

Volume 13 Issue 17
January 5, 2010

Learn Today, To Lead Tomorrow

Liberty Common School

Common Knowledge, Common Virtues, Common Sense
1725 Sharp Point Dr., Ft. Collins, CO 80525, (970) 482-9800

A National Charter School of the Year, A Nationally Recognized Blue Ribbon School,
A Certified Core Knowledge Visitation Site School,
A John Irwin School of Excellence

What is Happening In January

Jan. 11– Liberty Common School- 6th-8th grade Info. Night 6:30 p.m.

Jan. 14– Liberty Common High School Info. Night, 6:30 p.m.

Jan. 18- Martin Luther King Day, No School

Jan. 19– Spelling Bee, after school in library

Jan. 21- BOD Meeting, 7 p.m.

Jan. 25– Liberty Common School- Public Information Night, 6:30 p.m.

Liberty Common School Board of Directors 2009-2010

Terri Fisher– 223-0989
Kayleen Fraley-377-8850
Craig Horton– 207-1454
Dave Kleen- 377-9579
Dan Provaznik– 223-0188
Jeff Webb-545-9636
Bill Werst– 631-8379

Board of Directors Meeting: Jan. 21, 7 p.m.

BOD AGENDA

Financial Review, Mid-year teaching staff review.

On Jan. 14th, 8th graders are allowed to wear the Liberty Common High School Dress Code. This is in honor of the Liberty Common High School mtg. On 1/14/10 at 6:30 p.m. All are welcome to attend. The high school dress code is posted on our website.

Common Moral Culture

By Russ Spicer

Dr. E.D. Hirsch wrote a book entitled “Cultural Literacy” that stressed the importance of knowing and understanding certain things about our history and our culture to be able to adequately and fully function within our society. If a person did not have this background it would be difficult for them to communicate and cooperate adequately. Thus, he created the Core Knowledge curriculum to properly prepare our children to be “culturally literate.”

Liberty Common School believes that the teaching of the Core Knowledge curriculum will help our students become “culturally literate.” While education is the top priority of Liberty, we also believe it is important to instill a sense of morality to go along with the education. The following quotes support this belief.

- ❖ "Education without values, as useful as it is, seems rather to make man a more clever devil." C.S. Lewis
- ❖ Integrity without knowledge is weak and useless, and knowledge without integrity is dangerous and dreadful.
-- Samuel Johnson

It is imperative that our society be “culturally moral” as well as “culturally literate.” William Kilpatrick in his book “Why Johnny Can’t Tell Right From Wrong” addresses this very issue. He states, “Just as it is important for a community to have a common literate culture, it is equally important for it to have a common moral culture. America has had a common moral culture for most of its history. In the past, most people would have known of Adam and Eve’s disobedience, the loyalty of Penelope and Telemachus, Abe Lincoln’s honesty, the treachery of Benedict Arnold, the generosity of the couple in “The Gift of the Magi,” the selfishness of the Scrooge, the Ten Commandments, and the Twenty Third Psalm. None of this knowledge would ensure decent behavior, but it would be a good start. It would at least guarantee that people were speaking the same language. Like a common stock of knowledge, a common set of ideals seems necessary to any society that hopes to socialize its young.”

Though I often hear that there is a moral decay within our society, I am proud to say that Liberty Common School continues to hold true to the belief that there are moral absolutes and we are doing our best to reverse the trend of moral decay. At Liberty, we expect our students, staff, and parents to adhere to the foundation stones of respect, responsibility, citizenship, self-control, integrity, cooperation and perseverance. Character education at Liberty Common School is integrated throughout the entire culture of the school. First and foremost, everyone in the school is expected to model good character at all times. If someone is not upholding a foundation stone, it is addressed. Positive reinforcement of good behavior occurs as well – such as receiving a character education awards. Secondly, we learn about character through our literature. Our teachers frequently point out good and bad examples of character in the literature they read. Finally, one can learn a great deal about character through the study of history. There are numerous examples of people throughout history exhibiting both positive and negative character traits.

Liberty Common School does believe in the importance of being “Culturally Moral.” We offer no excuses for expecting people to act and speak in ways that are morally and socially acceptable at our school. This is yet another reason why I love Liberty Common School. In addition to receiving a rich, Core Knowledge based education, our students are learning a common set of ideals about what is morally right or wrong. One of my favorite sayings is, “right is right, wrong is wrong; never tire of doing what is right.” At Liberty Common School, we never tire of doing what is right.

Math Counts Meets in Jan. and Feb.

Math Counts will be meeting every Thursday in January and February after school in Mr. Lovely's room.

Upper School Running Club

Attention couch potatoes, gaming gurus, and anyone who is interested in shedding those unwanted pounds. There will be an after school running club for any upper school student interested in going on distance runs ranging from 2 to 4 miles. The club meets on Tuesdays after school beginning Jan. 12th. Please meet in the blue gym at 3:15. See Mr. Lovely with any questions. Parents and other teachers are welcome to attend.

Lil Dribblers Intramurals Start Jan. 16th

Lil Dribblers Basketball Intramurals for 1st and 2nd boys and girls begins Saturday, January 16th at 8:00 a.m. This is a fundamental experience for first time players and the first Saturday will be spent learning the basic skills of the game. The deadline for registration is January 11, 2010. Don't miss this great opportunity to learn the game and have fun while playing with your friends.

Multi-Activity Intramurals-3-4 Grades

Attention 3rd and 4th graders, Mr. Reeves, is offering a Multi-Activity Intramurals for 3rd and 4th graders beginning January 14th. Different activities and games will be played each day. Third and 4th grades play from 3:15-4:00 p.m. and 5th and 6th graders play from 4:10-4:55 p.m. Sign up sheets were sent home on Jan. 4th but can also be found in the Front Office. Deadline for sign up is Wednesday, January 13th. Please return forms by January 13th as we will not be accepting any late forms.

Intramural Basketball 5th-6th Graders

If Duke or Tennessee basketball teams have you on speed dial or if you have no experience playing basketball than this opportunity is for you. Begins January 14th, from 4:10-4:55. Deadline to sign up is Wednesday, January 13th. Extra forms are available in the Front Office. Cost is \$7.00/student.

Liberty Common Girls Basketball

Come out and support the Lady Eagles as they take on their opponents. All games begin at **4:00 p.m.**

- Jan. 14** Liberty at St. Joseph School
- Jan. 19** Liberty at St. John's School
- Jan. 21** St. Mary's at Liberty
- Jan. 25** Liberty at Windsor
- Jan. 28** Frontier at Liberty
- Feb. 1** Liberty at HMS
- Feb. 4** KQA at Liberty
- Feb. 8** Union Colony at Liberty
- Feb. 11** Liberty at New Vision
- Feb. 16** Rez at Liberty
- Feb. 18** Ridgeview at Liberty

High School Update from Bob Schaffer, Project Manager

LCHS Makes Decade's First Headline!

The second high-school public-information meeting is this Thursday, January 14th, 6:30 p.m., at Liberty. Please encourage any prospective highschooler to attend.

Hopefully, you saw the recent news feature about our new Liberty Common High School. Published by *The Fort Collins Coloradoan* daily newspaper, it was a very nice story.

The favorable press coverage, along with the positive feedback we've received since its publication, is tangible proof great things are developing at Liberty. It appears we are opening our high-school doors at a critical time when families of prospective students are asking the most serious questions about the future.

Noteworthy is the fact that the article is the *Coloradoan's* very first on the topic of education in this decade. It ran on January 1st of 2010 amid a cacophony of other stories spanning economic uncertainty, political perfidy and war.

The headline read: "Liberty Common continues growth toward high school." A beaming photo of Headmaster Russ Spicer accompanied the article – along with an optimistic message about academic opportunity in Northern Colorado.

"For 13 years, Liberty Common School has offered a choice to students and parents who didn't feel their needs were being met by the traditional schools in the Poudre School District. Starting next fall, Liberty Common will continue to grow its legacy as it embarks on an expansion into high school grades," wrote reporter Marcy Miranda.

The article reinforced key themes for Liberty: Choice is a powerful guarantor of high quality. We acknowledge as sacrosanct a parent's authority to choose the right school for their child.

Markets work. Schools that respond to a discerning academic marketplace tend to perform better. We have to in order to thrive.

A small-school setting offers many great advantages for individual attention, safety, student leadership and college preparedness. Combined with Liberty's forte -- heavy parental involvement -- the LCHS model is the antidote to the mediocrity commonly associated with large bureaucracies.

This statement is not meant to impugn any of our competitor institutions or anyone who would declaim the virtue of mega-campus high schools. It is, however, a positive declaration of what is different, special and unique about LCHS.

Now that we're firmly into LCHS's inaugural year, it's time for each of us to ramp up our advocacy of the school. "Each of us" means every student, parent, teacher, administrator and graduate of Liberty.

High School Update from Bob Schaffer, Project Manager

Promote Liberty Common High School with pride and enthusiasm. The success of LCHS is crucial to the overall wellbeing of the Liberty program.

So far, we have an encouraging number of current Liberty scholars who have expressed their intention to attend the high school this August – in fact, a healthy majority of them. There are a few yet undecided. Some from other schools will be attending including a few former Liberty students who will be coming back for high school.

The more students we attract now, the better our planning will be for the long term. For example, we'll be making initial big decisions on a building lease within the next few weeks. Enrollment projections will figure prominently in that decision.

Congratulations to everyone at Liberty, especially our future high-school scholars, for starting off the New Year with fabulous coverage in the local newspaper!

EXTRA CREDIT: Ten of Mr. Lavin's most loquacious vocabulary words for this week perambulate through this column. Can you find them? To quote William Safire's infamous *non sequitur*, "Never use a long word when a diminutive one will suffice."

OTHER ITEMS: All eighth graders are permitted to be in LCHS's high-school dress code at school this Thursday, January 14th in conjunction with the public-information night. This is for Thursday only. To review the LCHS dress code [click here](#).

LCHS NEWS FEATURE: To see the *Coloradoan's* [story about LCHS click here](#).

FOR MORE DETAILS about the LCHS public-information night [click here](#).



CARNIVAL TIME

Mark your calendars for this year's winter carnival, February 26th from 6-8 p.m. We have new activities for the kids, young and not so young, as well as crafts, games and food.

Look for more information in the future regarding activities and volunteer opportunities.

**IT'S JUNGLE FEVER-CATCH
IT!**