



Volume 15 Issue 3
September 6, 2011

*"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

What's Happening At LCS-K-6th

Sept. 9: Chess Club begins-see flyer on page 5.

Sept. 12: October Lunch Calendars are due.

Sept. 13: CVC Meeting- 8 a.m.-9 a.m. Teacher's Lounge

Sept. 14-16: 6th graders attend Eco-Week.

Sept. 23-Oct. 7: October Count (See explanation, page 4)

Sept. 30: Individual Student Photos.



Bring in your Box Tops for Education, Campbell's Soup Labels for Education and Morning Fresh Milk Lids- all benefit Liberty Common School

Liberty Common School Board of Directors 2011-2012

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
September 15, 2011
1725 Sharp Point Dr.
Faculty Room
7:00 p.m.

Headmaster Writing by Russ Spicer

The History of Liberty Common School PART 2 of 3

The following is a continuation of "The History of Liberty Common School" written by Maureen Schaffer.

The huge demand for the educational program offered at Washington Core Knowledge School prompted the school's founders to begin drafting an application for a Core Knowledge charter school. By the summer of 1995, unresolved issues about the permanence of Washington Core and the authority of the parent board over the academic program spurred a full-scale charter effort.

Meeting after work and on weekends, parents meticulously defined and documented the charter school's mission, goals, curriculum, governance, budget, facility plan, employee relations, and more. On October 31, 1995, the Core Knowledge Charter School (CKCS) Partnership submitted its application to the PSD Board of Education.

Rather than proceed with negotiations, the PSD board requested more and more information, explanation, and detail. The CKCS board, led by Chairman Phil Christ, diligently responded to each request, but to no avail. On December 11, the PSD board voted to deny the charter application without ever having met to negotiate with the parents.

Undaunted, the CKCS board appealed the decision to the Colorado State Board of Education. In February, the state board sided with the parents and instructed the PSD board to negotiate an agreement in good faith with the charter group.

Weeks of meetings ensued. It appeared the two sides were slowly coming together. However in an 11th hour surprise, the PSD board suddenly voted to "approve" the charter with several major restrictions, not previously discussed: the charter would be limited to two years, enrollment would be capped at 300 students, and the school would be limited to a K-6 program, thereby eliminating the school's innovative junior high program.

PSD further directed the charter school to find space in a non-district building and execute the charter contract with PSD no later than June 1. The constraints made it virtually impossible to open the school.

Disappointed, the CKCS board filed a second appeal with the State Board of Education. In an apparent attempt to quash the charter school, PSD unleashed its attorney. A paper war erupted as the lawyer threw legal obstacles in the path of the charter school. The charter group managed to fend off the legal challenges and was finally granted a hearing before the state board.

At the April 23 hearing, the final punch was landed when PSD announced it had filed suit against the State Board of Education and CKCS Board of Directors! Concerned that the lawsuit could result in an injunction preventing the charter school from opening, the state board recommended the charter group try to open a school with PSD's restrictions.

Dozens of outraged parents criticized the legal shenanigans at the next PSD board meeting. PSD director Bob Bacon denied they had sued parents and accused charter supporters of promulgating a "big lie." But PSD President Mike Liggett confirmed the lawsuit had indeed named five parents: Phil Christ, Randy Everett, Timothy Gilmore, Cheryl Olsen, and Maureen Schaffer, as defendants.

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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 chaperoned by a parent or guardian.

A BOD THANK YOU AND OPPORTUNITY

This summer, Liberty Common School hired an awesome new teacher for Kindergarten – Angela Horton. We were thrilled to have Mrs. Horton join our fabulous faculty, but the hiring caused us to lose an incredible Board of Director member as well. The BOD policies state that one cannot be a BOD member if his/her spouse is employed by Liberty Common School. Unfortunately, Craig Horton had to resign his position when Angela was hired.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Craig for his 7 years of service to our school. Craig served as the Chairman of the BOD and was instrumental in application and approval for a high school. We would like to thank Craig for serving our school and our children so well. Without you, the Liberty Common School would not be where it is today.

Mr. Horton had one year remaining in his BOD seat and that needs to be filled. If interested in finding more information about becoming a Board of Director Member [CLICK HERE](#).

Attendance Alert!

Dear Parents,

Attendance is very important here at Liberty Common School. When the students are here, they learn more. When they are here on time, they learn more. We want to provide the students with maximum class time throughout the year to ensure that students are getting maximum teacher contact time. Please make sure that you are dropping students off on time so that they can get ready for the day. If you are late (we know life happens), please make sure to sign in at the front office so that we have a record of the tardy. Once you have dropped off your child, please make sure to clear the halls so that the classroom teachers can get started with their day. If you are staying to volunteer, please report back to the office to sign in and get your nametag. We love our volunteers.

Thanks for your cooperation.

Keith A. Churchill, Jr.
Elementary Principal



6th graders posing in their famous historical persons costumes after giving speeches to their peers.

Classroom Volunteer Coordinator Meeting

All Classroom Volunteer Coordinators please plan to attend a meeting on September 13th in the Teacher's Lounge at 8a.m. Contact Kendra Simms to RSVP or with any questions –691-2033 or RonSim872@msn.com . See you on September 13th.

Hair Feathers



Parents,

Hair feathers are recent trend with our students. The Liberty dress code states, "Hair color must be natural and limited to two natural colors". Please help us reinforce this dress code policy by not having your child wear colored feathers (feathers on the left). Hair feathers are ok if they are a natural colored (feathers on the right).

Thanks,

Keith A. Churchill, Jr.
Elementary Principal

Headmaster Writing Continued from Page 1

The clock was ticking down to the June 1st deadline. Charter parent Peter Kast, a commercial realtor, conducted yet another survey of potential properties to accommodate the PSD-imposed school configuration. A near match was identified. However, two adjustments to the restrictions would be necessary:

1. Increase the charter length to 5 years to amortize building improvements
2. Increase the enrollment cap to 364 students to meet the annual lease and maintenance obligations.

The charter group entreated PSD to consider adjusting the restrictions. The PSD board refused to consider the request. "The Board of Education will not take any further action," came the response in a May 3rd letter to the CKCS board.

The June 1 contract deadline expired, and PSD dropped its lawsuit against the parents. The clock had run down. There would be no charter school in 1996.

TUNE IN NEXT WEEK FOR THE EXCITING
CONCLUSION!

Save The Date 11/22/11 Grandparents Day

This year's Liberty Grandparents Day is Tuesday, November 22nd. Please notify grandparents now so they'll have plenty of time for travel arrangements. This is a very popular Liberty event. Invitations will be mailed in a few weeks. The RSVP date is **Friday, Oct. 21st**. This is very firm RSVP date. Due to limited seating, class scheduling with grandchildren and other special arrangements, no RSVPs will be accepted after Oct. 21st. Please don't put our all-volunteer Grandparents-Day Planning Committee in the unenviable position of telling your grandma "no." That's never a good thing – but they'll really do it if her RSVP comes in after Oct. 21st.

Grandparents-Day Planning Committee Needs More Volunteers

Planning started last week for this year's 11/22/11 Grandparents Day. We need more volunteers to help pull off our second-annual event in splendid fashion. If you can volunteer or make donations to the effort, please [CLICK HERE](#).



100 Percent
By: Bob Schaffer, LCHS Principal

Over the past summer, all Liberty teachers were asked to read the book *Teach Like a Champion* by Doug Lemov. The book's subtitle is "49 Techniques that Put Students on the Path to College."

LCHS instructors – both the new and the well-experienced – tell me they're getting a lot out of the book. That's a terrific indicator of a faculty motivated to improve its professional effectiveness in the classroom.

It's a great indicator for our kids, too. Improved instruction leads to better knowledge acquisition plus perfected study habits. That leads to success in college. It all leads to freedom.

Chapter Six of Lemov's book is about setting and maintaining high behavioral expectations. "Technique 36" is called "100 Percent." It starts out, "There's one suitable percentage of students following a direction given in your classroom: 100 Percent. If you don't achieve this, you make your authority subject to interpretation, situation and motivation."

When it comes to behavioral expectation throughout LCHS, the 100-percent threshold is indeed our goal. Does that make us an obedience-obsessed school? I imagine it could seem so to some. But, we're really not.

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100 Percent (Continued from Page 3)

Rather than a harsh tack of grating discipline, Liberty's approach is one of firm, calm finesse. We rely instead on positive reinforcement, reasoned tone and clear expectations.

For the vast majority of LCHS scholars, this approach works marvelously. Sometimes, for only a few, it doesn't.

Lemov suggests a graduated sequential strategy to reach the 100-percent compliance necessary to allowing effective teaching: Nonverbal intervention. Positive group correction. Anonymous individual correction. Private individual correction. Lightning-quick public correction. Consequence.

These are indeed steps we've followed over the years to varying degrees. Lemov's sequence, however, adds a formal clarity, order and agreement that we're already finding useful just 12 days into the school year.

Over the course of the first few weeks of school, we do indeed seem to dwell on school rules and behavioral expectations. That eases shortly as students discover we really are firm in our expectations, and as we get closer to the 100-percent mark.

Some of LCHS's rules are designed to promote efficiency in managing a serious academic institution. Most rules are meant to remove distractions from an otherwise purposeful learning environment.

In all cases, Liberty's behavioral expectations are a thoughtful reflection of a first-rate, parent-run, college-preparatory school. They're designed to guide our children toward graduation, mature literacy, responsible adulthood, academic success, wisdom and authentic freedom.

In these broader objectives, Liberty's achievement expectations are no different – only 100 percent will do.



5th graders from Mrs. Cardenas', Mr. Henderson's and Mrs. Schupp's classes participating in a team building exercise.

October Count

All public schools in Colorado receive funding from the State based on the number of students who attend their school. It is critical that your student be present during the October Count period. The count occurs September 23rd-October 7th. September 30th is the official count date set by the state. If your child will be absent for more than two days in a row other than for an illness, during this time, please see the Front Office for an official document to sign. Thank you



Mrs. Schupp's 5th grade class ready for a new year!

Liberty Chess Club



Who: For all students k-6.

What: A 12 week chess program full of lessons, chess games and tournaments!

Beginner group (K-2): Fridays 7:00am-7:50 in the Library.
Advanced(3-5): 3:15pm-4:15 in the Art room.

Why : To improve your chess, learn strategy and forward thinking and have a great time with friends.

How: It costs \$40 dollars and you can sign up.

Schedule

September: 9, 16, 23 and 30.

October: 7 and 14.

November: 4, and 18.

December: 2, 9, and 16.

(The second session start date will be January 13th.)

Introducing the Coach

Hi! My name is Zachary Bekkedahl, chess coach and teacher of many schools and my own chess club. I can't wait to run Liberty chess again! I want to build off of our hard work last year and continue to grow as a team! Nice work everybody in placing 2nd in the district tournament!!!

If you have questions please call me @ (970) 581-2424 or e-mail me at info@chessmatesfc.com If you would like further information about me or my club check out my website at www.Chessmatesfc.com. Thanks!

-Zachary Bekkedahl