

APPENDIX A
Liberty Common School
Basic Information and Acknowledgement Form

Introduction

Liberty Common School is a charter school committed to excellence and fairness in public education. The School is governed by a Board of Directors (members of the community elected by the parents of students who attend the School), regulated by a contract with Poudre School District, and supported by public taxes as well as by the generous contributions of individuals who support the principles and ideals outlined in the School's charter. Inclusiveness is fundamental in responding to the diverse needs of children and raising academic standards. All parents, regardless of economic status, should be free to choose this educational program for their children. This document is a brief introduction that should help parents understand the principles on which the School is based, what will be expected of them, and what they voluntarily commit to when they enroll their children as students here.

School Philosophy

The mission of the School is to provide excellence and fairness in education for school children through a common foundation by successfully teaching a contextual body of organized knowledge, the skills of learning including the Thinking Framework, and the values of a democratic society. The School recognizes the value of inclusiveness, or providing access to a broad cross-section of the community, so that students from all backgrounds can benefit from the School's educational offering. The School acknowledges the leadership of teachers in the classroom, and recognizes the responsibility of each student for his or her academic effort.

Defining of Liberty Common School

As a Colorado charter school, Liberty Common School operates under a charter contract, made between the Board of Directors and the Poudre School District. The charter is a reference legal document through which the school and the Board of Directors are held accountable to parents and to the community.

Curriculum—The School uses a content rich curriculum, known as the Core Knowledge Sequence, with skills programs of Singapore math, Riggs-Spaulding Writing Road to Reading, Getty-Dubay and D'Nealian handwriting, Shurley grammar, and enhancements of the Habits of Mind from Benchmarks 2061 in science. In addition, the School offers PE, foreign language, art, choir, band, orchestra, computer electives, and a 9th grade classical honors program. The Core Knowledge Sequence is a detailed, integrated outline of content to be taught at each grade level through a planned progression of specific knowledge in history, geography, mathematics, science, language arts, and fine arts. It addresses concerns for fairness in education by giving disadvantaged children the missing background knowledge they need to compete evenly with and progress alongside of children who get the background knowledge they need for cumulative learning from their home environment.

The Thinking Framework—The School uses the Thinking Framework to take students beyond knowledge acquisition to enable them to synthesize concepts and engage in problem solving and creative thought.

Values of a Democratic Society—To thrive in work, citizenship, and personal growth, children must be taught the values of a democratic society. These values include respect for self, others, and property; honesty; social justice; responsibility for actions; resourcefulness, being ready to learn, to serve, and to share.

Special Topics

In addition to the key concepts outlined in the charter, parents who enroll their children at Liberty Common School are expected to read the Parent Handbook and should be aware of the School's policies regarding volunteering, safety, attendance, punctuality, the dress code, homework, and discipline.

Parental Involvement and Volunteering—As part of its goal to promote community involvement in the education of students at the School, on-site parental volunteer assistance is encouraged and facilitated, but is not required. Those who volunteer will be expected to comply with School guidelines by completing the volunteer application/information form. To assist the School in meeting its goal of community volunteer involvement equal to 50% of the entire staffing hours budgeted each year, which is 3,160 hours/month, volunteers are to record their volunteer hours with the School. To meet this goal each family is encouraged to volunteer 6 hours/month/student enrolled. Volunteers must fill out a volunteer form and adhere to the guidelines and rules for volunteering in the Charter Contract.

Safety—A primary concern in the operation of the School is the safety of the students. The most common and frequent threat to their safety is the heavy automobile traffic found in the morning and afternoon during student drop-off and pick-up. We must drive safely and slowly. Only drop students off in designated areas. To be courteous to others, we need to pull forward as much as possible, allowing for the maximum number of students to exit or enter vehicles. Also, because the School is located in a business park, we are required to comply with traffic policies set by the adjacent businesses and community. There is NO LEFT TURN off Sharp Point onto Prospect between 7:45-8:15 AM and 3:00-3:30 PM. It is vital for students' safety that ALL parents abide by these and other traffic policies set forth in periodic parent communications from the School. IT IS NECESSARY for everyone to follow the instructions and directions of School staff and volunteers who are directing traffic. Failure to do so not only compromises the safety of the students, but also undermines in a direct and visible way the values we are teaching to the children, including respect and responsibility. Parents must set the example of obedience to the rules.

Attendance—Colorado State attendance law states, in part, that “Every elementary child who has attained the age of 6 and under the age of 16 years, except as provided in this section, shall attend public school for at least 968 instructional hours during the school year, and every junior high child shall attend public school for at least 1150 instructional hours during the school year. The State of Colorado and the Poudre School District’s goal for attendance is 95%. Liberty Common School has an attendance goal to meet or exceed that of the Poudre School District. In order to attain this goal, a student cannot miss more than 10 days during the entire school year.

Punctuality—Classes begin promptly at 8:00 am. Parents are expected to have their students at School by 7:55. The School doors open at 7:50. Disruption and loss of instruction time results when students are not in their classrooms ready to begin learning at this time. Repeated tardiness will result in disciplinary action.

Dress Code—Students attending Liberty Common School are expected to adhere to a dress code that is published and available in the office. The dress code supports efforts to minimize external distinctions between students and to invite the individual personalities of the students to shine through. This includes the tucking in of all shirts and blouses. The School insists upon parental support and acceptance of this dress code.

Homework—Students are given homework to enhance what they have been taught at School. They are expected to complete it and turn it in as directed by the teachers. Missing homework can have a drastic effect on a student’s grades. **Homework must be completed and handed in on time to receive full credit.** Parents are expected to encourage their students to complete their homework.

Discipline—A copy of the School’s discipline policy is included in materials distributed to parents each year in the student handbook. The discipline policy clearly describes behavioral infractions and associated consequences. The policy allows for suspension and expulsion from the School in extreme cases. Repeated minor infractions will be treated as major infractions. Parents are urged to become familiar with the discipline policy.

Your child is voluntarily enrolled/enrolling in Liberty Common School. Parents are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the charter application and a core set of books (*Cultural Literacy* by E.D. Hirsch, *The Schools We need and Why We Don’t Have Them* by E.D. Hirsch, *Why Johnny Can’t Tell Right From Wrong* by William Kilpatrick) that are the basis of the School’s educational philosophy. It is necessary for parents of Liberty Common School students to be 100% supportive of their child’s education and educational environment.

I have read the above information regarding the program and policies of Liberty Common School and understand that, by having voluntarily enrolled or that by voluntarily enrolling my student, I accept the philosophy of the School and agree to abide by the policies set forth.

Signature of parent or guardian	date	Signature of parent or guardian	date
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List Students names and grades