



Volume 15 Issue 8  
October 10, 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

**Oct. 14:** End of 1st quarter

**Oct. 18:** Alcohol and Drug Education Night for **5th and 6th grade students and parents, 6:30 p.m.** –Liberty Common Performance Hall

**Oct. 21:** No School-Parent/Teacher Conferences

**Oct. 21:** RSVP deadline for Grandparents Day.

**Oct. 27:** Liberty T-shirt Day

**Oct. 28:** No School-Teacher/Professional Development

**Nov. 1:** Public Information Night– 6:30 p.m.

**Nov. 4:** Hearing and Vision Screening

**Student Directories are now available in the Front Office for \$1.00. Stop by and get yours today.**

### Liberty Common School Board of Directors 2011-2012

Amy Redstone-378-1170  
Dan Provaznik– 223-0188  
Mark Sutherland-225-0432  
Cassy Turner– 691-3027  
Jeff Webb-545-9636  
Bill Werst– 631-8379

**Board of Directors Meeting:**  
Liberty Common School  
October 20, 2011  
1725 Sharp Point Dr.  
Faculty Room  
7:00 p.m.

## Headmaster Writing by Russ Spicer

### Teach Like a Champion

This summer our faculty read a book entitled, “Teach Like a Champion” by Doug Lemov. Mr. Lemov served as a teacher, trainer, consultant and administrator during his career and observed many teachers, both good and bad, over the years. Mr. Lemov became intrigued by what exactly separated the good teachers from the great teachers and decided to write a book about what tools excellent teachers use to separate themselves from the good teachers.

Liberty Common School takes pride in hiring talented teachers. We know the importance of having great teachers in our school. When a teaching position is being filled, the screening and interviewing process is very intense. We thoroughly comb through the application materials. We look hard at the transcripts to ensure that the applicant took challenging courses and received good grades in those courses. We also dig into the educational philosophy of each candidate. We know that it takes a certain type of teacher to be successful at Liberty and we work hard at finding ones that agree with “The Liberty Way.” And of course, we want the teachers that are able to connect with children.

But just what is it that makes a great teacher? What types of things were identified by Mr. Lemov in his book, “Teach Like a Champion?” Listed below are some of the key chapters that address what it takes to be a great teacher. I am proud to say that for the most part, our teachers are “spot on” in these areas.

- 1. Setting High Academic Expectations** – The teachers know that at Liberty we want to raise the academic bar as high as possible. There is no room for “academic fluff” in our curriculum. The content is demanding and rich at the elementary and the high school.
- 2. Planning that Ensures Academic Achievement** – The beauty of Core Knowledge for K-8 is that the teachers know exactly what to cover. The beauty of collaborative planning time is that our grade level and content teachers are able to effectively plan how to cover the information in a given year. Our teachers at the elementary and the high school know the importance of developing curriculum maps, unit organizers and lesson plans. Our teachers are well-planned and well-prepared.
- 3. Structuring and Delivering Your Lessons** – There are many creative and effective ways to deliver the content. The teachers at Liberty Common School are encouraged to utilize a variety of methods in delivering the content. The number one priority is to make sure the students get the pertinent information, but we also encourage the teachers to do so in a way that is exciting and engaging.
- 4. Engaging Students in Your Lessons** – It is important to get the students excited about the topic. Often times that means providing a “hook” to peak their interest. Students also like to know the relevance of the content. The awesome teachers of Liberty do a masterful job of getting the students engaged in the lesson.
- 5. Creating a Strong Classroom Culture** – Liberty Common School has worked hard at establishing this – thus the term “The Liberty Way.” We often receive visitors who marvel over the behavior of our students in the classrooms and hallways. Our teachers do a magnificent job of establishing a positive, healthy culture in their classrooms. Routines, traditions, celebrations and procedures are firmly in place.
- 6. Setting and Maintaining High Behavioral Expectations** – Another area of emphasis at our school. Our students know that they are to conduct themselves in a manner that promotes the learning environment. Dress code is one thing that helps in this area as well. Students are expected to be respectful and responsible. Our teachers never tire of doing what is right and never tire of holding their students to that same standard.

**(Continued on page 4)**

## 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.

## Poudre School District Board of Education Forum

Ridgeview Classical School is hosting a Poudre School District Board of Education Candidate Forum Friday October 14 at 8am. Learn what the candidates have to say about the hot-button issues facing education in Fort Collins. Ridgeview Classical School is located at 1800 South Lemay. Ave.

## Honor Those Who Serve

Every November, for Veterans Day, we like to honor our men and women veterans and those that are currently serving our country with a display of thanks. To make our bulletin board a great presentation of respect and appreciation, we are needing pictures of our soldiers. Please bring in any photos of service men or women to the office. Include their name, where they served or are currently serving and their relation to our Liberty Common what Liberty Common student(s). **Photos will be accepted until November 4th** and will be returned. Photos can also be sent via email to [jronen@libertycommon.org](mailto:jronen@libertycommon.org).

## Thanks to our Fall Festival Volunteers

Thank you SO MUCH to all our wonderful Liberty Common School volunteers! The Fall Festival was a huge success and it would not have been possible without your time and donations of supplies. We have the best parents, kids and staff here at Liberty Common.

*Lisa Murphy & Marnie Dame, Festival Coordinators*

## Drug and Alcohol Education Night 5th and 6th Graders and Parents Oct. 18th, 6:30 p.m.

All 5th and 6th graders and parents are invited to attend Liberty's Annual Drug and Alcohol Education Night on October 18th from 6:30-8:00 p.m. The evening will begin with speaker Jep Enck, a national speaker from Enck Resources, who will lead an interactive session focusing on qualities of friendship and will give students tools to create relationships that support their greater good.

During the second half of the evening we will show a film series-Natural High which displays how youth can live up to their highest potential-DRUG Free. Please mark your calendars to attend.

## Math Counts Begins Nov. 1st 6th-8th Graders Invited

MathCounts is an exciting and competitive mathematics program that promotes achievement through a series of fun and engaging "bee" style contests. It is open to all 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade students, and will meet on Tuesdays from 3:15 to 4pm beginning on November 1<sup>st</sup> at the high school in Mr. Lovely's room (206C). The Northern Colorado competition is held in February every year, and alternates its venue between CSU and UNC. For more information, contact Mr. Lovely ([tlovely@libertycommon.org](mailto:tlovely@libertycommon.org)).

## Scrip Program News

Please remember to submit your scrip order by 8:00am Monday, Oct 24th. Cards ordered on this date will be available for pick up on Friday, Oct 28th at 4:00 p.m.. If you are wanting to order King Soopers gift cards and they are not listed on your order form, please just fill in the quantity and type you want at the bottom of your form and include them in your total. King Soopers gift cards are available in \$25 and \$100 increments and are reloadable at the store. Please keep scrip cards in mind for the holidays, as they are quickly approaching. 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. If you have any questions, please see contact information below.

Anyone that is interested in helping with this program please contact Tracy Horst at [dthorst@msn.com](mailto:dthorst@msn.com) or (970) 223-7282. We need more volunteers to make this program successful and profitable for the school.

## Alpine Achievement Essay Contest

Alpine Achievement Systems is pleased to announce the Second Annual Essay Contest for students in our school. Students can win \$500 for themselves and \$500 for our school library.

The essay topic for 2011 is "Leaving Your Mark in the World" - the complete announcement and parent authorization form as well as the submission form are on pages 5-7. The submission deadline is Friday, November 18, 2011.

Please have your student submit their essay and all registration materials to their teacher for review. Only two essays per school may be submitted.

## Grandparents Day Nov. 22, 2011 Save The Date !

This year's Liberty Grandparents Day is Tuesday, November 22nd. [CLICK HERE](#) for full information about Grandparents Day 2011 including RSVP instructions. Invitations were recently mailed out. If yours didn't show up, please know it's not intentional and your student's grandparents are still invited to participate. Please notify grandparents now so they'll have plenty of time to make travel arrangements. This is a very popular Liberty event. 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.

## Pumpkin Sale 100% of Proceeds go to Liberty

*Don't go buy pumpkins at the grocery store this year, instead enjoy the fall weather and take a trip out the pumpkin patch. Pick from hundreds of pumpkins. Enjoy the fall weather as you help raise money for Liberty Common School.*

*(100% of the proceeds go to Liberty)*

**Open:**

**Saturdays: from 10 am to 5 pm.**

**Sundays: from 11 am to 4 pm.**

**Beginning Saturday, October 8<sup>th</sup> until Sunday, Oct. 29<sup>th</sup>.**

**Directions: Take Timberline North to Mountain Vista Drive, Right on Mountain Vista, Take first left on Giddings, go ¼ to ½ mile. Look for signs on your right.**

**Questions call – 218-2460.**



## Good Students in Gomorrah By: Bob Schaffer, LCCHS Principal

Students at Liberty Common High School are receiving a serious kind of education purposefully designed to prepare them for college. Not just any college – good ones.

It's hard to know the difference these days. Once considered the world's gold standard, [the quality of American higher-education has been on a sad decline](#) for decades. Yet, there are still a few gems out there for those who know how to find them.

Liberty scholars and their families will get a chance to kick the tires on several universities tomorrow evening (Tuesday, Oct. 11<sup>th</sup>) at Poudre High School. That's the site of a big annual trade fair featuring representatives of [out-of-state colleges and universities](#).

They'll be on hand to pitch their schools to prospective recruits. Check out the nearby announcement for [more details about this event](#).

Liberty's college-bounders ought to apply the same discerning scrutiny to potential colleges that their parents did when choosing LCCHS. Just as a *prima facie* high-school diploma guarantees little, a [college degree no longer warrants a recipient is prepared](#) for gainful work, graduate study, entrepreneurship or self-reliance.

It's prudent to ask hard questions of college recruiters. For example, if a core curriculum makes sense in high school, why wouldn't it make sense in college?

Years ago, all serious colleges offered a core curriculum regardless of one's concentration of study. Back then, universities endeavored to educate citizens toward a common understanding of important subjects like history, law, religion, politics and economics.

In a recent letter I received from [Yorktown University president Dr. Richard Bishirjian](#), he noted, "Curricular requirements at most institutions of higher learning in America have turned into a permissive wasteland."

Today, [the majority of American colleges do not require students take mandatory courses in a core curriculum](#). This is a national scandal which began in the turbulent 60s and 70s when colleges capitulated to students rioting against the Vietnam War.

Instead of attracting high-quality students with academic excellence, today's [colleges offer cheap gimmicks](#) and slick marketing to lure new freshmen. Across the industry, [these schools are manic in their frenzied search for tuition-paying customers](#) to fill their roles and cover their bills.

(Continued on page 4)

## Good Students in Gomorrah (Continued from page 3)

Yet [the graduation rate of students entering college is only around 55%](#) – and that’s within six years. In other words, America’s colleges are failing miserably to graduate a very significant number of entering students.

Another acquaintance of mine, [Dr. Richard Vedder](#), an Ohio University economist who specializes in analysis of the economics of higher education, calls [the decline of the university a “special pleading.”](#) He writes, “The pleas of university leaders and governmental officials for more and more college attendance appear to be increasingly costly and unproductive forms of special pleading by a sector that abhors transparency and performance measures.”

Are all colleges really that bad? No. However, it’s no exaggeration to say that [most really are](#). The search for a suitable university can be a treacherous one and the cost of an errant decision can last a lifetime.

Equally, the benefit of a high-quality, perfect match can, too. And, while it may feel like ambling through the streets of Gomorrah, there are indeed a few good schools to be found at a college fair.

Our students have worked extra hard. They have earned stature to leverage their Liberty advantage for a college education that will propel them toward prosperity and freedom.

Their advanced preparation empowers them to be demanding customers, to strike favorable terms and to choose better options. It’s a valuable advantage to have indeed and one that makes us all pragmatically optimistic for the future of our LCHS scholars.



## Headmaster Writing (Continued from Page 1)

7. **Building Character and Trust** – How great are the Foundation Stones and Capstones? We want our students to know that character does matter. The teachers take as many opportunities as possible to teach character through their own actions and through examples in literature and history. We know we want our students to be well educated, but we also want them to become well-rounded and well-grounded, functioning members of our society as well.

8. **Challenging Students to Think Critically** – Dr. Randy Everett implemented the “Thinking Framework” for Liberty Common School. The four components of the “Thinking Framework” are: **Knowledge, Patterns, Modeling, and Creativity/Problem Solving**

The desired goal of a child progressing through a Liberty education is to have him/her be able to think critically. The student must first acquire a deep and broad base of knowledge and then make connections with the patterns within each discipline.

The student will then begin to model what has been learned. Ultimately, the student will be able to take all of that information and begin to think critically and problem solve.

Isn’t it great to see that many of the items identified by Doug Lemov to become a great teacher are already happening at Liberty? There are still many ways that we can improve and do better, but it was refreshing to read this book and know that our teachers are already doing most of these things. I know I am biased, but I believe we have a team of “Champion” teachers at Liberty. Our teachers truly buy into the concept of “Semper Excelsius – The Liberty Way.” They always give their best and give their all to the students of Liberty. I love the teachers of Liberty Common School! 😊

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual - Alpine Achievement Essay Contest

**What is it?** It is an essay contest open to students from any school that subscribes to services from Alpine Achievement Systems during the 2011-12 school year. Last year students from 52 schools in 3 states participated.

**What is the essay topic for 2011?**

*How would you like to leave your mark in the world? In what ways are the things you are learning in school providing you with the inspiration, skills, and knowledge you need to help you succeed?*

**Formatting:** The essay should be no longer than 2 typed pages with 12 point font (4 pages hand written). Elementary submissions may be hand written or typed. The essay itself should not contain the name of your school district, school, or the student's name if possible.

**Prize:** \$500 prize for the student and \$500 prize for the school at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. It is our hope that students will use the prize toward post-secondary college/career preparation and that the school will use their award to further inspire their students to reach their college and career goals. Winning essays along with the name and photo of the student will be posted on the Alpine Achievement Systems website. *All decisions are final. Submission materials will not be returned.*

**When is it due?** Essays may be submitted by an Alpine full permission user until 6:00 PM MST on Friday, November 18, 2011.

**How many essays can be submitted?** Up to 2 essays per school may be submitted. The essays will not be exported until after the deadline, so submissions may be modified until that time.

**How are essays submitted:** An online submission form is available to Alpine full permission users which contains spaces for identifying information about the student, school, and district. School personnel should review possible essays for submission ahead of time and select no more than 2 (this includes schools whose grades span more than one level). The submission will include the essay, teacher/counselor endorsement, parent/student release, and a photo of the student.

**What are we looking for?** Essays are first grouped in elementary, middle, and high categories and are scored blind. Each essay is reviewed with attention to the following general themes:

- 1) Addressing the topic and themes of the essay
- 2) Persuasiveness and connection among the essay's themes
- 3) Mastery and control of language in the service of #1 and #2 above (includes mechanics, presentation, and style).

*2<sup>nd</sup> Annual - Alpine Achievement*  
**Essay Contest**

**Parent Authorization and Release**

I hereby authorize my child, (print name) \_\_\_\_\_, to participate in the Alpine Achievement Systems 2011 Essay Contest. I understand that a check in the student's name for \$500.00 will be awarded for up to one essay per level (elementary, middle, high). It is the intent of Alpine Achievement Systems that the award be used to further the student's college and career goals and aspirations. However, the award may be used at the parent/child's discretion. I understand that a 1099 tax form may be issued in the applicable tax year in the student's name. Also a donation of \$500.00 will be made to the school's library in the name of the winning student to further the school's ability to support students' college and career aspirations.

Winning essays will be posted on the Alpine website along with the student's name, grade level, and school. If your child should win the contest, this form serves as your authorization to post the essay, or a synopsis of the essay along with your child's name and photo on the Alpine Achievement Systems website as an illustration of exemplary achievement.

All materials submitted to Alpine for this contest will become the property of Alpine Achievement Systems and will not be returned. Children of employees of Alpine Achievement Systems and children of school/district staff are not eligible to apply. All decisions are final.

Thanks for participating in the 2011 essay contest!

Name of Parent/Guardian (print): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of School District: \_\_\_\_\_

Alpine Essay Contest  
Screenshot of Submission Form

General Information	
Student First Name <i>Required</i>	<input type="text"/>
Student Last Name <i>Required</i>	<input type="text"/>
Grade <i>Required</i>	<input type="text" value="1"/>
School Name <i>Required</i>	<input type="text" value="1"/>
Name of Principal <i>Required</i>	<input type="text"/>
Email Address of Principal <i>Required</i>	<input type="text"/>
Phone (with extension) of Principal <i>Required</i>	<input type="text"/>
The Essay and Parent Release	
Upload your scanned essay and parent release here	
Essay <i>Required</i>	<input type="text"/> <input type="button" value="Browse..."/>
Parent Release <i>Required</i>	<input type="text"/> <input type="button" value="Browse..."/>
Student Photo	<input type="text"/> <input type="button" value="Browse..."/>
Teacher/Counselor/Principal Endorsement	
In this section identify the teacher/counselor/principal who is endorsing this submission. Include the name and contact information for this person along with a statement of support regarding the student and his/her work.	
Name of Endorser <i>Required</i>	<input type="text"/>
Authenticity of Work: <i>Required</i> <i>As the endorser of this student, I certify that to the best of my knowledge, the content of this essay is solely the work of the student.</i>	<input type="text" value="1"/>
Email Address of Endorser <i>Required</i>	<input type="text"/>
Phone (with extension) of Endorser <i>Required</i>	<input type="text"/>
Complete the statement of support in the text box below.	
Why was this particular essay selected for submission? <i>Required</i> <small>Maximum size: 3000 Current size: 0</small>	<div style="border: 1px solid gray; height: 100px; width: 100%;"></div>
<input type="button" value="Save"/> - or - <input type="button" value="Return Without Changes"/>	