

Discovery Public School of Faribault 2008-2009 Annual Report on Curriculum, Instruction, and Student Achievement

1. School Mission Statement

Our Mission

Discovery Public School of Faribault provides students at risk of school failure in Grades 6-12 a learning environment and social structure that gives them the tools and knowledge necessary to lead satisfying and productive lives upon graduation.

Our Vision

The vision of Discovery Public School is to meet the current and future needs of middle and secondary students by providing a stable and consistent environment in which each student builds necessary social, academic, personal, and career skills for a satisfying and productive life.

To reach this vision, the School will integrate the following tools and methods throughout the instructional program:

- Project Based Learning
- Small Class Sizes
- Student established short and long-term goals
- Basic Skills Instruction
- Career assessment and exploration of post-secondary options

Discovery Public School desires that all students who graduate from the school have acquired:

- Proficiency in basic reading, writing and math skills
- Knowledge, skills and ability to compete in the market place
- Knowledge and skills necessary to be productive citizens
- Ability to solve problems and think critically
- A willingness to hold themselves accountable for their decisions, behavior and performance
- A positive sense of self as an important human being
- Internal resilience and the tools for self advocacy
- An understanding of the need, and having the desire, for lifelong learning

2. Sponsor Information—Northwood Children’s Services is the school’s sponsor. In May 2007, they renewed a 3-year contract with Discovery Public School. Our liaison has been Dick Wolleat, Chief Operating Officer for Northwood. Their contact information is: Telephone: 218-724-8815, Fax: 218-724-0251 and Postal address: 714 W. College Street, Duluth, MN 55812. Our sponsor visits the school on a quarterly basis to ensure we are meeting our goals. They also review the school on a yearly basis to make sure we are helping our students and meeting the requirements of our contract.

3. Governance--

Date board elections are held: April

Name	Date Elected [If member has served multiple terms, list date first elected.	Positions: Officer of board or Committee chair	Affiliation [Teacher (File Folder#), parent, community member]	Board Attendance
John Burger	August 2005	Member	Parent	Yes
Russ Kennedy	April 2005	Chairperson	Community Member	Yes
Dan Weisser	August 2006	Member	Teacher #427995	Yes
Heather Humeniuk	August 2008	Member	Teacher #422171	
Jim Severson	May 2004	Vice-chairperson	Teacher #251210	Yes
Mike Vourlos	May 2005	Clerk/Treasurer	Community Member	Yes
Dirk Wells	August 2008	Member	Teacher #262109	Yes

The school board of Discovery Public School experienced a small turnover. Our English teacher, Mike Vourlos, took a different job, and was replaced by Heather Humeniuk. Mike did stay on our board however as a community member, and kept the role of Clerk/Treasurer. Kathleen Kallis also found other employment and was replaced as our Special Education teacher and school board member by Dirk Wells. Our attendance of the members has been around 90%, only because of occasional conflicts of schedule.

4. Teaching Staff Information—

08-09			
Name	File #	Assignment	Returning for 2009-2010
Steve Darkow	215267	Math	Yes
Sam Macklay	369829	Health/Life Skills	Yes
Jim Severson	251210	Director	Yes
Dan Weisser	427995	Social Studies	Yes
Dirk Wells	262109	Sp. Ed	Yes
Heather Humeniuk	422171	Language Arts	Yes
Delica Caldwell	415845	Reading	Yes
Ruth Havamaki	217037	Art/Music	No

Discovery Public School's teaching staff will remain very much in tact for the 09-10 school year. This is a very positive thing, especially when working with many kids who do not work well with big changes. The only change for the upcoming year is that we will need to cut the position of our Art/Music teacher due to budget constraints.

5. Program success and best practices--

The most significant program success for Discovery Public School is related to the area of graduation rate. The school has been working hard to address the basic skills throughout the curriculum. Students will know that all courses will utilize basic skills, and that upon graduation all students will be proficient in basic areas.

Anytime a charter school can graduate students it is an achievement. The achievement is great, because the students that we are accustomed to receiving are behind academically. The past year saw the school graduate four students. It is slightly down from last year, but at a school of this type the number graduated will fluctuate every year. Many of those students who graduated had to overcome large obstacles. The staff is very proud of those students who did graduate, and will be moving on. The school showing that it made annual yearly progress in relation to the graduation rate is a great symbol of our academic achievement.

Over the past three years, the school has taken measures to increase academic achievement in the core areas. The school hired a full time Reading teacher, and has been working hard at raising student test scores. Discovery Public school made s AYP in the areas of reading, math, and graduation!!! Over the past two years Discovery Public School has been on academic probation for not making AYP in reading and math. To get off of this probation the school has to make AYP (Annual Yearly Progress) for two consecutive years. The school has had an improvement plan in place for the past two years, and it is proving to be effective. The improvement plan focuses on the areas of reading and math. As the school changed its plans for curriculum, all teachers have played a role in achieving academic success. The staff is responsible for catching students up, and utilizing unique strategies to bring students to proficiency. As students remain at the school for longer periods of time, their progress can be tracked and their success can be realized.

Project based learning is being implemented on a small scale, and students grades are raising as a result. Students respond differently to being taught all curriculum areas on the same topics. The school has not done an official report, but it is believed by all staff members that the number of discipline issues is significantly reduced by creating homogenous groupings of students. Student maturity levels are showcased when they are in groups with students of other ages.

The greatest success of the school is keeping the school open through adversity. The school would have been closed if it did not find a sponsor by the end of June 2005, and that would have been catastrophic to the achievement of the students that the school was serving. Another great win is a continual growth in community awareness. Prior to the transition to Discovery Public School, many in the community thought we were a private school. Since moving locations and raising public awareness, we have been able to shed these myths and show the community that we are here to help their students. Discovery Public School has enjoyed its steadiest enrollment since being open over the last few years and hopes to continue with this progress. The school has also received much positive press in the last year, often being in the paper. The school had articles for

fundraising, school projects, graduation, meeting AYP, etc. The school is very pleased with the success of the school over the past few years, and glad to see Discovery heading in a positive direction.

6. Program challenges—

The number one academic problem that the school faces is in relation to attendance. Attendance has an effect on all areas of academic performance and is correlated to behavior. The school has been trying to improve these areas with the help of staff, parents, and community members. It has actually been much improved over the past few years.

The school has set a hard policy on attendance. The school handbook is under constant revision, and the goal is to have a user friendly product that helps parents know what their responsibilities are in relation to their student's education. Our school meets twice officially for parent – teacher conferences, but our staff encourages parents to stop by or contact them to discuss things such as grades and behavior. The school calls each and every student that is not in attendance by first hour. We have run into some roadblocks with this, because a few parents do not respond favorably to phone calls when they are at work. The school would rather take that chance than to have the parents uninformed. The major response is that parents are glad to know the location of their students and will do what they need to in order to keep their students in school.

Faribault Social Services has been working to keep their students in school, but the main issue that hurt the school last year was when Rice County said that they would not prosecute truancy. Truancy makes parents and students responsible for attendance, but the lack of support makes it meaningless to students. The school is working with the other area schools to develop a plan to keep students in school. Also, the charter school is looking into the idea of having a volunteer officer go to student's homes and bring them to school. Discipline issues on the bus seem to have a great impact on school attendance; the school is looking into transportation alternatives.

Another problem we had is in the area of reading. Many of our students are not considered proficient readers. We have made reading a required course for all students; however, challenges still arise. For the 2009-2010 school year, we have hired back a near full-time reading teacher to help all students with comprehension, vocabulary, and reading skills. This has shown very positive results in the past. Students have also struggled in the area of math, and our math teacher is constantly preparing our students for MCA tests, and life after high school.

7. Accountability Data

	Progress toward meeting goals using curriculum-based or performance-based measures	Progress toward meeting goals using standardized test-based measures	Significant changes to academic program planned in response to results
<p>Academic Goal #1 All students that have been attending Discovery for two consecutive quarters and have not passed by the time tests are administered, will increase their previous MCA Reading scores by an average of 10 points making significant progress towards passing.</p>	<p>Students that are passing classes at Discovery are preparing themselves for the tests and are learning the necessary skills to pass the test.</p>	<p>Results of tests are compared from year to year to show students their achievement, and then areas of weakness are addressed for the student.</p>	<p>Students are being placed in periodic testing situations and are utilizing old versions of the MCA tests. Teachers are focusing on improving MCA scores and areas of weakness.</p>
<p>Academic Goal #2 All students that have been attending Discovery for two consecutive quarters and have not passed by the time tests are administered will increase MCA Math scores by an average of 10 points making significant progress towards passing.</p>	<p>Students that are passing classes at Discovery are preparing themselves for the tests and are learning the necessary skills to pass the test.</p>	<p>Results of tests are compared from year to year to show students their achievement, and then areas of weakness are addressed for the student.</p>	<p>Students are being placed in periodic testing situations and are utilizing old version of the MCA tests. Teachers are focusing on improving MCA scores and areas of weakness.</p>
<p>Non-Academic Goal #1 Students' inappropriate behaviors will decrease by 10% from the first month of school to the sixth month of school as measured by the number of office referrals.</p>	<p>All staff are utilizing Discovery School handbook in the classroom and are consistently commenting to the students about addressing inappropriate behaviors.</p>	<p>Not Applicable</p>	<p>The staff is constantly communicating their concerns amongst one another and is therefore more able to address student problems.</p>

<p>Non-Academic Goal #2 All students who have been at Discovery for at least two quarters will have at least an 85% attendance rate.</p>	<p>Students that have poor attendance are staying after school to makeup work on their own time.</p>	<p>The School's overall attendance rate was over 85%, and did meet annual yearly progress, the school is making improvement in this area.</p>	<p>The school is working closely with Rice County Social Services and Corrections in order to achieve higher attendance rates. Also, the school is working with area schools that will also be experiencing the same situation. The school's newly adopted truancy policy will play a big role in addressing attendance.</p>
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8. Other school accountability measures—Parental involvement continues to be a struggle, but is starting to improve. We offer a variety of communication means for parents to reach the school and for us to reach parents. We also have an open door policy allowing parents to stop in and check on how their student is doing, which many parent have been using. We offer long hours for parent/teacher conferences in the hopes of having every parent stop in. We will continue to keep in contact with parents; letting them know of important dates in advance and if there are any issues with their student. The parents that are involved report a high level of satisfaction with the school. We have made it known that we are going to involve parents as best we can; we just need them to work with us.

The community has been starting to really show support to our school. We have had local businesses make donations, both monetary and in supplies. We have had community members stop in and volunteer their time. We have had opportunities to use our community facilities, i.e. the library, health center. We also had a local grocery store fund a comedy night fundraiser for the school and provide food, and donate all the proceeds. Overall, community support is at an all time high, and the school has received many compliments throughout the last couple school years.

9. All academic goals for the upcoming year

A. School-wide goals-

	Student Achievement Goal	Instructional strategies	Progress toward meeting goals using curriculum-based or performance-based measures	Progress toward meeting goals using standardized test-based measures
All students will: Academic Goal #1	All students who have attended Discovery for a minimum of two consecutive quarters and are still attending when assessments are given, will increase their scale score in reading by an average of 10 points from one year to the next or will pass the test.	The school has added additional staff to teach reading to Title One students throughout the school. Students that qualify for services, and have not passed the MCA tests will receive reading as a class during the 2009-2010 school year.	The teachers at the school are utilizing the resources of the reading teachers throughout the curriculum. Professional development opportunities will be made available to all teachers to become more qualified to instruct using best practices in reading and math.	Until this year Discovery had not met AYP in reading or math for two consecutive years. The school will continue to try to meet the needs of the students that have not been successful in achieving proficiency in reading and math, even after succeeding this year. The school has created an in depth improvement plan involving all staff to help with this.
All students will: Academic Goal #2	All students who have attended Discovery for a minimum of two consecutive quarters and are still attending when assessments are given, will increase their scale score in Math by an average of 10 points before next year, or pass.	The school is offering workshops to teachers in how to implement best practices in math throughout the curriculum. Our math instructor also teaches material specifically related to passing MCA tests.	All staff at Discovery try and incorporate basic math skills into their classrooms. Our math teacher works hard to teach the skills needed to pass tests that are required for graduation.	Based on MCA and BST results our school has not met AYP goals in Math the last couple of years. The school will continue to try to meet the needs of the students that have not been successful in achieving proficiency in math

<p>All students will: Non-Academic Goal #1</p>	<p>The number of inappropriate behaviors, as defined by the school handbook and kept track of by the number of detentions and suspensions, will decrease by ten percent over the course of the year.</p>	<p>Teachers are utilizing the Discovery School handbook which is based on other school districts.</p>	<p>Not Applicable</p>	<p>Not Applicable</p>
<p>All students will: Non-Academic Goal #2</p>	<p>The average attendance rate of all students who are enrolled for a minimum of two quarters will be at least 90% of the school days as required by state law.</p>	<p>The importance of school attendance is being addressed by all staff members. The school handbook was modified to include more specific information about attendance and absences. Students who miss more than 7 days per quarter will not receive credit for the class, unless reasonable cause can be established in a meeting with the attendance board.</p>	<p>Not Applicable- Information regarding this goal is available through MARSS records and will be periodically reviewed.</p>	<p>Not Applicable</p>

10. School’s Non Profit Status

Our school was given a 501(c)3 status as Covenant Academy in 2001. Our school has had to move to a new facility and we changed our name to Discovery Public School. At the time, we were unclear about having to submit another 1023 application to the IRS to apply for our 501(c)3 status again. Our application is currently in process. We hope to hear back from the IRS soon. Please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any questions.

11. School Report Card / MCAII Results

Here is our school report card displaying our Math and Reading Testing results. Our school did meet AYP in all areas! We will continue to use our school improvement plan, and keep it in constant revision. The staff at Discovery believes in not just staying the same, but making improvements every year.

12. AYP Status

Discovery has been on academic probation for not meeting AYP in the area of Reading for 2 years, and 1 year for math. To be on academic probation you must not meet AYP for two consecutive years. To get off of probation you must meet AYP for two consecutive years. Discovery made AYP this year in all areas (reading, math, attendance, and graduation). If the school does this for one more year they will be off. When on academic probation the school must create an in depth improvement plan to help improve testing scores, and find areas of weaknesses. This improvement plan has been very successful, and will be used even once the school is off of AYP probation. Discovery School is in the stage of 2.2 Implementing Supplemental Services. In this stage the school is required to set aside 20 % of Title I money and give parents the option to use this money for extra tutoring help outside of school. No parents have yet contacted the school about using this option, but they will be reminded at Parent-Teacher Conferences.

13. Demographic Information

Ethnicity – White- 63 %, Black-3%, Hispanic-30%, Asian-1%, Am. Indian-3%

Economic Indicator – Paid- 36%, Reduced- 8%, Free Meals- 56%

Disability – No Disability- 80%, Specific Learning Disabilities- 5%, Emotional/Behavioral Disorder- 14%, Other Health Impaired- 1%

14. School Report Card (AYP)

The Report Card has lots of information about your school. Some of the information appears below. Other information can be found by choosing the options on the right.

2009 Adequate Yearly Progress

Making Adequate Yearly Progress depends on schools and school districts achieving [annual proficiency](#) targets on state reading and math tests. For more information click on the hyperlinks below. Hyphens may appear in table below, indicating areas where subgroup counts were too few to measure.

DISCOVERY PUBLIC SCHOOL FARIBAULT has 3 eligible groups and has met 100.0% of the requirements for [Adequate Yearly Progress](#) under No Child Left Behind.

	Reading		Mathematics		Attendance	Graduation
	Participation	Proficiency	Participation	Proficiency		
All Students	-	Yes	-	Yes	Yes	-
American Indian / Alaskan Native	-	-	-	-		
Asian/Pacific Islander	-	-	-	-		
Hispanic	-	-	-	-		
Black	-	-	-	-		
White	-	-	-	-		
Limited English Proficient	-	-	-	-		
Special Education	-	-	-	-		

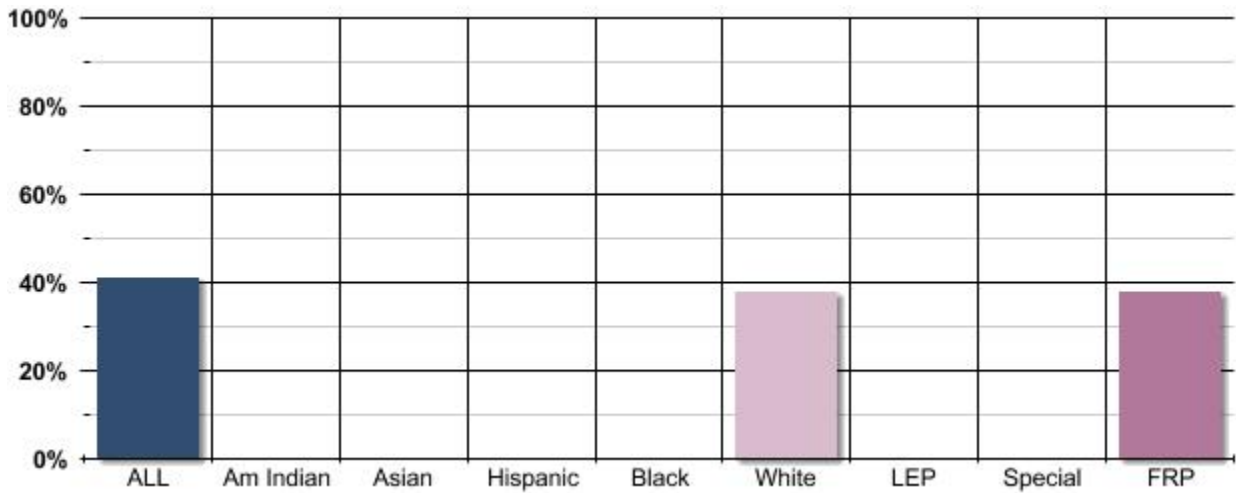
Free/Reduced
Price Lunch

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DISCOVERY PUBLIC SCHOOL FARIBAULT is Making AYP. There are 864 Minnesota schools (37.5%) that receive Title I funds. As a [Title I School](#), DISCOVERY PUBLIC SCHOOL FARIBAULT will be implementing Supplemental Services in 2009-10. Students at this school may request additional academic tutoring or may attend another school in the district that is higher performing.

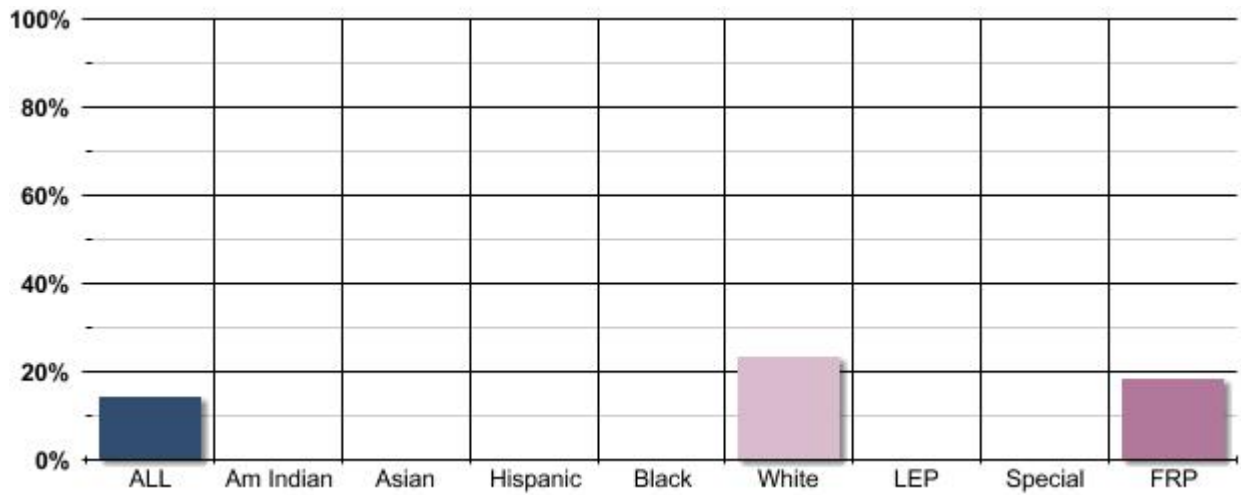
Reading Proficiency

This chart shows the percent of students who are proficient in reading across all grades on the [MCA-II](#) and [MTAS](#). View Analyze Your Results for more results by Achievement Levels.



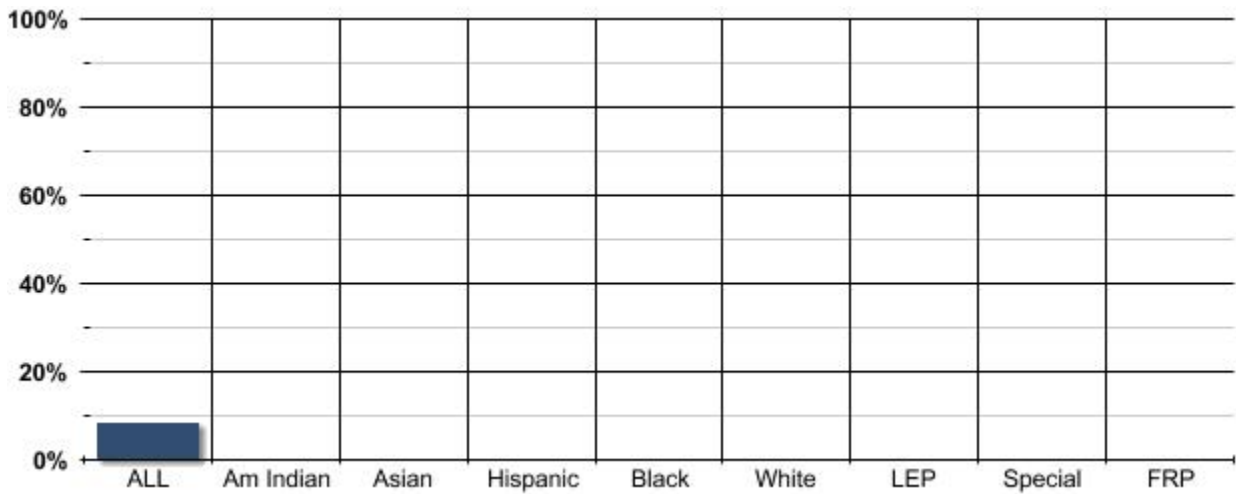
Math Proficiency

This chart shows the percent of students who are proficient in math across all grades on the [MCA-II](#), [MTAS](#) and [MTELL](#). View Analyze Your Results for more results by Achievement Levels.



Science Proficiency

This chart shows the percent of students who are proficient in science across all grades on the [MCA-II](#) and [MTAS](#). View Analyze Your Results for more results by Achievement Levels.



Minn. Stat. 124.10, subd. 11 (2009)

Professional Development Plan

Our director does not currently hold an administrative license, for our 2009-2010 Annual Report we will include this plan that we are currently working on. However, for this report we are only including information regarding the 2008-2009 school year. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.