



Volume 15 Issue 22
January 30, 2012

*"Semper Excelsius-
The Liberty Way"*

The Liberty Common School
Common Knowledge, Common Virtues, Common Sense
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

[Click Here](#) to view Liberty
Common High School
Newsletter

What's Happening at LCS K-6th

Jan. 31-Character Assembly-
Self Control- Wendy Mader,
speaker. K-3rd-8:10-8:45 a.m.
4th-6th-8:55-9:35 a.m.

Feb. 6-Penny Wars begin

Feb. 7- 1st/2nd Grade
Concert, 6:30p.m.
Performance Hall, LCS

Feb. 10-6th grade movie night
6 :30 p.m. for 6th graders
only. Despicable Me

Feb. 15- "Liberty for Lunch"-
Olive Garden, 11:30 a.m.,
Bob Schaffer, speaker.

Feb. 20 - No School,
President's Day

Feb. 24- Winter Carnival-
6-8 p.m.

Feb. 29-TCAP Begins ***See
schedule on page 5.***

Liberty Common School Board of Directors 2011-2012

Crissy Kopren 266-1005
Amy Redstone 378-1170
Dan Provaznik 223-0188
Mark Sutherlin 225-0432
Cassy Turner 691-3027
Jeff Webb 545-9636
Bill Werst 631-8379

Board of Directors Meeting:
Liberty Common School
February 16, 2012
1725 Sharp Point Dr.
Faculty Room
7:00 p.m.

Headmaster Writing by Russ Spicer

Clearing Up Core Knowledge (Part III of III)

This week will be the conclusion of a series that has been addressing some misconceptions about Core Knowledge. Hopefully this information that has been presented to you over the past few weeks will help you better understand the Core Knowledge curriculum and better defend it against commonly spoken misconceptions. The information below is found in a handout from the National Core Knowledge Foundation titled "Common Misconceptions About Core Knowledge."

8. Our population is changing, and schooling needs to change to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse population. What we need is a curriculum that is more multicultural.

Schools should foster respect for diversity, and a curriculum should include the study of many cultures. Typically, however, state and district curriculum guidelines do not define specific multicultural content. Rather, they prescribe a set of nice-sounding but vague goals and attitudes, such as the following from one state's "Curricular Framework for Social Studies":

- Understand the characteristics and development of other cultures throughout the world.
- Understand that societies reflect contributions from many cultures.
- Understand and appreciate various dimensions of world interdependence.

Understand historic and current events from the perspective of diverse cultural and national groups.

These are admirable goals that nod in the direction of multiculturalism—but where is the specific multicultural content? Without some specificity, the door is open to repetition and gaps. How many times will children study the Woodland Indians, and yet perhaps never examine the different ways of life of the Anasazi or the Cheyenne? Will children study Mexico but not Japan, Kenya but not China? Or Kenya in second grade then again in fourth? If we truly want our children to know about and appreciate many cultures, then we need to specify which cultures, and teach them in a way that broadens their perspective of the world and its diversity, rather than bores them with repetition or leaves them unaware of people and places most educated people know about.

9. The job of the teacher is to teach children, not subject matter.

There is something warm and appealing in that slogan. After all, it gives top priority to children—and don't we all want the highest priority of teachers to be the best interests of our children?

But there's something disconcerting in the way the imperative to "teach children, not subject matter" is phrased. It suggests an either-or situation: either you teach children, or you teach subject matter. The implication is that teachers who teach "subject matter" are somehow not teaching children! But what exactly does it mean to "teach children?" Are we in fact teaching children if we do not teach subject matter?

What a strange pass American education has come to when many educators assume that between children and subject matter there is some fundamental incompatibility, as though they were, as the old saying goes, like east and west, and never the twain shall meet. One would have thought, rather, that the challenge for the teacher is to link east and west – that is, to bring children and subject matter together, through practice, hard work, and imaginative and creative endeavors that kindle in children the love of subject matter the teacher herself or himself feels (or should feel).

(Continued on Page 6)

How to Reach Us

- Our office hours are **7:30-4:00 p.m.**
- Our telephone number is **(970) 482-9800**
- Our attendance line is **(970) 482-9800, option 2**, please call by 8:30 a.m.
- Please note that you may go to your student's classroom and wait for them to be dismissed only after 2:50 p.m.
- If you need to take your child to an appointment during school hours, please come to the Front Office, sign them out and we will call them out of class.
- All students who arrive after 8:00 a.m. must be signed in at the Front Office. It is important that a reason be written as this determines if the tardy is excused or not.
- Our school closes at 4:00 p.m. All students need to have left the building by 4:00 p.m. or be chaperoned by a parent or guardian.

Important Dates 2012-2013 School Year

The 2012-2013 Calendar has been approved by Liberty Common's Board of Directors. Please note the following dates when making vacation plans for your family.

Classes Begin - August 15, 2012

Labor Day - September 3, 2012

Thanksgiving Break - November 21-23, 2012

Christmas Break - December 24-January 4, 2012

Spring Break - March 18-22, 2012

Last Day of School- May 24, 2012

Clothes Closet Needs Donations

Thanks to all who have already donated to the clothes closet. We are needing pants in sizes 7, 8 and socks. Please make sure all clothing meets dress code and is without stains or holes. Thank you

Your Input is Valued

It is that time of year when we seek your input on your child's educational experience at Liberty. We value your opinion and strive to do our very best to be one of the top schools in Colorado. Surveys will be distributed a little differently this year. During the month of February, you will receive by email, one general survey focused on our institution as a whole and then a week later you will receive an individual teacher/class survey. One survey will be sent for each child attending school. We would encourage you to take a few minutes to fill out this survey. We value your feedback.



Winter Carnival-Feb. 24th-6-8pm

Come Prepared to Be Amazed



Break out of the wintry doldrums and mark your calendars for this year's winter carnival, **February 24th from 6 – 8 pm.** This year our theme is science and we have **new** activities for the kids, young and not so young, as well as crafts, games, entertainment and food.

Volunteers are needed for donations and activities during the carnival as well as pre-event help. For volunteer opportunities, please contact Marnie Dame at 391-8983 or

Scholastic Spring Book Fair Needs Volunteers



Join in the reading celebration as Liberty hosts the Scholastic Spring Book Fair **March 5th-9th.**

Thanks to Dunja Widhalm who has kindly offered to be this year's chairperson. If you are interested in volunteering at the book fair please contact Dunja at (970) 493-0092 or dunjaw72@gmail.com.

Liberty Common School Yearbook Still Available to Purchase

The 2011-2012 Liberty Common Yearbook is still available for purchase. The price is now \$18.00 per book and orders will be taken through the end of February or until supplies last. Order forms are available in the Front Office. Yearbooks will be distributed the on the last day of school, May 25th.

Walter Jordan -Spelling Bee Winner

Way to go Walter Jordan, our own Liberty Common 5th grader who participated in the written district spelling bee and will now advance to the 2012 District Bee on Feb. 15th. Good Luck Walter we wish you the best!

Scrip Program Easy Way to Help Liberty

Families are invited to participate in the Scrip program at Liberty. This is a strictly voluntary program and is a great way to help generate funds for Liberty Common School by buying gift cards to make purchases you would be making anyway. We offer gift cards for all the major grocery stores in town and many other retailers and restaurants. Groceries, household items, and gasoline can be purchased with scrip gift cards.

The beauty of scrip is that you put your regular household shopping dollars to work. You earn money for our school without spending a single additional penny. Just spend your regular shopping dollars with scrip at the stores that participate in the scrip program!

If you don't see a card for the merchant you want, please feel free to ask, it may be available but not listed on the current order form. King Soopers gift cards are available in \$25 and \$100 increments and are reloadable at the register for any amount.

If you are interested in helping with this program or have any questions, please contact **Tracy Horst** at dthorst@msn.com or (970) 223-7282. We need more volunteers to make this program successful and profitable for the school. To enroll just [click here for a form](#) or get one in the front office. [Click here for the policy page.](#) [Click here for an order form](#)

Orders must be in by 8:00 a.m. on designated Mondays. Scrip cards are then available to pick up the following Friday.

February Order Dates are Feb. 13th and Feb. 27th

Liberty Chess Club

February: 3, 10, 17, and 24.
March: 2, 9, 23, and 30
April: Last day 13th!
Beginner group (K-2) meets Fridays 7:00-7:50 a.m. in the Library.
Advanced group(3-5) meets Fridays 3:15-4:15 p.m. in the Art Room.



ChessMates Dominate

Congratulations to Chessmates who placed first again in last weekend's elementary division Chessmates Tournament.

Individual winners of the tournament included: Vedha Vijaasarathy(6th grade) took 1st place in the 6th-8th section, Ryan Saldanha (3rd grade) 2nd place in the 3rd-5th section, Nathan Meiners (5th grade) 3rd place in the 3rd-5th grade section, Ryan Green (2nd grade) 2nd place in the K-2 section, Beni Rodriguez tied for first place in the 4th-5th grade section as well as David Gao.

The following Chessmates scored individual points for the team in the 3rd-5th grade section: Edward Lim (4th grade) had 3.5 points, Ryan Saldanha(3rd grade) -3 points, Leo Von Bargaen(4th grade)-2.5 points, Patrick Campbell(4th grade)-2 points, Ian Smith(3rd grade)-1.5 points and Nathan Meiners(5th grade) -1 point.

Way to go Chessmates. Good luck at your next tournament



6th, 7th and 8th Grade Girls Basketball Team Rocks Their Opponents

The Jr. High Lady Eagles are now 5-0. Please come out and support this talented group of athletes. All games begin at 4:00 p.m. Come out and cheer our teams to victory.

1/30/12-Liberty vs. St. John's
2/2/12-Liberty at KQA
2/6/12-Liberty at St. Joe's
2/9/12-BYE
2/13/12- Liberty at Resurrection
2/16/12- Liberty vs. Windsor
2/21/12-Liberty at HMS





Sesquipedalian Gold!

By: Bob Schaffer, LCHS Principal

Liberty's vocabulary program demonstrated excellence yet again. It's really a remarkable story.

This year, some elite Liberty students participated in the National Classical Etymology Exam (NCEE) for the first time. [CLICK HERE](#) for more details about the exam.

According to Liberty foreign-language instructor Mr. Marques Kem, the NCEE is designed to test a student's ability to handle both Latin and Greek derivatives and their usage in the English language. The 2011-12 academic year is the second official year in which the National Junior Classical League has sponsored this on-line examination.

Administrators of other schools frequently ask "what's the point" of studying the so-called "dead" languages. Since our inception as a charter school, Liberty has had the answer.

"Greek and Latin are alive and well in our own English language, and students of the Classics have a deep knowledge of English with which others can't effectively compete," says Mr. Kem. "Liberty students are not frightened by strange and complex polysyllabic words – they use the tools that they've been given to attack and dissect those words with ease and enjoyment."

Liberty is unique among schools in Fort Collins in that it has a dedicated K-6 Latin program, and a Greek and Latin roots program which is intrinsically embedded in all English classes. Liberty's junior-high and high-school Latin program are just as strong as any fancy and expensive East-Coast boarding school.

The 11th graders enrolled in AP Latin this year took this test at the most difficult level that the test offers, and there was no preparation for the exam outside of our normal curriculum. The results speak for themselves.

Congratulations to **Josh Cochran**, **Megan Davis**, and **Elizabeth Sherman** for earning gold medals and **Melissa Davis** for earning a bronze medal! All received their medals last week.

"We were all really excited when we took this test, because we really didn't have to study specifically for the exam," said Megan Davis. "Everything tested was material we've been learning at Liberty since seventh grade. This says our Liberty education is just awesome. We were totally prepared! I feel that we're really well rounded."

Whether said simply, or in sesquipedalian terms, Liberty's curriculum is the gold standard for building solid, powerful vocabulary among students.



Megan Davis shows off the Gold Medal she won in this year's National Classical Etymology Exam

Grandparents Corner

By: Ed Haynes, Chairman of the Liberty Grandparents Club

A representative of the Grandparents Club attended the December 15th, 2011 LCS/LCHS Board of Directors meeting. She reported that it was so obvious that this board consists of dedicated professionals and parents that have the students' best interests at heart.

A board member suggested that we encourage grandparents to speak and share stories with the students in the classroom about their school and life experiences. The board feels that we as grandparents have experiences that the students could learn from. We will be working on developing a list of grandparents who would like to participate in this activity. Please contact us via e-mail gpc@libertycommon.org if you would like to participate.

We are excited that our inaugural Grandparents Club luncheon "Liberty for Lunch" is scheduled for Wednesday, February 15th at the Olive Garden at College and Boardwalk. We will meet at 11:30 am. Our speaker will be LCHS Principal and State Board of Education Chairman **Bob Schaffer**. He will be discussing important educational issues relative to our grandchildren's education. We invite all grandparents to attend. This will be a great way to get to know one another better. Please RSVP to **Tammy Thomas** at 970-204-0033 or email her at: tamarajthomas@aol.com. We look forward to seeing many of you there!!

ATTENTION: TCAP (CSAP) Schedule– 2011-2012

Please note the following TCAP schedule for 3rd-6th grade. If at all possible, please try to arrange doctor appointments, dentist appointments and orthodontist appointments around this schedule. If you have any questions please contact the Front Office.

LIBERTY COMMON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TCAP SCHEDULE 2011-2012

| GRADE | DATE | SESSION | TIME | | | |
|--|-----------|--------------------|-------------|--|--|--|
| 3rd | 2/29/2012 | Reading #1 | 8:00-10:00 | | | |
| 3rd | 3/1/2012 | Reading #2 | 8:00-10:00 | | | |
| 3rd | 3/20/2012 | Math #1 | 8:00-10:00 | | | |
| 3rd | 3/21/2012 | Math #2 | 8:00-10:00 | | | |
| 3rd | 3/26/2012 | Writing #1 | 8:00-10:00 | | | |
| 3rd | 3/27/2012 | Writing #2 | 8:00-10:00 | | | |
| 4th | 3/20/2012 | Math #1 | 8:00-10:00 | | | |
| 4th | 3/21/2012 | Math #2 | 8:00-10:00 | | | |
| 4th | 3/22/2012 | Math #3 | 8:00-10:00 | | | |
| 4th | 3/26/2012 | Writing #1 | 8:00-10:00 | | | |
| 4th | 3/27/2012 | Writing #2 | 8:00-10:00 | | | |
| 4th | 3/28/2012 | Reading #3 | 8:00-10:00 | | | |
| 4th | 3/29/2012 | Reading #4 | 8:00-10:00 | | | |
| 4th | 3/30/2012 | Writing #5 | 8:00-10:00 | | | |
| 4th | 4/2/2012 | Reading/Writing #6 | 8:00-10:00 | | | |
| 5th | 3/20/2012 | Math #1 | 10:00-12:00 | | | |
| 5th | 3/21/2012 | Math #2 | 10:00-12:00 | | | |
| 5th | 3/22/2012 | Math #3 | 10:00-12:00 | | | |
| 5th | 3/26/2012 | Writing #1 | 10:00-12:00 | | | |
| 5th | 3/27/2012 | Writing #2 | 10:00-12:00 | | | |
| 5th | 3/28/2012 | Reading #3 | 10:00-12:00 | | | |
| 5th | 3/29/2012 | Reading #4 | 10:00-12:00 | | | |
| 5th | 3/30/2012 | Writing #5 | 10:00-12:00 | | | |
| 5th | 4/2/2012 | Reading/Writing #6 | 10:00-12:00 | | | |
| 5th | 4/3/2012 | Science #1 | 10:00-12:00 | | | |
| 5th | 4/4/2012 | Science #2 | 10:00-12:00 | | | |
| 5th | 4/5/2012 | Science #3 | 10:00-12:00 | | | |
| 6th | 3/20/2012 | Math #1 | 10:00-12:00 | | | |
| 6th | 3/21/2012 | Math #2 | 10:00-12:00 | | | |
| 6th | 3/22/2012 | Math #3 | 10:00-12:00 | | | |
| 6th | 3/26/2012 | Writing #1 | 10:00-12:00 | | | |
| 6th | 3/27/2012 | Writing #2 | 10:00-12:00 | | | |
| 6th | 3/28/2012 | Reading #3 | 10:00-12:00 | | | |
| 6th | 3/29/2012 | Reading #4 | 10:00-12:00 | | | |
| 6th | 3/30/2012 | Writing #5 | 10:00-12:00 | | | |
| 6th | 4/2/2012 | Reading/Writing #6 | 10:00-12:00 | | | |
| KEY | | | | | | |
| | 2/29/2012 | 3rd Grade Only | | | | |
| | 3/1/2012 | 3rd Grade Only | | | | |
| | 3/20/2012 | 3rd/4th/5th/6th | | | | |
| | 3/21/2012 | 3rd/4th/5th/6th | | | | |
| | 3/22/2012 | 4th/5th/6th | | | | |
| | 3/26/2012 | 3rd/4th/5th/6th | | | | |
| | 3/27/2012 | 3rd/4th/5th/6th | | | | |
| | 3/28/2012 | 4th/5th/6th | | | | |
| | 3/29/2012 | 4th/5th/6th | | | | |
| | 3/30/2012 | 4th/5th/6th | | | | |
| | 4/2/2012 | 4th/5th/6th | | | | |
| | 4/3/2012 | 5th Grade Only | | | | |
| | 4/4/2012 | 5th Grade Only | | | | |
| | 4/5/2012 | 5th Grade Only | | | | |
| NOTES: | | | | | | |
| Grades 3-4 will be taking the CSAP test from 8-10 | | | | | | |
| Grades 5-6 will be taking the CSAP test from 10-12 | | | | | | |
| Teachers may reschedule specials that are missed because of the test but should work that out with the individual specials teachers. | | | | | | |
| We may use the specials rooms and staff to help proctor students that need accommodations. | | | | | | |

Headmaster Writing Continued from Front Page

10. *Students don't learn from rote memorization of isolated facts. What children need is not a bunch of facts but critical thinking skills.*

Those who think that the only way to teach specific content is through rote memorization need to observe the many imaginative, resourceful, and creative ways that teachers in Core Knowledge schools have found to engage their students in active learning of important knowledge: through dramatizations, art projects, writing workshops, collaborative learning groups, research projects, etc. Yes, children may occasionally memorize a poem or the Preamble to the Constitution—but these are valid learning experiences, which, in fact, children enjoy, and from which they get a sense of pride and achievement.

Behind the outcry against “rote memorization” lies a deep prejudice—a prejudice against fact. Many educators object to any curriculum that says, for example, that children should learn the seven continents because that is a “mere fact.” To teach facts, they say, is to reduce education to “Trivial Pursuit.” Granted some facts are trivial. Who starred in “Car 54 where are you?” That’s trivial. But, who was Dred Scott and what was the significance of the Supreme Court’s Dred Scott decision? That’s worth knowing: it gives you insight into the causes of the Civil War as well as historical perspective on race relations in the United States.

No one wants schools to think of curriculum solely in terms of facts. We also want—and students need—opportunities to use the facts, to apply them, question them, discuss them, doubt them, connect them, analyze them, verify or deny them, solve problems with them. All these activities, however, rely upon having some facts to work with. Without factual knowledge about an issue or problem, you can’t think critically about it—you can only have an uninformed opinion.

2011-2012 Concert Season

FEBRUARY

7- 1st/2nd Grade Concert, 6:30 p.m.
Performance Hall, LCS

MARCH

2/3- “Aladdin Jr.”, 7:00 p.m.

Performance Hall, LCS

Tickets: \$3/students, \$5/general admission

5- LCHS Spring Instrumental Concert, 6:30 p.m. Performance Hall, LCS ***Please note date change***

8- LCHS Spring Choir Concert, 6:30 p.m.
Performance Hall, LCS

30- LCS Talent Show, 6:30 p.m.
Performance Hall, LCS

APRIL

10- 3rd/4th Grade Concert, 6:30 p.m.
Performance Hall, LCS

20/21- 5th/6th Dessert Theatre, 6:00 p.m.
Performance Hall, LCS
Tickets: \$5/students, \$10/general admission

MAY

8- 5th/6th Band & Choir Concert, 6:30 p.m.
Performance Hall, LCS ***Please note date change**

15- LCHS Band, Choir, & Orchestra Finale Concert, 6:30 p.m. Performance Hall, LCS

Breaking News: Penny Wars Begins Monday, February 6, 2012



We are one week away from the Penny Wars, which will begin on Monday, February 6, 2012. The Penny Wars are a friendly competition between grades to raise money for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. Today, in your student’s Monday Folder you will find collection boxes to store change for this worthwhile cause. We encourage students to use these boxes to collect and then transport change daily to school. These boxes are **not** meant to be used to collect change door to door. Remember, pennies collected count toward each grades’ total while silver coins are used deplete from other grades’ totals. The Penny War runs through February 17th. and the winning grade will receive an ice cream party. Let the competition begin.