

Discovery Task Force Recommendations

Career Discovery (7th grade)

1. Career Discovery curriculum will go into the *revision* status AY 2005-2006 with adoption and delivery in 2006-2007.
2. Use the Career Discovery enhancements as presented by Tupelo Middle School as a model for making curriculum revisions, including tested academic standards.
3. Add a 9-week keyboarding module to Career Discovery.
4. Add the MDOT TRAC software to teach the competencies in the Career Discovery framework.
5. School districts will have the freedom to deliver the Career Discovery curriculum as it best meets their needs. By the end of the year, a district should have taught all of the competencies in the state curriculum delivering it the best way they can. For example, they may cluster units into 9-week modules, with keyboarding remaining one 9-week module state-wide.

Computer Discovery (8th grade)

1. Computer Discovery curriculum will go into *revision* status AY 2005-2006 with adoption and delivery in 2006-2007.
2. Use the Career Discovery enhancements as presented by Tupelo Middle School as a model for making curriculum revisions, including tested academic standards.
3. Add a review-only of keyboarding.
4. Add strategies for teaching comprehensive keyboarding to those students who are new and did not complete Career Discovery in the 7th grade.
5. Add a higher level of computer software and web-based applications as aligned with the No Child Left Behind 8th Grade Computer Literacy Test.
6. Add the administration of the No Child Left Behind 8th Grade Computer Literacy Test.

Technology Discovery (9th grade)

1. Technology Discovery curriculum will go into *developmental/conversion* status AY 2006-2007 with adoption and delivery in 2007-2008.
2. During AY 2005-2006, districts who wish to pilot programs such as Project Lead the Way or Tech Know may do so with approval from the MDE Office of Vocational Education and Workforce Development.
3. Studies will be conducted through teacher surveys and other data gathering methods to determine needs and the feasibility of maintaining the course.

Major implications of revising the 7th and 8th grade discoveries are noted as follows:

1. Securing equipment or funding for equipment to teach keyboarding in the 7th grade.
2. Teacher training will be on a state-wide scale.

Other recommendations:**Does the Computer Discovery course prepare students to use technology to evaluate information and solve problems as required by NCLB?**

- No, enhancements must be made to the 7th and 8th grade curriculums to effectively prepare students to use technology to evaluate information and solve problems as required by NCLB.
- Rigor and relevance training needs to be provided to all Computer Discovery teachers to accomplish this.
- The first year that keyboarding is moved to 7th grade, keyboarding will need to be taught in 7th and 8th grades.

Can students pass a statewide computer literacy test in March of the 8th grade year?

- The way the course is designed now, students would not be able to pass the test.

Can local school districts afford to continue to offer the Technology Discovery course?

- A modified version of Technology Discovery that does not require so much equipment is needed to be able to afford it.

What curriculum changes need to be made to increase rigor and relevance in Career and Computer Discovery?

- Add subject area academic standards to the curriculum.

Some overall thoughts expressed on these courses include the following:

- A concentrated, consistent integration of soft skills should be integrated throughout all three discoveries and across all vocational curricula.
- All three courses need more integration of academics.
- Teacher selection needs to be considered.
- Curriculum writing teams need to visit with industry.
- All vocational teachers should be required to complete an internship.
- Vertical alignment of all 3 discovery curricula is critical.
- A culture change among the discovery teachers is essential.
- Community partnership must be developed to help execute these plans.
- As reforms of these courses are explored, the average school district in Mississippi should be considered.
- Equipment, space, and a qualified workforce of teachers must be considered.
- Wireless word processors or old computers may be considered for the keyboarding course.