



Volume 15 Issue 10
October 24, 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. 24-Nov. 4: Liberty
Common Canned Food Drive

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

Nov. 11: Picture Make-up Day

Nov. 11: December lunch
calendar due

Nov. 22: Grandparents Day

**Liberty T-Shirt Day is Oct.
27th. Wear your Liberty T-
shirt and show your Liberty
pride.**

Liberty Common School Board of Directors 2011-2012

Crissy Kopren -266-1005
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
November 17, 2011
1725 Sharp Point Dr.
Faculty Room
7:00 p.m.

Headmaster Writing by Russ Spicer

Breadth vs. Depth

Dr. E.D. Hirsch Jr. wrote an article for the Core Knowledge Foundation entitled, "Breadth Versus Depth: A premature polarity." In this article, Dr. Hirsch addresses the need to have a broad base of general knowledge to be successful in academics and society in general (cultural literacy). This assertion is aligned with the "Thinking Framework" approach of teaching at Liberty Common School, which includes: knowledge, patterns, modeling, and problem solving/creativity. Knowledge is the foundation of this process. In order to move on to higher levels within the "thinking framework," a solid foundation of knowledge must be laid.

In the article, Dr. Hirsch addresses the debate within the education realm of "learning to learn" versus "piling up of mere facts." There are some who would argue that it is more important to develop a deep understanding of a few topics rather than having students simply memorize a bunch of "mere facts." Dr. Hirsch discusses what research says about this debate. Listed below are the four principles he sites in his article.

1. The ability to learn something new is not primarily a general formal skill. It is chiefly a domain-specific skill. For instance, the ability to learn something new about math or music or history is highly dependent on the knowledge that one already possesses about math, or music, or history. This means that "learning to learn" always entails acquiring relevant knowledge about specific domains.
2. General ability to learn is highly correlated with general knowledge. There is a stunning statistic on this point. The positive correlation of learning ability with socioeconomic status is .422, whereas the correlation of learning ability with general knowledge is nearly twice as high - .811 (D. Lubinski and L.G. Humphreys, "Incorporating General Intelligence into Epidemiology and the Social Sciences," *Intelligence* 24, 1997, pp. 159-202). We are so used to emphasizing the socioeconomic status that this datum come as a surprise. Yet it is just what we might have inferred from point 1 above that learning ability depends chiefly on having relevant prior knowledge.
3. The optimal way to learn a subject is to learn both its general principles and an ample number of diverse examples that illustrate those principles. That's obvious in math. One needs to know what multiplication is in principle, but to gain real insight into what multiplication is one also needs to do a number of multiplication problems of different types. This finding bears directly on the depth/breadth issue in education. A broad range of examples should be studied, but studying too many is a waste of time.
4. Another finding is that broad general knowledge is the best entrée to deep knowledge. This is a conclusion from the field of psychology called "discourse analysis." The most effective way to introduce the meaning of a discourse is to start with a summary such as an abstract found in learned journals. After the learner gains a broad context through a sense of the whole domain, he or she can mentally fit the various parts that follow into that whole, and make sense of them. An example would be introducing first graders to a globe that shows oceans and continents before going on to teach them about specific places.

Dr. Hirsch's conclusion is that, "we should teach a diversity of subjects that will lead to broad general knowledge, and we should teach in some depth a moderate number of specific examples." The Core Knowledge Sequence sprung forth as a result of trying to accomplish this.

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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.

MAA American Mathematics Competitions (AMC)

The MAA holds AMC competitions each year for a wide variety of grade levels. This year Liberty will be hosting the AMC-8 on **Tuesday, November 15th, from 3:30 – 4:30 p.m.** at the high school campus (2745 Minnesota Drive). The competition is open to anyone in the 8th grade or lower. Advanced math students in the elementary school are welcome to attend. If your student is interested in participating, contact Mr. Lovely (tlovely@libertycommon.org) to RSVP so enough exams can be ordered.

Calling All Kindergarteners for 2012-2013 School Year

We have begun filling our Kindergarten sibling spots for next year. If your child is planning on attending Kindergarten at Liberty next year-2013-2014, please call the Front Office or stop by and speak with Bev Hanawalt. Don't delay as spots are filling quickly.

Liberty Common Annual Canned Food Drive

A Liberty Common Tradition, the canned food drive will start today and run through November 4, 2011. Please bring in non-perishable items to be donated to the Larimer County Food Bank. Food will be collected and counted in the classrooms and then placed on the stage for all to see. If the students collect 2,011 cans, they will earn a free dress day. If the students collect 3,000 or more cans, faculty and staff will be doing "Minute to Win It- Teacher Edition" (schedule TBA). Don't miss out on this great opportunity to give to others.

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 6th – 8th grade students, and will meet on Tuesdays from 3:15 to 4pm beginning on November 1st 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).

Hearing and Vision Testing– November 4th

Parents:

According to district guidelines, we will be screening grades K-3rd, and 5th for hearing and vision. If you have a child in grades 4th or 6th that you would like to be screened, please call us at x113. Please remind your children to wear their glasses or contacts on Friday, November 4.

Thank you,
Angie Selgren
Health Technician



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.

Don't Forget

T-shirt Day is
Oct. 27th

Robotics Competition Volunteers Needed

Liberty is hosting its second annual FLL Robotics Competition on November 5 at LCS. We need volunteers, especially judges and referees, to help at the tournament. The teams of elementary and middle school students are judged in three areas: the design and programming of their robot, their research project presentation, and teamwork. Adult judges, both technical and non-technical, are needed in those three areas. High school students with a technical background would be great referees for the robot matches. Junior high and high school students are also invited to volunteer in a variety of roles to help the tournament run smoothly. For more information, please contact Sondra Iverson at sondra@pleasingsoftware.com or visit <http://fll.coloradofirst.org/volunteer> to help support STEM in our community and get a free t-shirt!

Morning Fresh Dairy Parent Volunteer

We are currently seeking a volunteer to take over the collection and submission of Morning Fresh Dairy Lids. If you are a Morning Fresh Dairy customer this is the job for you. All you have to do is collect the caps once a week from the drop off point in the Front Office and a delivery driver will pick up the lids on your doorstep. If interested please contact parent volunteer Cheri Young at tcsteyoung@aol.com.

New Computer Kiosk for School Volunteers and Visitors

Liberty Common School is preparing for a new computer kiosk for volunteer sign in and sign out. This new system will allow for volunteers to sign in and out at a computer station. Each volunteer will have a pre-made name badge with a barcode. Upon arrival for a volunteer shift, volunteers will simply scan a badge on the way in and again on the way out. There will no longer be a handwritten sign in/sign out form.

This is a great time to make sure that you are registered as a volunteer and that your volunteer information is up-to-date. To do this, visit the website for PSD Partnerships and Volunteers at <http://www.psdschools.org/partnerships>.

At a later time there will also be a visitor function to this new system on which visitors will sign in on the computer, print a visitor badge, and log out.

Thanks to Moms In Touch

Thanks to Moms In Touch who made the grade by providing lunch for teachers and staff on parent/teacher conference day-Oct. 21st. Your display of generosity and kindness was a great way to end our very busy week. Thank you.

Scrip Program News

Please remember to submit your scrip order by 8:00am Monday, Nov. 7th. Cards ordered on this date will be available for pick up on Friday, Nov. 11th by 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 dtorst@msn.com or (970) 223-7282. We need more volunteers to make this program successful and profitable for the school.

Food Donations Needed for Grandparents Day

The RSVP deadline for Grandparents Day was last Friday. We appreciate all the RSVPs and are excited to provide a great Liberty experience for the grandparents who are able to attend. We will need volunteers to help provide light breakfast foods such as muffins and fruit for the event. Please contact GPD committee at grandparentsday@libertycommon.org if you would like to help provide a nice breakfast for the grandparents. Food donations would be dropped off on Monday, November 21st in the front office. Thank you in-advance for your contributions to a great Liberty tradition!

Picture Retakes-November 11th

School picture retakes and make-ups will be November 11, 2011 from 8:15-9:00 a.m. If your student was absent or is new to the school you may have his/her picture taken. If you had a picture taken but didn't purchase a package you may have a new picture taken and purchase a picture package. If you would like your student to have a retake you must return the original package in full with reason for the retake clearly stated on the package.

Headmaster Writing (Continued from Page 1)

The Sequence exposes the students to a variety of different things, at different times and at different degrees on intensity. Thus the result is a student who has a wide knowledge base and is able to understand and learn more things because of the solid knowledge base.

Our students traditionally perform well academically. There is no doubt that one explanation for the academic success of Liberty Common School lies in the fact that we use the very challenging, rich and broad Core Knowledge curriculum. We are now able to see the positive outcome of the K-8 Core Knowledge program since we now offer high school grades. Our students are excelling due to this excellent educational foundation that has been laid.



The Clean Air of Liberty By: Bob Schaffer, LCHS Principal

Starting in kindergarten, Liberty students learn important economic lessons involving tradeoffs, wants versus needs, property rights and elementary principles of voluntary trade. By the time they graduate, our students enjoy a quite profound, impressive and refined understanding of economics.

It's a very important academic discipline, [one which gets only summary treatment in most American schools](#). Economics informs many vital subjects – engineering, business, all the social sciences and more.

The depth of Liberty's economics program is another example of what makes our school so unique. Applying [our students' economics lessons](#) to the school itself will prove crucial in charting the institution's success over the next decade and beyond.

For the past few weeks, I've described [in his space](#) the rapidly intensifying trends of federal and state lawmakers to meddle more deeply in the management and the very craft of public education. With every new top-down "reform," [America's public schools get worse](#).

Liberty must mind these [troubling national trends](#) and we must be prepared to rise above them. It is imperative we do everything possible to preserve the concepts of parental control, of school choice and marketplace education.

Traditionally considered a local responsibility in America, [public education is now more dominated by the whim and](#)

[and fancy of politicians than ever before](#). It's not a healthy reality for our students.

One of the economic philosophers being studied right now by our ninth-grade economics students is [Frederic Bastiat](#). Writing amid the 1848 Revolution in France, Bastiat characterized the proclivity of French politicians to pass more laws as an arrogant attempt to force French people to become more equal.

On the contrary, Liberty adheres to [the Core Knowledge Sequence](#) which views education itself – a rather rigorous one at that – not the law, as the great equalizer. This philosophy is ingrained in [the school's mission statement](#) and all we do.

So is the concept of parental control. Liberty rejects the idea that a school is a place a parent can simply send their child to become educated by others.

We firmly believe it is the responsibility, moral obligation and [right of parents to direct the education and upbringing of their children](#). As conscientious parents, we hire [people who teach in schools](#) to assist us in best accomplishing this solemn duty.

We choose them. Not the other way around. We are responsible. At Liberty, [parents are in charge](#).

Sending your kids off to government-owned buildings and expecting them to become smart has never worked. It can't work. It doesn't work.

Yet, many people somehow expect it would. Topping that list are lawmakers.

[Of them, Bastiat wrote](#), "There are too many 'great' men in the world – legislators, organizers, do-gooders, leaders of people, fathers of nations, and so on, and so on. Too many persons place themselves above mankind; they make a career of organizing it, patronizing it, and ruling it."

Our economics students know very well the interplay of these economic principles in such an equation. Self interest (as opposed to selfishness), free markets, efficiency and sound money (among others) help humans to, in Bastiat's words, "develop themselves harmoniously in the clean air of liberty."

He wrote, "Away with the whims of governmental administrators, their socialized projects, their centralization, their tariffs, their government schools, their state religions, their free credit, their bank monopolies, their regulations, their restrictions, their equalization by taxation, and their pious moralizations!"

Bastiat finished [his most famous work *The Law*](#) this way, "And now that the legislators and do-gooders have so futilely inflicted so many systems upon society, may they finally end where they should have begun: May they reject all systems, and try liberty; for liberty is an acknowledgment of faith in God and His works."

(Continued on page 5)

The Clean Air of Liberty (Continued from page 4)

Bastiat's mantic words sprung from the French upheaval of his day. Liberty scholars read *The Law* now to better understand the economic realities of theirs.

As Liberty parents, we must similarly understand how contemporary [political impulses](#) and [economic realities](#) impact the future success of our children. It is our duty – actually our privilege – to help LCHS scholars “develop themselves harmoniously in the clean air of liberty.”

2011-2012 Concert Season

OCTOBER

25- LCHS Fall Choir Concert, 6:30 p.m.
Performance Hall, LCS

NOVEMBER

29- Kindergarten Concert, 6:30 p.m.
Performance Hall, LCS

DECEMBER

9/10- “You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown”, 7:00 p.m.
Performance Hall, LCS
Tickets: \$5/students, \$8 general admission
12- 6th Grade Band/5th and 6th Choir Concert, 6:30 p.m.
Performance Hall, LCS
13- LCHS Holiday Concert, 6:30 p.m.
Location TBD

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
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
15- LCHS Finale Concert, 6:30 p.m.

Liberty Clothes Closet Available to All

Seasons are changing, kids have grown, and clothes no longer fit. Come in and visit the clothes closet and choose from the wide selection available.

The Liberty Common Clothes Closet is a closet of gently used code clothing that is available to all Liberty families. Parents may purchase items for \$1.00 per item or evenly exchange items for others. The closet is open from 7:30 a.m.– 4:00 p.m. Monday-

Calling Cecil B. DeMille!

Liberty needs a passable videographer volunteer to make a video documenting Liberty's founding origins. In preparation for [our annual spring gala](#) (April 2012), we need someone to make a video to underscore the event theme – the roots of Liberty. We want to interview founding parents and concisely tell the epic story of [creating Liberty Common School](#). We want to show the [video at the gala](#) and use it thereafter for subsequent school promotions. Here are the criteria: Compelling, timely, cogent, thorough, succinct, moving. Amateurs and experts alike are encouraged to apply. We could cover expenses of perhaps some minor production costs, but the work would be a labor of love. This could easily be a team effort, too. Please contact **Wendy Thomas** at prontobw@msn.com if you're ready to become Liberty's modern-day [Cecil B. DeMille](#).

Pumpkin Sale 100% of Proceeds go to Liberty

Don't go buy pumpkins at the grocery store this year, instead visit the Kerb family pumpkin patch. The pumpkin patch still has pumpkins and will remain open this week but will be unattended. Please come out and help yourself to your favorite pumpkin. Donations for the pumpkins can be made at either school office.

(100% of the proceeds go to Liberty)

Directions: Take Timberline North to Mountain Vista Drive, Right on Mountain Vista, Turn left at Giddings, turn left at the red shed and go straight east. Questions call – 218-2460.