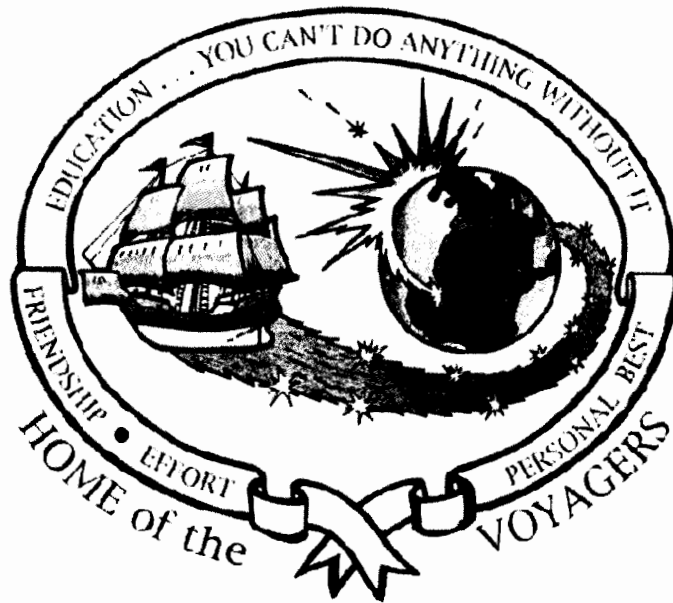


# Discovery Academy of Lake Alfred

## Charter Renewal

October 1, 2008

15 Year Term - July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2024



Carol Fulks - Director

Kevin Warren - Principal

*1000 N. Buena Vista Dr. Lake Alfred, Florida 33850*

## Executive Summary

The journey of Discovery Academy of Lake Alfred has been one of wonderful accomplishments and exciting challenges during the past five years.

Discover Academy has just completed its Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) CASI renewal for accreditation. Discovery will host the review team in November to document our improvement efforts and provide assurance that a quality program is in place to pursue educational excellence and that the necessary resources will be available to accomplish our objectives.

A major component in our continued rise to excellence is our commitment to our Mission Statement:

*We are dedicated to actively engaging all individuals in a quality learning experience that will enable them to value themselves and become responsible, productive citizens in a changing world.*

Discovery Academy accomplishes this by focusing on one of the cornerstones of its charter, Kagan Cooperative Learning. This research-based practice is not only an instructional strategy that engages ALL students, but is an integral part of our climate and daily lessons.

Discovery Academy is the only middle school in Florida to fully implement the high yield strategies of Kagan and Kagan Cooperative Learning. Students benefit from positive interactions, while the Lifeskills of flexibility, patience, initiative, and cooperation are stressed. Student involvement is increased as Kagan structures engage all students in meaningful learning activities. By implementing the Kagan structures, classrooms become environments where students work together, solve problems, create projects, share knowledge, and demonstrate learning. Students benefit from Kagan structures academically, socially, and by building self-esteem.

We are seeing the positive results of more financial resources being directed to classrooms. Parents are more involved with the school and are pleased with the instructional and organizational focus. Curriculum emphasis includes the rigorous Hirsch Core Knowledge Sequence where lessons are infused with hands-on projects and technology. Florida Sunshine State Standards are a focus for mastery of the content in the subject areas. Further enhancement of the curriculum provides for field experiences and study trips at each grade level. Students' use of technology both as a learning tool and an avenue for research under the teacher's direction is offered in our technology labs.

Teachers are making decisions that affect them directly. Classrooms have the supplies and equipment needed to enhance the curriculum and extend student learning.

Teachers presently receive a Returning Bonus and have allocated funds to spend for student activities. They receive staff development in effective research-based strategies to use in their teaching and have flexibility in making decisions to address their needs and those of their students.

Discovery is a member of the Successful Practices Network run by Dr. Willard Daggett. Through the network, many quality staff development opportunities are available for our teaching staff that includes presenters coming to our school, staff attending conferences, and on-line opportunities for teachers to work at their own pace to stretch their personal growth in the area of "Rigor and Relevance".

Students having difficulty with academics are offered extra help with tutoring daily. In addition, if a student has earned an unacceptable grade in a course, the opportunity to replace that grade by retaking the course work is offered through our six week extended school day program on Saturdays. This is available twice during the school year.

In an effort to improve at Discovery, we realized there was a need for more extra-curricular activities for our students. We initiated a student council, a robotics club, a chess club, a chorus club, and six extramural sports for both boys and girls.

Another area of weakness was Math and Science. To do something innovative in this realm, teachers created a "Project Block" that was not a part of their regular curriculum, but had a math and science focus. It would be taught every other day for a period of nine weeks, would have a culminating event and would be exciting to both the teacher and students. After the nine weeks, the students would rotate to experience another "Project Block".

Discovery Academy has continued to be committed and dedicated to implementing the essentials of a "True" middle school as defined by the National Middle School Association in their position publication, [This We Believe](#):

1. Educators knowledgeable about and committed to young adolescents
2. A balanced curriculum based on the needs of young adolescents
3. A range of organizational arrangements
4. Varied instructional strategies
5. A full exploratory program
6. Comprehensive advising and counseling
7. Continuous progress for students
8. Evaluation procedures compatible with the nature of young adolescents
9. Cooperative planning
10. Positive school climate

***1. Is the academic program a success?***

**1A. Has the school made reasonable progress in meeting internally established educational goals during the term of its charter?**

**&**

**1B. Has student performance significantly improved and/or been persistently strong on internal and external academic assessments?**

**\*The answers to both of the questions above are provided below.**

Discovery Academy of Lake Alfred has made steady progress towards increasing student achievement in the areas of writing, reading, math, and science both internally by analyzing longitudinal data, and externally by comparing ourselves against the “comparable schools” assigned by the Office of School Choice with similar demographics.

Discovery has made reasonable progress in meeting internally established student achievement goals during the term of the accountability plan. Specific data in relation to each goal and their indicators are located in the attached accountability plan progress report. Our academic performance goals are to make progress in Writing, Reading, Math, and Science.

**WRITING**

During the term of our accountability plan we have met this goal each year scoring substantially higher than the comparable schools. Specific data related to our goals is presented in the attached accountability plan progress report.

Discovery Academy students have consistently demonstrated excellence in the area of writing. Beginning with our baseline year of 2004-2005, we have had a higher percentage of all 8<sup>th</sup> grade students scoring a 3.5 or above than the state and district. In 2004-2005, 85% of all 8<sup>th</sup> graders reached the standard compared to 76% in both the district and state. As shown in the chart, students show steady, strong improvement in subsequent years. ELL students are those that have entered our ESOL (English Speakers of Other Languages) program by being either non-English or limited-English speaking and are either currently in the program (LY) or have exited the program in the last two years (LP). Low SES (Socio-Economic Status) students are eligible for free or reduced lunch. ESE students are served in our Exceptional Student Education program.

Percentage of students scoring a 3.5 or higher on FCAT Writes

	Total	State	District	Female	Male	White	Black	Hispanic	ELL	Low SES	ESE
07-08	95	88	86	97	93	96	98	89	82	95	90
06-07	89	86	83	89	88	90	88	85	52	86	77
05-06	85	83	81	91	78	88	82	77	*	82	55

\*Did not have enough students in this sub-group for the state to report the results

**Highlights of our writing scores:**

- In 2007-2008, 95% of our students scored at the 3.5 level or higher, compared to 88% at the state level, and 86% in the district.
- We achieved these results by strong increases from all of our sub-groups.
- Our ELL 8<sup>th</sup> grade students jumped 30% scoring a 3.5 or higher, which is significant, especially since our LY population has more than tripled since the 04-05 school year.
- A substantial increase is shown by our ESE 8<sup>th</sup> graders; their scores increased 35% since the 05-06 school year
- Black students increased their scores by 16% over the same timeframe, while our low SES students increased by 13%.
- It is interesting to note that females scored consistently higher than males, but males made more gains over the three-year period as shown above.

**READING**

During the term of our accountability plan we have met this goal each year scoring higher than the majority of comparable schools. Specific data related to our goals is presented in the attached accountability plan progress report.

In the area of reading, Discovery students have made progress from the 44% scoring achievement level 3 (on grade level) or higher in 04-05, to 53% in 07-08. The chart below is Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) data for sub-groups over time, displaying averages for the whole school, then shown by grade level. In each column the percentage of students achieving a level 3 or higher is given.

Percent students scoring 3 or above in FCAT Reading

	Total	White	Black	Hispanic	Female	Male	Low SES	ELL	ESE
Reading									
07-08	53	59	46	45	54	51	49	23	19
06-07	50	57	35	47	52	50	47	26	28
05-06	53	59	35	53	56	49	47	25	13
04-05	44	49	25	48			37	*	11
	Total	White	Black	Hispanic	Female	Male	Low SES	ELL	ESE
6th Reading									
07-08	57	61	51	53	54	59	54	33	21
06-07	59	67	38	54	56	61	53	22	19
05-06	63	71	49	56	65	60	56	32	24
7th Reading									
07-08	59	63	55	52	65	52	54	19	25
06-07	51	58	38	45	53	49	46	38	61
05-06	54	58	32	56	55	52	49	17	3
8th Reading									
07-08	42	50	37	27	42	42	39	18	10
06-07	43	52	24	41	46	39	42	17	5
05-06	42	48	25	41	49	34	35	*	12

\*Did not have enough students in this sub-group for the state to report the results

When looking at demographic data over time in the chart above, Black students significantly increased their percentage of level 3 or higher from 25% during the baseline year of 04-05 to 46% in 07-08. The largest gain for the Black sub-group occurred in 7<sup>th</sup> grade with a 23% gain from the 05-06 school year to the 07-08 school year. Overall, the seventh and eighth grade gains increased over time in the White, Black, and Low SES sub-groups. Gender differences were small. Female students showed a slight decline over the years, while Male students demonstrated a slight increase. The ELL and ESE group had low numbers of students, which accounts for the large fluctuations in scores, although these are areas in which we need to improve.

Over time if we follow the ELL group from 6<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grade we notice a large increase in percentage of Level 1 students from 37% in 05-06, to 53% in 07-08.

This is directly related to our large growth in LY population.

In the charts above and throughout, only the White, Black, and Hispanic sub-groups are given. Statistically, there are too few students in the other ethnic sub-groups to report.

## MATH

Math is an area that has challenged Discovery. Even though we have not scored higher than the majority of comparable schools except for 07-08, we have shown steady progress. Specific data related to our goals is presented in the attached accountability plan progress report.

Discovery Academy has made substantial progress in math when looking internally. In our baseline data year 2004, only 35% scored a level 3 or higher; that increased to 45% in 2007. As depicted in the chart below, all sub-groups except for the Hispanic group made significant gains.

*Percent students scoring 3 or above in FCAT Math*

	Total	White	Black	Hispanic	Female	Male	Low SES	ELL	ESE
<b>Math</b>									
07-08	45	54	31	36	44	48	40	19	7
06-07	44	51	23	42	41	45	38	22	10
05-06	38	42	22	41	38	39	34	24	6
04-05	35	38	16	43			28	*	10
<b>6th Math</b>									
07-08	40	48	33	31	34	47	38	15	5
06-07	39	49	18	35	39	40	31	4	4
05-06	36	44	22	23	35	37	32	26	10
<b>7th Math</b>									
07-08	47	49	42	42	48	46	40	14	5
06-07	37	44	19	34	36	38	33	31	8
05-06	34	33	21	41	32	34	31	22	3
<b>8th Math</b>									
07-08	50	62	25	38	49	51	46	29	10
06-07	53	59	32	58	48	57	50	30	18
05-06	47	49	25	61	46	47	41	*	5

\*Did not have enough students in this sub-group for the state to report the results

Over the term of the accountability plan, students made the most substantial gain in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade Black sub-group. They made gains of 21% since the 05-06 school year. The White sub-group made gains of 16% over the term of the plan, as did 7<sup>th</sup> grade

females. If we look at females that in 2005-2006 were 6<sup>th</sup> graders and follow that cohort group through the 2007-2008 school year, **they dramatically reduced the percentage of Level 1's from 40% to 19%**. Males reduced their percentage from 36% to 25%. The Hispanic group showed a small decrease over the years. Following the ELL cohort group from the 05-06 school year, increases in the percentage of level 1 students are evident. The ESE cohort group also showed increases in the percentage of level 1 students as well.

### SCIENCE

During the term of our accountability plan we have met this goal each year scoring higher than the majority of comparable schools. Specific data related to our goals is presented in the attached accountability plan progress report.

Discovery's science achievement has steadily improved. In 2004-2005 we had a mean scale score of 275. That score steadily increased to 290 in the 2007-2008 school year. This data is reported in the accountability plan progress report.

Looking at students scoring a level 3 or higher, increases of 23% were made by the white student sub-group from 2005 to 2007. Strong gains by both gender groups were made as well; males made gains of 16% over the same time period, while females made gains of 9%. Since the 05-06 school year, Discovery students have made gains of 12%, while the state and district gains were only 8%.

*Percent students scoring 3 or above in FCAT Science*

	Total	White	Black	Hispanic	Female	Male	Low SES	ELL	ESE
07-08	29	41	14	8	24	34	24	6	5
06-07	24	28	10	22	20	27	26	4	0
05-06	17	18	5	23	15	18	11	*	2

\*Did not have enough students in this sub-group for the state to report the results

## ***2. Is the school a viable organization?***

### **2A. Is the school financially solvent and stable?**

A Report of Independent Auditors on Internal Control over financial reporting is conducted annually and submitted to the Board of Directors of Discovery, the District School Board of Polk County and is included in the Annual Report submitted to the State of Florida. During the term of this charter, these audits have not identified any deficiencies in internal control over financial reporting that are considered to be a material weakness. In addition, there were no findings or recommendations to improve compliance, internal control or the financial reporting process for any of the years audited during the term of the charter contract. The School has always strived to have a comprehensive system of internal controls in place to safeguard assets, provide for accurate financial reporting, and ensure proper approvals for all transactions. Consequently, the School has never received a significant negative finding from its independent audits.

Discovery Academy is financially stable. Discovery has competently and effectively managed its finances from its inception as a charter school in 2001. Over the past seven years, the School has not had a year with a deficit in its results of operations on a fund basis and has accumulated a positive fund balance and numerous resource materials for learning. Discovery has planned for the future by having this reserve to handle future expenditures of replacing buses, updating technology throughout the school, and unexpected shortfalls to balance budgets if we have a planned operating deficit.

Classrooms have an abundance of supplies and students have necessary textbooks. We have purchased the latest in technology for both students and staff. Any increase in enrollment will generate the necessary funds for additional staff and student expenditures. The Governing Board has been closely involved with the budget and has exercised fiscal responsibility in making decisions that affect our school organization.

### **2B. Is enrollment stable and near capacity?**

Yes, our enrollment is stable and near capacity. Below is a chart documenting our enrollment since the 04-05 school year with a breakdown of various sub-groups. ESE (Exceptional Student Education) and ELL (English Language Learners) enrollment data is provided in those specific sections later in the report.

As shown in the chart below the enrollment is up this year, and has been stable over the prior years. We have noticed a trend that 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders are less likely to commit to enrolling at Discovery during the school year. This is mainly because of established peer groups at their existing school; therefore, we have increased our enrollment in 6<sup>th</sup> grade to compensate for articulation to the next grade. Our enrollment in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade had declined slightly in 06-07 and 07-08 even though

we accepted more 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students than in prior years. We were able to increase our enrollment this year in all subgroups due to the fact that the requirements to class size allow us to use a school average. Next year we will have to make adjustments to meet the class size mandate.

	<b>Totals</b>	Male	Female	White	Black	Hispanic	Other	Low SES
2004-2005								
6	<b>348</b>	194	154	194	73	70	11	248
7	<b>354</b>	170	184	216	75	57	6	243
8	<b>274</b>	126	148	192	56	22	4	163
<b>Totals</b>	<b>976</b>	<b>490</b>	<b>486</b>	<b>602</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>654</b>
2005-2006								
6	<b>333</b>	163	170	190	73	58	12	134
7	<b>339</b>	200	139	186	67	74	12	220
8	<b>323</b>	156	167	191	68	59	5	193
<b>Totals</b>	<b>995</b>	<b>519</b>	<b>476</b>	<b>567</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>547</b>
2006-2007								
6	<b>326</b>	158	168	165	71	82	8	243
7	<b>320</b>	160	160	179	73	56	12	221
8	<b>310</b>	168	142	155	64	77	14	194
<b>Totals</b>	<b>956</b>	<b>486</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>499</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>658</b>
2007-2008								
6	<b>327</b>	155	172	161	74	84	8	236
7	<b>306</b>	144	162	157	58	83	8	221
8	<b>292</b>	144	148	166	62	55	9	200
<b>Totals</b>	<b>925</b>	<b>443</b>	<b>482</b>	<b>484</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>657</b>
2008-2009								
6	<b>383</b>	191	192	185	75	114	9	214
7	<b>341</b>	157	184	167	74	89	11	194
8	<b>316</b>	148	168	156	65	85	10	173
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1040</b>	<b>496</b>	<b>544</b>	<b>509</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>581*</b>

*\*We are still receiving forms for 08-09; the numbers will increase*

We presently have a waiting list of 121 students. Withdrawals have been primarily out of the area and out of the state, leading to a mobility rate averaging 26% per year. Economic factors facing our families have necessitated some of them moving where they can find employment or housing with relatives.

The latest census data has the City of Lake Alfred racial makeup as 78.25% White, 17.25% Black, Hispanic 5.89%, and the rest of the population other races. Our Black and Hispanic populations are higher than our surrounding community, and the white population at Discovery is lower; our low socio-economic numbers are much higher than the 14.0% the census data shows.

Given the growth in our Lake Alfred community, we want to expand our enrollment during the term of our upcoming charter to about 1025 students. We feel we can maintain Class Size Reduction and accommodate these students in the upcoming years.

**2C. Is the school governance sound and professional in performing the governance duties of the charter school?**

The school governance has been sound and professional in performing their governance duties. The Governing Board members consist of 5 voting members along with 3 nonvoting members who are the president, secretary, and our Teacher of the Year. Since the 04-05 school year, we have replaced only one board member.

Any issue that comes to the school or goes through the Office of School Choice is directed to the principal who tries to resolve the matter in an expedient and efficient manner. If the parent is still not satisfied, they talk with a Governing Board Member. There have been no parent complaints during any of the Governing Board Meetings during the term of this charter. There has only been one concern documented through the regular Office of School Choice Site Visits reports. The concern was in September, 2004 regarding a split-parenting situation. We worked with the District Transportation Office to resolve the matter.

Clear and fair procedures for evaluating teacher performance have been established and adopted by the Governing Board, and are located in our Faculty Policy & Procedures Handbook. The Governing Board adopted Discovery Academy's Personnel Agreement along with the Teacher Salary Schedule for the 2008-2009 school year. The Governing Board approves all personnel recommendations.

**2D. Are the professional staff of the charter school competent and resourceful?**

The professional staff of Discovery Academy is competent and resourceful. Staff members are focused on providing a quality middle school model based on research while implementing active learning strategies for students. It is evident that our staff is committed to our mission statement. A "family environment" has been established along with implementing sound instructional and innovative practices when teaching the whole child.

Discovery Academy is currently working towards having 100% of its instructional staff classified as highly-qualified teachers. We hired three teachers for the 2008-2009 school year that are working towards completing all requirements. All candidates are eligible for certification through the state of Florida.

Many of our teachers have chosen to advance their knowledge and skills by attaining an advanced degree. The information below gives a history of teachers with advanced degrees teaching at Discovery Academy.

**2004-2005**  
\*11 of 57 = 19%(Masters)  
\*2 of 57 = 4%(Doctorate)

**2005-2006**  
\*7 of 58 = 12%(Masters)  
\*2 of 58 = 3%(Doctorate)

**2006-2007**  
\*11 of 59 = 19%(Masters)  
\*2 of 59 = 3%(Doctorate)

**2007-2008**  
\*9 of 56 = 16%(Masters)  
\*1 of 56 = 2%(Doctorate)

**2008-2009**  
\*10 out of 59 = 17%(Masters)

All schools in the district experience teacher turnover, and we are no exception. However, some reasons teachers left Discovery, were certification issues, transfers to neighboring counties, energy transfers, relocation, and contract not renewed. Statistics regarding teacher turnover follows. The number of teachers new to the school at the beginning of each school year is: 04 -05 totaled 20; 05-06 totaled 23, and 06-07 totaled 15, and in 07-08 23 teachers were new. We were making progress in teacher retention, but this past year we were hurt by the poor economy as many teachers opted to teach closer to their home. Also, we have notice a trend that our younger teachers are moving to a more metropolitan area. Administration's efforts have been to recruit the highest quality educator because the administrative team strongly feels that our students deserve the best.

On-going professional development includes: (1) Kagan Cooperative Learning provided for the entire school staff ranging from 1 to 5 days of training, along with coaching and mentoring throughout the school years 2004, 2005, 2006, and 2007. (2) All school staff has been provided technology training each school year as well. Teacher Technology Training is conducted on a monthly basis emphasizing using current technology tools, showcasing new ideas in Technology and getting feedback from teachers about their use of technology in their classrooms. (3) As members of the Successful Practices Network, headed by Dr. Willard Daggett, we have a focus on Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships. 37 teachers attended at least 3 days of training at the Model Schools Conferences from 2004 through the summer of 2008. These conferences took place in Washington D.C., Nashville, and Kissimmee. The knowledge and strategies gained has become the centerpiece of Discovery's voyage towards its vision. Through the three R's, Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships, we have developed a framework that has guided our school improvement initiatives. During the 2006-2007 school year, Discovery Academy was selected as one the schools

in Florida that was implementing redesign principles and showing promise as a model of success. The goal of this initiative was to promote a rigorous and relevant curriculum for all students. Teachers from Discovery attended several sessions that included speakers from around the country to hear and collaborate on successful practices being used.

Ongoing professional development is key to Discovery Academy to ensure that our staff is well trained to meet the needs of our students and equip teachers with the tools to work towards our vision. What follows is a summary of the other professional development initiatives in which we were involved.

### **Collaborating Online for Rigor and Relevance (CORR)**

Beginning in the 2007-2008 school year, we began utilizing CORR as a supplemental instrument to help teachers collaborate to create high-quality (Quadrant D) lessons that reinforce the use of the Rigor/Relevance Framework.

### **Middle School Mathematics Initiative (MSMI)**

During the 2006-2007 school year, Discovery Academy was one of 20 district teams selected to participate in a 2-year grant. The goal of the grant was to examine research on middle school math, introduce the new math Sunshine State Standards, increase the rigor and relevance of middle school math instruction, and also increase the use of research-based literacy strategies in math classrooms. Discovery teachers collaborated with educators from other districts to complete Gold Seal Math Lessons and examine best practices from other districts in the state.

### **Reading**

Our reading coach conducted monthly staff meetings to introduce reading strategies to all teachers. These strategies are incorporated into daily lesson plans to ensure that all teachers use effective reading instruction.

### **Middle School Philosophy**

All teachers are trained in the components of the Middle School Philosophy. Teachers new to Discovery have pre-school training that orients them to Teaming, the use of Common Planning Time, creating a Brain-based learning environment, implementing the Advisory program, focusing on educating and meeting the needs of the whole child, understanding of exploratory wheel classes, and creating a positive school climate.

### ***3. Is the school faithful to the terms of its charter?***

#### **3A. Have the school's program and operation been consistent with the terms of its Charter?**

The school's program and operation has been consistent with the terms of its charter. As demonstrated in sections 1A and 1B (specifics are in the Accountability Plan Progress Report), Discovery has made reasonable progress in meeting the objectives in reading, math, science, and writing performance of its students in both longitudinal data, and when compared to District middle schools with comparable populations. In addition, Discovery has made progress towards becoming a model Kagan Cooperative Learning School, and continues to implement the essential components of a "true" middle school. Discovery also continues to infuse technology into the curriculum and regularly adds state-of-the-art equipment for both student and staff use.

In our original charter we included an outdoor classroom as a part of the science curriculum. When Hurricane Charley arrived in the area and caused damage at Discovery, our greenhouse was among the items destroyed. We listed it among other items on the FEMA report, but we were not compensated nor was it replaced. We need to remove this item from our charter. We also need to remove the wording of Jostens Computer Lab. We no longer use this lab. Our prescriptive programs for intensive reading address the needs of our low functioning readers and the Kaplan Achievement Planner allows remedial work for low functioning Math students related to benchmarks. Hyperstudio is a program no longer used at Discovery. It is a software program that has been replaced with more modern versions such as Power Point, iwork, etc. In addition, we do not have a program that includes Basic Offset Printing, Plate-making, Silk Screen or Presswork. Due to budgetary cuts this year, we did not offer either Band or Orchestra. Enrollment in both of these programs had steadily declined and other programs are more popular with our clients. This also needs to be taken out of our charter. Since the State of Florida has chosen to eliminate FCAT NRT testing, we will no longer be able to offer it as an assessment tool to measure our student progress over time. To be added our charter is the introduction of Relationships, Rigor, and Relevance as a methodology and instructional framework to structure school improvement by using a Learning Criteria composed of goals and strategies in the area of Core Academics, Stretch Learning, Student Engagement, and Personal Skill Development.

**3B. Is the school within the bounds of applicable statutory and regulatory requirements?**

**Special Education**

Our Exceptional Student Education (ESE) program serves students who are identified as disabled in grades 6-8 with mild to moderate conditions. Special education programs offered are specific learning disabled, other health impaired, speech and language impaired as well as gifted. Federal and state guidelines are adhered to when referring, identifying, evaluating, staffing and placement of a student into the exceptional student education program.

In the chart below a history is given of the number of ESE students enrolled at Discovery Academy.

2004-2005	<b>Total</b>	6th	7th	8th		2005-2006	<b>Totals</b>	6th	7th	8th
	<b>196</b>	63	75	58			<b>174</b>	52	57	65
2006-2007	<b>Totals</b>	6th	7th	8th		2007-2008	<b>Totals</b>	6th	7th	8th
	<b>151</b>	53	50	48			<b>135</b>	46	46	43
2008-2009	<b>Totals</b>	6th	7th	8th						
	<b>116</b>	38	38	40						

There are two teachers who teach our ESE varying exceptionality classes. In addition we contract to provide services to the Speech/Language Impaired and students needing Occupational Therapy.

IEP review dates and re-evaluation due dates are closely monitored by the ESE facilitator. IEP reviews are scheduled as needed throughout the course of the school year. The ESE facilitator schedules IEP review or re-evaluation meetings, and the required personnel are invited to attend the meeting, including the parent, the student and at least one regular education teacher. All individual education plans as well as re-evaluation reviews were in compliance during school years 2004-2005, thru the present as documented in the regular Office of School Choice site visit reports.

The table below is a synopsis of the number of ESE students, including gifted, that withdrew from Discovery Academy since the 04-05 school year and the reasons why.

	07-08	06-07	05-06	04-05
Transferred to other district school-W02	11	9	2	6
Moved out of district or state-W3A(B)	4	9	9	7
Withdrew to Home School-W04	2	3	3	2
<b><i>The numbers from the categories below are included in the first three categories</i></b>				
Dismissed due to serious misconduct	4	4		
Zoned school closer to home	1	3		1

#### Overview of Service and Compliance:

Our gifted students receive services via the subjects of science and social studies from our gifted teacher.

Our speech impaired and/or language impaired students receive help from our itinerant speech teacher; services vary from consultative services to 30 minutes per week of direct service to 60 minutes per week of direct service. Our speech teacher is on campus two days per week for approximately 1½ hours each day.

Our SLD and OHI receive ESE services that vary from monthly consultation to ESE resource room help in math and language arts. Students receiving help in math and language arts are served using a resource room model. Regular education teachers are given copies of the IEP to follow up on accommodations that the students are entitled to.

Regarding our ESE student population that is receiving consultation services, our ESE teachers meet with the student's regular education teachers on a monthly basis to discuss the student's academic progress. ESE teachers are required to keep monthly consultation logs on these students.

Students who may be in need of Hospital/Homebound services are staffed into the program and provided services as the need arises.

Future Plans for ESE students: We are moving towards full inclusion for all of our ESE students.

Our goals for our ESE student population are as follows:

1. Improve student's basic skills in reading, writing, mathematics, science and language arts.

2. Prepare students for regular class placement when in high school.
3. Improve student's organizational skills.
4. Make our ESE student population aware of the accommodations they are entitled to due to their disability.

**There have not been any state program review audits performed or any formal complaints with the exceptional student education program at Discovery Academy.**

### **Limited English Proficiency**

Discovery Academy ensures that all students have a completed Home Language Survey that is kept in the student's cumulative record file. All students who are from out of Polk County are provided with this survey at the time of enrollment at Discovery Academy. Cumulative files are routinely checked to ensure that all students at Discovery Academy have a Home Language Survey.

An oral test is administered within 20 school days to the students whose Home Language Survey indicates that there is another language other than English used in the home. The oral test determines whether the student is NES (non-English speaker), LES (limited-English speaker), or FES (fluent-English speaker). NES and LES students are entered into the ESOL program and an eligibility letter is sent home to inform the parent that ESOL program placement is recommended for their child.

Students who test as FES are given the Reading and Writing Test to determine how well they read and write English. The results of this test are used to determine if entry to the ESOL program will benefit them.

When a student is recommended to enter the ESOL program a LEP (limited English Proficiency) meeting is scheduled involving the parent and the LEP committee. The purpose of this meeting is to determine whether the ESOL program will be of benefit to the student based on the student's test results and to discuss needs for establishment of accommodations in the classroom. Some of the accommodations that may be used are scheduling, setting, test modification, amount of time to complete work or tests, modifications in presentation, use of bilingual dictionary for translation, or assistance in heritage language.

Below is a chart summarizing the total numbers of LEP students since 2004-2005.

2004-2005	<b>Total</b>	6th	7th	8th		2005-2006	<b>Totals</b>	6th	7th	8th
	<b>19</b>	11	7	1			<b>50</b>	21	19	10
2006-2007	<b>Totals</b>	6th	7th	8th		2007-2008	<b>Totals</b>	6th	7th	8th
	<b>63</b>	30	14	19			<b>88</b>	36	29	23
2008-2009	<b>Totals</b>	6th	7th	8th						
	<b>98</b>	34	37	27						

To ensure ESOL students receive needed services and accommodations, each teacher is provided with a list of any students in the ESOL program, a copy of "ESOL Instructional Strategies" and document how those strategies are being implemented for each ESOL student. The TransAct website is utilized to obtain documents in languages other than English.

### **Student Learning Time**

Discovery Academy students attend school 180 calendar days a year mirroring the Polk County School District calendar. Students follow an alternating day block schedule of approximately 90 minutes in length. Students have an advisory class, three academic blocks and one exploratory wheel block meeting daily for 420 minutes each day. Students are provided a variety of remediation programs to receive additional instruction. Remediation programs offered are, a daily tutoring class specific to the subject area of concern, computer assisted tutorial programs in reading and math, remedial reading instruction, and an Extended School Day Program. Additional extra-curricula programs include: National Junior Honor Society, Student Council, Chorus, Spelling Bee, Book Bowl, Chess, Robotics, Volleyball, Soccer, Basketball, Wrestling, Flag Football, and Track.

Discovery is a school of Technology that has four sign-up computer labs open for classroom use for multi-media productions, student electronic portfolios, research, career education, and FCAT Explorer.

Discovery implements Kagan Cooperative Learning and uses the strategies in all classrooms.

Discovery strongly adheres to the "true" middle school components, emphasizing the essential elements of the middle school philosophy; including an advisory program, teaming, and a common block of planning time for each grade level.

### State Testing Requirements

Exceptional, ESOL, and 504 students received accommodations on the FCAT SSS Test over the term of the charter. These students received at least one of the following accommodations: Flexible Setting, Flexible Scheduling, Flexible Presentation, Flexible Responding, use of a dictionary, and assistance in their heritage language. The chart below reflects how many students in each grade and each category received accommodations.

04-05	Total	6th grade	7th grade	8th grade
ESE	118	38	39	41
504	12	2	5	5
ESOL	11	4	5	2
05-06	Total	6th grade	7th grade	8th grade
ESE	103	27	35	41
504	15	0	8	7
ESOL	29	13	8	8
06-07	Total	6th grade	7th grade	8th grade
ESE	75	26	26	23
504	12	8	2	2
ESOL	49	20	10	19
07-08	Total	6th grade	7th grade	8th grade
ESE	58	17	20	21
504	15	5	8	2
ESOL	87	30	37	20

### Student Discipline

Below is a chart with a summary of suspension data. The number of suspensions has dropped dramatically in the past year.

	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08
Referrals Processed	945	1141	1669	800
ISS Assignments	42	302	140	123
OSS Assignments	221	748	572	308
Bus Suspensions	123	20	292	189

## Health and Safety

The following table gives data on the SESIR (School Environmental Safety Incident Report) codes.

	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08
Fighting	29	14	7	5
Battery	4	0	0	1
Drugs	2	0	3	2
Sexual Offenses	1	0	1	5
Threat/Intimidation	3	0	9	0
Tobacco	1	0	0	0
Weapon	4	2	1	2

## Legal

There have been no legal actions or threatened legal actions pending involving Discovery Academy during the term of our charter.

## Miscellaneous

*Is the school utilizing and upgrading technology in the management of the school and in the classroom? Is the school compliant with copyrighted material and software licenses?*

## Technology

Discovery Academy prides itself on providing its staff and students with computers and software that enhances both lesson teaching and student learning.

Teacher Technology Training is conducted on a monthly basis emphasizing using current technology tools, showcasing new ideas in Technology and getting feedback from teachers about their use of technology in their classrooms.

Discovery Academy just recently initiated an extensive technology upgrade in the following ways:

1. We now offer seven computer labs for student use, six of them using Apple's OS X.4 (tiger) operating system software. Students have access in these labs to the Internet, their electronic portfolios, iLife and iWork software, word processing, spreadsheet and presentation software.
2. One hundred percent of our teachers have modern Apple laptops with wireless access to our network and the Internet. All of our teachers also have projectors in their classrooms for presentations. Wireless access points are spread throughout the campus, which enables connectivity in every building.

3. A T1 line to the PCSB Wide Area Network currently connects Discovery Academy. Switches were recently upgraded to gigabit speed and a new high-speed router to PCSB has been installed.
4. All classrooms have at least one student workstation with more being added this year.
5. The Discovery Academy TV Studio was upgraded summer 2008 to a modern digital studio.
6. To meet the software needs of our school, software site licenses are bought whenever possible. Recently we have upgraded with site licenses for iWork, iLife, Comic Life, Voyagers and Easytech.
7. Each team and grade level has been provided with scanners, modern digital video cameras as well as class sets of still digital cameras.
8. Additional technology items our school has recently introduced are PasPort Scientific Probes (Conductivity, Force Sensor, Heartrate and Temperature). Also, as part of our project block, we offer Lego Robotics. An Eduware Student Response System is also available for classroom use.

Discovery is in compliance with copyrighted material laws and software licenses. The use of copyrighted material is addressed in our Faculty Handbook. Site licenses are purchased whenever possible and the original software on computers are used.

**Student Confidentiality** – Confidentiality of student records is maintained through district, state, and federal guidelines. We have not had any subpoenas for records.

**Code of Conduct** – Discovery Academy’s Governing Board voted unanimously to follow the Polk County School District Code of Conduct guidelines.

**Discrimination Free-** Discovery Academy has maintained an atmosphere free from discrimination for both students and staff. Evidence of protocols that are in place may be found in the Policies and Procedures Faculty Handbook, in the staff workroom, and in the student handbook.

***4.If the school's charter is renewed, what are its plans for the fifteen years of the next charter?*** See the attached Business Plan

#### **4A. Charter Experiences**

Our charter has served as the foundation that propels us towards our mission and vision. It keeps us focused on the cornerstones of technology, middle school philosophy, Kagan Cooperative Learning and the Hirsch Core Knowledge Curriculum. A challenge is balancing our charter and new state mandates and accountability in a climate of economic uncertainty.

It is important that charter schools are easily able to make adjustments to their course of action when needed because of changes at the state level, budget cuts, new research, innovation or new technology, or to better serve a changing population.

Our main goal at Discovery Academy is to educate the “whole” child. We want to go beyond test scores and make that child a productive participant in society. The charter has allowed us to place our focus solely on the child. We are able to offer a different educational experience, from various field experiences to project block. Data has shown that Discovery Academy is consistently strong in Writing. While our Science scores have not reached our expected level, we consistently score above our comparable schools and showing improvement. Math has been an area of concern. Our target populations include our Black, Hispanic, and ELL sub groups. We continue our efforts to improve our student perception as we add more activities and increase their role creating a positive school climate.

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI) accredits Discovery Academy with assurance that there is a quality program in place with a future commitment to excellence in education and a commitment to provide the necessary resources to accomplish the educational objectives. Through the accreditation process, all staff participated in a self-study of programs and practices, surveyed all stakeholders, and created an action plan for the future. The process created learning communities that were positive and added energy and excitement to the campus. A sense of pride was the attitude of the stakeholders as we reflected on our accomplishments and planned for our future with excitement. We have just completed our self-study for reaccreditation and the report is attached.

#### **4B. Accountability Plan**

Our Accountability Plan is attached. Goals 1 – 4 of our Accountability Plan are directly aligned to the Sunshine State Standards.

#### **4C. Evaluation and Dissemination of Effective Elements**

We evaluate our program every year through our Accountability Plan goals, and every five years through a thorough self-study involved in the SACS CASI reaccreditation process. We disseminate information through our Annual Report, brochures, website, media, and presentations. A thorough examination of our programs is available in the attached SACS CASI report.

#### **4D. Facility Use**

Discovery plans on using its present facility for the next 15 years as a conversion charter school. We would like to continue to work collaboratively with the food service division of Polk County School Board. In addition, Discovery would also like to continue to contract transportation services provided for the original zone of Lake Alfred Middle School.

During the term of our charter, Discovery has remained in compliance with all building, health, safety, and insurance requirements as described in Florida Statutes, and have participated in all inspections. Copies of all of the above are on file with necessary documentation being forwarded to the appropriate departments within the district offices at the Polk County School Board. All the above has been documented in the annual pre-opening site-visits conducted by the Office of School Choice and our Annual Report.

#### **4E. Projected Budget and Business Plan**

The Projected Budget and Business Plan for the requested 15 years is attached.

#### **5. SACS CASI Self-Appraisal**

The attached SACS CASI document gives a thorough self-appraisal of strengths and weaknesses for the term of the charter.



NCA CASI  
Arizona State University  
P.O. Box 871008  
Tempe, AZ 85287-1008  
[www.ncacasi.org](http://www.ncacasi.org)

SACS CASI  
1866 Southern Lane  
Decatur, GA 30033  
[www.sacscasi.org](http://www.sacscasi.org)

NSSE  
Suite 406  
1699 East Woodfield Road  
Schaumburg, IL 60173-4958  
[www.nsse.org](http://www.nsse.org)

## Standards Assessment Report

### Discovery Academy of Lake Alfred

1000 North Buena Vista Drive Lake Alfred, Florida 33850

Prepared for the AdvancED Quality Assurance Review

Report Status : Accepted

Report Open Date : February 21, 2008

Report Due Date : October 6, 2008

Report Submitted Date : September 30, 2008

Report Accepted Date : September 30, 2008

# Standards Assessment Report

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# Introduction & Purpose of the Report

## Introduction

The Standards Assessment Report is designed to serve as a valuable self-assessment and as a tool to help schools prepare for their Quality Assurance Review. The report is based on the AdvancED standards, which serve as the foundation of the accreditation process. In order to earn and maintain accreditation, schools must meet the AdvancED standards, engage in a process of continuous improvement, and host a Quality Assurance Review at least once every five years.

The Standards Assessment Report engages the school community in an in-depth assessment of each of the seven AdvancED standards. In completing the report, the school identifies the data, information, evidence, and documented results that validate that it is meeting each standard. This self assessment helps the school identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement.

The Standards Assessment Report also serves as the primary resource for the Quality Assurance Review Team, which uses the report to prepare for the visit to the school. The team uses insights gathered from the report and information obtained during the on-site visit to provide feedback to the school and to make an accreditation recommendation.

## Structure of the Report

The Standards Assessment Report is organized by the AdvancED standards. For each standard, the report includes four sections: 1) considering the evidence; 2) indicators rubric; 3) focus questions; and 4) overall assessment. Each section reinforces the other sections by asking a question that builds on the prior section.

The section entitled "considering the evidence" allows school personnel to think about the practices and/or processes being implemented and identify evidence that will support its responses to the indicators rubric and focus questions. This section helps school stakeholders engage in a discussion about how it knows it is adhering to the standards. The section is not intended to engage the school in a collection of evidence, but rather in thoughtful dialogue about how it can demonstrate that quality practices, conditions, and results are occurring in the school. The section asks, "What practices/processes are being implemented, and are they effective?" or said another way, "How do we know we are doing what we say we are doing?"

The indicators rubric enables the school to assess the degree to which practices and/or processes are in place that indicate adherence to the standard and indicators. For each indicator, the school may check if the practices and/or processes are highly functional in the school, operational, emerging, or not evident. The school should use the rubric as an opportunity to ask itself challenging questions and to respond with accurate answers geared toward self-improvement. After completing the rubric, the school can quickly see areas of strength and opportunity. The section asks, "To what degree are the noted practices/processes in place?"

The focus questions allow the school to expand on and think more deeply about the responses to the indicators rubric. The focus questions provide an opportunity for the school to describe the systematic and systemic processes that are in place to support its ability to meet the indicators. The section asks, "How are the practices/processes implemented?"

The overall assessment describes how well schools are implementing practices and/or processes and the impact these practices and/or processes have on student results and overall school effectiveness. The overall assessment helps schools judge where they are in relation to each standard. The "operational" level is required in order to demonstrate meeting the standard. The section asks, "How well are we meeting the standard overall?"

# Demographics

Public/Non-public:	<b>Public</b>
School Type:	<b>AdvancED - Middle School</b>
Charter School:	<b>Conversion</b>
Enrollment:	<b>970</b>
Gender at School:	<b>Co-Ed</b>
Beginning Grade:	<b>6</b>
Ending Grade:	<b>8</b>
Alternate Beginning Grade:	
Alternate Ending Grade:	
Location Type:	<b>Rural</b>
Gender at School:	<b>Co-Ed</b>

## Standard 1. Vision and Purpose

**STANDARD:** The school establishes and communicates a shared purpose and direction for improving the performance of students and the effectiveness of the school.

**Impact Statement:** A school is successful in meeting this standard when it commits to a shared purpose and direction. The school establishes expectations for student learning aligned with the school's vision that is supported by school personnel and external stakeholders. These expectations serve as the focus for assessing student performance and school effectiveness. The school's vision guides allocations of time and human, material, and fiscal resources.

**Indicators Rubric:** Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school. The responses to the rubric should help the school identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school's responses to the focus questions and examples of evidence.

### Definitions of Indicators Rubric:

<b>Not Evident</b>	Little or no evidence exists
<b>Emerging</b>	Evidence indicates early or preliminary stages of implementation of practice
<b>Operational</b>	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are actively implemented
<b>Highly Functional</b>	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are fully integrated and effectively and consistently implemented

**Indicators:** In fulfillment of this standard, the school:

1.1 Establishes a vision for the school in collaboration with its stakeholders:

**Operational**

1.2 Communicates the vision and purpose to build stakeholder understanding and support:

**Operational**

1.3 Identifies goals to advance the vision:

**Highly Functional**

1.4 Develops and continuously maintains a profile of the school, its students, and the community:

**Highly Functional**

1.5 Ensures that the school's vision and purpose guide the teaching and learning process:

**Highly Functional**

1.6 Reviews its vision and purpose systematically and revises them when appropriate:

**Highly Functional**

**Focus Questions:**

***1. What is the process for establishing and building understanding of and commitment to the vision statement among stakeholders?***

Discovery Academy continuously implements professional development opportunities for staff members that reflect the vision and purpose of the school. New teachers begin the school year with an intensive introduction to the Middle School Philosophy, brain-based teaching and learning, Kagan Cooperative Learning strategies, the curriculum timeline, and Life Skills and Lifelong Guidelines. Staff development is also ongoing with veteran teachers in the areas of Kagan Cooperative Learning, Rigor, Relevance and Relationships, reading strategies and technology.

A core group of administrators and teachers were first introduced to the International Center for Leadership in Education (ICLE) at the Model Schools Conference in 2005. From this conference a Leadership Team, which consists of administrators, classroom teachers, a teacher coach, and a school counselor, was formed. The team worked with the Secondary Schools Redesign Initiative (SSRI) through the ICLE and Florida DOE for the past three years, creating a series of goals and an action plan to advance Discovery Academy's vision to include Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships. This Learning Criteria Action Plan focuses on the areas of Core Academics, Stretch Learning, Student Engagement, and Personal Skill Development. The Leadership Team has worked to implement new strategies like SAIL (a daily tutoring program), Project Block, and various opportunities for student engagement that coincide with the school mission. Discovery has participated in many professional development opportunities that have been offered through the ICLE, SSRI, and Middle School Math Initiative. MSMI is a program offered through ICLE and DOE in an effort to incorporate Big Ideas in math curriculum through lessons with high rigor and relevance. Over the past three years, staff has been given opportunities to travel to Washington D.C., New York, Tennessee, and across the state of Florida to attend conferences to build a better understanding of the school's vision in relation to Rigor, Relevance and Relationships.

Students are introduced to the school's vision through Advisory programs at each grade level. Advisory classes begin each week with a community circle to reinforce Lifeskills and Lifelong Guidelines, "Skills for Adolescence", and The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens. The Middle School Philosophy of instructing the whole child and Kagan Cooperative Learning strategies are also used in all classrooms to reinforce the vision of engaging students in quality learning experiences.

Report Card Night, scheduled three times throughout the school year, and Spectacular, Spectacular Student Showcase are two evening events that Discovery Academy has recently implemented to reach out to parents and community members. These events facilitate communication between the school and its stakeholders, and allow Discovery Academy to share the various practices and programs that encompass the school mission and vision.

***2. What is the school's process for developing a profile and systematically maintaining and using information that describes the school, its students, and their performance?***

Discovery Academy creates an Annual Charter School Report, a thorough examination of the school's vision and philosophy, and academic goals. This report is a culminating document of the best practices used at Discovery Academy.

An Accountability Plan created by Discovery includes a school and student profile and annual goals in the areas of reading, writing, science and math. This report includes Discovery Academy FCAT data in comparison with analogous schools within the district. The Accountability Plan is published and made available to all stakeholders.

The Learning Criteria Goals and Action Plan created in accordance with SSRI in the fall of 2007 is a reflection of Discovery's vision and commitment to Rigor, Relevance and Relationships. In creating this document, the Leadership Team created goals and an action plan in Core Academics, Stretch Learning, Student Engagement, and Personal Skill Development and established data indicators in each area. The committee evaluated the Learning Criteria progress in the spring of 2008, with specific emphasis on quantitative evidence on the data indicators.

***3. How does the leadership ensure that the school's vision, purpose, and goals guide the teaching and learning process?***

All students at Discovery Academy are placed on academic teams with the same core group of academic teachers, who share a common planning period. Teaming students allows the teachers time to work together on interdisciplinary units, plan "Being-There" experiences, and to discuss student successes and concerns. Each team is involved with weekly administrative meetings with the grade level counselor and administrator focusing on school-wide, grade level, team, and individual student concerns and successes.

Kagan Cooperative Learning is a focus of all instruction at Discovery Academy. Teachers are trained through a five-day Kagan professional development workshop, and ongoing modeling of Kagan strategies through staff development at monthly family meetings. The cooperative learning skills are then implemented in all classes working with students to build teamwork and mastery skills, while engaging students and creating a community within the team and classroom.

Physical fitness has become a renewed focus for the students and staff during the 2008-2009 school year. Every student is involved in a yearlong physical education class. This year Fitness Fridays, a school-wide initiative involving all staff and students, has been implemented. The physical education staff is dedicated to instilling students with a passion for life-long health and wellness.

Daily instruction at Discovery Academy is technology rich, with laptops and projectors provided to each teacher and multiple high-speed computer labs available for class use on campus. Students interact with technology in academic and Encore classes, including creating an electronic portfolio, as technology is used to help prepare students for a changing world.

***4. What process is used to ensure that the vision and purpose of the school remain current and aligned with the school's expectations for student learning and school effectiveness?***

Discovery Academy began attending the Model Schools Conferences in 2005. A core group of administrators and teachers attended the first conference and returned to school with a mission of introducing Rigor and Relevance to the staff and students. This group formed a Leadership Team and worked to implement many of the strategies from the conference, such as adding real-world experiences to everyday classroom lessons, offering more areas for extra-curricular student engagement, and even providing dinner for parents and families at Open House nights.

School administrators are committed to exposing more staff members to the Model Schools experience and over one dozen teachers and staff members attended the conference in 2006. At the beginning of the 2006-2007 school year, several teachers were added to the Leadership Team and Discovery began involvement with SSRI through ICLE and DOE. While participating in SSRI, team members attended several professional development conferences and worked together in intensive self-evaluation to create a plan to implement Rigor, Relevance, and Relationship strategies, in accordance with the Middle School Philosophy of teaching the whole child.

In 2007, fifteen Discovery staff members attended the Model Schools Conference in Washington DC, and the Leadership Team continued its work with SSRI in creating the action plan focusing on the Learning Criteria to support Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships. This plan included goals in Core Academics, Stretch Learning, Student Engagement, and Personal Skill Development. At the end of the 2007-2008 school year, the Leadership Team completed a narrative on the progress toward the goals and action plan, and presented a "Best Practice" at the Model Schools Pre-conference at Walt Disney World, highlighting Discovery's work with Stretch Learning in Project Block. Discovery Academy continues to work with the ICLE, DOE and SSRI in 2008 in an effort to engage students in a real-world learning environment.

While collaborating with SSRI, the administration and leadership committee have worked to add programs that help to further Discovery Academy's vision. In an effort to increase student achievement in math and science, administrators worked with ICLE to create Project Block, a 90-minute class devoted to high interest real-world lessons with a math and science focus. New opportunities for student engagement have been implemented with various boys' and girls' sports teams, Robotics Club, and Student Council after school activities. Eighth grade teachers and administrators worked together to create a new student relationship plan to encourage positive behaviors and instill a sense of responsibility and pride in Discovery Academy upperclassmen. Skills for Adolescence, a new seventh grade Advisory program, was adopted this year to help reinforce Lifeskills and Lifelong Guidelines, a key component to Discovery's expectations and effectiveness. Fitness Fridays are a new focus of the Encore team in an effort to relate the importance of life-long health and wellness to students and staff. Through Student Council, students will take on Rachel's Challenge in 2008-2009 school year, reaching out to others through random acts of kindness. Through these and other programs, Discovery Academy strives to stretch students and staff and remain current in its vision and purpose.

### Overall Assessment:

**Highly Functional:** The school has achieved a wide commitment by all groups of stakeholders to a shared purpose and direction. The school has clearly defined expectations for student learning aligned with the school's vision that is fully supported by school personnel and external stakeholders. These expectations serve as the focus for assessing student performance and school effectiveness. The school's vision guides allocations of time and human, material, and fiscal resources. The preponderance of the evidence supports an overall assessment of "highly functional" and is substantiated in the responses to the Indicators Rubric.

## Standard 2. Governance and Leadership

**STANDARD:** The school provides governance and leadership that promote student performance and school effectiveness.

**Impact Statement:** A school is successful in meeting this standard when it has leaders who are advocates for the school's vision and improvement efforts. The leaders provide direction and allocate resources to implement curricular and co-curricular programs that enable students to achieve expectations for their learning. Leaders encourage collaboration and shared responsibility for school improvement among stakeholders. The school's policies, procedures, and organizational conditions ensure equity of learning opportunities and support for innovation.

**Indicators Rubric:** Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school. The responses to the rubric should help the school identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school's responses to the focus questions and examples of evidence.

### Definitions of Indicators Rubric:

<b>Not Evident</b>	Little or no evidence exists
<b>Emerging</b>	Evidence indicates early or preliminary stages of implementation of practice
<b>Operational</b>	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are actively implemented
<b>Highly Functional</b>	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are fully integrated and effectively and consistently implemented

**Indicators:** In fulfillment of this standard, the school operates under the jurisdiction of a governing board that:

2.1 Establishes policies and procedures that provide for the effective operation of the school:

**Highly Functional**

2.2 Recognizes and preserves the executive, administrative, and leadership prerogatives of the administrative head of the school:

**Highly Functional**

2.3 Ensures compliance with applicable local, state, and federal laws, standards, and regulations:

**Highly Functional**

**Indicators:** In fulfillment of this standard, the school has leadership that:

2.4 Employs a system that provides for analysis and review of student performance and school effectiveness:

**Highly Functional**

2.5 Fosters a learning community:

**Highly Functional**

2.6 Provides teachers and students opportunities to lead:

**Highly Functional**

2.7 Provides stakeholders meaningful roles in the decision-making process that promote a culture of participation, responsibility, and ownership:

**Operational**

2.8 Controls curricular and extracurricular activities that are sponsored by the school:

**Highly Functional**

2.9 Responds to community expectations and stakeholder satisfaction:

**Highly Functional**

2.10 Implements an evaluation system that provides for the professional growth of all personnel:

**Operational**

### Focus Questions:

***1. What is the process for establishing, communicating, and implementing policies and procedures for the effective operation of the school?***

The process for establishing, communicating, and implementing policies and procedures for Discovery Academy is based upon the open door policy of communication among all stakeholders. Evidence of this communication can be seen in our Family Contract, which must be reviewed and signed by both parents and students. In addition, at regularly scheduled Governing Board meetings the policies and procedures that have been established by administrators and other appropriate personnel are examined and discussed. The Board's membership includes community leaders, parents, and staff. To communicate the policies and procedures that have been established, the appropriate personnel--teachers, staff, and administrators--present information to other stakeholders in a variety of settings. These settings include regularly scheduled Team Leader meetings, Leadership Team meetings, Family meetings, Grade Level and Subject Area meetings, and weekly administrator/counselor/team meetings. Each meeting includes a question and answer time where stakeholders can ask for clarification if needed. Input from these meetings is then used to make any necessary adjustments to ensure effective operation of the school. Implementation is ensured through several means. First, appropriate manuals list approved policies and procedures and are distributed to stakeholders (teachers, students, staff, Board members, parents). Second, further discussion takes place in team meetings to ensure understanding. In addition, administrators are visible on campus and in classrooms to ensure that procedures are being followed in order for the school to operate effectively. Finally, an administrator has been assigned to each grade level. At weekly meetings, the administrator and grade level counselor address any concerns or questions that the team teachers may have on policies and procedures as they relate directly to students on their teams.

***2. What process does the school's leadership use to evaluate school effectiveness and student performance?***

School effectiveness at Discovery Academy is measured in several ways. Data from stakeholders is obtained on an annual basis through the use of Climate Surveys completed by parents, students, and teachers. The data is reviewed by the school's leadership and shared with stakeholders at regularly scheduled meetings. Results of the surveys are used to make adjustments to school policies and procedures in order for the school to continue to operate in an effective manner.

Data on school effectiveness and student performance is examined through the use of a variety of evaluation instruments. Discovery Academy conducts a school-wide Data Day where FCAT scores from the previous year are examined. Teachers study these results to determine their students' current strengths and weaknesses in an effort to plan instruction. Additional data includes Kaplan testing three times a year. This data reflects student progress and identifies continued areas of concern. In addition, reading teachers conduct fluency and MAZE tests at regular intervals during the year. Finally, content area teachers are developing common assessments in each unit of study. Results of these assessments are also used to plan instruction.

A variety of avenues are used to share data on school effectiveness and student performance. Opportunities to share include parent conferences, Report Card Pickup Night, Open House, 8th Grade Parent Transition Meeting, Family, Grade Level, Subject Area and team meetings and letters sent home. Parents also have access to their child's individual class grades on Pinnacle Viewer on the school's website. The Governing Board and community have an opportunity to review the data by examining the school's Annual Report and other appropriate documents.

***3. In what ways are stakeholders, including staff, given opportunities to provide leadership and to contribute to the decision-making process?***

Discovery Academy provides numerous opportunities for all stakeholders to be involved in both leadership and the decision making process. The Governing Board meets regularly to review information pertinent to the life of the school. Through active participation on the Board, the members are directly involved in making decisions that effect the overall operation of the school. In addition, parents, teachers, and students are involved in the decision making process by completing Climate Surveys which are reviewed by teachers and administration. Information from these surveys impacts decisions on current and future policies and procedures established by the school.

Teachers are given the opportunity to lead and/or participate in Team Leader meetings, Subject Area and Grade Level meetings and Leadership Team meetings. In addition, each grade level team is led by one of its own teachers. Discussion at each of these meetings allows for the sharing and clarification of information and the expression of concerns. Information exchanged is used in the decision-making process as policies and procedures are reviewed. Another opportunity for leadership is provided at Family meetings where teachers present Kagan Cooperative Learning structures that other teachers can implement in their classrooms. These structures can be used for building relationships, as well as assisting in the mastery of content. Teachers have also been involved in making presentations at school-wide in-service training, especially in the areas of reading and technology. Finally, teachers have been instrumental in developing and implementing student assemblies and Fitness Fridays for the entire school.

Teacher involvement on the Leadership Team has been extensive. It is comprised of representation from each grade level and meets on a regular basis. The team has worked with SSRI, especially in the area of Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships. Teachers on this committee have worked to promote staff awareness in the areas of Core Academics, Stretch Learning, Student Engagement, and Personal Skill Development, Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships, and Professional Learning Communities.

Students at Discovery Academy are actively involved in the life of the school and are provided with opportunities to display and develop their leadership skills. Our school day begins with Disco Live, which is a student-led TV show. It includes announcements, lunch menus, news, and interesting facts. National Junior Honor Society and Student Council provide opportunities for our students to learn to be leaders. NJHS leads the school in food drives for the Salvation Army, Pasta for Pennies for the Leukemia Society and teacher appreciation events. Student Council discusses issues pertinent to the student body and plan activities such as socials. Needs and concerns can be shared with administrators. Discovery Academy provides a growing number of sports activities and clubs in which students can be involved. These activities allow students to develop skills that carry over to other areas of life.

***4. What policies and processes are in place to ensure equity of learning opportunities and support for innovation?***

Equitable opportunities for learning exist for all students at Discovery Academy. Among the opportunities available are access to technology, reading classes for all students, Exploratory Wheel classes, use of Kagan Cooperative Learning structures in the classroom, use of common assessments in core content classes, SAIL, field experiences, physical education classes, sports and clubs, and mainstreaming for Special Education students. In the area of technology, students have access to the computer labs through their classes, as well as the opportunity before school to use the computers in the Media Center. In addition, all students are scheduled in reading classes based on reading diagnostic assessments and FCAT reading scores. This allows all students to receive instruction on a level appropriate to their ability and need. To ensure further student success, the daily SAIL tutoring program offers all students extra teacher support in areas where they are struggling. Wheel classes offer our students the opportunity to expand their knowledge base by exposure to art, humanities, music, and computers.

Common assessments and Kagan Cooperative Learning structures also provide equitable learning opportunities. Cooperative Learning allows all students to participate on four person teams where relationships are built and content reviewed and mastered. These teams give students an opportunity for equal participation in a safe environment. In addition, common assessments are being created in the core content areas. This will allow all students at a particular grade level in a content class to be assessed in a consistent fashion. Analysis of the results reveals not only strengths but also any weaknesses that need to be addressed.

At least two field experiences, including an overnight experience, are provided for all students at each grade level. These experiences are content related and seek to make learning more meaningful in a real-world environment. Some examples are trips to local colleges, Kennedy Space Center, and the Florida Keys. Students are also involved in a Project Block class that focuses on math and science skills in real-world situations. The goal of these classes is to engage students in activities that challenge them to apply math and science concepts to real-world problems. Both teachers and students have been innovative in creating classes that focus on robotics, "A Trip to the Moon," quilt making, architecture, and heat shield development.

Finally, students who are enrolled in the Exceptional Education Students program (ESE), English as a Second Language (ESOL), or those students who have 504 plans are fully involved in the life of Discovery Academy. These students have the opportunity to participate in the regular curriculum where Kagan Cooperative Learning structures and common assessments are used. They have access to all Wheel classes, physical education, SAIL, field experiences, sports, and clubs. The goal of this involvement is to prepare these students for the world in which they will live and work.

**Overall Assessment:**

**Highly Functional:** The school has leaders who are advocates for the school's vision and improvement efforts. The leaders provide direction, lend support, and systematically allocate resources for systemic and sustainable implementation of curricular and co-curricular programs that enable students to achieve expectations for their learning. Leaders ensure collaboration and shared responsibility for school improvement among stakeholders with clearly defined expectations for each stakeholder group. The leaders provide stakeholders meaningful roles in the decision-making process that promote a culture of participation, responsibility, and ownership. The school's policies, procedures, and organizational conditions ensure equity of learning opportunities and support for innovation and are deeply embedded in the way the school functions. The preponderance of the evidence supports an overall assessment of "highly functional" and is substantiated in the responses to the Indicators Rubric.

## Standard 3. Teaching and Learning

**STANDARD:** The school provides research-based curriculum and instructional methods that facilitate achievement for all students.

**Impact Statement:** A school is successful in meeting this standard when it implements a curriculum based on clear and measurable expectations for student learning that provides opportunities for all students to acquire requisite knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Teachers use proven instructional practices that actively engage students in the learning process. Teachers provide opportunities for students to apply their knowledge and skills to real world situations. Teachers give students feedback to improve their performance.

**Indicators Rubric:** Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school. The responses to the rubric should help the school identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school's responses to the focus questions and examples of evidence.

### Definitions of Indicators Rubric:

<b>Not Evident</b>	Little or no evidence exists
<b>Emerging</b>	Evidence indicates early or preliminary stages of implementation of practice
<b>Operational</b>	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are actively implemented
<b>Highly Functional</b>	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are fully integrated and effectively and consistently implemented

**Indicators:** In fulfillment of this standard, the school:

3.1 Develops and implements curriculum based on clearly defined expectations for student learning:

**Highly Functional**

3.2 Promotes active involvement of students in the learning process, including opportunities for them to explore application of higher-order thinking skills and investigate new approaches to applying their learning:

**Highly Functional**

3.3 Gathers, analyzes, and uses data and research in making curricular and instructional choices:

**Operational**

3.4 Designs and uses instructional strategies, innovations, and activities that are research-based and reflective of best practice:

**Highly Functional**

3.5 Offers a curriculum that challenges each student to excel, reflects a commitment to equity, and demonstrates an appreciation of diversity:

**Operational**

3.6 Allocates and protects instructional time to support student learning:

**Highly Functional**

3.7 Provides for articulation and alignment between and among all levels of schools:

**Highly Functional**

3.8 Implements interventions to help students meet expectations for student learning:

**Highly Functional**

3.9 Monitors school climate and takes appropriate steps to ensure that it is conducive to student learning:

**Highly Functional**

3.10 Provides comprehensive information and media services that support the curricular and instructional programs:

**Operational**

3.11 Ensures that all students and staff members have regular and ready access to instructional technology and a comprehensive materials collection that supports the curricular and instructional program:

**Highly Functional**

#### Focus Questions:

***1. How does the school ensure that the curriculum, instructional strategies, and assessments are aligned and articulated across grade levels in support of the expectations for student learning?***

Discovery Academy ensures that curriculum, instructional strategies and assessments are aligned and articulated across grade levels by providing opportunities for teachers to collaborate and plan using the Sunshine State Standards and the Core Knowledge timeline. The Core Knowledge timeline was created by staff at Discovery Academy several years ago in connection with the rigorous Hirsch Core Knowledge Sequence. This timeline aligns the Sunshine State Standards with Hirsch Core Knowledge for grades six through eight. It is the communication tool for curriculum alignment and articulation across grade levels. However, the newly adopted Sunshine State Standards in the areas of math and science have prompted revision to the timeline. Small learning communities were created to work on curriculum alignment in math and science. Members from these learning communities have participated in professional development such as the Middle School Math Initiative (MSMI) to assist in the process of understanding and incorporating these new standards. The learning communities comprised of administration and staff continue to align curriculum in math and science using the new standards with the Core Knowledge timeline. A "cross-walk" implementation plan between old and new standards is being created in an effort to ensure a smooth transition.

Subject Area meetings held monthly also enable teachers to align subject area concepts across grade levels. Subject area teachers are provided time in which to articulate grade level expectations aligned with the Sunshine State Standards and the Core Knowledge timeline during these meetings. The Grade Level meetings are held monthly to provide time for teachers to participate in professional development, discuss grade level issues, and create common assessments.

During Grade Level meetings, teachers work in small, subject specific groups to design common assessments. A time frame is established for the assessment and the outcomes are analyzed in the subsequent grade level meeting. Teachers utilize the assessment results to plan the next steps as well as evaluate the assessment.

In addition to curriculum alignment, teachers at Discovery Academy are teamed so that there is a common planning

time per grade level. This time not only provides additional support for vertical and horizontal curriculum alignment and articulation, but it also is used for planning integrated curriculum. We believe that all of these established practices ensure the curriculum, instructional strategies, and assessments are aligned and articulated across grade levels.

***2. In what ways does the school ensure the implementation of research-based instructional strategies, innovations, and activities that facilitate achievement for all students?***

Discovery Academy has embraced the belief that students need a rigorous and relevant curriculum in a brain-compatible environment built upon the foundation of the Middle School Philosophy. Therefore, a strong emphasis has been placed on professional development opportunities which utilize research-based strategies in order to promote a rigorous and relevant curriculum and a brain-based learning environment for all students. As a member of Successful Practices Network (SNP) and the SSRI, our staff has participated in various professional developments emphasizing Rigor and Relevance and the Learning Criteria. The Learning Criteria is comprised of four components: Core Academics, Stretch Learning, Student Engagement, and Personal Skills Development. The Leadership Team created a Goal and Action Plan for Discovery Academy following the components of the Learning Criteria. The plan helps to capture the essence of the research-based strategies, innovations, and activities practiced at our school. The Stretch Learning component led to the development of a class entitled Project Block, designed to engage students in Quad D (highly rigorous and relevant lessons) activities that would challenge them to apply math and science concepts and skills to solve real-world problems. Students rotate through different Project Block classes during the course of the year. Teachers also participated in Collaborating Online for Rigor and Relevance (CORR) in order to assist them in their quest to develop Quad D lessons involving real-world problem-solving. Discovery Academy has submitted Quad D lessons to the Successful Practices Network and to MSMI. Teachers are supported in their implementation of these strategies and innovations through continued professional development, accessible resources such as kits provided by the SPN containing Quad D lessons, weekly team meetings with administrator/counselor, lesson plan feedback, and classroom observations.

The Reading Initiative at Discovery Academy also plays a vital role in ensuring implementation of research-based practices that facilitate achievement for all students. A professional development plan has been developed in order to train all teachers in research-based literacy strategies. Reading teachers monitor student progress regularly in order to provide instruction based on student strengths and weaknesses.

Discovery Academy is also committed to the full implementation of the high yield strategies of Kagan Cooperative Learning. Kagan training is offered every summer and October for all staff. All new teachers to Discovery participate in a week-long, intensive Kagan training. On-going support is provided through individualized coaching and "team tubs" full of Kagan support materials such as timers, spinners, and other resource materials.

***3. What processes are implemented to ensure that teachers are well-prepared and effectively implementing the curriculum?***

Processes we have implemented at Discovery Academy to ensure that teachers are well-prepared and effectively implementing the curriculum begin with our new teachers. Teachers new to Discovery participate in an intensive two-day training. During this time, teachers get oriented to the school and our climate. School procedures and expectations are reviewed and research-based teaching and learning are examined. New teachers also have a mentor teacher who conducts informal observations, and provides feedback and support. This group of teachers meets twice a month to discuss instructional strategies, classroom management, and other topics relevant to effective teaching.

We strongly support the Middle School Philosophy at Discovery Academy. All teachers are part of a team and share common planning time. By providing teachers with time to plan, collaborate, and utilize resources, we believe they will be prepared to effectively implement the curriculum. During this planning time, administration has weekly

meetings with each team and the grade level counselor to discuss the resources the team needs to help their students.

Numerous resources are available through Media Services, technology, and professional development support manuals. Teachers have several varieties of media support services ranging from a well developed professional resource library to audio-visual tools. As members of the Successful Practices Network, teachers have access to the SPN website, a wide variety of manuals, and multi-media resources. We also have access to the ICLE website and professional development resources such as teacher handbooks with instructional strategies for making lessons rigorous and relevant, along with kits of Quad D lessons. Teachers have the ability to communicate online through SPN with other educators committed to developing rigorous and relevant lessons.

During the course of the school year, each team of teachers selects and models a Kagan structure during Family meetings. Evidence of the implementation of our school-wide Kagan Cooperative Learning strategies is noted through Family meetings, lesson plans, and classroom observations.

***4. How does the school provide every student access to comprehensive information, instructional technology, and media services?***

Discovery Academy provides every student access to comprehensive information, instructional technology, and media services through an extensive technology component and a creative media program. The commitment of the school to provide technology education and resources for every student is evident in the multiple technology labs available for classes. All students create an electronic portfolio highlighting their accomplishments from sixth through eighth grade. The portfolio contains samples of significant learning. Each year students add to their portfolios; all portfolios are available to parents. Students also participate in a Instructional Technology class. Other technology available to students includes Alpha Smarts and digital cameras. Students have access to the Discovery Academy website and the media link which provides a wealth of resources. Teachers have Smartboards available for classroom instruction. Discovery has a Director of Technology to in-service teachers and assist with technical issues.

The media program at Discovery Academy has an open-door policy for all students. Students are invited to come to the media center before, during, or after school. All students come to the media center twice a month with their social studies classes. The social studies teacher ensures that each student checks out a book. A sign-up schedule is in place to provide teachers with the opportunity to bring students to the media center as needed. Academic classrooms have classroom libraries that consist of a variety of book types and reading levels. Reading is encouraged through several innovative programs such as Book Adventure (on-line reading program), Book Bowl (local and district), 50/100 page Reading Challenge, Sunshine State Young Reader's Award Program, Silent Reading Auction, and a monthly Family Literacy Night. Discovery students and staff participated in the Guinness Book of World Record Read Aloud.

**Overall Assessment:**

**Highly Functional:** The school implements a curriculum based on clear and measurable expectations for student learning that provides multiple opportunities for all students to acquire requisite knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The school has a formalized process to align instructional practices with the curriculum and demonstrates results through systemic and sustainable implementation across the school. Teachers use proven, research-based, instructional practices that actively engage students in the learning process and encourage students to take ownership of their learning. Teachers consistently provide opportunities for students to apply their knowledge and skills to real world situations. Teachers give students frequent feedback using a variety of methods to improve their performance. The preponderance of the evidence supports an overall assessment of "highly functional" and is substantiated in the responses to the Indicators Rubric.

## Standard 4. Documenting and Using Results

**STANDARD:** The school enacts a comprehensive assessment system that monitors and documents performance and uses these results to improve student performance and school effectiveness.

**Impact Statement:** A school is successful in meeting this standard when it uses a comprehensive assessment system based on clearly defined performance measures. The system is used to assess student performance on expectations for student learning, evaluate the effectiveness of curriculum and instruction, and determine interventions to improve student performance. The assessment system yields timely and accurate information that is meaningful and useful to school leaders, teachers, and other stakeholders in understanding student performance, school effectiveness, and the results of improvement efforts.

**Indicators Rubric:** Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school. The responses to the rubric should help the school identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school's responses to the focus questions and examples of evidence.

### Definitions of Indicators Rubric:

<b>Not Evident</b>	Little or no evidence exists
<b>Emerging</b>	Evidence indicates early or preliminary stages of implementation of practice
<b>Operational</b>	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are actively implemented
<b>Highly Functional</b>	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are fully integrated and effectively and consistently implemented

**Indicators:** In fulfillment of this standard, the school:

4.1 Establishes performance measures for student learning that yield information that is reliable, valid, and bias free:

**Operational**

4.2 Develops and implements a comprehensive assessment system for assessing progress toward meeting the expectations for student learning:

**Highly Functional**

4.3 Uses student assessment data for making decisions for continuous improvement of teaching and learning processes:

**Operational**

4.4 Conducts a systematic analysis of instructional and organizational effectiveness and uses the results to improve student performance:

**Operational**

4.5 Communicates the results of student performance and school effectiveness to all stakeholders:

**Highly Functional**

4.6 Uses comparison and trend data of student performance from comparable schools in evaluating its effectiveness:

**Highly Functional**

4.7 Demonstrates verifiable growth in student performance:

**Operational**

4.8 Maintains a secure, accurate, and complete student record system in accordance with state and federal regulations:

**Highly Functional**

**Focus Questions:**

***1. How is the assessment system currently used in your school to analyze changes in student performance?***

Discovery Academy uses the FCAT as one of the assessment tools to analyze changes in student performance. At the beginning of each school year, teachers meet collectively to assess and break down individual scores. Teachers know how many Level 1, Level 2, Level 3, Level 4 and Level 5 students are in each class. This data is not only used in academic classrooms, but all classrooms. This information is used to plan professional development and implement strategies that will effectively show grade level gains for students. Teachers use this information to identify specific areas of need and plan instruction accordingly.

Students are placed in reading classes based on their FCAT scores and reading diagnostic tests. Each reading class has a certain area of focus, from phonics and fluency to reading strategies such as inference and evaluation. Intensive reading students are progress monitored frequently in their individual classes for fluency(PMRN), comprehension(MAZE), and skill development.

Discovery Academy also uses Kaplan testing as a way of measuring gains throughout the academic year. Reading, math and science tests are given to all students three times during the year--August, January, and May. At the beginning of the year, the results are shared with the students. Student and teacher meet to establish goals for the year. The scores are shared again in January and goals re-assessed. Final results are reviewed in May with the student.

***2. What are you doing to ensure that assessment results are timely, relevant, and communicated in a way that can be used by teachers, students, parents, and external stakeholders to aid the performance of individual students?***

Kaplan test results are shared with students three times during the year. Students are aware of their strengths and weaknesses, and they set goals to improve their skills. Any student below grade level on the FCAT reading, math and/or science tests are required to have an Academic Success Plan (ASP). Teachers identify strategies in the area of need to help the student achieve a grade level status on the next FCAT test. There are specific responsibilities for the teacher, the student in the classroom and the parent. Teachers meet with students and parents three time during the academic year to establish and monitor the goals. All three stakeholders sign the document acknowledging the goals.

Discovery Academy participates in Data Day at the beginning of the school year. The purpose of this day is to break down the FCAT scores of individual teams and individual students in the subject areas of reading, math, and science. Teachers are made aware of individual student scores and they also verify a strand or criteria level that is an area of

weakness overall in each class period. Once this information is determined, teachers participate in professional development necessary to increase scores. This information is documented in each teacher's Individual Professional Growth Plan.

Information regarding the FCAT tests and scores is explained to parents at Open House and Report Card Pick-up Night. Teachers and staff members explain the overall test and scores to the parents. If their child has an ASP, then it is reviewed at that time and the forms are signed, documenting the meeting. Open House is an annual event; Parent Report Card Pick-up is held three times during the year.

Pinnacle Viewer is an online program that gives parents access to their child's individual grades in each class. Parent conferences are held any time the team or the parent feels a need to discuss the progress of a student. All core academic teachers sit down with the parent and student to discuss areas of concern. Intensive Reading teachers send home progress letters and ESE students have a separate progress report attached to their report cards.

Eighth graders take the FCAT Writes, but the process of learning the writing format begins in 6th grade. Sixth and seventh grade teachers give a pre-FCAT writing assessment to their students in late spring. This information is used by the students' current teachers and passed up to the next grade level so the students' new teachers are also aware of the skill levels as the next school year begins.

### ***3. How are data used to understand and improve overall school effectiveness?***

The teacher and student review Kaplan results three times per year. These results are also reviewed by the academic teams, wheel teachers, counselors, and administrators to determine gains made from the initial test to the final test. These scores can be compared to the district which allows Discovery to have a clear view of our strengths and weaknesses compared to those of other schools.

FCAT results are used to compare the school's overall performance. This data is used to compare the school's overall score to that of comparable schools in the district. This information is reported in the school's Annual Report and Accountability Plan. Administrators analyze this data to make improvements in the overall school program. Teachers review this data to plan lessons and implement strategies to enable students to improve.

### ***4. How are teachers trained to understand and use data in the classroom?***

Data day is used to assess the overall areas of need in each class period. FCAT scores are analyzed by individual students and class period. Kaplan tests are analyzed by individual test items and teachers research Kaplan resources for remedial and enrichment activities that can enhance their lessons in each class. Once this is determined, professional development strategies are provided to the staff. These strategies are provided to the staff through the use of Discovery's reading and Kagan coach. Professional development and student achievement goals are documented through the Individual Professional Growth Plan for each teacher.

Kagan Cooperative Learning is a powerful tool in keeping students engaged and creating a safe environment for learning. Students are grouped in four person teams and seated at their tables based on their test scores. This allows students to learn from each other and to help one another. Each individual student is also held accountable for learning the material. Kagan structures enhance overall performance and retention through mastery, team building and classbuilding.

The reading coach provides professional development in reading strategies monthly at Grade Level meetings. Grade level teachers gather to learn strategies to improve their students' reading abilities. The coach also explains the differentiated instruction for each reading level so teachers are aware of the needs of their individual students. Again, this information is helpful in planning lessons to reach all levels of readers.

Discovery Academy has monthly Subject Area meetings. Subject areas meet across grade levels to work on implementing rigorous and relevant lessons. Teachers learn to create Quad D lessons, those identified as the most rigorous and relevant for students, using real-world situations to engage adolescents. Strategies are discussed to raise performance levels and test scores. Teachers communicate across grade levels to determine the scope and sequence of materials taught from one year to the next. Strengths and weaknesses are identified by grade level.

Finally, team leaders are a vital source of information to team members. Team leaders meet and discuss current issues with administration. Issues may be student concerns, academic concerns, overall school performance or increasing effectiveness in the classroom. Team leaders share this information with their teams. Leaders also facilitate discussion regarding student performance and skills to enhance learning for individual students on the team. Team leaders coach and mentor new teachers on the team. They give guidance and direction for the classroom and everyday operations and procedures.

### **Overall Assessment:**

**Highly Functional:** The school uses a comprehensive assessment system based on clearly defined performance measures that yield valid and reliable results, including multiple measures of individual student achievement that assess higher order thinking skills and are of adequate technical quality. The system is used to assess student performance on expectations for student learning, evaluate the effectiveness of curriculum and instruction, design and improve instructional strategies and practices, and determine interventions to improve and enhance student performance. The assessment system yields timely and accurate information that is meaningful and useful to school leaders, teachers, and other stakeholders in understanding student performance, school effectiveness, and the results of improvement efforts for individual students and groups and subgroups of students. The preponderance of the evidence supports an overall assessment of "highly functional" and is substantiated in the responses to the Indicators Rubric.

# Standard 5. Resource and Support Systems

**STANDARD:** The school has the resources and services necessary to support its vision and purpose and to ensure achievement for all students.

**Impact Statement:** A school is successful in meeting this standard when it has sufficient human, material, and fiscal resources to implement a curriculum that enables students to achieve expectations for student learning, to meet special needs, and to comply with applicable regulations. The school employs and allocates staff that are well qualified for their assignments. The school provides ongoing learning opportunities for all staff to improve their effectiveness. The school ensures compliance with applicable local, state, and federal regulations.

**Indicators Rubric:** Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school. The responses to the rubric should help the school identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school's responses to the focus questions and examples of evidence.

**Definitions of Indicators Rubric:**

<b>Not Evident</b>	Little or no evidence exists
<b>Emerging</b>	Evidence indicates early or preliminary stages of implementation of practice
<b>Operational</b>	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are actively implemented
<b>Highly Functional</b>	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are fully integrated and effectively and consistently implemented

**Indicators:** In fulfillment of this standard, the school:

5.1 Recruits, employs, and mentors qualified professional staff that are capable of fulfilling assigned roles and responsibilities:

**Highly Functional**

5.2 Assigns professional staff responsibilities based on their qualifications (i.e., professional preparation, ability, knowledge, and experience):

**Highly Functional**

5.3 Ensures that all staff participate in a continuous program of professional development:

**Highly Functional**

5.4 Provides and assigns staff that are sufficient in number to meet the vision and purpose of the school:

**Highly Functional**

5.5 Budgets sufficient resources to support its educational programs and to implement its plans for improvement:

**Highly Functional**

5.6 Monitors all financial transactions through a recognized, regularly audited accounting system:

**Highly Functional**

5.7 Maintains the site, facilities, services, and equipment to provide an environment that is safe and orderly for all occupants:

**Highly Functional**

5.8 Possesses a written security and crisis management plan with appropriate training for stakeholders:

**Highly Functional**

5.9 Ensures that each student has access to guidance services that include, but are not limited to, counseling, appraisal, mentoring, staff consulting, referral, and educational and career planning:

**Highly Functional**

5.10 Provides appropriate support for students with special needs:

**Highly Functional**

#### Focus Questions:

***1. What is the process for recruitment, induction, placement, development, evaluation, and retention of qualified teachers, administrators, and support staff?***

Staff at Discovery Academy are recruited through job fairs, online, and recommendation and are placed according to their areas of certification, following NCLB guidelines. Teachers new to Discovery attend in-service meetings before the school year begins where they are introduced to our school culture and research-based training such as creating a brain-compatible classroom, Kagan Cooperative Learning and Love and Logic. A new teacher coach is provided to assist those new to our staff with lesson design, classroom management, assessments, and any other areas of need. The coach meets with the teachers both in and out of the classroom for informal observations and question and answer sessions. All staff members attend regular in-service meetings in which "best practices" are introduced and reinforced. Teams, grade levels, and subject area teachers meet on a regular basis to share ideas and learn new strategies. Evaluation of staff takes place on a regular basis via lesson plan monitoring, classroom observations, and self-evaluations. Teachers are rated by the Essential Performance Criteria. Formal evaluation of staff follows state guidelines and requirements.

Our organizational structure of teaming and the support it lends to a new teacher is an incentive for new hires. The continuous dialog among team teachers reinforces the sense of community. Discovery Academy gives ample opportunities for teachers who are interested in pursuing a leadership role to participate in many on-going initiatives, attend conferences, become members of teams or committees. All staff are rewarded a monetary bonus after successfully completing their first year of service at Discovery and each year thereafter.

***2. How does the leadership ensure that the allocation of financial resources is supportive of the school's vision, educational programs, and its plans for school improvement?***

Discovery Academy maintains the Middle School Philosophy in the current climate of budget cuts, increasing class size and teaching loads. This philosophy enables teachers to have common planning time as a team and as grade levels. Students have a 25 minute Advisory class each morning to build relationships with their peers and their teachers, set goals, and learn communication skills. Lifelong Guidelines and Lifeskills are reinforced on a daily basis. Our focus is the whole child, not just academics or successful test taking. A part of our vision is for teachers to have the latest research-based information and training. Resources are set aside each year for quality in-service and for

attendance at conferences locally and nationally. These resources have enabled us to become active participants in SSRI, MSMI, MSSI, and the Successful Practices Network. Educational programs such as our research-based reading, Kagan Cooperative Learning, brain-compatible classrooms are funded to allow staff and students to benefit fully.

In addition to staff development and adherence to the Middle School Philosophy, Discovery Academy is committed to offering our students as many opportunities for learning as we are able. A variety of after school clubs and sports are available. The school hosts celebrations for good behavior and good work--Administration/Student Luncheons, Morning Madness, Team Acknowledgements. Parents are invited to have dinner with us when they come for report cards, Open House, and our end-of-the-year celebration of student work, Spectacular! Spectacular! "Being There" experiences are an important part of the curriculum and teaching the whole child. Discovery Academy has its own busses to make these trips more accessible. Some costs are subsidized and students who may not be able to afford to go are provided the resources to attend in many cases. Another component of our vision is to have students ready for a changing future, thus we have multiple high speed computer labs and students and teachers are provided with many other types of technology can be used in and out of the classroom.

A budget is submitted to the Governing Board each year. Classrooms have an abundance of supplies and students have necessary textbooks. We have purchased the latest technology for both students and staff. The Middle School Philosophy, the emphasis on a rigorous and relevant curriculum and a wide variety of opportunities and experiences for our students are all part of our on-going school vision, mission, and commitment to continuous improvement.

### ***3. How does the leadership ensure a safe and orderly environment for students and staff?***

Relationship building is a big part of ensuring a safe and orderly environment. This is achieved through our Advisory curriculum, Lifeskills and Lifelong Guidelines, student teaming, the student relationship plan, and adherence to the Middle School Philosophy. Educational programs such as Kagan Cooperative Learning create a sense of community through teambuilding and classbuilding structures used in every classroom. Teachers are trained in Fred Jones and Love and Logic to provide a non-threatening environment, where children are encouraged to take ownership of their own behaviors and do not have the opportunity for confrontation. Our classroom management is based on expectations and procedures rather than rules.

The master schedule is staggered by grade to reduce mass movements of the student body. Morning and afternoon transitions are carefully managed and monitored with full staff participation. Teachers greet students at the doors of their classrooms at the beginning of each class. Administrators are visible outside during all transitions and walk through classrooms regularly.

Finally, facilities are regularly inspected and maintained. Staff is updated on school-wide disaster preparedness. Regularly scheduled drills are conducted and each classroom has an individual evacuation plan. A camera security system is also in place throughout the campus. Discovery Academy does not allow students to have backpacks, cell phones, or electronic devices at school.

### ***4. What process is used to ensure and monitor that each student has access to guidance and resource services that meet the needs of the student?***

The guidance department maintains an open door policy for all students and each grade level has an assigned counselor. Guidance services include such programs as orientation of new students, the planning and administering of standardized testing programs, counseling with students who have vocational or personal needs, as well as placement and follow-up services. Guidance counselors are also assigned to service the particular needs of ESE, Alpha, 504, and ESOL students. An IEP facilitator meets with students and parents at scheduled conferences as required. Each grade level has an Advisor/Advisee program in place to encourage open communication. Teachers conduct team meetings with individual students as needed to ensure students meet with success; counselors, administrators and team teachers

meet weekly to discuss concerns regarding students on the team and interventions are planned when necessary. Regular communication occurs with parents through the student planner, eboards, e-mail, and phone. Our adoption of the Middle School Philosophy provides a climate in which students feel free to communicate their needs to teachers, counselors, and administration.

**Overall Assessment:**

**Highly Functional:** The school effectively uses human, material, and fiscal resources to implement a curriculum that enables students to achieve and exceed expectations for student learning, to meet special needs of all students, and to comply with applicable regulations. The school systematically employs and allocates staff members who are well qualified for their assignments in all content areas. The school provides and fully supports ongoing, job-embedded learning opportunities for all staff to improve their effectiveness, including both professional and support staff. The school ensures compliance with applicable local, state, and federal regulations. The preponderance of the evidence supports an overall assessment of "highly functional" and is substantiated in the responses to the Indicators Rubric.

# Standard 6. Stakeholder Communications and Relationships

**STANDARD:** The school fosters effective communications and relationships with and among its stakeholders.

**Impact Statement:** A school is successful in meeting this standard when it has the understanding, commitment, and support of stakeholders. School personnel seek opportunities for collaboration and shared leadership among stakeholders to help students learn and advance improvement efforts.

**Indicators Rubric:** Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school. The responses to the rubric should help the school identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school's responses to the focus questions and examples of evidence.

**Definitions of Indicators Rubric:**

<b>Not Evident</b>	Little or no evidence exists
<b>Emerging</b>	Evidence indicates early or preliminary stages of implementation of practice
<b>Operational</b>	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are actively implemented
<b>Highly Functional</b>	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are fully integrated and effectively and consistently implemented

**Indicators:** In fulfillment of this standard, the school:

6.1 Fosters collaboration with community stakeholders to support student learning:

**Operational**

6.2 Has formal channels to listen to and communicate with stakeholders:

**Highly Functional**

6.3 Solicits the knowledge and skills of stakeholders to enhance the work of the school:

**Operational**

6.4 Communicates the expectations for student learning and goals for improvement to all stakeholders:

**Highly Functional**

6.5 Provides information about students, their performance, and school effectiveness that is meaningful and useful to stakeholders:

**Highly Functional**

**Focus Questions:**

**1. How does the school's leadership ensure that the school is responsive to community expectations and stakeholder satisfaction?**

The mission statement of Discovery Academy clearly defines the expectations the stakeholders of the future have for our students. Being able to work together is vital in today's workplace. Academics need to be relevant to real-world situations. Students need to be equipped with skills that will allow them to be successful on the job by being able to solve problems and to work cooperatively toward a common goal. The world is changing and students must be adaptable. Discovery Academy has established many programs to answer the ever-changing community needs and expectations.

The Middle School Philosophy supports our mission statement. Discovery addresses the whole child. We take pride in offering a variety of programs that do more than just reflect growth in academics. Through the concepts of the Middle School Philosophy and brain-based teaching and learning, the whole child is reached. Students are provided opportunities not available in many schools.

The Advisory program teaches students to value themselves and others. The 6th grade curriculum focuses on the five Lifelong Guidelines: truthfulness, trustworthiness, active listening, no put-downs, and giving your personal best. These guidelines will serve them well in school, the workplace and in their personal relationships. They learn valuable Lifeskills that will help them function productively in society. 7th grade uses "Skills For Adolescence" program. They learn to value differences and appreciate that each individual brings something valuable to the table. 8th grade Advisory prepares students for transition to high school and the rest of their lives through The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens. Students learn to set goals, prioritize, and manage their time. They learn about making good choices and working with others to create synergy. Through the Advisory curriculum, students become prepared to meet the expectations of their community and world.

Kagan Cooperative Learning helps students to work as a member of a team--to work toward a common goal. Students participate in teambuilder and classbuilder structures that build team unity and minimize individual differences. Students become active learners who realize that "Your gain is my gain." Students learn to value themselves and to trust others.

Our students leave Discovery Academy with a strong academic foundation. In addition, they leave with skills and strategies that have enabled them to build self-confidence, teamwork skills, and qualities that prepare them for an ever-changing 21st Century.

**2. How does the school's leadership foster a learning community?**

Discovery Academy fosters learning communities for students, teachers, and teacher-leaders. The Middle School Philosophy creates an environment in which students feel connected to their school, their teachers and to each other. Students are divided into teams with the same core academic teachers. They are able to identify with their team, develop close relationships with their teachers and feel safe and championed. The Advisory program and Kagan Cooperative Learning strategies create an environment in which students are at ease to take a risk and reach beyond their comfort level to achieve greater academic and social successes. Even the special Discovery Academy lingo suggests a "home away from home." Brain-based teaching and learning establishes the most productive environment for students, taking into consideration their needs as human beings first and adolescents second. These elements provide a place where students can be happy, productive, and successful.

Teachers at Discovery Academy work and learn together to be more effective in and out of the classroom. In regularly scheduled staff development meetings, grade level teachers learn reading strategies, subject area teachers plan common assessments, and teachers across grade levels work to develop rigorous and relevant lessons for their

students. Teachers expand their knowledge of technology with the help of the Technology Director. On teams, core academic teachers study data on their students to make their lessons more effective. Team meetings focus on student successes, student concerns, and putting new skills to work in the classroom. Other teacher groups have created the student management system, i.e. green cards and passports, and planned a school-wide literacy day to celebrate reading by enjoying a variety of reading activities throughout an entire school day. Administration has been instrumental in identifying areas where teacher groups can bring ideas and build consensus to improve the learning climate at Discovery Academy.

The Leadership Team is a very special learning community whose members drive change and innovation at Discovery Academy. This Leadership Team was formed after attending the first Model Schools Conference in 2005. Bringing back an understanding that the focus of education had to change in order to ready students for the 21st Century, this group went to work with SSRI and ICLE and DOE resources and information to update the mission and vision of the school. Using the Learning Criteria, a plan was created to change the way students would be taught by adopting rigor and relevance into all areas of the curriculum. This team planned how this information would be shared with the rest of the staff and what kind of time frame would be feasible. Our affiliation with SSRI gives all teachers access to CORR which is a computer based program that walks teachers through the process of developing Quad D lessons. This group of teachers was the first to attend the many conferences to learn how to create these changes. Since then, most teachers have had the opportunity to attend one or more of these conferences. The work of this learning community is driving the future of Discovery Academy and its students.

**3. What avenues are used to communicate information to stakeholders about students, their performance, and school effectiveness?**

Discovery Academy uses many avenues to communicate information to stakeholders. Following is a list of the many ways we reach out to our community with information about Discovery and our students, their performance and school effectiveness:

- **Website** Provides parents with general information about Discovery Academy, eboards that give information regarding subjects and team happenings, Pinnacle Viewer where parents have detailed access to grades in each individual subject.
- **Open House** August introduction to the school, the teams, and a look ahead to the year's work.
- **Student Planner** Documents class work agendas, daily class objectives, homework assignments. The planner also serves as tool of communication between home and school.
- **Team Conferences** Teams or parents can request a conference with academic teachers and counselors to discuss student concerns. Conferences can be in person or by phone.
- **Report Card Night** Evening set aside for parents to pick up student report cards, have mini-conferences with teachers regarding academic or behavioral concerns and questions, discuss ASP's and talk with counselors about FCAT scores. Parents can view student portfolios.
- **Spectacular! Spectacular!** An evening set aside to celebrate student achievements in academics, the arts, and physical education.
- **ConnectEd** Phone devise that sends school-wide messages to parents regarding events on campus.
- **Parent Letters** Communication home from teams or administration regarding upcoming activities.
- **Probation Hearings** Serious academic, behavior, or attendance problems attended by parents, student, administrator, and team teacher.
- **Family Literacy Nights** Monthly meetings that provide reading activities to parents to encourage reading and assist struggling readers.
- **5th Grade Parent Orientation** Invitation to showcase Discovery Academy and its mission and vision to upcoming 5th grade students and parents.
- **5th Grade Student Tours** 1/2 day "Being There" experience for 5th graders to come to Discovery and pair up with a buddy for the day and experience middle school.

The administration and staff provide an environment where the whole child is valued, not just academic success. When students leave Discovery Academy, they are not only equipped with the skills needed to be successful in a changing world, but they have been afforded opportunities to grow socially, emotionally, physically, and mentally. The "exit pass" is more than just success. It's a well rounded individual who enters the world to be productive and responsible.

**Overall Assessment:**

**Highly Functional:** The school has the understanding, commitment, and support of all stakeholders. School personnel actively promote and provide regular, systematic opportunities for collaboration and shared leadership among all stakeholders to help students learn and advance improvement efforts and can demonstrate a high level of meaningful participation by most shareholder groups. The preponderance of the evidence supports an overall assessment of "highly functional" and is substantiated in the responses to the Indicators Rubric.

## Standard 7. Commitment to Continuous Improvement

**STANDARD:** The school establishes, implements, and monitors a continuous process of improvement that focuses on student performance.

**Impact Statement:** A school is successful in meeting this standard when it implements a collaborative and ongoing process for improvement that aligns the functions of the school with the expectations for student learning. Improvement efforts are sustained and the school demonstrates progress in improving student performance and school effectiveness. New improvement efforts are informed by the results of earlier efforts through reflection and assessment of the improvement process.

**Indicators Rubric:** Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school. The responses to the rubric should help the school identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school's responses to the focus questions and examples of evidence.

### Definitions of Indicators Rubric:

<b>Not Evident</b>	Little or no evidence exists
<b>Emerging</b>	Evidence indicates early or preliminary stages of implementation of practice
<b>Operational</b>	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are actively implemented
<b>Highly Functional</b>	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are fully integrated and effectively and consistently implemented

**Indicators:** In fulfillment of this standard, the school:

7.1 Engages in a continuous process of improvement that articulates the vision and purpose the school is pursuing (Vision); maintains a rich and current description of students, their performance, school effectiveness, and the school community (Profile); employs goals and interventions to improve student performance (Plan); and documents and uses the results to inform what happens next (Results):

**Highly Functional**

7.2 Engages stakeholders in the processes of continuous improvement:

**Operational**

7.3 Ensures that plans for continuous improvement are aligned with the vision and purpose of the school and expectations for student learning:

**Highly Functional**

7.4 Provides professional development for school personnel to help them implement improvement interventions to achieve improvement goals:

**Highly Functional**

7.5 Monitors and communicates the results of improvement efforts to stakeholders:

**Operational**

7.6 Evaluates and documents the effectiveness and impact of its continuous process of improvement:

**Operational**

**Focus Questions:**

***1. What is the process for continuous improvement used by the school and what are the results that this process is delivering for student performance and school effectiveness?***

Discovery Academy is a conversion charter school that prides itself in providing a safe and orderly environment that challenges all students to become productive 21st Century learners. With an emphasis on excellence in academics, communication skills, and technology, the school improvement initiatives are carefully constructed, examined thoroughly through the school's mission and vision, driven by data, and are reported to multiple stakeholders.

Through ICLE Model Schools conferences, SSRI, and MSMI, Discovery Academy has worked diligently to focus on continuous school improvement. Through the direction of our Leadership Team, the school has used the four components of the Learning Criteria to clarify its mission, prioritize challenge areas, seek interventions, and critically review the school's performance. This evaluation has provided a critical rationale for establishing future goals of the school and developing a plan of action in each of the areas.

- **Core Academic Learning** The Leadership team has focused on the achievement in the core subjects of English/Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies in an effort to identify strengths and challenges. Through the course of the last several years, teams have developed a writing plan across grade levels that resulted in an increase in FCAT Writes scores. Reading initiatives have been put in place to support students who are not meeting proficiency levels on the FCAT. Academic teachers began working together through vertical and horizontal planning to create common assessments and Quad D lesson plan ideas. Project Block classes have been designed to strengthen math and science skills. These programs are currently being monitored with trend data to see if improvements are occurring over the course of 3-5 years.
- **Stretch Learning** Programs have been put in place to help demonstrate rigorous and relevant learning beyond minimum requirements. Advanced classes have been added to 7th and 8th grade in Math, Language Arts, and Science. 8th grade students have the opportunity to take algebra for high school credit. Project Block hands-on activities have allowed students to stretch their learning beyond just basic math and science standards. They are incorporating these standards into real-world projects that are relevant to the 21st Century.
- **Student Engagement** After looking at student activities available on campus, the Leadership Team worked to provide more opportunities for students to become engaged before, during, and after school. More sports teams and clubs were created on campus to help engage students in opportunities that support a sense of belonging and accomplishment. These activities also provide the chance for students to build relationships with adults, peers, and parents.
- **Personal Skill Development** In an effort to increase personal, social, service and leadership skills among students, the Leadership Team worked to build the personal skills of the student body. Advisory programs were designed to support positive behaviors and attitudes on campus. Student leadership programs were put in place to help build student awareness and provide a voice to administration. "Rachel's Challenge" is a new initiative to encourage students to reach out to their fellow students in kind and positive ways. This program promotes a sense of community. (An act of kindness that sparks a chain reaction.) Kagan Cooperative Learning structures are implemented across campus to help students connect with each other. A behavior incentive plan is in place to monitor student behavior and provide an opportunity to celebrate positive outcomes through Administration/Student Luncheons and Morning Madness.

To better understand the Learning Criteria, the Leadership Team, under the direction of Administration, attended a series of professional development conferences that support the mission and vision of our school. At the same time, the team uses the criteria to evaluate and process the results of programs that are currently in place at Discovery.

***2. What steps are taken to ensure that the improvement goals reflect student learning needs that are aligned with the vision and purpose of the school?***

The Leadership Team continues to monitor the four Learning Criteria areas. In an effort to bridge the gap between new employees and returning staff members, the Administration provides a phase-in process for teachers. New teachers to Discovery Academy are required to attend a week-long Kagan training where they learn to use Kagan strategies in the classroom. During a pre-week of school, new teachers receive a two-day training that supports the brain-based learning programs implemented at Discovery. These teachers are expected to use these strategies and ideas during the first year of employment. Returning teachers, Phase 2 are stretched to incorporate Rigor, Relevance, and Relationship strategies. These teachers are provided training and conference opportunities to build their background knowledge of such practices. Teachers in their third year at Discovery move to Phase 3. They continue to gain knowledge through leadership conferences and session opportunities. They also provide mentoring to new staff members. To incorporate more rigor, Phase 3 teachers design Quad D lessons. These phase-in opportunities help ensure that all staff get the information and support they need to deliver the vision and mission of Discovery. As a result, all staff are trained in all areas to have maximum impact on student learning.

***3. What process is used to ensure that the school personnel are provided professional development and technical assistance to implement interventions and achieve improvement goals?***

Through professional development opportunities, staff members are able to implement interventions that help reach the desired results for student learning. In an effort to equip teachers with the skills needed, the following professional opportunities are in place:

- Vertical subject planning
- Horizontal team planning
- Technology training
- Literacy Council initiatives and activities
- Reading strategies for content area teachers
- Fred Jones training
- Love and Logic training
- PEC program for new teachers
- SSRI, MSMI, MSSI teams
- Leadership Team meetings and initiatives
- Weekly team/administrator/counselor meetings

During these meetings, teachers work together to plan, implement, and organize educational opportunities that immerse students in relevant 21st Century learning experiences.

***4. How does the leadership ensure that the improvement plan is implemented, monitored, achieved, and communicated to stakeholders?***

The Leadership Team works hard to provide learning opportunities for all individuals at Discovery Academy. The use of the Learning Criteria empowers the staff to design meaningful school improvement, create agendas for change, and build critical interventions that help students achieve academic excellence. The Leadership Team assists in professional development opportunities for staff members to grow in knowledge that not only supports student learning, but provides the latest information on brain-based research programs and initiatives. Through the phase-in program, teachers are given the skills necessary to support the mission and vision of Discovery Academy. Initiatives are monitored through lesson plans, observations, and conferences. In an effort to keep all stakeholders informed of the progress of our educational programs, Discovery hosts many family and community outreach programs throughout the school year. All reports are public and available for examination at any time. Being a charter school, we are required to self-study each school year, which gives us the opportunity to change and update continuously. These factors work together to keep Discovery Academy at the forefront of educational research and innovation.

### Overall Assessment:

**Highly Functional:** The school fully implements a collaborative and ongoing process for improvement that aligns all functions of the school with the expectations for student learning. Improvement efforts are systemic, sustained, and fully embedded, and the school demonstrates significant progress in improving student performance and school effectiveness. New improvement efforts are clearly informed by the documented results of earlier efforts through reflection and assessment of a highly sustained, continuous process of improvement. The preponderance of the evidence supports an overall assessment of "highly functional" and is substantiated in the responses to the Indicators Rubric.

## Conclusion

The following focus questions reflect the school's overall analysis of its internal evaluation of the accreditation standards.

### Focus Questions

***As you review your responses to the standards, what major trends, themes, or areas of focus emerge that cut across the seven standards?***

Discovery Academy is focused on creating an educational climate in which students and staff learn and grow in an atmosphere of mutual respect. The Middle School Philosophy provides an environment where the whole child is nurtured yet challenged to be the best that he or she can be. Students learn academics through a rigorous and relevant curriculum; they have access to the latest technology. They learn to work cooperatively and to value themselves and others. Teachers are trained in the very best research-based practices--Kagan, R/R/R, brain-based teaching and learning. There is a concerted effort to reach out to students and their families. Students have access to counselors and tutoring; they enjoy celebrating with their teachers and their peers. Parents are invited to share in their children's accomplishments and to join our Discovery family at regularly scheduled parent night dinners. These practices are evident everywhere, everyday and reflect our vision and mission to give a well-rounded education to each and every child.

***Based on your review of these cross-cutting themes/trends and each of the seven standards, what would you consider to be your school's greatest strengths?***

Discovery Academy's greatest strength is the climate that has been created which sets high expectations in a caring, supportive environment for students and staff. Students know that much is expected of them through a rigorous curriculum. Teachers know that by providing Kagan structures, a brain-compatible classroom and a rigorous and relevant curriculum that students can attain the knowledge and skills they need to be successful. Students are supported by their teams, guidance, and administration. Teachers are supported through professional development, learning communities, peers, and administration. The middle school concept of building a sense of community and teaching the whole child enables students to grow academically, socially, and physically in an atmosphere absent from threat.

Discovery sets consistent expectations for students and staff. These school-wide expectations have created the climate in which a diverse student population is able to form a larger community where individuals feel connected to each other, their teams, and staff. With this safety and support, students and staff alike are encouraged to stretch beyond their ordinary limits and feel validated by their successes. Our focus on the whole child gives Discovery the ability to provide our students with skills to be successful in high school, on the job, and in their personal relationships. So much of what we accomplish is due to the fact that we are a charter school and decisions are made on site. We run our own ship!

***What would you consider to be your school's greatest challenges?***

Our greatest challenge is engaging the 21st Century student. Bill Daggett has shown the educational community and the world how students today are truly different from those of previous generations. Their brains are "wired differently" because of their exposure to technology only dreamed of a few years ago. They are capable of taking on

many tasks at once. In a traditional classroom with traditional instruction, they are bored and tuned out. They want to be challenged to solve problems that are relevant to their world; they want to work through solutions with their hands on the materials and their brains wrapping around the information. This challenge has led us to embrace SSRI, the Rigor and Relevance framework, and the Learning Criteria as a means to plan a curriculum to excite our students.

Because Discovery Academy embraces the latest and best research, new teachers sometimes feel overwhelmed by the scope of our programs. We use training and learning communities to give our new staff the tools they need to be successful in the classroom with their curriculum and their managing of students. A support system is in place to help them make this transition as smoothly and as quickly as possible using the phase-in process.

We continue to look for ways to increase parent involvement. We draw from a large geographical area and many in our school community lack some of the basic resources to be able to become as active in their children's education as they might wish. The Leadership Team will continue to search for avenues to reach out to our parents and encourage them to participate in more ways.

As with all schools today, state and federal mandates, backed by few dollars, challenge our monetary and personnel resources. The intensive reading requirement puts restraints on the master schedule. The adoption of middle school credits challenges our commitment to teaming and enrichment classes. We will work together as a staff to implement these initiatives and at the same time continue to offer our students a superior and well-rounded education.

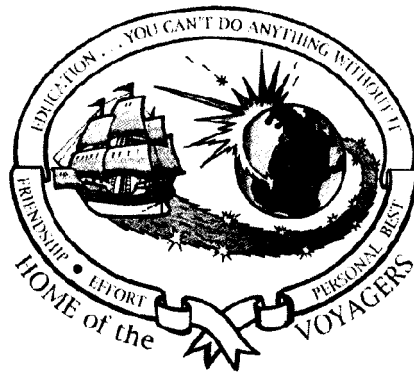
***How will you use the insights gained from this self-assessment to inform and enhance your quality assurance and continuous improvement efforts?***

This self-assessment has shown us that we have an effective process in place for continuous improvement. We have teachers and staff working through learning communities; we have staff development that is based on the strongest research; we have assistance from SSRI, and the Successful Practices Network; we have resources dedicated to support our programs and initiatives. It is evident from this study that our mission and vision drive all the work of the school and everyone who is a part of it. All our stakeholders are knowledgeable and involved. By examining each of the standards, we are validated in what we are doing well; we find areas that need our attention. This process gives us the confidence to move forward knowing that every effort and every resource is being used to furnish the best education we know how to provide for our students. We are ready to continue; we are ready to move forward; we are not afraid to reflect. We are dedicated to actively engaging all individuals in quality learning experiences that will enable them to value themselves and become responsible citizens in a changing world.

# **DISCOVERY ACADEMY OF LAKE ALFRED**

1000 North Buena Vista Drive

Lake Alfred, FL 33850



## **RENEWAL ACCOUNTABILITY PROGRESS REPORT**

2004-2005 to 2007-2008 Progress Reports

Carol Fulks – Executive Director

Kevin Warren - Principal

*Revised 10/1/08*

## Discovery Academy of Lake Alfred Mission Statement

We are dedicated to actively engaging all individuals in a quality learning experience that will enable them to value themselves and become responsible, productive citizens in a changing world.

Individual components fit into many sections of the mission statement.

Students are **actively engaged** in learning at DALA through:

- ⊕ School-wide use of Kagan Cooperative Learning Strategies
- ⊕ “Being There” experiences
- ⊕ Hands-on learning
- ⊕ Brain-based learning environment

All individuals are engaged in **quality learning experiences** by incorporating:

- Hirsch Core Knowledge Curriculum
- Multiple Intelligence Strategies
- Methods to address varying levels of ability
- Integrated Curriculum
- A focus on Literacy –  
Literacy Council, Discover Reading, Interactive Reader, Intensive Reading Program, FlaRE, Celebration of Reading Day, Book Adventure, Read It/Rate It, Classroom Libraries, Read Aloud Strategies, Daily Reading Class

**Self-value** is further promoted via:

- Life Skills and Lifelong Guidelines focus in Advisory
- Open-door guidance policy
- Abundant opportunities for students to celebrate personal accomplishments

**Responsible citizenship** is modeled by offering:

- ✦ Grade specific Advisory Classes
- ✦ Life Skills and Lifelong Guidelines
- ✦ 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens
- ✦ Service Learning Clubs
- ✦ National Junior Honor Society

Students are being prepared to be **successful in a changing world** by providing:

- ✦ Business Computer Exploratory Wheel Classes
- ✦ A school-wide emphasis on technology
- ✦ Many opportunities to use technology in the classroom
- ✦ Five computer labs throughout the school

### **Background Information**

Discovery Academy of Lake Alfred is a conversion charter school serving grades six through eight. Discovery is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. Discovery Academy emphasizes Kagan Cooperative Learning, technology, excellence in academics, and “Being There” experiences (field trips and simulations) integrated through the Hirsch Core Knowledge Curriculum. Discovery Academy promotes the middle school components of advisory classes, teaming, and a block schedule with common planning time.

Disaggregated information on the 2004-2005 student population is listed below:

<u>Student Population</u> - 987		<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
White	62%	310	302	612
Black	21%	103	104	207
Hispanic	18%	81	66	147
Other	2.1%	10	11	21

Low SES - 641 students      65% of total school population

White	52.6%	176	160	336
Black	28.3%	91	90	181
Hispanic	18%	64	51	115
Other	1.1%	4	3	7

Students with Disabilities - 106 students      11% of total school population

White	56.7%	64	42	106
Black	23%	29	14	43
Hispanic	18.7%	20	15	35
Other	1.6%	2	1	3

LEP - 11 students      1% of the total school population

White	.1%	1	0	1
Black	54.5%	3	3	6
Hispanic	36.4%	4	0	4
Other	0%	0	0	0

## Background Information

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Disaggregated information on the 2005-2006 student population is listed below:

<u>Student Population</u> – 1016 students		<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
White	57.3%	289	292	581
Black	20.4%	105	102	207
Hispanic	19.3%	85	111	196
Other	3.0%	14	15	29

<u>Low SES</u> - 634 students		62% of total school population		
White	48.4%	163	144	307
Black	27%	86	85	171
Hispanic	22.6%	83	60	143
Other	2.1%	7	6	13

<u>Students with Disabilities</u> - 64 students		6% of total school population		
White	54.3%	51	38	89
Black	22%	24	12	36
Hispanic	20.7%	22	12	34
Other	1.8%	1	4	5

<u>LEP</u> - 34 students		3% of the total school population		
White	2.9%	1	0	1
Black	23.5%	6	2	8
Hispanic	67.6%	10	13	23
Other	5.9%	0	2	2

## Background Information

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Disaggregated information on the 2006-2007 student population is listed below:

<u>Student Population</u> – 958 students		<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
White	53.9%	268	248	516
Black	21.1%	103	99	202
Hispanic	21.5%	109	97	206
Other	3.5%	17	17	34

### Low SES - 629 students      66% of total school population

White	43.7%	150	125	275
Black	27.5%	88	85	173
Hispanic	25.9%	84	79	163
Other	2.9%	10	8	18

### Students with Disabilities - 150 students      16% of total school population

White	56.7%	51	34	85
Black	21.3%	24	8	32
Hispanic	18%	16	11	27
Other	4%	2	4	6

### LEP - 54 students      6% of the total school population

White	3.7%	2	0	2
Black	14.8%	6	2	8
Hispanic	74.1%	17	23	40
Other	7.4%	1	3	4

## Background Information

Discovery Academy of Lake Alfred is a conversion charter school serving grades six through eight. Discovery is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. Discovery Academy emphasizes Kagan Cooperative Learning, technology, excellence in academics, and “Being There” experiences (field trips and simulations) integrated through the Hirsch Core Knowledge Curriculum. Discovery Academy promotes the middle school components of advisory classes, teaming, and a block schedule with common planning time.

Disaggregated information on the 2007-2008 student population is listed below:

<u>Student Population</u> – 926 students		<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
White	52.4%	241	244	485
Black	20.5%	84	106	190
Hispanic	24.4%	108	118	226
Other	2.7%	16	9	25

### Low SES - 616 students

67% of total school population

White	43.2%	127	139	266
Black	26.3%	73	89	162
Hispanic	28.1%	86	87	173
Other	2.4%	10	5	15

### Students with Disabilities - 126 students

14% of total school population

White	58.7%	47	27	74
Black	15.1%	11	8	19
Hispanic	23.8%	20	10	30
Other	2.4%	2	1	3

### LEP - 78 students

8% of the total school population

White	3.8%	2	1	3
Black	10.3%	4	4	8
Hispanic	82.1%	26	38	64
Other	3.8%	2	1	3

**Goal One**

**Discovery Academy students will demonstrate progress in writing.**

**Indicator:**

Discovery Academy students will demonstrate annually an equal or higher percentage of students scoring at the state indicator or above on the FCAT SSS Writing than the majority of comparable schools.

**Baseline Data:**

Discovery Academy's eighth grade students had 92% (for 2004-2005 at 3.5) meeting state standards compared to the following school sites:

<b>2004-2005 Comparable Schools:</b>		<b>2005-2006 Comparable Schools:</b>	
<b>Discovery Academy</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>Discovery Academy</b>	<b>90%</b>
Dundee Ridge Middle School	72%	Bartow Middle School	90%
Crystal Lake Middle School	71%	Denison Middle School	87%
Kathleen Middle School	88%	Kathleen Middle School	89%
Sleepy Hill Middle School	89%		
Westwood Middle School	88%		
<b>We have met this goal.</b>		<b>We have met this goal.</b>	

<b>2006-2007 Comparable Schools:</b>		<b>2007-2008 Comparable Schools:</b>	
<b>Discovery Academy</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>Discovery Academy</b>	<b>96%</b>
Denison Middle School	86%	Denison Middle School	91%
McLaughlin Middle School	86%	McLaughlin Middle School	83%
Mulberry Middle School	90%		
Sleepy Hill Middle School	82%		
<b>We have met this goal.</b>		<b>We have met this goal.</b>	

**Goal Two**

**Discovery Academy students will demonstrate progress in Reading.**

**Indicator:**

Discovery Academy students will demonstrate annually an equal or higher percentage of students scoring Level 3 or above on the FCAT SSS Reading than the majority of comparable schools.

**Baseline Data:**

Discovery Academy's 2004-2005 students had 49% at grade level (achievement level 3 or higher) compared to the following:

<b>2004-2005 Comparable Schools:</b>		<b>2005-2006 Comparable Schools:</b>	
<b>Discovery Academy</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>Discovery Academy</b>	<b>59%</b>
Crystal Lake Middle School	42%	Bartow Middle School	53%
Dundee Ridge Middle School	36%	Denison Middle School	55%
Kathleen Middle School	44%	Kathleen Middle School	52%
Sleepy Hill Middle School	49%		
Westwood Middle	42%		
<b>We have met this goal.</b>		<b>We have met this goal.</b>	

<b>2006-2007 Comparable Schools:</b>		<b>2007-2008 Comparable Schools:</b>	
<b>Discovery Academy</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>Discovery Academy</b>	<b>56%</b>
Denison Middle School	59%	Denison Middle School	56%
McLaughlin Middle School	49%	McLaughlin Middle School	56%
Mulberry Middle School	59%		
Sleepy Hill Middle School	53%		
<b>We have met this goal.</b>		<b>We have met this goal.</b>	

### Goal Three

**Discovery Academy students will demonstrate progress in Math.**

**Indicator:**

Discovery Academy students will demonstrate annually an equal or higher percentage of students scoring Level 3 or above on the FCAT SSS Math than the majority of comparable schools.

**Baseline Data:**

Discovery Academy's 2004-2005 students had 39% at grade level (achievement level 3 or higher) compared to the following:

<b>2004-2005 Comparable Schools:</b>		<b>2005-2006 Comparable Schools:</b>	
<b>Discovery Academy</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>Discovery Academy</b>	<b>42%</b>
Crystal Lake Middle School	37%	Bartow Middle School	42%
Dundee Ridge Middle School	31%	Denison Middle School	50%
Kathleen Middle School	43%	Kathleen Middle School	48%
Sleepy Hill Middle School	51%		
Westwood Middle School	43%		
<b>*Baseline Data 2004-2005</b>		<b>We did not meet this goal.</b>	
		<b>*See narrative below.</b>	

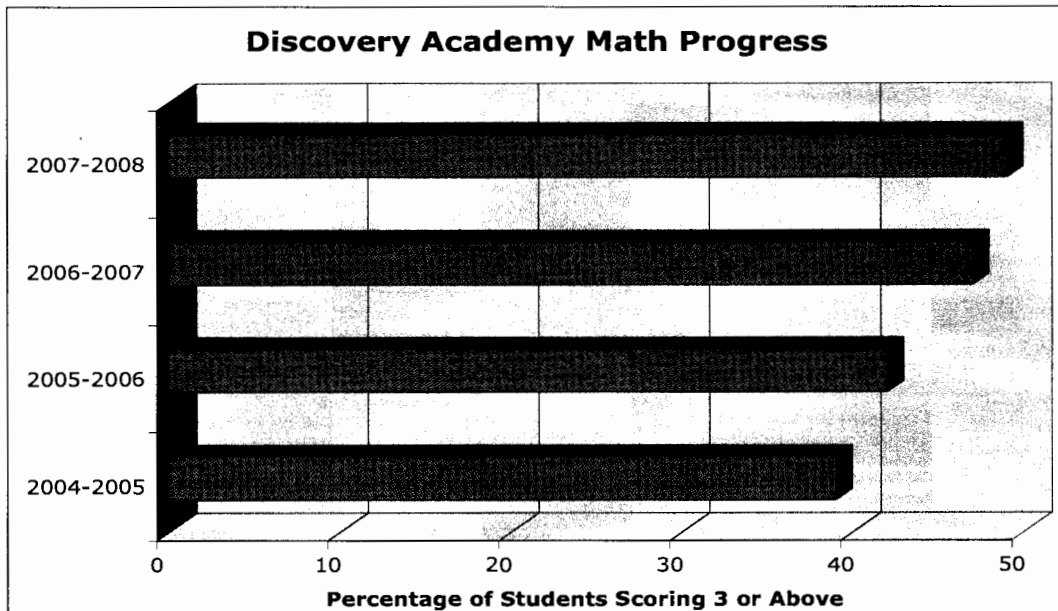
**\*2005-2006**

Discovery did not meet the projection of having more students meeting high standards in SSS Math than the identified schools; however, Discovery Academy students scored equal to one other school. Discovery did make progress from the previous year by increasing from 39% of our students meeting high standards to 42%. The increase would have been more substantial, but the Florida Department of Education increased the math proficiency target for meeting high standards. Comparing learning gains from 2005 to 2006, the data shows an increase from 52% to 56% of students making a year's worth of progress. Discovery's AYP data shows a 3% overall increase. The LEP group made the biggest gains increasing in the percentage of students meeting grade level proficiency or higher, from 13% in 2005 to 24% in 2006. Even though we did not outscore the majority of the identified schools, Discovery students did show gains from the previous year.

2006-07 Comparable Schools:		2007-2008 Comparable Schools:	
Discovery Academy	47%	Discovery Academy	49%
Denison Middle School	52%	Denison Middle School	54%
McLaughlin Middle School	47%	McLaughlin Middle School	45%
Mulberry Middle School	57%		
Sleepy Hill Middle School	57%		
<b>We did not meet this goal.</b> *See narrative below.		<b>We have met this goal.</b>	

**\*2006-2007**

Discovery students at or above grade level in Math equaled one of the comparable schools. Discovery students have steadily increased the percentage of students at or above grade level for the last four years as shown in the chart below. The students this year scoring at or above grade level was the highest percentage in six years and represents a 5% increase over last year. Also, 62% of students made a year's worth of progress from the year before. Looking at AYP data, the percentage of students on grade level increased from 38% to 44% from last year. **When NRT data was analyzed, Discovery did meet the goal.** Discovery students consistently have a higher or equal median NPR than the majority of comparable schools in all three grade levels.



**Goal Four**

**Discovery Academy students will demonstrate progress in science.**

**Indicators:**

Discovery Academy students will demonstrate annually an equal or higher mean scale score on the FCAT SSS Science test than the majority of comparable schools.

**Baseline Data:**

Discovery Academy's 2004-2005 eighth grade students had a mean scale score of 275 compared to the following:

<b>2004-05 Comparable Schools:</b>		<b>2005-2006 Comparable Schools:</b>	
<b>Discovery Academy</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>Discovery Academy</b>	<b>280</b>
Crystal Lake Middle School	259	Bartow Middle School	264
Dundee Ridge Middle School	256	Denison Middle School	273
Kathleen Middle School	271	Kathleen Middle School	271
Sleepy Hill Middle School	264		
Westwood Middle School	255		
<b>We have met this goal.</b>		<b>We have met this goal.</b>	

<b>2006-2007 Comparable Schools:</b>		<b>2007-2008 Comparable Schools:</b>	
<b>Discovery Academy</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>Discovery Academy</b>	<b>290</b>
Denison Middle School	276	Denison Middle School	279
McLaughlin Middle School	279	McLaughlin Middle School	277
Mulberry Middle School	293		
Sleepy Hill Middle School	279		
<b>We have met this goal.</b>		<b>We have met this goal.</b>	

## Goal Five

**Discovery Academy students will demonstrate technological proficiency.**

### **Indicators:**

90% of Discovery Academy's 6th, 7th and 8<sup>th</sup> graders will have established or enhanced an electronic portfolio at the conclusion of the 2007-2008 school year. 6th grade students will begin their portfolios by working individually developing the skills necessary to create their portfolios. 7<sup>th</sup> grade students will continue to refine their portfolios by working individually as well as collaboratively on some projects further developing the skills necessary to create quality portfolios. 8th grade students will finish their portfolios by working on a cumulative project as well as displaying examples of work in each core subject area and presenting their portfolio at a parent conference.

"Exit" portfolios will contain examples of student work in all three grades while at DALA as well as a test history profile demonstrating achievements on standardized tests, report cards, and special recognitions. Documentation of portfolios will be available through a report generated by the FileMaker Pro computer software program.

### **Baseline Data:**

This is a phase-in program that begins with the 6<sup>th</sup> grade students in 2005-2006. By 2008-2009, all students in all grades will be establishing a portfolio annually.

### **Goal Outcome:**

#### **2005-2006**

In our initial phase of implementation, 100% of our 6<sup>th</sup> grade students established an electronic portfolio as documented by Filemaker Pro program housed at school site. Examples of portfolio pages are also provided.

**We have met this goal.**

#### **2006-2007**

We had 100% of our 6<sup>th</sup> grade students establish and maintain an electronic portfolio during the 2006-07 school year.

We also had 100% of our 7<sup>th</sup> grade students continue to refine and maintain their electronic portfolios that were created during the 2005-06 phase-in program.

**We have met this goal.**

## **2007-2008**

We had over 99% of our 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade students establish and maintain an electronic portfolio during the 2007-2008 school year. Several students had opt-out forms preventing them from establishing portfolios.

The eighth grade students had 99% participation in establishing an electronic portfolio. These students showcased their portfolios during a series of parent nights, which were held at Discovery Academy of Lake Alfred. The eighth grade students were also provided with a CD copy of the portfolio that they were able to take with them at the end of the year.

**We have met this goal.**

## **Goal Six**

**Discovery Academy's classroom teachers will be trained and evaluated in the use of Kagan Cooperative Learning.**

### **Indicators:**

Beginning in 2005-2006, 90% of classroom teachers not previously trained will complete the Kagan Cooperative Learning Strategies in-service within the first year of employment as documented by sign-in sheets / in-service participation forms.

2. Beginning in 2005-2006, 90% of classroom teachers will be coached by administration / designee at least once each school year as documented by coaching forms.

3. Beginning in 2005-2006, 90% of classroom teachers employed for the entire academic year will attend at least six peer teaching demonstrations of Kagan teambuilders or classbuilders during family meetings each year as documented by sign-in sheets and agendas.

### **Baseline Data:**

This program began during the 2005-2006 school year; therefore there is no baseline data.

**Goal Outcome:**

**2005-2006**

1. Discovery Academy had 100% of the teachers trained in Kagan Cooperative Learning Strategies.
2. The administration team coached 93% of the teachers during the 2005-2006 school year.
3. One hundred percent of the teachers attended at least six peer-teaching demonstrations during our monthly family meetings during the 2005-2006 school year.

**We have met this goal.**

**2006-2007**

1. Discovery Academy had 100% of the teachers trained in Kagan Cooperative Learning Strategies.
2. The administration team coached 95% of the teachers during the 2006-2007 school year.
3. One hundred percent of the teachers attended at least six peer-teaching demonstrations during our monthly family meetings during the 2006-2007 school year.

**We have met this goal.**

**2007-2008**

1. Discovery Academy had 100% of the teachers trained in Kagan Cooperative Learning Strategies.
2. The administration team coached 97% of the teachers during the 2007-2008 school year.
3. Ninety-two percent of the teachers attended at least six peer-teaching demonstrations during our monthly family meetings during the 2007-2008 school year.

**We have met this goal.**

## Goal Seven

**Discovery Academy students will be given the opportunity to participate in “Being There” experiences that integrate the Sunshine State Standards with the Hirsch Core Knowledge Curriculum in a real world context.**

### **Indicators:**

1. Beginning in 2005-2006, 95% of all students will be given the opportunity to participate each year in at least two “Being There” experiences (field trips or simulations) that are connected to the Hirsch Core Knowledge Curriculum as documented by field trip teacher request forms.

### **Baseline Data:**

This program began during the 2005-2006 school year; therefore there is no baseline data.

### **Goal Outcome:**

#### **2005-2006**

100% of Discovery Academy students had the opportunity to participate in the field experiences offered by their team. If there is a fee charged for any field experience and a student/family cannot afford the trip, the team can make a request to PTO on the student’s behalf for necessary funds to cover the cost of the trip.

**We have met this goal.**

#### **2006-2007**

100% of Discovery Academy students had the opportunity to participate in the field experiences offered by their team. If there is a fee charged for any field experience and a student/family cannot afford the trip, the team can make a request to PTO on the student’s behalf for necessary funds to cover the cost of the trip.

**We have met this goal.**

#### **2007-2008**

100% of Discovery Academy students had the opportunity to participate in the field experiences offered by their team. If there is a fee charged for any field experience and a student/family cannot afford the trip, the team can make a request to PTO on the student’s behalf for necessary funds to cover the cost of the trip.

**We have met this goal.**

## Goal Eight

**Discovery Academy stakeholders will reflect their satisfaction with the overall school program.**

**Indicators:**

Indicator 1.

85% of the parents responding to the Annual Climate Parent Survey will show that they are satisfied with the school by indicating that they either agree or strongly agree with the majority of the effective school correlates.

**Baseline Data:** Baseline data is included in the chart below for 2004-2005.

*% that Strongly Agree or Agree to the Effective Schools Correlates*

	<b>Effective Schools Correlates</b>						
<b>Parents</b>	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six	Seven
04-05	93%	98%	98%	98%	95%	89%	77%
05-06	91%	98%	95%	94%	91%	89%	87%
06-07	86%	94%	93%	92%	90%	86%	90%
07-08	97%	98%	99%	98%	96%	95%	97%

Indicator 2.

85% of the students responding to the Annual Climate Student Survey will show that they are satisfied with the school by indicating that they either agree or strongly agree with the majority of the effective school correlates.

**Baseline Data:** Baseline data is included in the chart below for 2004-2005.

*% that Strongly Agree or Agree to the Effective Schools Correlates*

	<b>Effective Schools Correlates</b>						
<b>Students</b>	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six	Seven
04-05	85%	97%	95%	97%	89%	93%	68%
05-06	84%	97%	83%	96%	89%	91%	84%
06-07	63%	91%	78%	84%	75%	79%	64%
07-08	71%	70%	74%	70%	70%	70%	75%

Indicator 3.

85% of the teachers responding to the Annual Climate Student Survey will show that they are satisfied with the school by indicating that they either agree or strongly agree with the majority of the effective school correlates.

**Baseline Data:** Baseline data is included in the chart below for 2004-2005.

*% that Strongly Agree or Agree to the Effective Schools Correlates*

	<b>Effective Schools Correlates</b>						
<b>Teachers</b>	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six	Seven
04-05	82%	91%	84%	92%	91%	89%	84%
05-06	88%	87%	99%	93%	88%	88%	97%
06-07	89%	87%	96%	93%	86%	88%	94%
07-08	90%	99%	93%	97%	96%	97%	95%

**We have met this goal.**

**Goal Nine**

**Discovery Academy will operate with sound financial principles and an active supportive board of directors.**

**Indicators:**

**2004-2008**

1. The result of an independent audit will show that the school is operating with a positive fund balance each year of the school's contract.
2. The board of directors will hold a minimum of four meetings per year. Minutes for each meeting are on file at the school.

**We have met this goal. Each year is documented by audits and Office of School Choice Site Visits.**

**DISCOVERY ACADEMY OF LAKE ALFRED**

**1000 North Buena Vista Drive**

**Lake Alfred, FL 33850**

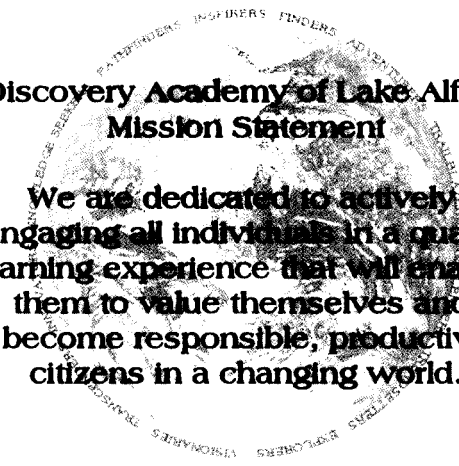
**RENEWAL ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN**

**JUNE 2010**

**Carol Fulks, Executive Director**

**Kevin Warren, Principal**

**Peggy Cook, Chairperson, Board of Directors**



**Discovery Academy of Lake Alfred  
Mission Statement**

**We are dedicated to actively engaging all individuals in a quality learning experience that will enable them to value themselves and become responsible, productive citizens in a changing world.**

Individual components fit into many sections of our mission statement.

Students are **actively engaged** in learning at DALA through:

- ⊕ School-wide use of Kagan Cooperative Learning Strategies
- ⊕ “Being There” experiences
- ⊕ Hands-on learning
- ⊕ Brain-based learning environment

All individuals are engaged in **quality learning experiences** by incorporating:

- Hirsch Core Knowledge Curriculum
- Multiple Intelligence Strategies
- Methods to address varying levels of ability
- Integrated Curriculum
- A focus on Literacy –
  - Literacy Council, Discover Reading, Intensive Reading Program,
  - Celebration of Reading Day, Book Adventure, Read It / Rate It
  - Classroom Libraries, Read Aloud Strategies, Daily Reading Class
- Real world experiences to extend classroom learning

**Self-value** is further promoted via:

- Life Skills and Lifelong Guidelines focus in Advisory Class
- Open-door guidance policy
- Abundant opportunities for students to celebrate personal accomplishments

**Responsible citizenship** is modeled by offering:

- ✦ Grade specific Advisory Classes
- ✦ Life Skills and Lifelong Guidelines
- ✦ 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens
- ✦ National Junior Honor Society

Students are being prepared to be **successful in a changing world** by providing:

- ✦ Business Computer Exploratory Wheel Classes
- ✦ A school-wide emphasis on technology
- ✦ Many opportunities to use technology in the classroom
- ✦ Computer labs throughout the school

## Background Information

Discovery Academy of Lake Alfred is a conversion charter school serving grades six through eight. Discovery is accredited by the SACS CASI, a division of Advancing Excellence in Education Worldwide. Emphasized throughout the school is technology, Kagan Cooperative Learning, excellence in academics, “Being There” experiences (field trips and simulations) integrated through the Hirsch Core Knowledge Curriculum and excellence in academics by making connections to real world situations. Discovery Academy promotes the middle school components of advisory classes, teaming and a block schedule with common planning and exploratory classes for students.

Disaggregated information on the 2008-2009 student population is listed below:

<u>Student Population</u>	1040 students	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
White	48.5%	248	260	508
Black	20.5%	101	113	214
Hispanic	27.7%	127	161	288
Other	2.9%	19	11	30

<u>Low SES</u>	581 students	56% of total school population		
White	40.3%	113	121	234
Black	25.6%	69	79	149
Hispanic	31.5%	86	97	183
Other	2.8%	11	5	16

<u>Students with Disabilities – non-gifted</u>	58 students	6% of total school population		
White	53.5%	21	10	31
Black	8.6%	3	2	5
Hispanic	32.8%	12	7	19
Other	5.2%	2	1	3

<u>LEP</u>	99 students	10% of total school population		
White	4%	2	2	4
Black	12%	5	7	12
Hispanic	81.8%	32	49	81
Other	2%	2	0	2

### Goal One

**Discovery Academy students will demonstrate progress in writing.**

**Indicator:**

Discovery Academy students will demonstrate annually an equal or higher percentage of students scoring at the state indicator or above on the FCAT SSS Writing than the majority of comparable schools.

**Baseline Data:**

Discovery Academy's eighth grade students for 2008-2009 meeting state standards will be the baseline data.

### Goal Two

**Discovery Academy students will demonstrate progress in reading.**

**Indicator:**

Discovery Academy students will demonstrate annually an equal or higher percentage of students scoring Level 3 or above on the FCAT SSS Reading than the majority of comparable schools.

**Baseline Data:**

Discovery Academy's students scoring Level 3 or above on the FCAT SSS Reading for 2008-2009 will be the baseline data.

### **Goal Three**

**Discovery Academy students will demonstrate progress in math.**

**Indicator:**

Discovery Academy students will demonstrate annually an equal or higher percentage of students scoring Level 3 or above on the FCAT SSS Math than the majority of comparable schools.

**Baseline Data:**

Discovery Academy's students scoring Level 3 or above on the FCAT SSS Reading for 2008-2009 will be the baseline data.

### **Goal Four**

**Discovery Academy students will demonstrate progress in science.**

**Indicator:**

Discovery Academy students will demonstrate annually an equal or higher percentage of students scoring Level 3 or above on the FCAT SSS Science than the majority of comparable schools.

**Baseline Data:**

Discovery Academy's students scoring Level 3 or above on the FCAT SSS Science for 2008-2009 will be the baseline data.

### **Goal Five**

**Discovery Academy students will demonstrate progress in technology.**

**Indicator:**

Discovery Academy will assess student's ability to apply computer skills learned in each grade level. Technology goals will be identified for each grade level listing key skills to be mastered. Students will be assessed annually with a rubric designed to identify NETS skills mastered.

**Baseline:**

No baseline data is available until the assessment is created.

### **Goal Six**

**Discovery Academy's classroom teachers will be evaluated in the use of Kagan Cooperative Learning.**

**Indicators:**

1. Classroom teachers will be coached by administration / designee at least once each school year as documented by coaching forms.
2. Classroom teachers employed for the entire academic year will attend at least six peer teaching demonstrations of Kagan teambuilders or classbuilders during staff meetings each year as documented by sign-in sheets and agendas.

**Baseline Data:**

Baseline data will be the data from the 2008-2009 school year.

### **Goal Seven**

**Discovery Academy students will be given the opportunity to participate in “Being There” experiences that integrate the Sunshine State Standards with the Hirsch Core Knowledge Curriculum in a real world context.**

**Indicator:**

Ninety-five percent of all students will be given the opportunity to participate each year in at least two “Being There” experiences (field trips or simulations) that are connected to the Core Knowledge Curriculum as documented by teacher field trip request forms.

**Baseline Data:**

Baseline data will be the data from the 2008-2009 school year.

### **Goal Eight**

**Discovery Academy stakeholders will reflect their satisfaction with the overall school program.**

**Indicator**

Eighty-five percent of the parents, teachers and students responding to the Annual Climate Survey will show that they are satisfied with the school by indicating that they either agree or strongly agree with the majority of the effective school correlates.

**Baseline Data:**

Baseline data will be from the Surveys from the 2008-2009 school year.

### **Goal Nine**

**Discovery Academy will operate with sound financial principles and an active supportive board of directors.**

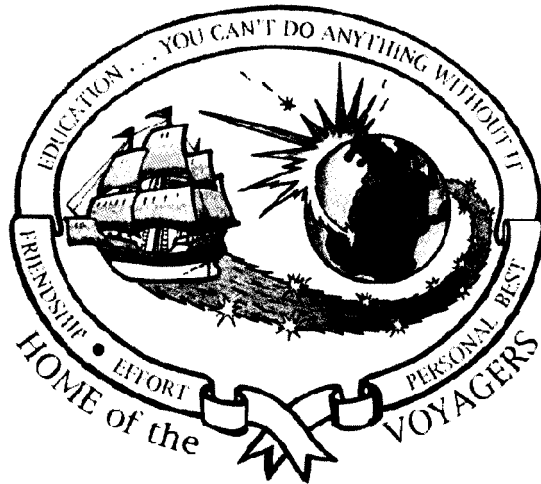
**Indicators:**

1. The results of an independent audit will show that the school is operating with a positive fund balance. This audit is submitted annually to the district and state.
2. The board of directors will hold a minimum of four meetings per year. Minutes for each meeting are on file at the school and available to the Office of School Choice during site visits.

# Discovery Academy of Lake Alfred

Charter Renewal

Business Plan



Carol Fulks, Executive Director

Kevin Warren, Principal

Peggy Cook, Chairperson  
Governing Board

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## Mission

***“We are dedicated to actively engaging all individuals in quality learning experiences that will enable them to value themselves and become responsible, productive citizens in a changing world.”***

Discovery Academy’s mission statement reflects a clear and strong focus on student learning. It is easily understood and intricately woven into all areas of our curriculum as our mission statement becomes a living document.

Individual components fit into many sections of our mission statement.

Students are **actively engaged** in learning at DALA through:

- ⊕ School-wide use of Kagan Cooperative Learning Strategies
- ⊕ “Being There” experiences
- ⊕ Hands-on learning
- ⊕ Brain-based learning environment

All individuals are engaged in **quality learning experiences** by incorporating:

- Hirsch Core Knowledge Curriculum
- Multiple Intelligence Strategies
- Methods to address varying levels of ability
- Integrated Curriculum
- A focus on Literacy –
  - Literacy Council, Discover Reading, Intensive Reading Program,
  - Celebration of Reading Day, Book Adventure, Read It / Rate It
  - Classroom Libraries, Read Aloud Strategies, Daily Reading Class
- Real world experiences to extend classroom learning

**Self-value** is further promoted via:

- Life Skills and Lifelong Guidelines focus in Advisory Class
- Open-door guidance policy
- Abundant opportunities for students to celebrate personal accomplishments

**Responsible citizenship** is modeled by offering:

- ✦ Grade specific Advisory Classes
- ✦ Life Skills and Lifelong Guidelines
- ✦ 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens
- ✦ National Junior Honor Society

Students are being prepared to be **successful in a changing world** by providing:

- ✦ Business Computer Exploratory Wheel Classes
- ✦ A school-wide emphasis on technology
- ✦ Many opportunities to use technology in the classroom
- ✦ Computer labs throughout the school



## **Accreditation**

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and the Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (CASI) and the Commission on International and Trans-Regional Accreditation has granted accreditation status to Discovery Academy of Lake Alfred. This provides assurance to our stakeholders that a commitment has been made to pursue educational excellence and that the necessary resources will be available to accomplish that objective.

## Philosophy

Our belief is that every student needs to succeed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century with an education that is both academically rigorous and “real-world” relevant. We think of academic rigor as students being able to apply their skills and knowledge to real-world problems, to adapt solutions to an ever-changing society, and to solve problems we have yet to recognize. Teaching through application is a very effective way to engage students and ensure they can apply what they have learned.

We believe that the Discovery Academy family works together and shares responsibility for guiding our students’ education by:

- Providing a safe and orderly environment conducive to learning for students,
- Actively engaging students in the learning process through a variety of teaching strategies and modality styles,
- Encouraging students to value themselves and have an acceptance of cultural differences of ideas and feelings,
- Providing ongoing technological training for growth in a changing world.

Discovery Academy of Lake Alfred is a conversion charter school serving students in grades 6-8. This charter school began in 2001 with an emphasis on excellence in academics, technology, Kagan Cooperative Learning, and the Hirsch Core Knowledge curriculum. Discovery promotes the middle school components of advisory classes, teaming and common planning time for teachers. Other aspects that make Discovery unique are instructional strategies incorporating brain based teaching and learning, multiple intelligence research, service learning, and numerous student activities.

Curriculum emphasis includes the rigorous Hirsch Core Knowledge Sequence where lessons are infused with hands-on projects and technology. Further enhancement of the curriculum provides for field experiences and study trips at each grade level. Students' use of technology both as a learning tool and an avenue for research under teacher direction is offered in fully equipped technology labs. Each student creates an electronic portfolio to house evidence of their significant learning during each grade level while at Discovery Academy. This artifact memorabilia is taken with the student as they exit eighth grade.

Students learn to work together cooperatively to complete tasks while everyone remains responsible and accountable for their own learning. Social skills, life skills, communication skills, and goal setting are emphasized during a daily advisory class. A school-wide literacy plan is in place to enhance the reading skills of all students. Our focus on literacy enhances our reading program at Discovery Academy by encouraging all students to read as well as ensuring research based reading strategies are taught in all classrooms.

Whenever the opportunity presents itself within the curriculum or the community, teachers promote service-learning activities. Teaching students the "giving back" concept fosters character development in students as they provide service to others through real life experiences. This helps our young people develop a sense of civic and social responsibility.

At Discovery we have chosen to stay the course in providing proven **middle school practices** such as the following:

#### TEAMING \*Most important component

- Key elements:
  - Common students, common planning time and common area
- Establishes small community of learners
- Provides consistent discipline
- Treats child as a whole person
- Coordinates testing & assignments

#### ADVISORY PROGRAM

- Interaction with peers a key element
- Teacher is a resource; alert to serious problems
- Goal setting and communication skills taught
- Sharing of experiences and viewpoints benefit each other
- Structured programs at each grade level – life skills the major focus school-wide
- Taught first thing so day gets started with a positive focus

#### INTERDISCIPLINARY INSTRUCTION

- Integrate curriculum
- “Being There” field experiences to connect to real-world
- Connect Sunshine State Standards to year long Hirsch Core Knowledge Time Line that is integrated

#### FLEXIBLE SCHEDULING

- NO BELLS
- Flexible schedule can be done on certain days on teams and school-wide when necessary for student learning

## CRITICAL THINKING

- Emphasized in all areas of the curriculum
- Real-world application of learning

## COOPERATIVE LEARNING AND INDEPENDENT STUDY

- Use of cooperative learning regularly
- Move students toward being independent learners, including research, projects and electronic portfolios

## ATHLETICS

- Involving all students in a variety of events with an emphasis on fitness and wellness
- Offering a variety of both girls' and boys' extracurricular sports

## EXPLORATORY PROGRAM

- Offering of fine arts, practical arts, technology, physical education, health and fitness, mini-courses and service learning.

## OTHER ELEMENTS

- Success for all students through emphasis on heterogeneous grouping / teaming so students learn to function as a productive team member which is important in the school setting as well as in the workplace.
- Student-centered curriculum
- Clubs / after school activities

## Goals

### **1. Discovery Academy students will demonstrate progress in writing.**

Discovery Academy students will demonstrate annually an equal or higher percentage of students scoring at the state indicator or above on the FCAT SSS Writing than the majority of comparable schools.

### **2. Discovery Academy students will demonstrate progress in reading.**

Discovery Academy students will demonstrate annually an equal or higher percentage of students scoring Level 3 or above on the FCAT SSS Reading than the majority of comparable schools.

### **3. Discovery Academy students will demonstrate progress in math.**

Discovery Academy students will demonstrate annually an equal or higher percentage of students scoring Level 3 or above on the FCAT SSS Math than the majority of comparable schools.

### **4. Discovery Academy students will demonstrate progress in science.**

Discovery Academy students will demonstrate annually an equal or higher percentage of students scoring Level 3 or above on the FCAT SSS Science than the majority of comparable schools.

### **5. Discovery Academy students will demonstrate progress in technology.**

Discovery Academy will assess student's ability to apply computer skills learned in each grade level.

Technology goals will be identified for each grade level listing key skills to be mastered.

Students will be assessed annually with a rubric designed to identify NETS skills mastered.

**6. Discovery Academy's classroom teachers will be evaluated in the use of Kagan Cooperative Learning.**

Classroom teachers will be coached by administration / designee at least once each school year as documented by coaching forms.

Classroom teachers employed for the entire academic year will attend at least six peer teaching demonstrations of Kagan Teambuilders or classbuilders during staff meetings each year as documented by sign-in sheets and agendas.

**7. Discovery Academy students will be given the opportunity to participate in "Being There" experiences that integrate the Sunshine State Standards with the Hirsch Core Knowledge Curriculum in a real-world context.**

Ninety-five percent of all students will be given the opportunity to participate each year in at least two "Being There" experiences (field trips or simulations) that are connected to the Hirsch Core Knowledge Curriculum as documented by teacher field trip request forms.

**8. Discovery Academy stakeholders will reflect their satisfaction with the overall school program.**

Eighty-five percent of the parents, teachers and students responding to the Annual Climate Survey will show that they are satisfied with the school by indicating that they either agree or strongly agree with the majority of the effective school correlates.

**9. Discovery Academy will operate with sound financial principles and an active supportive board of directors.**

The results of an independent audit will show that the school is operating with a positive balance fund. This audit is submitted annually to the district and state.

The board of directors will hold a minimum of four meetings per year. Minutes for each meeting are on file at the school and available to the Office of School Choice during site visits.

## Governing Board Members

**Peggy Cook** is the present Chairperson. She joined us in 2000 as a member of our Founding Board and an active member of the community. Mrs. Cook had three grandchildren attend our school and was involved in our activities. Her background includes 40 years in banking, including the position of Vice President. She has also been involved in the Lake Alfred Chamber of Commerce and Chair for the Polk County March of Dimes.

**Mike Jones** represents our community. His involvement began when he visited with many of our students in the capacity of Youth Pastor. He regularly attended our functions and was concerned about our students and their success.

**Heather McElwee** is a parent representative. Over the span of several years she has had two sons and a nephews attend Discovery. She was a bus driver for Polk County Schools when she became involved with Discovery. She is presently working for the county transportation system.

**Ilah Frazier** joined us as a Founding Board member and has remained on the Governing Board. She is a retired teacher from Winter Haven who taught for the Polk County schools for 34 years. She describes herself as a “Champion for Children”. Her background also includes being a member of the Board of Directors for Girls, Inc., Vice President of the National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Inc. and a member of the Board of Directors for Keep Winter Haven Clean and Beautiful.

**Patricia Love** is a parent representative on the board from Lake Alfred. Mrs. Love has previously had a child attend Discovery and now has another one here. She is employed as a workers compensation auditor for Summit Consulting. She is also an active member of her church.

**Greg Holloman** is a community member representing Haines City / Davenport. Mr. Holloman is involved in his community through church and youth activities and became involved with Discovery through students he knew in the community.

**Charlotte Butler** is a retired teacher from the community of Auburndale. She formerly taught at Discovery and was a member of the Leadership Team and a Teacher of the Year.

**Kimberly Cubert** is a parent representative from Winter Haven who has previously had a child at Discovery and now has another. She spends a great deal of time volunteering in our media center and attending events at school.

**Cheryl Wilkinson**

**Board Secretary**

Mrs. Wilkinson has been an employee of public education for 28 years and began her career as a paraprofessional. She then advanced to Principal's Secretary and is presently the Assistant to the Executive Director of Discovery Academy.

**George Miarecki**

**Certified Public Accountant**

Mr. Miarecki is the Certified Public Accountant for Discovery who works directly with the Executive Director in preparing budget proposals for the Governing Board. George has 14 years of experience as a public accountant and financial auditor. He has closely worked with charter schools since 2001.

**Carol Fulks**

**President / Executive Director**

Mrs. Fulks has been in Education Administration for 21 years and is currently the Executive Director for Discovery Academy. She has been involved in numerous initiatives throughout her career in education. Carol's prior business knowledge has helped her to implement these initiatives effectively. Her broad view of the education system has been a product of having begun her career in education as a Parent Volunteer, then a Paraprofessional and continuing her career through the present. Carol's accomplishments include certification in six areas of education, Administration and Supervision, Elementary Education, Early Childhood, Middle School Mathematics, Middle School Social Studies and Middle School English. She has consistently stayed current with research-based strategies and is also a certified trainer for Seven Habits of Highly Effective People (Stephen Covey), Positive Classroom Discipline (Fred Jones) Cooperative Learning and Multiple Intelligence (Kagan & Kagan), Love and Logic (Jim Fay), Brain Based Teaching and Learning (Eric Jensen). Most recently, she completed the Educational Leadership Institute sponsored by Dr. Willard Daggett of the International Center for Leadership in Education. Carol Fulks has dedicated her work over the past two decades to the middle school philosophy because it addresses the needs of the adolescent child in a changing world.

## **Strategies for Recruitment**

Discovery will implement strategies to recruit students and market the school through community outreach, public relations, and business partnerships.

### **Community Outreach**

To ensure our incoming sixth grade students are aware of the opportunities available at Discovery, the administrators speak to students at each of the feeder schools in our original zone.

We send letters and a brochure about our school to all 5<sup>th</sup> grade students in these schools explaining our program and the application process.

All prospective students are invited to spend a day at Discovery Academy and are partnered with a sixth grader for half of the day to have a “Middle School Experience”. Before they leave, they tour the school and have a question and answer session with the administration. As a follow up to the student tours, we hold a Parent Orientation Evening to familiarize our prospective parents with our school.

We network very closely with the administrators at the elementary feeder schools in our original zone to encourage those families to submit applications in a timely manner during our Open Enrollment to ensure acceptance at Discovery. We will continue to keep an open line of communication with those staff members.

We host individual tours for interested families. Staff members are made available to speak with future applicants who are interested in seeing our campus and want to talk to us about our program.

Discovery will focus on promoting the many attributes of the school at local churches, community centers, local civic clubs and organizations, and similar venues. We will ask to speak at their meetings to talk about our school and programs we offer for students.

We will contact local community centers to distribute brochures and applications to prospective students and parents. Staff will be actively involved in community activities such as local parades, ball games, and other social events as representatives of Discovery.

### **Public Relations**

Discovery will continue to promote its successes in the surrounding areas. It will send staff to local service clubs and organizations.

Staff will develop press releases for local newspapers and contact local TV stations for special newsworthy events involving our students.

The school website features special activities and offers a virtual tour of the school.

### **Business Partnerships**

Discovery will seek business partnership to endorse and promote school endeavors. Partners will participate in existing school programs and support new ones that connect to the businesses involved.

## Current Financial Status

Overview: The financial condition of Discovery Academy of Lake Alfred, Inc. is very strong. Discovery Academy of Lake Alfred, Inc. has competently and effectively managed its finances from its inception as a charter school in 2001. Over the past seven years, the School has not had a year with a deficit in its results of operations on a fund basis and has accumulated a positive fund balance of almost \$2.3 million.

Revenue and Expense Trend:

See the following table for the revenues, expenditures and increases to fund balance over the previous five fiscal years:

	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008	Totals
Revenues	4,912,745	5,529,657	6,137,191	6,482,131	6,474,271	29,535,995
Expenditures	(4,575,192)	(5,038,053)	(5,681,132)	(6,641,778)	(6,179,934)	(28,116,089)
Other Fin. Sources	-	-	-	376,405	-	376,405
Increase in Fund Balance	337,553	491,604	456,059	216,758	294,337	1,796,311

Liquidity and Financing: The assets of the School are very liquid and consist primarily of cash and certificates of deposit (52%), investments (29%), current accounts receivable (2%), and long-term assets (17%). It is this strong liquidity position that has allowed the School to best serve its mission as well as obtain favorable interest rates on its investments and borrowings. As of August 31, 2008, the School has no borrowings outstanding with any bank or other lender.

Financial and Operational Accomplishments: While generating its positive fund balance and maintaining positive results of operations in every year since inception as a charter school, Discovery Academy of Lake Alfred, Inc. has been able to provide better and expanded services to its employees and students over that time:

- In 2003, the School converted its payroll from subcontracting employees from the District School Board to hiring and maintaining its own workforce. This has enabled the School to provide for advanced benefits for its employees as well as having greater flexibility with payroll and improving employee retainage.
- From 2004 to the present, the School has provided an increasing amount of its own transportation to its students as opposed to contracting with the District for 100% of its transportation needs.
- Over the past seven years, the School has been able to purchase and maintain the latest in technology for the employees and students. In addition, all classrooms have an abundance of supplies and students have the necessary textbooks to ensure the most effective learning environment.

## **Future Enrollment**

We want to expand our enrollment during the term of our new charter to 1025 students. After careful study, we feel we can still meet class size requirements, use our present facilities and serve our students with the programs and services that we have identified.

Given the present state of the economy, we know that most schools have had a declining enrollment. That has not been the case in our area. We continue to have a strong enrollment and a waiting list at each grade level.

We have projected a budget five years into the future with an estimated progressive increase in both enrollment and conservative increase in revenue.

DISCOVERY ACADEMY OF LAKE ALFRED  
PROJECTED OPERATING BUDGET  
2009-2014

BEG. FUND BALANCE 7/01	ACCT NO. 12769000	2009-2010 1,837,418.01	2010-2011 2,168,273.71	2011-2012 2,638,191.79	2012-2013 2,981,038.37	2013-2014 3,340,879.77
<b>REVENUE</b>	<b>ACCT NO.</b>	<b>FTE 999</b>	<b>FTE 1010</b>	<b>FTE 1016</b>	<b>FTE 1028</b>	<b>FTE 1028</b>
READING COACH	13296000	-	-	-	-	-
FL EDUC FINANCE PROGRAM	13310000	4,439,519.32	4,665,083.40	4,828,823.21	5,022,689.76	5,173,370.45
FLORIDA LEAD TEACHER	13334000	13,800.00	13,800.00	13,800.00	13,800.00	13,800.00
INSTR MATERIALS	13336000	98,922.35	103,948.40	107,596.89	111,916.68	115,274.16
DISCRETIONARY LOTTERY	13344000	32,024.82	33,651.94	34,833.09	36,231.56	37,318.51
TRANSPORTATION - FEFP	13354000	170,451.18	179,111.48	185,398.11	192,841.44	198,628.88
TRANSPORTATION - PCSB	13354000	204,589.28	214,984.07	222,529.80	231,463.87	238,407.79
CLASS SIZE REDUCTION	13365000	927,427.56	974,548.37	1,008,754.05	1,049,253.29	1,080,730.89
SCHOOL RECOGNITION	13361000	-	-	-	-	-
EXCELLENT TEACHING PROGRAM	13363000	-	-	-	-	-
CAPITAL OUTLAY	13397000	-	-	-	-	-
SCHOOL TAXES	13411000	429,810.83	451,648.70	467,501.12	486,270.25	500,858.36
INTEREST	13430000	66,820.00	67,897.90	69,934.53	72,032.56	74,193.54
MISC REVENUE	13490000	15,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>		<b>8,387,485.93</b>	<b>8,719,673.98</b>	<b>9,064,170.80</b>	<b>7,231,488.40</b>	<b>7,447,689.38</b>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE</b>		<b>8,334,883.94</b>	<b>8,666,847.68</b>	<b>9,482,382.89</b>	<b>10,182,837.79</b>	<b>10,788,469.16</b>
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>	<b>ACCT NO.</b>					
<b>ACCOUNT NAME</b>						
Salaries-Teachers	15000120	2,314,863.11	2,384,412.00	2,465,944.36	2,529,622.69	2,605,511.38
Salaries-Paras	15000160	98,897.43	99,586.35	102,588.30	105,883.89	108,833.81
Retirement-Instructional	15000210	234,555.72	241,592.39	248,840.16	256,305.37	263,994.53
Soc Sec/Medicare-Instructional	15000220	183,635.61	189,144.68	194,819.02	200,683.59	206,683.50
Medical Insurance-Instructional	15000230	345,975.97	356,355.25	367,045.91	378,057.28	389,399.00
Workers Comp -Instructional	15000240	15,171.90	15,827.08	16,085.87	16,578.74	17,076.11
Disability Insurance	15000290	9,319.44	9,589.02	9,868.99	10,183.60	10,489.11
Contracted Services-Instructional	15000310	2,575.00	2,652.25	2,731.82	2,813.77	2,898.19
Travel-Instructional	15000330	515.00	530.45	546.36	562.75	579.64
Repair & Maintenance	15000350	2,675.00	2,652.25	2,731.82	2,813.77	2,898.19
Other Purchased Services	15000390	35,020.00	36,070.60	37,152.72	38,267.30	39,415.32
Supplies-Instructional	15000510	77,250.00	79,587.50	81,954.53	84,413.16	86,945.56
Textbooks-Instructional	15000520	82,400.00	84,872.00	87,418.16	90,040.70	92,741.93
Equipment-Instructional	15000840	20,800.00	21,218.00	21,854.54	22,510.18	23,185.48
Software-Instructional	15000890	3,090.00	3,182.70	3,278.18	3,376.53	3,477.82
Dues & Fees-Instr	15000730	463.50	477.41	491.73	506.48	521.67
Salaries-Sub Teachers	15000750	61,800.00	63,654.00	65,563.62	67,530.53	69,556.44
<b>INSTRUCTIONAL</b>		<b>3,486,897.88</b>	<b>3,691,286.91</b>	<b>3,888,842.89</b>	<b>3,999,916.38</b>	<b>4,124,397.86</b>
Salary Dean - Student Support	16100110	101,456.03	104,489.71	107,634.70	110,883.74	114,189.88
Salaries Guidance-Student Support	16100130	151,578.86	156,124.17	160,807.89	165,632.13	170,601.09
Salary Technology - Student Support	16100180	56,051.87	57,743.73	59,478.04	61,260.32	63,098.13
Retirement-Student Support	16100210	29,988.88	30,867.95	31,793.98	32,747.80	33,730.24
Social Security-Student Support	16100220	22,818.62	23,503.18	24,208.27	24,934.52	25,682.56
Medical Insurance-Student Support	16100230	24,438.81	25,171.97	25,927.13	26,704.95	27,508.10
Workers Comp-Student Support	16100240	1,865.93	1,942.51	2,000.78	2,080.81	2,122.63
Disability Insurance	16100290	1,322.52	1,362.20	1,403.08	1,445.15	1,488.51
Contracted Services	16100310	2,060.00	2,121.80	2,185.45	2,251.02	2,318.55
Travel-Student Support	16100330	515.00	530.45	546.36	562.75	579.64
Repair/Maint - Student Support	16100350	-	-	-	-	-
Other Purchased Services	16100390	4,902.60	5,049.88	5,201.38	5,357.42	5,518.14
Supplies-Clinic	16100510	2,080.00	2,121.80	2,185.45	2,251.02	2,318.55
Equipment	16100840	1,030.00	1,080.90	1,092.73	1,125.51	1,159.27
Software	16100890	206.00	212.18	218.55	225.10	231.85
Substitute-Student Support	16100750	-	-	-	-	-
<b>PUPIL PERSONNEL SVCS</b>		<b>489,363.32</b>	<b>412,312.42</b>	<b>424,681.79</b>	<b>437,422.28</b>	<b>460,844.91</b>

**OPERATING EXPENSES**

ACCOUNT NAME	ACCT NO.					
Salaries-Media	16200130	57,242.25	58,959.52	60,728.30	62,550.15	64,426.66
Salaries-Media Paras	16200150	17,722.18	18,253.85	18,801.46	19,365.50	19,946.47
Retirement-Media	16200210	7,241.93	7,459.19	7,682.96	7,913.45	8,150.66
Social Security-Media	16200220	5,514.62	5,680.06	5,850.46	6,025.97	6,206.75
Medical Insurance-Media	16200230	10,982.96	11,312.38	11,651.75	12,001.30	12,361.34
Workers Comp-Media	16200240	466.29	466.98	464.08	466.60	513.56
Disability Insurance	16200290	247.20	254.62	262.25	270.12	278.23
Other Purchased Service	16200390	7,210.00	7,426.30	7,649.09	7,878.56	8,114.92
Supplies-Media	16200510	6,895.00	6,895.85	7,102.73	7,315.61	7,535.28
Periodicals	16200530	669.50	669.59	710.27	731.58	753.53
Library Books-Media	16200610	8,240.00	8,487.20	8,741.82	9,004.07	9,274.19
Audio-Visual-Media	16200620	3,080.00	3,182.70	3,278.18	3,376.53	3,477.82
Equipment-Media	16200640	1,030.00	1,060.90	1,082.73	1,125.51	1,159.27
Software - Media	16200660	-	-	-	-	-
<b>INSTRUCTIONAL MEDIA SVCS</b>		<b>126,341.98</b>	<b>130,132.12</b>	<b>134,638.08</b>	<b>138,067.18</b>	<b>142,198.98</b>
Contracted Service-Curr	16300310	7,210.00	7,426.30	7,649.09	7,878.56	8,114.92
Travel-Instr/Curriculum Dev	16300330	-	-	-	-	-
Supplies-Curriculum	16300510	1,030.00	1,060.90	1,082.73	1,125.51	1,159.27
<b>INSTR/CURRICULUM DEV SVCS</b>		<b>8,240.00</b>	<b>8,487.20</b>	<b>8,741.82</b>	<b>9,004.07</b>	<b>9,274.19</b>
Contracted Service-Inservice	16400310	-	-	-	-	-
Travel - Instructional	16400330	25,750.00	26,522.50	27,318.18	28,137.72	28,981.85
Supplies	16400510	8,240.00	8,487.20	8,741.82	9,004.07	9,274.19
<b>INSTR STAFF TRNG SVCS</b>		<b>33,990.00</b>	<b>34,999.70</b>	<b>36,060.00</b>	<b>37,141.79</b>	<b>38,256.04</b>
Group Insurance	17100230	-	-	-	-	-
Unemployment Comp	17100250	8,180.00	8,365.40	8,556.36	8,753.05	8,955.64
Short Term Disability	17100290	-	-	-	-	-
Contracted Service-Admin/Gov/Audit	17100310	13,360.00	13,791.70	14,205.45	14,631.61	15,070.56
Contracted Service-Legal	17100311	5,150.00	5,304.50	5,463.64	5,627.54	5,796.37
Liability Insurance-Charter Board	17100320	12,360.00	12,730.60	13,112.72	13,508.11	13,911.29
Student Insurance-Charter Board	17100321	3,605.00	3,713.15	3,824.54	3,939.28	4,057.46
Travel-Charter Board	17100330	1,030.00	1,060.90	1,082.73	1,125.51	1,159.27
Postage Board	17100370	103.00	106.09	108.27	112.55	115.93
Other Services - Board	17100390	1,030.00	1,060.90	1,082.73	1,125.51	1,159.27
Supplies - Board	17100510	154.50	159.14	163.91	168.83	173.89
Dues & Fees-Board	17100730	2,286.00	2,333.98	2,404.00	2,476.12	2,550.40
<b>BOARD</b>		<b>48,286.89</b>	<b>49,626.88</b>	<b>50,925.35</b>	<b>52,265.11</b>	<b>53,666.10</b>
Salaries-Administration	17300110	323,061.58	332,753.41	342,736.01	353,018.09	363,606.63
Salaries-Admin. Para	17300150	16,148.34	16,632.79	17,131.77	17,645.73	18,175.10
Salaries-Admin. Sec.	17300160	185,555.53	191,122.20	196,855.86	202,761.54	208,844.36
Retirement-Admin	17300210	52,713.34	54,294.74	55,823.58	57,401.29	59,026.33
Soc. Sec./Medicare-Admin	17300220	38,732.12	39,694.08	41,090.91	42,323.63	43,593.34
Medical Insurance-Admin	17300230	51,886.55	53,453.45	55,057.05	56,708.78	58,410.02
Workers Comp-Admin	17300240	3,202.27	3,296.34	3,397.29	3,499.21	3,604.18
Disability Insurance	17300290	1,433.78	1,476.77	1,521.08	1,566.71	1,613.71
Travel-Admin	17300330	12,360.00	12,730.60	13,112.72	13,508.11	13,911.29
Repair & Maintenance	17300350	205.00	212.18	218.55	225.10	231.85
Postage	17300370	4,120.00	4,243.60	4,370.91	4,502.04	4,637.10
Other Purchased Svcs-Admin	17300390	9,270.00	9,548.10	9,834.54	10,128.58	10,433.47
Supplies-Admin	17300510	18,025.00	18,585.75	19,122.72	19,668.40	20,267.30
Equipment-Admin	17300640	8,240.00	8,487.20	8,741.82	9,004.07	9,274.19
Software-Admin	17300660	1,648.00	1,697.44	1,748.96	1,800.81	1,854.84
Dues & Fees-Admin	17300730	5,665.00	5,834.95	6,010.00	6,190.30	6,376.01
Salary- Sub Admin Sec	17300750	1,030.00	1,060.90	1,082.73	1,125.51	1,159.27
Misc Expense	17300790	8,240.00	8,487.20	8,741.82	9,004.07	9,274.19
PCSB Admin Cost	17300791	158,212.09	163,135.79	168,075.53	173,211.87	178,408.22
<b>SCHOOL ADM (OFFICE OF PRIN)</b>		<b>899,799.66</b>	<b>928,828.69</b>	<b>954,783.24</b>	<b>983,529.61</b>	<b>1,013,626.43</b>
Contracted Service-Fiscal	17500310	30,900.00	31,827.00	32,781.61	33,765.26	34,776.22
Contracted Service-Payroll Processing	17500311	5,665.00	5,834.95	6,010.00	6,190.30	6,376.01
Contracted Services - Cornerstone/FLEX	17500312	-	-	-	-	-
<b>FISCAL SERVICES</b>		<b>36,565.00</b>	<b>37,661.95</b>	<b>38,791.61</b>	<b>39,955.56</b>	<b>41,152.23</b>

OPERATING EXPENSES						
ACCOUNT NAME	ACCT NO.					
Purchased Service-Central Services	17700390	8,240.00	8,487.20	8,741.82	9,004.07	9,274.19
Supplies-Central Services	17700510	1,030.00	1,080.80	1,082.73	1,125.51	1,159.27
Equipment	17700840	3,080.00	3,182.70	3,278.18	3,376.53	3,477.82
Software-Central Services	17700890	2,090.00	2,121.80	2,185.45	2,251.02	2,318.55
<b>CENTRAL SERVICES</b>		<b>14,438.80</b>	<b>14,862.69</b>	<b>15,288.18</b>	<b>15,757.12</b>	<b>16,228.84</b>
Salarie-Bus Drivers	17800180	130,295.00	134,203.85	138,229.97	142,376.86	146,648.17
Retirement-Bus Drivers	17800210	12,675.00	13,261.25	13,659.09	14,088.86	14,480.93
Social Security-Bus Drivers	17800220	9,808.69	10,102.95	10,405.04	10,718.22	11,039.77
Medical Insurance-Driver	17800230	38,441.86	39,594.91	40,782.76	42,008.24	43,286.43
Workers Comp-Bus Drivers	17800240	6,142.92	6,327.21	6,517.02	6,712.53	6,913.91
Disability Insurance	17800290	-	-	-	-	-
Insurance-Transportation	17800320	27,810.00	28,644.30	29,503.63	30,388.74	31,300.40
Maintenance & Repair	17800350	6,180.00	6,385.40	6,586.36	6,783.05	6,985.64
Contracted Service-Student Transp.	17800390	311,952.37	321,310.94	330,950.27	340,878.77	351,105.14
Contracted Service-Bus Maint. & Inspect	17800391	18,540.00	19,098.20	19,698.09	20,259.16	20,866.93
Contracted Service-Bus Drivers	17800392	-	-	-	-	-
Other Purch Services-Physicals & Advertising	17800393	1,030.00	1,080.90	1,082.73	1,125.51	1,159.27
Diesel Fuel	17800480	82,400.00	84,872.00	87,418.18	90,040.70	92,741.93
Supplies-Transportation	17800510	-	-	-	-	-
Oil & Grease	17800540	1,030.00	1,080.90	1,082.73	1,125.51	1,159.27
Equipment-Transportation	17800840	-	-	-	-	-
Bus Vehicles	17800851	-	-	-	-	-
Sub Bus Driver	17800750	6,180.00	6,385.40	6,586.36	6,783.05	6,985.64
Misc Expense	17800790	412.00	424.35	437.09	450.20	463.71
<b>PUPIL TRANSPORTATION</b>		<b>853,897.84</b>	<b>872,898.67</b>	<b>892,871.38</b>	<b>913,887.42</b>	<b>934,887.14</b>
Salarie-Custodial	17900180	15,144.09	15,598.41	16,086.37	16,548.36	17,044.81
Retirement-Custodian	17900210	1,440.97	1,484.20	1,528.73	1,574.59	1,621.82
Soc. Sec.-Custodian	17900220	1,119.61	1,153.20	1,187.79	1,223.43	1,260.13
Insurance-Custodian	17900230	51.50	53.05	54.64	56.28	57.98
Workers Comp-Custodian	17900240	772.50	795.68	819.55	844.13	869.46
Disability Insurance	17900290	51.50	53.05	54.64	56.28	57.98
Bldg Insurance-Operations	17900320	35,020.00	36,070.80	37,152.72	38,267.30	39,415.32
Vehicle Insurance-Operations	17900321	3,090.00	3,182.70	3,278.18	3,376.53	3,477.82
Repair & Maint	17900350	9,270.00	9,548.10	9,834.54	10,129.58	10,433.47
Rental - Operations	17900390	-	-	-	-	-
Telephone	17900370	15,450.00	15,913.50	16,390.91	16,882.63	17,389.11
Papers	17900371	51.50	53.05	54.64	56.28	57.98
Water, Sewage and Garbage	17900380	10,300.00	10,609.00	10,927.27	11,255.09	11,592.74
Contracted Service-Operations	17900390	9,270.00	9,548.10	9,834.54	10,129.58	10,433.47
Contracted Service-Custodial	17900391	159,850.00	164,436.50	169,372.69	174,453.87	179,887.48
Contracted Service-Security	17900392	27,810.00	28,644.30	29,503.63	30,388.74	31,300.40
Contracted Services - Truck Maint.	17900393	2,080.00	2,121.80	2,185.45	2,251.02	2,318.55
Utilities	17900400	142,140.00	146,404.20	150,798.33	155,320.22	159,979.82
Gasoline	17900450	2,575.00	2,652.25	2,731.82	2,813.77	2,898.19
Supplies-Operations	17900510	14,420.00	14,862.60	15,298.18	15,757.12	16,228.84
Equipment -Operations	17900840	10,300.00	10,609.00	10,927.27	11,255.09	11,592.74
Motor Vehicles	17900850	-	-	-	-	-
Misc Exp	17900790	1,030.00	1,080.90	1,082.73	1,125.51	1,159.27
<b>OPERATION OF PLANT</b>		<b>881,918.67</b>	<b>914,847.17</b>	<b>948,982.89</b>	<b>983,795.38</b>	<b>1,018,878.32</b>
Principal - Debt	18200710	-	-	-	80,000.00	92,000.00
Interest - Debt	18200720	-	-	-	14,000.00	12,000.00
<b>DEBT SERVICE</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>94,000.00</b>	<b>104,000.00</b>
<b>TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES</b>		<b>6,185,619.23</b>	<b>6,389,765.67</b>	<b>6,641,324.21</b>	<b>6,841,888.91</b>	<b>7,043,787.75</b>
<b>CURRENT YEAR NET INCOME(LOSS)</b>		<b>231,856.79</b>	<b>388,918.08</b>	<b>412,846.68</b>	<b>388,841.39</b>	<b>403,782.63</b>
<b>ENDING FUND BALANCE 6/30</b>		<b>2,188,273.71</b>	<b>2,528,191.79</b>	<b>2,951,838.37</b>	<b>3,348,879.77</b>	<b>3,744,672.40</b>
<b>FUND BAL. RESERVED FOR:</b>						
<b>CAPITAL OUTLAY (ADMIN FEE &gt; 800FTE)</b>		<b>(218,182.14)</b>	<b>(241,448.98)</b>	<b>(489,018.79)</b>	<b>(489,784.04)</b>	<b>(534,684.77)</b>
<b>UNRESERVED FUND BALANCE 6/30</b>		<b>1,969,991.57</b>	<b>2,199,748.83</b>	<b>2,462,822.62</b>	<b>2,841,116.73</b>	<b>3,210,097.63</b>
<b>ENDING FD BAL AS % OF AVAIL FDS</b>		<b>28.03%</b>	<b>28.56%</b>	<b>31.89%</b>	<b>32.81%</b>	<b>34.71%</b>
<b>Unreserved fund bal as % of avail funds</b>		<b>23.40%</b>	<b>24.71%</b>	<b>28.16%</b>	<b>27.99%</b>	<b>29.78%</b>

## Summary

A Report of Independent Auditors on Internal Control over financial reporting is conducted annually and submitted to the Board of Directors of Discovery, the District School Board of Polk County and is included in the Annual Report submitted to the State of Florida. Since Discovery Academy has been a charter school, these audits have not identified any deficiencies in internal control over financial reporting that are considered to be a material weakness. In addition, there were no findings or recommendations to improve compliance, internal control or the financial reporting process for any of the years audited during the term of the charter contract.

The school has always strived to have a comprehensive system of internal controls in place to safeguard assets, provide for accurate financial reporting and ensure proper approvals for all transactions. Consequently, the school has never received a significant negative finding from its independent audits.

Discovery Academy is financially stable. Discovery has competently and effectively managed its finances from its inception as a charter school in 2001. Over the past seven years, the school has not had a year with a deficit in its results of operation on a fund basis and has accumulated a positive fund balance and numerous resource materials for learning. Discovery has planned for the future by having this reserve to handle future expenditures of replacing buses, updating technology throughout the school, and unexpected shortfalls to balance budgets if we have a planned operating deficit.

Classrooms have an abundance of supplies and resources and students have necessary textbooks. We have purchased the latest in technology for both students and staff. Any increase in enrollment will generate the necessary funds for additional staff and student expenditures.

The Governing Board has been closely involved with the budget and has exercised fiscal responsibility in making decisions that affect our school organization.

This document clearly demonstrates that Discovery Academy has a plan for its future that is sound and deserves a fifteen year contract.