

When you step onto the DCS campus, you feel that you have been transported to another world. Middle School students play tag, 4-square, and a variety of other games. You never see this at other middle schools. There is such a strong culture of community, cooperation, and safety that you can't help but smile and breath it all in. In the classroom, student discussions are open, engaging, insightful, and reflective. Group work, problem solving tasks, and projects give students options and choices. Here their original, creative ideas are cultivated, expressed, and positively shared. Selectives, which are similar to electives, foster student interests and allow them to not only learn new things, but also gives them the opportunity to learn more about themselves.

As a new teacher, the support, encouragement, and friendship received and given from colleagues and parents is vital, needed, and truly appreciated.

DCS is a unique, and special school that I am grateful to be a part of. There are many positive things that have surfaced during my first two years as a teacher here. First of all, relationships with others mean everything to me, and I have made countless relationships with colleagues, families, and students at DCS. We are connecting as people, as teachers, as parents/teachers, students/teachers, and all of these connections have helped me grow. Next, I enjoy the support and freedom that DCS allows me to grow as an educator. I feel safe and challenged to try new things in the classroom without fear of judgment or consequences. This allows me to continually fuel and refuel my passion in the classroom, and allow the students to guide our learning path as well. Finally, I am grateful for my colleagues and especially my team. They have been my friends, my family, my support, and shoulders to cry on for the past two years. At some schools, everyone comes in, heads down, do their jobs and leave. I love that we have formed bonds and connections on all types of levels that make it a joy to come to work at DCS. DCS may not be the last school that I will work at, but it will be one that has impacted and challenged me to grow the most.

He walks through the door and there is that momentary hesitation, "what will he will think", before you decide it doesn't really matter. You are doing something useful and meaningful for your class and this is what matters.

I can't imagine teaching at another school after being here these past 8 years. Though it is an awful lot of work, teaching at a more conventional school would be boring and frustrating. Probably the most influential factor in making DCS such a great place to work is the staff. It was stressful to see so many people let go in the early years, but by this point, I can see the outcome of that. The collaboration at grade level and across grade levels is so helpful. Dale's influence is also a major factor. He is always faithful to his philosophy of progressive education. This often pushes me outside my comfort zone, but in a good way. If I force myself to try the things he's suggesting, I usually find the results beneficial to the students and to me. I love that we are somewhat free of the control a district can have over its schools. Having worked in Cupertino, and seen its one-size-fits all mentality, makes me more appreciative of our autonomy.

Another aspect of the DCS environment that means a lot to me is the collaboration with the families. As a parent who worked in my own daughters' classrooms, I really value parent participation. These co-teachers enable small group instruction and the differentiation so needed.

Finally our focus on social emotional learning is so much more extensive than other schools. Where else would the principal tell us to take 6 weeks to teach to this?

Coming to Discovery was like visiting Hawaii for the first time. Stepping onto the campus, like stepping out of the airplane, floods the senses with warmth, purity, and intensity. The life force that grows here is palpable and dynamic. Like the feeling of coral-sand and warm water when one first explores the tropical beach and reefs, this school surrounds one with colorful creatures, an abundantly nutritive environment, and a sense of wonder at the natural beauty that emerges when life is allowed to flourish of its own accord.

Reasons why I like working at Discovery

- The people
 - fun loving
 - supportive
 - both positive and understanding
- Communication
 - Throughout day/week
 - Beyond school hours
- Kindness
 - Offers of help and support
- Cool curriculum
 - Hands on
 - Team challenges
 - Positive Discipline/community building
- Student Centered
- Creativity
- Appreciation of uniqueness
- Never boring

Discovery is awesome!

Comraderies and collaboration are inherent in the Discovery experience. Every person, one passes on campus, is an opportunity to engage in a greeting, a humorous exchange, or a quick chance to catch up on life. People smile and shrug at life's quirks and the unique personalities imbedded in the Discovery community. Uniqueness that is celebrated, accepted, and supported so that each individual feels that they are valued, as they are, without conditions. In the classroom, and beyond, people work together, pursuing projects and interests to then share. Students, teachers, and staff are free to explore new ideas, and are comfortable with risk taking, knowing that the possibility of failure can support/precede deeper learning and understanding. Discovery is the place to be.

Life, like rollercoasters, can take you on some pretty wild rides... the ups and downs, the twists, the turns, oh and let's not forget the loops. It's a comfort having a place to work that takes me off my rollercoaster ride, if only for a while. My heart warms with every smiling face that enters my room in the morning. The children genuinely seem happy to be here. It should come as no surprise... but it does. Each time I witness the bounce in their step, the excitement in their eyes, and the purpose when they speak, I'm reminded of my passion for facilitating a learning environment that inspires learners to chase knowledge, embrace thinking, and share experience. I'm also reminded that no matter how big my problems are outside of DCS, my community here is strong enough to help me put things in perspective... To accept, that like my students, I too am learning to persevere, be resilient, and most importantly, learn from setbacks.

1. The kids
2. The sense of "family" (community)
3. The teachers and their dedication
4. Creativity happens each day
5. Enrichments
6. Kids and teachers who want to make the world a better place
7. Students who care... about each other, their school, themselves
8. Fun
9. Not rule driven

"I could feel the difference when I walked through the gate."

"The sense of community here is so strong and evident in every classroom."

"Watching the kids interact is so heartwarming. These kids care about each other, are genuinely interested in learning, and are clearly enjoying themselves."

Visitors to Discovery share their impressions and leave here inspired and appreciative. Whether they are education professionals, parents with prospective students, or members of the community, they all find the unique zeitgeist of Discovery.

How is it that outsiders are able to feel so many of the special qualities that make up this place within minutes of setting foot on our campus?

I believe it's because we have a charismatic school. Like the celebrity who exudes quiet confidence that needs no publicity, we have grown so confident in who we are that it has become natural. And it's clearly visible to others, even when we ourselves miss that daily look in the mirror.

Pg. 1

"Why it is a privilege to work here"

DCS Community

Staff - my absolute best friends/family

Families - who love me so deeply and entrust me with their kids

Grade level team - supportive and grows together

Kids - who LOVE school and are so close to me that I love them/some as my own

Values/Beliefs - creating global citizens

- Public speaking - emphasis on ideas to grow
- Pushed/challenged - risk takers
- Parent participation - empathy, jell, team building, differentiated
- Each their own - innocence

Close to here in a town I love

Brings in happiness EVERY day

Creative, progressive, reflective, offer choice, freedom to do as seen ideal, constant growing and emphasis to try new thing, take risks

In truth I feel that I have the job that was meant for me. What an amazing warmth I receive every day at our school! It instills my belief in the path I have chosen. The fulfillment of family/friends/children and growth! The opportunity to get a chance to grow; develop, strengthen my own character and self view along with 22 other children is the best. With opportunities to: be creative, look towards progressive ideas, and take risks not only impacts myself but the lives of many. My colleagues support my sharing of what I love in building the social/emotional strength within and providing tools for others to do in their class with kids. The power of helping to mold and support

the beings of 7,8,9 year olds and the view of themselves and their outward view of supporting the team is deeply rooted in my soul.

Pg. 2

Here kids can be who they authentically want to be. They are given time to go at their pace, ask the questions they desire, and learn to self-confidently speak their own personal truth. Character building is the MOST important emphasis that we can control along with our reactions, we can practice and develop those kids daily. I learn right alongside the kids every day. Being flexible and allowing for compromise, continues to be a reminder for me. Parents co-teach with me and enhance children's understanding depth of knowledge, and are another pair of hands to push, nudge, and support.

My best friends in life work here. Each day I get to see them and connect on so many levels. They are my second family and continue to mold me into who I am. My colleagues push me to try and inspire much of my practice. Families are loving and receive me with open arms. Students fulfill me with their insights and compassion. I can't imagine another job than this!

For twenty four years. I have faced the children in my classroom on the first day of school. I see in their faces a mixture of emotions. But since coming to Discovery Charter School, the emotion that I observe is excitement. This excitement to be in school is only one reason why it is wonderful to teach at DCS.

I value working in a school where our focus is to create life-long learners and where creativity is encouraged. I see parent participation as a strength of our school, because it allows me to give my students so many opportunities most teachers only dream of. These include frequent field trips and interesting enrichments. I enjoy getting to know entire families and watch multi-generations value their child's learning. With that in mind, I also appreciate our rich cultural heritage represented and celebrated throughout our school. DCS is a place where individuality is encouraged. Having a small class size allows me to really focus in on my students' so many other bonuses. I can step outside my classroom door and get some fresh air while gazing at the beautiful mountains surrounding our valley. The gardens on our campus are lovely. I have an amazing principal and team. There are so many more reasons why DCS is an amazing place to work and besides all that we get paid and can wear jeans and I don't take that lightly. Discovery Charter School has made me a better teacher.

Working at Discovery is like dancing in the wind. There is freedom to not only do the steps with practiced precision, but also the feeling of experiencing the rush of the elements impacting and molding your soul. This give and take is what Discovery is all about. The elements, in this case, are the children and their openness to respond without fear in their learning environment. An environment where it is safe to be yourself. Safe not only for the students, but also for the teacher. This freedom allows one to be the best teacher possible because, here, you can reach beyond yourself and truly make a difference.

Working at DCS

- Fantastic team
- Like-minded
- Multi-grade
- Wearing jeans
- Enrichments
- Project-based
- I have my own room
- Gardens small class size
- Parent participation
- Get to know the whole family
- We get paid
- Creativity is encouraged
- Individuality is encouraged
- Lifelong learners
- Seeing the mountains