

## FAQs About Discovery

### WHY SHOULD I DO A DISCOVERY?

- to gain experience in how to find your place in the world
- to consider your own interests and the range of opportunities available outside of school
- to take responsibility for the demands of looking for and holding a job
- to enjoy a real-life experience that could change the way you think about your future
- to do something completely different for a week
- to add an interesting and worthwhile work experience to your resumé

### WHAT ARE SOME THINGS I MIGHT DO FOR DISCOVERY?

- The possibilities are endless! Students in the past have worked in the the following areas: advertising, animals, architecture, art, auto, business, communication, computers, construction, design, education, engineering, fashion, film, finance, food service, hospitality, journalism, law, medicine, non-profit, outdoor, politics, real estate, retail, sports, technology

### HOW DOES IT WORK? HOW DO I GET STARTED?

- First, talk with the **Discovery Coordinator** about your specific areas of interest, or let the Coordinator know if you've already found a place you want to work. The Discovery Coordinator can also help you identify potential hosts; your parents, your Advisor, or another teacher might have some good ideas, too.
- Contact host organizations and arrange to meet with possible mentors. It is essential to provide the potential mentor with information about the Discovery program and discuss it with him or her. Your mentor must understand the requirements of the program before agreeing to host.
- When you find a good match, you and your mentor complete the Discovery Project Proposal together. You, your mentor, your Advisor, and your parents sign this Proposal, and you hand it in to the Discovery Coordinator.
- The Discovery Coordinator reviews and approves your proposal. If it isn't approved, you re-adjust it, or wait to do a Discovery at a later time. If you don't get prior approval, it is not guaranteed that the work you do will fulfill the role of a Discovery.
- Your Discovery should be completed during a single week, preferably in five consecutive days. Any exceptions must be approved in advance by the Discovery Coordinator.
- If you do Discovery-in-Winterim, you will reflect on your experience through five daily posts to the Discovery Blog.
- At the conclusion of your week, you submit a self-evaluation and the host's evaluation of your performance.
- You must also thank your host organization and sponsor(s) in writing.

### WHAT SHOULD I LOOK FOR WHILE I'M PLANNING MY DISCOVERY WEEK?

- An opportunity to play an active role in the organization, not just watch someone else work
- An engaged mentor, or team of mentors, who will be available to meet with you daily—or at least frequently during the week
- A situation where you will not simply be "shadowing" the same person every day—look for variety, and for hands-on opportunities
- An opportunity to learn the things you are excited to learn
- A Discovery apprenticeship gives you the opportunity to be "on your own" in the working world, so we ask that you not be hosted by a close family member.
- You must not be paid for your work—that's called "a job." Discovery is a volunteer experience.

- If you work for a nonprofit agency, your Discovery project may also count as one of your Service-Learning Projects. Talk with the Discovery Coordinator/Service Learning Coordinator to arrange this.

### WHEN CAN I DO A DISCOVERY?

- Most students complete a Discovery project during the week of Winterim in March. Discovery-in-Winterim is a privilege, and you must meet all required criteria to be permitted to participate in this program. You may do a Discovery-in-Winterim once during your time at OES. To be approved for Discovery-in-Winterim you must complete the following steps:
  - Attend the fall information meetings about the program
  - Meet with the Discovery Coordinator to discuss your interests and brainstorm ideas.
  - Find an organization and a mentor you can work with; this person will become your Discovery Host. Share the Information for Hosts, and be sure she/he understands and agrees to the details.
- Turn in the Project Proposal and all required paperwork by announced deadline. No late applications will be accepted. This is an opportunity to show that you are sufficiently responsible and organized to be able to create and experience a successful Discovery.
- If you do not propose an acceptable Discovery by the completion date, you will not be approved, and you will wait until Winterim options are announced and sign up for a Winterim course. You are welcome try again for a Discovery the following year.
- By applying, you indicate your interest in doing a Discovery. You may still sign up for other Winterim course choices, but Discovery is now an option.
- If the plans you have made fall through for some reason before Winterim week, we will assign you to a pre-arranged Discovery experience.
- You may also choose to do a Discovery during summer or another vacation. These experiences must be arranged ahead of time, and all paperwork must be submitted to the Discovery Coordinator at least three weeks before the vacation begins.
- You are not encouraged to miss school to do your Discovery—however, occasionally there is an unbeatable opportunity that is only available during regular school time. Such cases have to be cleared in advance with the Discovery Coordinator

### WHERE CAN I DO A DISCOVERY?

Although many Discoveries take place within the Portland area, it is possible to your Discovery in another state or another country

### WILL I LOVE EVERY MINUTE OF MY DISCOVERY WEEK?

Maybe not! Most students do have enjoyable, challenging, and fascinating weeks in the workplace. But work can sometimes be hard, slow, boring, or otherwise not-quite-right. You might find out that you don't want to be a circus performer or police officer, ever again. You might have to shift your priorities or re-think your dream career--which makes for an especially valuable learning opportunity. And that's what Discovery is all about—a new experience, new insights. Whatever else happens, you will learn and grow from the experience.

### WHAT'S WITH ALL THESE FORMS AND DEADLINES?

Deadlines and paperwork are a part of most real-life jobs, and learning to deal with them is an important part of the Discovery process.