



The Discovery Connections

A newsletter for parents of Discovery Elementary Students
February 2026

A WELCOME MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL-DR. MATHEW NELSON

February is "I Love to Read Month," and we had a lot of fun officially kicking it off with a gathering in the auditorium! We will continue in our tradition of "Stop, Drop, and Read", which is a favorite of the students. There is a good chance that your son or daughter will "get caught reading", which is a great thing! Other planned "I Love to Read" month activities include Book Bingo, Town Square Reading, Mystery Readers on the announcements, and our Read-a-Thon fundraiser. Information was sent home about our annual Read-a-thon fundraising event.

In our Read-a-Thon, each student will have a reading goal of total minutes read outside of school in the month, and by acquiring pledges/donations, the students are making a promise to do their best to reach their reading goal for the month. The funds raised in this fundraiser will be used towards the purchase of additional items for student use, including adding additional kid-friendly furniture in our Commons, technology, books, and offsetting field trip costs. The main advantages of a fundraiser like this are that the focus is on literacy and **100% of the donations benefit the students of Discovery Elementary**. Thank you in advance for your support, we are excited to kick off our annual Read-a-Thon, which is **our only school-led fundraiser for the year**.

To culminate our "I Love to Read Month" activities, on **Friday, February 27th** all Discovery students and staff will be invited to watch a "G" rated movie, Peanuts, in the auditorium on the big screen! I do realize that it sure seems hypocritical of me to share that we are going to watch a movie together at school when in this month's newsletter, we shared a resource about limiting screen time. I shared the resource, though as a general reminder because, as a parent, I feel this is one area that could be improved in my own house. Back to the "I Love to Read Month" culminating festivities...after the movie, we will have our school-wide, book character parade, in which the students will parade around Discovery dressed as their favorite book character. Additional information will be sent home this month explaining the Character Parade. It is always such a great, fun day for our students to conclude "I Love to Read Month".

This year, on February 4th, our entire school participated in the Global Day of Play! The purpose of "Day of Play" is to encourage children to PLAY, HAVE FUN, and be CREATIVE. It was great to see the students organizing their own "technology-free" play activities, inviting others to join them, being problem solvers, and compromising! To be honest, I believe that in general children (including my own) don't spend enough time engaging in technology-free play often enough, so this is a great opportunity for us to help encourage creative play. There have been numerous studies that indicated that uninterrupted playtime is very important for children's development emotionally, socially, and academically!

Thank you for your continued support of Discovery Elementary.



"Together We're Better!"

BETTER
TOGETHER



TECH OVERLOAD

FACT: The average American child spends **50+ HOURS** a week in front of a screen. That's more than **A FULL TIME JOB!**



Recommended daily screen time for children and teens



Average screen time per day
(TV, video games, tablets, computers, cell phones...etc)



% of children addicted to mobile devices

The Downside of Screen Time

- Depression
- Fatigue
- Poor Academic Performance
- Anxiety
- Health Problems
- Impaired Self-Control
- Vision Problems,
- Impaired Social Skills
- Obesity
- Aggressive Tendencies
- Poor Digital Footprints
- Developing Unhealthy Relationships

Unplugging Tips!

ASK YOUR CHILD:

"What have you always wanted to learn or try?"

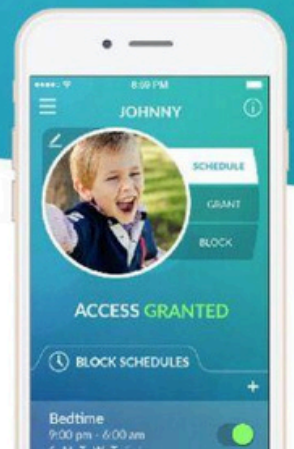
"What are you missing out on when you spend so much time on your device?"

- Encourage tech-free hobbies and activities.
- Practice what you preach! Children follow by example.
- Create no-tech zones in your home.
- Don't allow devices at family meals.
- Set screen time schedules.

A Resource for Parents

Want to limit your child's device use? OurPact is a free solution for parents to block internet and apps on all children's iOS and Android devices. Manage screen time by blocking children's devices at-a-touch or through automated schedules. Through our Web App or iOS app, limit device use with a bedtime schedule or set a manual block during a family meal.

Get Started for Free



IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES

FEBRUARY



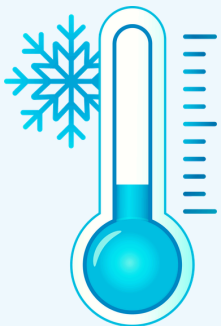
- **Conferences**– Thursday, February 12th & Tuesday February 17th
- **Kindergarten Registration**– Thursday, February 12th from 6–7pm
- **Read-a-Thon Packets Due**– Friday, February 27th
- **Character Parade**–Friday, February 27th at 1:45PM (Families Welcome)

MARCH

- **Early Release Day**– Friday, March 6th (early release at 12:15)
- **3-4-5 Recorder Finales**– Wednesday, March 18th during student's Music Class
- **K-8 Teacher Workshop**– Friday, March 27th– No School
- **Spring Break**– March 30–April 3– No School

Cold Weather Reminder

We will continue to remind students to wear appropriate clothing for the weather. Students go outside for recess every day that the temperature/wind chill is at or above -5 degrees. Listed below are the items students should wear to be dressed for the weather:



- **Jacket**
- **Snow Pants**
- **Headwear**
- **Gloves/Mittens**
- **Boots**



Please Note: Students will be asked to stay on the tar area of the playground if they are missing an item.

EXCUSED ABSENCES FOR FAMILY VACATIONS

We understand that time is precious and it might not always work for you to go on a family vacation when school is not in session. We are able to mark family vacations as excused absences if you let us know when they are planned. There is a formal family vacation pre-approval form in the office, or if you email the teacher and copy Dr. Nelson into the message that works as well for us to be able to mark those dates as excused.



DES BOOK CHARACTER PARADE



FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27TH AT 1:45 P.M.

Parents and siblings are welcome to observe as the children parade through the halls of Discovery. The students will make two laps around the outside hallways (they will not go through the Commons).

Teachers have visited with students about the following guidelines for costumes:

- Pick a character from a book and dress up similarly to that character!
- Please bring the book along to carry in the parade.
- Please think of a costume that can easily be brought to school and quickly put on over your child's clothes shortly before the parade starts.

You are welcome to take your child home with you after the parade, but please let their teacher(s) know that you are taking them.



December "C" Students of the Month – Celebrate



January "C" Students of the Month – Collaborate



HEALTH UPDATES



Parents of Preschoolers and soon-to-be Kindergartners:

If you have a child who is 3 ½ to four years old or one who is entering kindergarten in September and have not been contacted for Early Childhood Screening, please visit <https://www.bhmschools.org/early-childhood-screening> and click the green Registration button

to choose a screening date/time. If you have any questions, please call Cheri at 763-682-8408.

Early Childhood Screening is a mandated early intervention program for all children entering kindergarten in the public schools, but is targeted for all children ages 3 1/2 to 4 1/2 years old.

Parents of Kindergarten Students Starting '26-'27 school year:

If you have a child beginning kindergarten in September, please consider taking care of their immunization needs now. It is the law that all students must submit an updated immunization status before starting kindergarten.

Please submit one of the following: immunization record, notarized non-medical exemption form or physician signed medical exemption form.

Required shots for vaccinated students include:

- 5 DTP
- 4 Polio (IPV or OVP)
- 3 Hepatitis B (HBV – not to be confused with Hib, which is the Haemophilus Influenza)
- 2 MMR (Measles, Mumps & Rubella)
- 2 Varicella (Chicken Pox) – If your child has had the chicken pox illness, the school will need a statement from your health care provider indicating one of the following:

- The signature of a provider along with the date of the child's varicella illness
- The signature of a provider along with a statement that the parent's or legal guardian's description of the child's varicella disease history is indicative of past varicella infection.

If you have questions, please contact Timarie Leahy RN/PHN/LSN, at tleahy@bhmschools.org or 763-682-8818.

