



Volume 15 Issue 7
October 3, 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. 23-Oct. 7: October Count
(See explanation, page 2)

Oct. 7: Fall Festival 5:30-8:00
(See attached flyers)
**Volunteers Needed see
page 2.**
**Order your tickets by
Oct. 4th**

Oct. 14: End of 1st quarter

Oct. 21: No School-Parent/
Teacher Conferences

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

Whose Values Should Be Taught?

Thomas Sowell penned a book entitled "Inside American Education" in 1993. His insight and wisdom in regards to the American education system is uncanny. I would encourage any Liberty Common School parent to purchase or check out a copy (Liberty's library has one) to read. Many of his viewpoints and understandings of what the education process should or should not be are incredibly similar to that of Liberty Common School. Understandably, the Founders of our school considered naming our school the "Thomas Sowell School" before deciding on Liberty Common School. We also use Sowell's "Basic Economics" book for our 9th Grade economics class.

In his book "Inside American Education" Mr. Sowell addresses the topic of values clarification being taught in school and has this to say about it.

"Values Clarification programs, for example, could more accurately be called values confusion, for its whole judgmental approach is at odds with any set of values that includes right and wrong- and without any concept of right and wrong it is hard to see what "values" mean. One parent testified before the U.S. Dept. of Education that her son "came home one day very confused as to the rightness or wrongness of stealing" after going through "values clarification" and other psychological conditioning programs. Other parents report similar confusion among children after their parents taught them right from wrong and the schools said that there was no such thing. Things taught in the classroom "cause children to re-think values taught at home" and caused children "to wonder whom to believe."

The very phrase "values clarification" is fundamentally dishonest. When parents tell their children not to steal there is no ambiguity as to what they mean. Clarification is neither required nor attempted. Instead, values are downgraded to subjective preferences of individuals or blind traditions of "our society," and contrasted with alternative values of other individuals and other societies - including, in some cases, societies of various species of animals. The "non-judgmental" approach which pervades such exercises provides no principle of logic or morality by which to choose among the many alternatives presented except, implicitly, what peers or "experts" or "modern thinking" might prefer.

"Clarification" is merely a word used to camouflage this process of undermining the child's existing values." 😊

I have heard that values clarification activities takes place in other schools on a fairly frequent basis. We take pride in the fact that Liberty Common School does not embark in this type of activity. We believe that there are moral absolutes and that character education can be taught through modeling, and through examples from the literature and history content we teach. There is no need or room for "values clarification." Our primary purpose is to provide a quality academic and character education (Foundation Stones and Capstones) to all of our children and to support our parents in this process, not contradict them. Yet another reason as to why I love Liberty Common School.



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.



Count Down to Fall Festival 40 Volunteers Needed to Make It A Go

Come join the Liberty Common family for a celebration of the season at the Fall Festival. There will be games, crafts, prizes, 3 bouncy houses and food to enjoy.

In order to make this fun and popular event a success we still need we are still in need of **40 volunteers**. We need people to run game booths, craft tables, serve food and we are still in need of at least 2 volunteers to run the grill. Donations of 2 liter bottles of soda, cupcakes, and plain, store bought, nut free sugar cookies, frosting and sprinkles are still needed. Liberty Common has one of the best Fall Festivals around let's keep it that way! Contact Marnie Dame at marniedame@msn.com to help out!

Please use the order form on page 4 to pre-purchase tickets. Buying tickets by October 4th will insure no standing in line and more time to enjoy the festivities.

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 (tlvely@libertycommon.org).

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.

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.

Grandparents Day Planning Committee Needs Volunteers

Planning is well underway for this year's 11/22/11 Grandparents Day. The committee will meet three Thursdays a month at the elementary school. We need more volunteers to help pull off our second-annual event in splendid fashion. [CLICK HERE](#) for full information about Grandparents Day 2011. If you can volunteer or make donations (including food, decorations, printing, etc.) to the effort, please [CLICK HERE](#) to contact our superhero Committee Chairwoman, Board Member and Liberty parent Amy Redstone.



The John D. Williams Cotillion Visits Liberty

A big Liberty thank you goes out to The John D. Williams Cotillions. Mr. Webb was here on Sept. 27th presenting about respect at our monthly character education assembly. Please visit their website for more information about their services at www.cotillion.com.



Telescopes, Math and Rearview Mirrors

By: Bob Schaffer, LCCHS Principal

We teach our students that saying, “because everyone else is doing it” is a terrible excuse to offer upon a bad decision. Will Liberty do any better? I believe so. I certainly hope so.

Last week, I wrote in this space about the nation’s great leap toward “Common Core Standards.” [In that column](#), I stressed the importance of Liberty adhering to the school’s time-tested [mission and philosophy](#) instead of succumbing to the latest national trends toward academic central planning.

There are several reasons many of [the nation’s top education leaders share my misgivings](#) about the [Common Core Standards](#). Chief among them is the provincial premise underscoring the effort. It takes a rather myopic view of what American students need to know.

The standards are assembled by a panel of top politicians. That doesn’t automatically disqualify the work, but it does aptly signal the compromises made as the standards are developed.

As such, the tool might well be useful in comparing states to one another. However, it’s unlikely the Common Core Standards will be particularly helpful in improving [America’s abysmal international standing in math and science](#).

The Common Core Standards are benchmarked primarily against America’s better-performing states. But even those measures are questionable.

Here at home, for example, the passing standard used by Colorado’s premier assessment (CSAP) is below the “proficient” standard used by the America’s national report card – [The National Assessment of Educational Progress](#). This is also true for most other states. For more on this point [CLICK HERE](#).

Notwithstanding nods to international benchmarking found in the narratives of Common Core documents, the pacing and rigor of the final product are not pegged to the world’s top-performing education systems. For years to come, children of China, Singapore, Finland and dozens of other nations will still need telescopes to see American students in their rearview mirrors.

Then there are the inevitable politics that come with a politically derived set of academic standards. A recent entry in the [Core Knowledge Foundation’s blog](#) (which I highly commend to anyone who’s still with me at this point) discusses the proximity of an agenda called “[Math Equity](#)” – which promotes *teaching math for social justice* – to the [Common Core Standards for math](#).

Years ago, when Liberty wanted to build a second-to-none math program, the school’s Board of Directors didn’t ask which state teaches the best math. No; it pursued the best math program on the entire planet.

This is [how we arrived at Singapore Math](#). It explains why, for students who have gone all the way through Liberty’s math program, our math scores are off the charts.

Despite the relative ease with which schools can do like Liberty – obtain and deliver the world’s best curriculum – America’s central planners seem to believe mediocrity is an acceptable course for the future of public education. Moreover, they’ll spend enormous sums trying to persuade parents of American schoolchildren that mediocrity is good enough.

It’s a winning strategy for textbook sales and re-election campaigns alike.

Regrettably, the Common Core Standards will indeed have an impact on Liberty. They’ll become the basis of [Colorado’s assessment system](#), which our government intends to use to define its standard of “quality.”

Our kids will take those tests. By them, they’ll be compared to all others who attend government-owned schools.

Sure Liberty will probably continue to [do well on the state test](#). But it will take yeomen’s discipline to dismiss the allure of middling standards, especially when “everyone else is doing it.”

As parents committed to directing the education and upbringing of our children, we will certainly have to become even more vigilant in maintaining higher – internationally benchmarked – academic expectations for our students. While the rest of America embraces “common” standards for schoolchildren, Liberty must insist upon extraordinary ones for ours.



FESTIVAL

October 7th, 5:30pm – 8 pm

Pre-purchase Ticket form

By pre-purchasing your Fall Festival carnival tickets, you save **money** and **time**.

Pre-purchased tickets: 5 for \$1

Tickets at the night of the event: 4 for \$1



Expected costs are as follows:

- Hamburger meal..... 15 tickets
(includes hamburger, chips & soda pop)
- Hot dog meal..... 15 tickets
(includes hot dog, chips & soda pop)
- Nacho chips w/ cheese 4 tickets
- Soda pop..... 2 tickets
- Chips..... 2 tickets
- Games, crafts and bouncy houses 1 to 4 tickets each

There are many crafts and games, both inside and outside. Make sure you pre-purchase enough tickets at the *discounted* price!

Name: _____

\$ included for tickets: _____

Check # _____

Please attach your check to this bottom portion of the flyer and return to the Front Office no later than Oct. 4th. Pre-purchased tickets may be picked up at the Fall Festival in the pre-purchased ticket line. Thank you.