

Volume 13 Issue 29  
March 29, 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's Happening

April 5-5th grade Human Development/Parents -6:00 p.m.

April 13- 3rd/4th Music Concert- 6:30 p.m.

April 20- 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

### Board of Directors Meeting: Expansion Mtg. 4/1/10

**BOD AGENDA**  
Financial Review, approve 2010-2011 school calendar, review Election Committee progress, write Headmaster performance evaluation.

### SAVE THE DATE LEARN TODAY, TO LEAD TOMORROW

1st Annual Liberty  
Fundraiser /Silent Auction

Saturday, May 1, 2010  
The Rio Grande  
Restaurant

Upstairs in the Agave  
Room  
6:30- 9:30 p.m.

Donate to Liberty  
[Common Click Here](#)

## A Sage On The Stage By Russ Spicer, Headmaster

Those with a constructivist educational philosophy have adopted a phrase that describes how the role of a teacher in the classroom ought to be played out. The phrase goes as follows: "A teacher should not be a sage on the stage, but rather a guide on the side." This is where many of the experiential learning and peer learning programs come about. This constructivist philosophy attacks direct instruction and champions self-guided learning. In his book "Class Warfare," J. Martin Rochester addresses this very topic.

Mr. Rochester states "Most progressives are disparaging almost any traditional teaching as worthless, and ridiculing anyone who continued to employ such pedagogy as "a sage on the stage" engaged merely in "chalk and talk" or "yell and tell" routines. When teachers are not being compared to pretentious pedants, they were portrayed as dull, droning drill instructors. Rather than celebrating a good instructor, alongside a good facilitator, only one mode of education received the seal of approval from progressives. And it is this model—the teacher-as-coach or, as it is dominantly taught to future teachers in America's schools of education and subsequently reinforced in professional development workshops. As one critic put it, 'a generation of absentee parents now wants a generation of absentee teachers.'"

Mr. Rochester goes on to say "Typical is the view of an instructional technology specialist on my campus (a fellow named Bob Clapp), who recently told me "we' re moving from the old model of teacher 90 percent-student 10 percent to teacher 10 percent-student 90 percent." This Clapp-trap is called "authentic learning." Robert Hutchins, the president of the University of Chicago who was Dewey's contemporary, argued that advocates of child-centered classrooms were reducing teacher to the role of mere "chaperones." Even though such advocates today use the term "coach" to describe the proper role of the teacher, teachers are not even performing the duties of coaches, who in football and other sports typically build learning sequentially and formally around lots of drawing of x's and o's on a black-board along with drill and practice. Pointing out the silliness of constructivism, Ravitch comments "It's like going to a golf pro who says: 'however you feel like swinging is okay. You figure it out.' You wouldn't pay him."

Liberty Common School teachers have expertise and knowledge that is shared and given to the students. Our teachers disseminate the important facts and knowledge to the students in creative ways. This is why we incorporate many of the Quantum teaching techniques into our classrooms. The teacher is the expert and not simply a chaperone. In our opinion, there is great benefit in a teacher being the "sage on the stage."

Lastly, I leave you with these thoughts concerning direct instruction taken from "Class Warfare." "Socrates pupil was Plato, Plato's pupil was Aristotle, and Aristotle's pupil was Alexander the Great. There is no historical evidence of these great teachers doing "facilitating" and their star pupils doing "projects." There was a lot of listening and a lot of learning going on, with the students usually studying at the feet of these scholars."

## NCIL 2009-2010 Track Schedule

March 30th	Tues.	4:00 p.m.	at Liberty Common
April 7th	Wed.	4:00 p.m.	at Windsor
April 10th	Sat.	8:30 a.m.	Immanuel Lutheran Invitational
April 17th	Sat.	8:00 a.m.	UNC (Greeley)
April 21st	Wed.	4:00 p.m.	Frontier
April 28th	Wed.	4:00 p.m.	Liberty

## Volunteers for First Annual Fundraiser and Silent Auction Are Busy, Busy People

Volunteers for the First Annual Liberty Fundraiser and Silent Auction on May 1st are busy preparing for an evening of fun at The Agave Room of The Rio Grande Restaurant in downtown Fort Collins.

A special thank you for the generous and creative donations from our staff, families and community members! We are actively seeking donation sot add to our growing inventory of awesome auction items. Please consider asking friends, neighbors, business associates and old Aunt Agnes for donation items- Bronco tickets, Celtics Tickets, beauty services , a work of art, interior design consulting, a shopping trip with fashion advice, gift cards or a trip to Disneyland. The ideas are limitless! With the coming reduction in funding for education, it is the Special Event Committee's goal to generate additional funds for Liberty students, staff and supplies through this entertaining event. Please contact Susan Jones at rasb@nassmv.com with Silent Auction donations or contacts. The solicitation of silent auction items will require many hands on deck; can we count on yours?

## Fund Development Committee Needs You

**Attention Party Planners:** If you like to plan parties, the Special Event Committee needs your help planning a spring fundraising event to include decorations, promotion, silent auction donations and other areas. You will be part of creating a Liberty tradition!

### Additional Planners for the Learn Today To Lead Tomorrow Auction And Fundraiser:

- Specific help needed with basket organization and certificate sorting for auction week of April 26th
- Decorations committee to plan and decorate for the event.
- Help in preparing a video of students, teachers and parents to show the night of the event

## 40 Yearbooks Available to Purchase \$25.00

**You will be disappointed if you miss this great memory keeper. Stop by the Front Office and pick up an order form.**

## Liberty Common High School Update by Bob Schaffer

### Liberty Common High School – Info night.

**High-School Public-Info Night – two weeks away!** The phones continue ringing with new parents considering having their kids attend Liberty Common High School and asking questions. So, we've decided to hold another LCHS Public-Information Night. Enrollment is still open.

If you know of anyone who would make for an excellent LCHS scholar starting in August, please urge them to attend the LCHS Public-Info Night on Monday April 12<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. at Liberty.

**Liberty Rocks:** Attention young Liberty scribes, scholars and storytellers: Tell Colorado why Liberty “rocks” and **win a \$250 or \$500 scholarship.** Enter the 2nd annual Charter School Essay Contest. [CLICK HERE](#) to download an entry form and rules. Deadline for entry is April 2, 2010.

**Donate Bribery Materials Please.** Any items of nominal value, or greater, useful in rewarding students who consistently exceed the LCHS Dress Code are needed. Please search the house, your car, purse, etc., for things like unused gift cards to restaurants, book stores, coffee shops, clothing stores and other fun places. Donate them to the school.

Other items can be used, too, such as classic books, electronic gadgets (ones appealing to a normal teen) and any Krugerrands you might have collecting dust or hiding in a desk drawer somewhere. Many thanks to those who have donated already. Keep them coming.

Oh, though we are most appreciative and grateful for whomever donated the gift card to a popular local bar & grill, we probably shouldn't pass that one along to a kid. An unnamed but worthy faculty member will get that coveted prize instead. Hopefully the donor understands and approves.

**Hiring High-School & Elementary Teachers Now.** Liberty Common High School is in the process of hiring superior high-school teachers for the 2010/2011 school year. We've already received many excellent applications from throughout the country.

Interview teams are organizing now, culling the candidate pool and scheduling interviews with promising applicants. The application process will remain open until the perfect candidates are selected for the posts.

For the high school, we're looking for a premier science/math/engineering teacher and a perfect history/Latin teacher to join our existing premier and perfect staff.

For the elementary grades, we're looking for a Da Vinci-esque art teacher, another world-class art/music teacher and a couple more flawless elementary teachers. **(Continued on page 3)**

## Liberty Common High School Update (Continued from pg. 2)

Please see the Liberty website's "job openings" page ([CLICK HERE](#)) for more details and application information at [www.libertycommon.org](http://www.libertycommon.org). Only the best need apply.

**Spring Cleaning & Liberty:** Now is the time to donate household treasures, heirlooms, valuables, trips and services to Liberty for our upcoming silent auction – May 1<sup>st</sup>. Be creative in thinking about things you might donate.

Four hours of babysitting, for example, will surely raise good money for the school. Dinner at your house with special celebrity guest Dawn Karr could go for thousands on the open market. Please see event details printed nearby.

To succeed in an increasingly fickle economy, Liberty needs the certitude of more financial support. To donate now, please [CLICK HERE](#).

To volunteer to help our parent-led Fund Development Committee – for example, you might want to join the grant-application sub-committee or help plan the Silent Auction, or cultivate a partnership with a fund-donating entity – please email Committee Co-Chair Kayleen Fraley at [kayleen.fraley@libertycommon.org](mailto:kayleen.fraley@libertycommon.org)

**Fear Itself.** Congratulations to the prodigious sixth-grader Nick Vosseteig for figuring out last week's Smart Kid Question of the Week. Another Mystery Sentence, the clue in last week's school newsletter ([CLICK HERE](#) to see it) led Nick to the correct answer: "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself."

Uttered by President Franklin Roosevelt in his inaugural address on March 4, 1933, the speech addressed Americans' various "common difficulties." To read and hear the whole speech [CLICK HERE](#).

**Prehistoric Stuff.** For being first to answer correctly, Nick received two fossil specimens – Rhynchonellid brachiopods (sea-shell-sorta-look'n things) from the early Devonian Period (416 to 359.2 million years ago). [CLICK HERE](#) to see some. This week's winner gets two more specimens (your choice) out of the same bag of prehistoric fossils. Just answer this first and you'll win, too:

This week's Smart Kid Question is **Q:** What is this sentence? **Clue:** This interrogative sentence from a children's nursery rhyme begins with a two-syllable proper noun, repeated twice and used as the noun of direct address, followed by an adverb modifying an adjective that rhymes with the first word of the sentence, then an interrogative adverb, a helping verb, a second person singular possessive pronoun, a two-syllable common noun, and a main verb.

**Liberty In The News.** Read about student Olivia Sponsler in the Coloradoan ([CLICK HERE](#))!

Read about student/mathletes Allen Zhou, Victor Amato, Alex Iverson, Will Werst, Zachary, Kevin Sun, Tim Scott, Cody Turner and Coach Torgun Lovely in the Coloradoan ([CLICK HERE](#))!

Read about LCS faculty/staff: Steve & Jill Ronen, Ken Vetter, Jared Dybzinski, Bill Kranz and Russ Spicer ([CLICK HERE](#))!

Read about Russ Spicer in the Coloradoan ([CLICK HERE](#))!

### First Liberty Book Club Meeting A Success

The first Liberty Book Club Meeting was a huge success. Ruth Ann Everett lead a great discussion on the book [The Schools We Need and Why We Don't Have Them](#). Don't miss your opportunity to be a part of another great learning and discussion group. All Liberty staff and parents are invited to attend the second book club discussion on **April 22nd at 7:00 p.m.** on [Cultural Literacy](#), by E.D. Hirsch. The discussion will be led by Bob Schaffer. If you have read the book come. If you have only read 1/2 of the book come. If you have only read the first paragraph you are still encouraged to attend. [Cultural Literacy](#) is available for check out from our school library. If you have any questions, please contact Connie Trout at [c trout@libertycommon.org](mailto:c trout@libertycommon.org). Happy Reading!

### Help Us Make 4th Quarter a Great One!

- Spring Scholastic Bookfair is April 27th-April 30th. We need parent volunteers to help us make this a success. Please contact Lori Laws at 988-8777 or [lorilynn90@yahoo.com](mailto:lorilynn90@yahoo.com)
- If your child is absent please call the Attendance Line at 482-9800, press 2. When your child is late and an adult signs them in, it is necessary that a reason for tardiness be given. Our auditors frown on blanks on the Student Check- In Sheets.
- May Lunch Calendars are due to the Front Office by April 11. The calendars can be downloaded off our school website [libertycommon.org](http://libertycommon.org).
- Hot lunch will not be served on April 23rd. Please send a sack lunch with your child. Thank You!