

The Liberty Common School

Policy Manual

Revised 4/21/2016

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DEFINITIONS

- a. "Board" or BOD shall mean the board of directors of The Liberty Common School.
- b. "Liberty" shall mean The Liberty Common School.
- c. "District" also P.S.D. shall mean Poudre School District.
- d. "Headmaster" means The Liberty Common School Headmaster.
- e. "Parent" means a The Liberty Common School parent or legal guardian.
- f. "Teacher" means a Teacher at The Liberty Common School
- g. "Student" means a student at The Liberty Common School
- h. "Administrator" means an Administrator at The Liberty Common School

1. **The School and Its Goals**

1.1. **Schools:**

Liberty Common Elementary School:

1725 Sharp Point Drive, Fort Collins.

- Kindergarten – 6th grade

Liberty Common Junior High and High School

2745 Minnesota Drive, Fort Collins.

- 7th and 8th grades are referred to as the Junior High School
- The 9th – 12th grades are referred to as Liberty Common High School (LCHS)

1.2. **Mission Statement***

According to Part I, Section (a) of Liberty Common School's Charter submitted to the Poudre School District on October 1, 1996, and as amended by contract with the PSD Board of Education on June 26, 2000:

The mission of the School will be to provide excellence and fairness in education for school children through a common foundation by successfully teaching a contextual body of organized knowledge, the skills of learning including the Thinking Framework, and the values of a democratic society. The School recognizes the value of inclusiveness, or providing access to a broad cross-section of the community, so that students from all backgrounds can benefit from the School's educational offering. The School acknowledges the leadership of teachers in the classroom, and recognizes the responsibility of each student for his/her academic effort.

Declaration of Principles

1. Children yearn for meaning and require a basis of solid contextual common knowledge for the development of mature literacy and critical thinking, for growth and communication in a diverse society.
2. The educational "playing field" between students of differing backgrounds should be level to provide all students a basis to the greatest degree practicable, upon which they can build further knowledge and to develop the skills necessary to communicate and succeed.
3. The skills of learning--reading, writing, speaking, calculating, and thinking -- are most meaningfully learned from the knowledge or content of the curriculum, modeling, coaching, and sensible practice.
4. To thrive in work, citizenship, and personal growth, children must be taught the values of a democratic society. These values include: Respect for others - their property and rights; Responsibility for actions, honesty and social justice; Resourcefulness - being ready to learn, to serve, and to share.

5. Inclusiveness is fundamental in responding to the diverse needs of children and raising academic standards. All parents, regardless of economic status, should be free to choose this educational program for their children.
6. Teachers are professionals; which implies considerable autonomy, mastery and independence. Having accepted the academic and philosophic mission of a school, the teacher needs to be free to exercise informed judgment in order to fulfill his/her primary role as an educator.
7. The principle determinants of individual academic success are individual ability and effort. The policies of the School (grading, discipline, homework, pedagogy) must support the student's adoption of a personal quest for academic growth using the clearly marked path of expectations in knowledge, skill, and character. The guiding philosophy of the School acknowledges that children can and should be held accountable for their own schoolwork and behavior with the support of teachers and parents.

* This mission statement was developed through ongoing research and discussion by approximately 500 community members regarding educational philosophy over a five-year period in parent homes, school settings and public forums. Included were discussions with teachers and administrators of PSD and other districts across the country. Over 200 books by leading educational authorities around the world were reviewed in depth. A bibliography is included in Appendix B. The writers of this Charter have each spent over 2000 hours as PSD volunteers in leadership and other capacities over the past 4 years.

Adopted: 2-24-97

Amended: 3-04-2004

1.3. Philosophy

According to Part I, Section (d) I. B. of Liberty Common School's Charter submitted to the Poudre School District on October 1, 1996, and as amended by contract with the PSD Board of Education on June 26, 2000:

Assumptions about how one learns, the purposes and goals of learning, and what constitutes effective teaching define an educational philosophy. The School's educational philosophy is *agency education*. It informs our decisions on how knowledge, skills and democratic values should be taught and how students, parents and teachers should work together to accomplish that part of education that occurs in schooling.

Agency education has as its metaphor a journey. The journey is the individual's own quest in life and includes responsibility for one's own education, which is a lifelong endeavor. The purpose of a liberal education is to lead young people on just such an odyssey of the mind and heart, which is to lead them to self-reliance. The classical allegories for a liberal education, such as the journeys of Odysseus, Aeneas, and Faust, represent a journey of the soul from one's particular time, place, and attachments to the

universal and back again. The beauty of this journey is its applicability to the actual development of mind, heart, skills and knowledge in each child.

Children begin their cognitive development by first developing a broad framework of knowledge through early acquisitional curiosity, much like they acquire their early spoken vocabulary. After they have gained a wide familiarity with literature, history, science, math, music, people, and places, as one does in the early years of Core Knowledge, they begin to appreciate patterns and forms. Following this, particularly when trained in the Thinking Framework, or Habits of Mind, the student is able to engage in mental modeling, which is possible only when one's broad background knowledge allows her/him to associate ideas and to observe patterns. By continuing the habits of mind, and the search for patterns, discernment is applied to deeper levels of knowledge, enabling one to solve problems and exercise judgment.

The beginnings of the moral journey are along a similar course. At first the focus is obedience to parental authority. Later the child focuses on rules, or the required patterns of expectation. As in writing or thinking, it is only through the formation of good habits that the ability to act and act wisely becomes instinctive. As those habits become more and more internalized, the student journeys closer to self-reliance.

Adopted: 2-24-97

Amended: 3-04-2004

1.4. Knowledge

According to Part I, Section (d) I. B. of Liberty Common School's Charter submitted to the Poudre School District on October 1, 1996, and as amended by contract with the PSD Board of Education on June 26, 2000:

The School has selected the Core Knowledge Foundation's Curriculum Sequence as the framework of its curriculum. The Core Knowledge Sequence is distinguished by planned progression of specific knowledge in history, geography, mathematics, science, language arts, and fine arts.

Children learn by building on what they already know. Thus, it is important for them to begin building foundations of knowledge in the early grades when they are most receptive to attaining an organized body of knowledge. Children are by instinct driven to construct a contextual view of the world. Thus, it is important to provide them an educational framework that assists them in developing the constructs upon which their viewpoints will be based. Academic deficiencies in these areas in the first nine grades can permanently impair the quality of later schooling.

By specifying the knowledge that all children should share, one can achieve equal access to that knowledge. At risk children especially suffer from low expectations, which often translate into watered-down curricula. In schools using the Core Knowledge Sequence, however, all children are exposed to a coherent core of challenging, interesting,

interwoven knowledge. This knowledge not only provides a foundation for later learning, but also defines a common heritage and establishes a common ground for communication and cooperation in a diverse society.

In addition to its specificity, the Core Knowledge curriculum is characterized by knowledge that is shared, solid, and sequenced. Literacy in every subject requires a set of mechanical skills and a shared background. The shared, many-cultured knowledge that promotes effective classroom learning also promotes cooperation and respect among students, both in the classroom and in society. Because the School's teachers will be able to rely on shared background knowledge amongst their students, they will be able to build sequentially on that knowledge year by year.

The Core Knowledge Sequence will be the k-8 curriculum. Expansions of the curriculum, including Colorado History, foreign language, and all high school courses will be determined by the BOD. In addition, the School will develop an expanded science curriculum consistent with the Habits of Mind put forth by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Project 2061 and the Colorado Model Content Standards for Science. This effort has the explicit support of Dr. E. D. Hirsch, Jr., founder of the Core Knowledge Foundation.

Adopted: 3-04-2004
Amended 12/3/2011

Liberty Common High School is a classical, liberal-arts, college-preparatory institution accentuating math, science and engineering. We believe a high-quality, rigorous education is the “great equalizer” among individuals allowing all students to achieve mature literacy and obtain the ability to thrive in college.

One’s economic and social status, race, physical attributes and other conditions become less relevant in the pursuit of happiness when armed with superb intellectual aptitude oriented toward true freedom.

The founders and leaders of Liberty Common High School share a genuine concern for the general decline in the quality of American public education and the preparation of American students to live free and compete well in a dynamic economy. Our remedy is Liberty Common High School and the philosophy described herein.

We reject the anti-intellectual traditions that have become so prevalent in American schools and colleges, particularly colleges of education. We find fault with the progressive, romantic theories of education that have come to dominate American education systems.

Instead, we advocate the systemic acquisition of broad knowledge, superior language and active, engaged minds consistent with the idea of academic “formalism” described by Core Knowledge Foundation founder E.D. Hirsch, Jr.

Our students are expected to excel in history, literature, English, fine arts, math, science and engineering. They are expected to be familiar with at least one foreign language and to maintain physical fitness.

Instructional strategies at Liberty Common High School build upon the standards-based instruction delivered through Liberty Common Elementary School, Liberty Common Junior High School and the Core Knowledge Sequence.

Liberty Common High School believes in placing higher emphasis on academic rigor than what is the norm in mainstream American high schools. Minimum requirements for core subjects at LCHS are significantly higher than those of the local Poudre School District (one of the state's top-performing school districts. LCHS requires 30 hours of Foreign Language, where the district has no minimum requirement.

As a classical-liberal academic institution, Liberty Common High School endeavors to cultivate the minds of its scholars in preparation for authentic liberty. While all citizens enjoy unalienable and civil rights, the responsible exercise of all fundamental individual rights is a direct function of a well-prepared mind and internalized virtue.

A high-school diploma should warrant the graduate is capable of independent thinking and understanding of what is required to "live the good life." A graduate must have acquired accurate familiarity with essential concepts rooted in literature and philosophy – joy and despair, happiness and tragedy, dignity and corruption, and other indispensable juxtapositions.

All high-school graduates should possess the ability to objectively evaluate the nation's place in the world through a deep appreciation of history, intensive study of civilizations including their rising and falling. They should grasp nuances of relevant cultures including their languages, religions, governments, and economies.

Graduates must know well the background of America's allies and adversaries. A survey-level treatment of economics further promotes a solid understanding of America's imprint on human civilization and its future.

Liberty Common High School believes all scholars must fully appreciate art, truth, beauty, goodness and perfection. Robust exposure to these values renders specific genius marking creativity, imagination, inventiveness, and moral seriousness.

Developing practical leadership qualities and supporting skills in students is a proven strategy toward applying comprehensive knowledge in constructive ways. Lessons learned in the classroom should be deployed by students through organization, advocacy, persuasion, implementation of supporting projects and wholesome community leadership.

A proper liberal education gives honored stature to science. Key scientific contributions and the scientific method should be taught to all students throughout high school.

Scholars should be cognizant of significant scientific achievements in biology, chemistry and physics especially those that elevate the human condition, promote prosperity and enhance freedom. Students should also be taught to understand the limits of science. Liberty Common High School believes all students should be exposed to the fundamentals of engineering. The synthesis of applying scientific and mathematical principles to meritorious social and economic situations draws upon the multiple disciplines taught at Liberty to solve important problems.

Competition and choice in public education results in schooling of a higher quality. Teachers should be treated like real professionals. Parents should play the most influential role in the management and maintenance of the school.

It is the obligation and responsibility of parents to direct the education and upbringing of their children. Liberty Common High School exists to assist conscientious parents in this fundamental duty. The school exists because of parental leadership and parental oversight of the institution.

A Liberty Common High School graduate is intellectually awake, able to engage in meaningful, mature conversations about any academic and philosophical topic. They are vigilant, active and brave.

Our goal is to educate for freedom, achieve excellence in all we do and to become the best high school in America.

Adopted 12/3/2011

1.5. Skills

According to Part I, Section (d) I. B. of Liberty Common School's Charter submitted to the Poudre School District on October 1, 1996, and as amended by contract with the PSD Board of Education on June 26, 2000:

The skills of learning, namely, reading, writing, speaking, listening, calculating, problem solving, and exercising critical judgment, are best taught through the content of a body of organized knowledge.

The development of literacy will be one of the primary aims and focuses of effort in the School. This will include a great deal of reading from a variety of both fiction and non-fiction primary literature. Particularly in the early grades, the School will emphasize reading and more reading. In the early grades, students will receive explicit, systematic phonemic awareness and phonics instruction. Children will be provided deliberate, coherent, direct instruction in letter-sound correspondences. Practices which teach children to rely on word-memorization (the look-say method) and guessing (through illustration and/or context) will be avoided.

Mature literacy develops as students become acquainted with a broad and rich body of knowledge and become familiar with many well-written, diverse and meaningful works of literature. The literature suggested by the Core Knowledge Sequence, as well as other literature that will be introduced, is chosen not only for its place in the core body of knowledge, its multi-cultural representation, and its rich use of language, but also because it provides access to deeper meaning of universal human problems, particularly those which preoccupy children's' minds.

The School will acknowledge the central role of language in thought and action. The School's students will be taught to write and speak through example and sensible practice. Grammar, logic, and real spelling learned from real literature will be part of these skills.

The School will teach the Thinking Framework not as a stand-alone course, but rather as instruction integrated within the content. Students often receive knowledge disconnected from features that make it understandable and meaningful. For instance, in math it is common to learn concepts without knowing their purposes. When you study history, you frequently find scant attention paid to the evidence underlying an historical fact or interpretation. Students may come to know something about history, but not much about historical thinking. Science instruction routinely pays insufficient attention to examples and images that make the concepts under study concrete and impart an intuitive grasp of them. Contemporary research shows that instruction offered in one context often does not transfer to other contexts. The School will use a Thinking Framework to teach the Core Knowledge curriculum.

Additionally, the School will teach the more specific critical thinking skills unique to each discipline, called "Habits of Mind." The Habits of Mind to be taught for scientific literacy are found in Benchmarks for Scientific Literacy from the American Association for the Advancement of Science (Exhibit II). The Habits of Mind for historical literacy are found in the book by the same title, which is a report of the Bradley Commission on History (Exhibit XIII). The Habits of Mind for math literacy are identified in "Children's Mathematical Development" (Exhibit XIV).

The development of skills requires time, thought and active engagement of the visual and verbal imagination. The School will encourage students replace non-instructional television watching, which is passive and discourages creative play, with the myriad of activities which will foster the development of imagination and skills. Because television viewing is diametrically opposed to reading, may stifle cognitive development and imagination, trivializes information, undermines values, distorts cause and effect, and is unable to portray thought, the School will discourage excessive (greater than 10 hours/week) of viewing.

Adopted: 3-04-2004

1.6. A Classical Framework for Teaching Thinking

Classical Education has since ancient times included an implicit and explicit understanding of the development of thinking. In most treatments of the progression of how to teach thinking there are four natural steps. A recognition of these four steps and their application to different age groups is vital to answering questions of educational policy for both the content and assessment of schooling at each grade.

In the ancient Egyptian text from Shabako Stone these steps are 1) Reception – the proper use of the senses to acquire knowledge about the world around us. 2) Perception – the accurate processing of such input by mind and heart to understand the inherent patterns of the knowledge. 3) Formation – The organizing of one’s perceptions into language and hence thoughts, and 4) Action – taken to bring life to those thoughts.

Many years later Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, the famous German poet, put forth his formula for how creativity is developed. This formula is put forward in several ways in his drama “Faust” and parallels the Egyptian formula, namely: First there is the Word, or Knowledge; Second, the Meaning or Pattern; Third, the Power or what we would call mental discipline or mental modeling; and finally, the Act which is either problem solving or composition, etc.

In our day Robert Mitchell, the Underground Grammarian, has summarized these same steps in the following lines, “Knowledge consists of the facts [1], the relations between them [2], the thinking about them [3] and the effort to understand and connect them [4]. It is not out of ignorance that we discover understanding. It is because of what we already know that we can know more [1], that we can discern organizing principles [2] and make and test hypotheses [3], and act rationally [4].” These lines tersely reiterate this old proven framework for teaching Thinking.

First identified is knowledge and herein lies just one of the great values of teaching a solid core of background knowledge as put forward in the K-8 sequence of the Core Knowledge Foundation. As John Holdren of that foundation has stated, “Without a lot of pertinent factual knowledge about an issue or problem, you can’t think critically about it – you can only have an uninformed opinion. If we’re concerned about having students think “critically,” then we have an obligation to give them the knowledge that will make them *informed* thinkers, not mere likers and dislikers. That’s why, from the early years, we should teach them a lot of factual knowledge. We should, of course, also provide frequent opportunities to discuss the facts, to analyze apparent contradictions, to challenge accepted interpretations. Maybe then we’ll produce at least some students who develop the habit of choosing words carefully, of avoiding clichés, and resisting unquestioned orthodoxies – such as the uncritical use of a term like “critical thinking.” No one, except perhaps Joe Friday, wants ‘just the facts,’ at least not in schools. We also want – and our students need – opportunities to use the facts, to apply them, question them, discuss them, doubt them, connect them, analyze them, verify or deny them, think critically about them. All these higher-order activities, however, rely upon having some

facts to work with. Without knowing a lot of facts, you lack the solid foundation upon which to build all higher order skills. And that's a fact."

E. D. Hirsch has stated, "...the almost universal feature of reliable higher-order thinking about any subject or problem is the possession of a broad, well-integrated base of background knowledge relevant to the subject. This sounds suspiciously like plain common sense..."

In the beginning (grades K-3) the acquisition of common knowledge about a wide variety of subjects should be the primary focus of this framework. While students will naturally be making inferences on their own about the relations of the facts and ideas they are learning, helping students make connections and see the patterns – dissimilitude in similitude, and similitude in dissimilitude – comes at the next level, generally grades 4-6. During this time teachers in addition to teaching more knowledge specifically look for ways to train students' perceptions of organizing principles, the relations between things they have learned or observed.

During the junior high years (grades 7-8) students continue to learn many new facts and their relationships, but more and more of this is independent, and because of how knowledge builds on knowledge, schema are quicker to form and be modeled. This must continue and be expected, but at this level mental modeling – the making and testing of arguments and hypotheses (including logic) – must be explicitly and implicitly taught, and students given ample opportunity to practice. In writing this means essays that marshal several concepts with the underlying evidence. In history it means an effort to link the patterns of individual human nature with social influence to project explanations of future or past causation. In math this means symbolic representation of complex problems, algebra and geometry.

Jerome Bruner was referring to this stage when he said, "In contrast to analytic thinking, intuitive thinking characteristically does not advance in careful, well-defined steps. It tends to involve maneuvers based seemingly on an implicit perception of the total problem. Unfortunately, the formulation of school learning has somehow devalued intuition." Using the thinking framework one could conclude that intuition became devalued when the steps that lead to it (the acquisition of knowledge and its structure) were removed from the curriculum.

TheodoreSizer also refers to his third level (mental modeling) when he says, "A science course, built on sheer memory work, that never gives examples of or experience in scientific inquiry would be as stunted as a course that engages in some sort of disembodied, abstract problem-solving that demands of the students no command of precise knowledge." Fortunately, in science education there seems to be a more direct effort to follow the natural steps of the thinking framework.

The final step is action or problem solving or judgment or creativity. This is the stage that should be the focus of teachers' efforts for prepared high school students. I say prepared because this final higher-order thinking cannot proceed apace if the other three

have not preceded. This is obvious from common sense and most high school teachers wish the majority of their students were prepared for this problem solving work. This is also one of the reasons for a core knowledge high school – so that the prior experience of students in a core knowledge elementary and junior high program can be capitalized upon. The less is more approach, where a fewer number of examples are tackled but each is studied more deeply, only works in this setting. The course work in our high school would take into account, and assume to the greatest extent possible the common background held by students, the perception of patterns and relations that can only come by wide exposure to a lot of factual knowledge built upon by directed help in projecting learned schema into novel situations. Such students are prepared for writing, Trigonometry, Calculus, history and economics, literature and art, taught with a high and specific expectation of productivity. As Peter Emberly said, “This is an education which is without ostentation, and education which through the gradual and sequential formation of habits and talents produces a critical and impartial mind.”

And finally by J. W. v Goethe, “Man should not scorn the only instruments he has by which he can attain to some fair approximation of knowledge and wisdom, namely his healthy senses, his power of approach to teaching thinking and will be employed at this school. It is a significant and unique element of our educational plan worthy of attention and implementation.”

Randy W. Everett
Liberty Common School
Fort Collins, Colorado

Adopted: 2-24-97

1.7. Values

According to Part I, Section (d) I. B. of Liberty Common School’s Charter submitted to the Poudre School District on October 1, 1996:

The purpose of public education in a democracy is to prepare people for the demands of work, the duties of citizenship, and the obligation of each individual to make as much of herself or himself as possible. For this to be accomplished, our youth must be taught the values inherent in a democratic society, such as devotion to human dignity and freedom, equal rights for all, social and economic justice, the rule of law, civility and honesty, respect for differences, and self-respect.

Academic standards and standards for behavior and demeanor are a part of education values. In the School, children will learn sportsmanship, fair play, sharing, and taking turns. They will be given the opportunity to lead and to follow and to respect the rights of the minority. These values will be taught from the content of the curriculum, by inference and example, and also in how we teach.

Adopted: 3-04-2004

1.8. Character education

Character education is a central emphasis in the complete development and formation of young scholars at Liberty Common School. Liberty invests thirteen years of character education toward the lives of its students.

The overarching achievement of a virtuous life within the context of scholarly pursuits is the acquisition and development of wisdom. If the dissemination of knowledge and values from one generation to the next is the underlying purpose of education, wisdom then is a complete expression of the core academic objective of any worthy academic institution.

Liberty's Foundation Stones and Capstones are reinforced through the rich literature, biographies and case studies deployed in our classrooms. So are many other virtues that guide children through maturity to adulthood.

Foundation Stones – Elementary School

Respect: Showing consideration for others and their property; listening to and following instructions of those in authority; honoring others.

Responsibility: Doing what we have said we will do; being accountable for our actions and consequences because we know right from wrong; being dependable.

Self Control: taking charge of our actions and feelings, even in difficult situations; making good and right decisions; being able to deal promptly with problems.

Perseverance: Sticking to a purpose and never giving up on what one has to do; being determined to improve; being committed to justice.

Cooperation: Using skills to contribute to the common good; serving others with patience and a positive attitude.

Integrity: Knowing the difference between right and wrong and having the courage to do what is right, even when it is not easy to do so.

Citizenship: Using the rights and privileges one has as a member of the community to make that community a better place.

Adopted: 6-28-01

Amended 12/3/2011

Capstones - 7-12th Grades

Prudence: Predicated upon practical reason, prudence entails discernment of the true good surrounding every situation and the moral means of achieving it.

Temperance – Restraint in passions of ambition and pleasure. Temperance places intellect, balance and reason above impulsiveness setting limits in order to attain that which is honorable.

Justice – Balance between self-interest and the rights of others. Justice entails a mature appreciation of what is due another whether among equals, superiors or subordinates.

Fortitude – Includes forbearance, endurance and ability to withstand fear, uncertainty or intimidation.

Gratitude – An inclination to express thankfulness and gratefulness to others for their gifts and gestures of kindness.

Patriotism – Devotion and dedication to the country – allegiance to the Flag of the United States of American, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with Liberty and justice for all.

The Keystone of Wisdom.

A culminating goal of Liberty's character-education program is to graduate wise LCHS scholars.

Adopted 12/3/2011

1.9. Student Accountability

According to Part I, Section (d) I. B. of Liberty Common School's Charter submitted to the Poudre School District on October 1, 1996:

All students are capable of learning to accept responsibility for their own education. The philosophy and practices the School will acknowledge that young people are free to act and can be held accountable for their actions. The policies of the School will encourage discipline, hard work, cooperation, making decisions and living with the consequences. Such policies, and a clear understanding of academic expectations, will help the School's students to choose a personal quest for intellectual and personal growth. The students' sensing of an alignment between their personal educational goals and those of the School's will further reinforce their desire to accept responsibility for their education. Such an approach to student accountability has been termed "agency education."

Adopted: 3-04-2004

1.10. Parental Involvement and Responsibility

According to Part I, Section (d) I. B. of Liberty Common School's Charter submitted to the Poudre School District on October 1, 1996:

The School will be characterized as a School of Choice. This means that parents will have an option to select the School's educational philosophy for their children. The School believes that its design will result in parents wanting to play a strong role in their children's education. When parents have the opportunity to choose the kind of education they prefer, they will find the necessary energy, time, and resources to devote to their

children's education. The School anticipates that parents will be directly engaged in tutoring, coaching, classroom instruction, and providing other necessary and invaluable assistance.

The family naturally provides the most influential and effective context for basic lifelong learning and teaching. The School's governance will be structured to recognize the primacy of the family's necessary influence over their children.

The segment of any community that can be most trusted to make good educational decisions for children to the betterment of both student and the greater society are the parents. Regardless of educational level, income, or lack of support, parents of all backgrounds (particularly those who, because of limited finances, can't choose which neighborhood to live in or which private school to attend) as a group come forward when given a real option and choose successful programs.

For this reason, and at the discretion of the classroom teacher, parents will be invited to teach or assist with lesson plans or learning projects in all subjects, depending on their interests and expertise. Parents will also be encouraged to spend time reading aloud to children at school and/or in the home, coaching them in skill development, and otherwise contributing time and talents in a variety of ways.

The School will encourage every adult--parents, step-parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles--to take a special interest in the lives of the School's students, to act as mentors and tutors, and to instill in every student a love of learning.

Parents will work in conjunction with the staff to ensure the most effective education possible for their children. To this end, parents will be responsible for knowing and understanding the contents of the School's Charter, and be encouraged, but not required, to participate on school committees and provide other volunteer services as they are able. Parents will respect the authority of the teacher in the classroom. Parental involvement will be actively encouraged, but parents will need to understand their limits when recommending specific actions or changes in the classroom. Parents will be encouraged to understand from their child's teacher the rationale behind the way things are done. However, concerns regarding issues such as curriculum, values, or philosophy will be directed centrally to the Headmaster, where they can be handled in a single united effort. Concerns not adequately addressed by the Headmaster may be brought to the BOD. The opportunity of parents to choose the School and its well defined educational program will not include the right to demand individual preferences within the classroom.

Adopted: 3-04-2004

1.11. Teacher, School and Professionalism

According to Part I, Section (d) I. B. of Liberty Common School's Charter submitted to the Poudre School District on October 1, 1996:

Teachers are at the center of both the mind and heart of every successful school. Without dedicated competent teachers the best of educational practices will never actually come to fruition in the classroom. Research on effective schools reveals that next to individual ability and effort, the organization of the school is most influential in determining academic achievement. The School's teachers will be expected to implement the School's academic mission. In the classroom the teacher will be in charge. Outside of the classroom, teachers will receive professional guidance with respect to specific goals and objectives from the BOD through the Headmaster.

Professionalism requires a body of knowledge and skill applied with a clear level of accountability that affords the flexibility to accomplish the defined task. All teachers have a different style of teaching—the unique blend of classroom characteristics that enable them to give the very best of themselves to educating their students. The teacher's style sets some basic parameters for the parents as well as the children. Within those parameters parents have the opportunity to assist the teacher. As a high level of parental involvement will be actively encouraged, teachers will be expected to incorporate parental volunteer efforts in the classroom.

The central role of teachers in the classroom deserves respect. The School will make it clear to all teachers that they must understand and accept the responsibility of teaching the entire curriculum, both content and skills, and in a way congenial to the School's attitude toward values and the student. This will be defined as their primary role.

A number of the innovations of the School (bonus pay for teachers, additional planning time for teachers, provision of a Headmaster) that have been part of the plans for the School also directly address concerns resulting from a recent report for the Department of Education by the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (Exhibit XV). The report concluded that many new teachers are poorly prepared to teach, in part because of a lack of sufficient mentoring, failure to reward better qualified teachers, and a lack of planning time.

The Headmaster will be hired by and be directly responsible to the BOD. His/her foremost responsibility will be to support the teachers in their primary role by coaching them towards attainment of their professional goals. Teachers will be expected to give input regarding their needs to the Headmaster.

Adopted: 3-04-2004

1.12. Nondiscrimination

Liberty Common School does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, marital status, sexual orientation or disability in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its educational programs or activities.

Adopted: 2-24-97
Amended 12/3/2011

1.13. Disclaimer

If there is no Liberty Common School policy present, then the Poudre School District policy will be in effect. If there is a conflict between Poudre School District and Liberty Common School policy, the Liberty Common School policy shall prevail.

Adopted: 6-28-01

The Board and Governance

2.1. Charter Application, Contract, Bylaws, and Addendums

The Liberty Common School Contract, Application and Bylaws are additional parts of these policies. They can be found in their individual reference notebooks.

Adopted: 2-24-97

2.2. Decision Making

Two principles should underlie all significant decisions made by the Board and Liberty Common School's administration: All actions should fall within the parameters of the Mission Statement and the Philosophy documents; and the Liberty Common School charter is a contract between the school and the district.

Accordingly, in making any significant decision the Board and Administration shall consider the decision on the context of the Liberty Common School mission and philosophy documents and from the parents' perspective, always keeping in mind that parents should have a meaningful voice in their children's education.

Adopted: 6-28-01

2.3. Board Members Code of Conduct

Individual BOD members are committed to proper use of their authority and to decorum consistent with maintaining the integrity and discipline of BOD leadership.

- A. While the BOD as a body cannot exercise authority over individual BOD members, the BOD is responsible for the organization's exposure to members acting as individuals. To that end, the BOD can exercise authority over the Headmaster's response to individual members and can enumerate its expectations for individual member discipline.
 - i. While the BOD expects individual members to be given common courtesy, it does not require the Headmaster and staff to heed any individual member's opinions or instructions.
 - ii. Regardless of any individual member's dissent from a decision of the BOD, he or she must support that the Headmaster is bound by directions given by the BOD as a whole.

- B. Individual BOD members may not attempt to exercise authority over the organization unless explicitly set forth in BOD policies.
 - i. Individual members' interactions with the Headmaster or staff must recognize that individual members have not authority over staff or to insert themselves into staff operations. (Nothing contained in section 2) a) is intended to restrict or discourage normal and open communication between the BOD, staff and community.)
 - ii. No BOD member can place himself or herself between staff members in their disputes or negotiations.
 - iii. No BOD member can engage in solving staff problems without approval from the Headmaster

- C. Although all members are obligated to register differences of opinion on BOD issues at the BOD level as passionately as desired, individual members may not direct their differences in opinion to staff in a manner which would create dissension or polarization in the organization or undermine a decision of the BOD majority.
 - i. Member's interactions with public, press or other entities must recognize that individuals have no authority to speak for the BOD unless specifically authorized by the BOD.
 - ii. Members will not individually render judgments of Headmaster or staff performance apart from compliance with BOD policies as monitored by the BOD as a body.

Adopted: 2-25-99

2.4. Governing Style

The BOD will govern with an emphasis on (a) strategic leadership more than administrative detail, (b) clear distinction of BOD and Headmaster roles, (c) collective rather than individual decisions, (d) future rather than past or present, and (e) proactivity rather than reactivity. The BOD will:

1. Deliberate in many voices, but govern in one.
2. Cultivate a sense of group responsibility. The BOD, not the staff, will be responsible for excellence in governing. The BOD will be an initiator of policy, not merely a reactor to staff initiatives. The BOD will use the expertise of individual members to

enhance the ability of the BOD as a body, rather than to substitute the individual judgments for the BOD's values.

3. Direct, control and inspire the organization through the careful establishment of broad written policies reflecting the BOD's values and perspectives. The BOD's major policy focus will be on the intended long-term Goals, not on the administrative or programmatic means of attaining those effects.
4. Enforce upon itself whatever discipline is needed to govern with excellence. Discipline will apply to matters such as attendance, preparation for meetings, policy-making principles, respect of roles, and ensuring the continuity of governing capability. Continual BOD development will include orientation of new members in the BOD's governance process and periodic BOD discussion of process improvement. The BOD will allow no office, individual or committee of the BOD to hinder or be an excuse for not fulfilling its commitments.
5. Monitor and discuss the BOD's process and performance at each meeting. Self-monitoring will include comparison of BOD activity and discipline to the Liberty Common School Charter Application, Contract, Bylaws, and approved policies.

Adopted: 2-25-99

2.5. Board Self-Evaluation

The Liberty Common School Board of Directors believes that the efficiency and performance of the Board itself directly affects the efficiency and performance of the school as a whole. Therefore, the Board will conduct an annual evaluation of its own work.

The following guidelines will apply to the Board self-evaluation:

1. The evaluation shall be a positive, constructive process, aimed at improvement rather than criticism.
2. The evaluation shall be conducted using a formal written tool. Additionally, the board will evaluate its progress on the strategic plan.
3. Board members shall evaluate the board as a whole and not individuals on the board.
4. Board self-evaluation forms shall be distributed at the first April board meeting for use at the May meetings. The board shall not be limited in its discussion to those items that appear on the form. Free discussion and informal comments are valuable.

Adopted: 6-28-01

2.6. Public Attendance at Board Meetings

The Liberty Common School board represents the mission and vision of the school and is composed of parents from Liberty Common School. It desires to provide opportunities for any member of the school community to express interest in and concern for the school. Accordingly, all members of the school community are cordially invited to

attend all open meetings of the board. A time for public comment shall be a part of every regular board meeting.

Meetings are closed to the public only when the board is meeting in executive session. An executive session may be called only to discuss matters not appropriate for public discussion pursuant to Colorado Revised Statutes, Section 24-6-402. An executive session may be called only upon the affirmative vote of two-thirds of a quorum present. No formal action of the board may be taken in any executive session.

Although the board wishes to encourage everyone to attend its open meetings, it must be remembered that board meetings are conducted to carry on the business of the school. Board meetings are not “public meetings,” but meetings held in public, and public participation must be controlled to some extent so that the board can deal with its agenda within a reasonable time.

Persons who wish to make requests, presentations, or proposals to the board should follow the format listed in Article 4 of the School Bylaws.

Notice of the Liberty Common School Board meetings shall be posted in the school office one day prior to the meeting.

Adopted: 3-16-98

2.7. Policy Making

The board shall be solely responsible for adopting, repealing or amending governing policies for Liberty Common School. Action by the board shall be accomplished as set forth in the bylaws. Any board action may be reversed by a vote of 5 of the 7 Board memberships at a regular or special meeting of the membership called for that purpose.

Emergencies: Upon majority vote of a quorum present at a regular or special meeting called for that purpose, an emergency may be declared. If any emergency is declared, a policy may be adopted on first reading.

Proposed policies should be referenced to the proposed table of contents policy title. If it is an amendment, the entire policy should be typed with the new language in all capitals with the language to be deleted lined out.

The Headmaster shall be responsible for reviewing, adopting, amending, or repealing operational policies, procedures or regulations. All such operational material shall be in accordance with the Liberty Common School governing policies, and shall reference the related governing policy by section and number.

Adopted: 6-28-01

2.8. Board Member Conflict of Interest

Public office is a trust created in the interest of the common good and for the benefit of the people. It is the intent of this section to maintain public confidence and prevent the use of public office for private gain. In order to avoid conflicts of interest, it is the general policy of the school not to employ or contract with BOD members or employees (except for the employee's employment), members of their families, or persons or entities having an ongoing business or financial relationship with them. BOD members and employees shall disclose any known or potential conflicts of interest in writing to the BOD prior to the time set for voting on any such transaction and a BOD member making such disclosure shall not vote on the matter or attempt to influence the decisions of other BOD members in voting on the matter.

Board members shall serve without compensation, but may be reimbursed for any necessary expenses incurred by them in performing their duties as members of the board.

Any contract with the school involving a member of the board, or the board member's family, shall be approved by the full board with the interested member abstaining. Each board member is responsible to make known to the board any circumstances that could involve a potential conflict of interest.

In the event that an issue, in which a board member has a non-financial, but family or personal interest, and which does not apply to the general case, is elevated to the Board for consideration, the Board member with the personal interest will abstain from voting on the matter.

Adopted: 6-28-01

2.9. Board Review of Administrative Procedures

Administrative procedures, policies and regulations should reference existing Board policies. The employee manuals and student handbook should reference existing Board policies and numbering.

The Board reserves the right to review administrative regulations and policies at its discretion. However, the Board of Directors shall revise or veto regulations only when, in its judgment, such regulations are inconsistent with the board's policies.

Adopted: 6-28-01

2.10. Advisory Committees to the Board

The primary purpose of all advisory committees to the board is to contribute to the educational program of the school by conducting studies, identifying problems, or developing recommendations to assist the board in making decisions. The ultimate

authority to make those decisions, however, will continue with the boards as required by law.

Advisory committees will be formed by the board at such times and for such purposes as the board may deem necessary. They will be given a clear charge in writing, and will be dissolved upon accomplishing that charge.

Membership in advisory committees will be chosen from among those who have shown an interest in education or who have special knowledge or expertise relating to the committee's purpose. Once activated, an advisory committee will report periodically to the board.

Adopted: 6-28-01

Amended: 12-16-04

2.11. Academic Advisory Committee

Per BOD policy 2.10, *Advisory Committees to the Board*, the BOD establishes the Academic Advisory Committee (AAC):

1. Members of the AAC will be appointed and removed by the Board of Directors. Members will be individuals who have demonstrated an understanding of the school's philosophy, as determined by the Board of Directors.
2. The AAC will review and evaluate potential changes to the curriculum as directed by the Board of Directors, and report back to the BOD with their evaluation.
3. No curriculum changes will be made without a review from this committee.
4. At the direction of the BOD, AAC members may mentor and assist teachers in implementation of curriculum changes.
5. This standing committee will be formalized in the LCS Bylaws.

In the process of establishing the AAC, we define the following roles in determining curriculum:

- The Board of Directors has the final vote on acceptance of curriculum after review by the AAC.
- Teachers provide input into the recommendation for curriculum decisions and guidance on the implementation of any new or modified curriculum.
- Parents are encouraged to provide their perspective and work with the AAC on specific curriculum issues in accordance to their interests and expertise. The AAC will mentor these individuals as a means to developing future candidates for the AAC.

- The Headmaster provides input and leadership in curriculum decisions and the implementation.

Adopted: 8-08-02

Amended: 12-16-04

2.12. Documents in Advance of Board Meetings

Documents for agenda items are to be provided to the BOD one week in advance of the Board meeting. Board members should be provided with a summary of the issue or concern and the proposed Board action for all agenda items, so that BOD members have time to evaluate topics prior to discussion and decision making.

Adopted: 10-16-03

Amended: 6-03-04

3. Administration

3.1. Delegation to Headmaster

All BOD authority delegated to staff is delegated through the Headmaster, so that all authority and accountability of staff—as far as the BOD is concerned—is considered to be the authority and accountability of the Headmaster.

The BOD will direct the Headmaster to achieve certain results through the establishment of Goals. The BOD will limit the latitude the Headmaster may exercise in practices, methods, conduct, and other “means” through the establishment of Executive Limitations policies.

As long as the Headmaster uses any reasonable interpretation of the BOD’s Goals and Executive Limitations policies, the Headmaster is authorized to make all decisions, take all actions, establish all practices, and develop all activities.

The BOD may change its Goals and Executive Limitations policies, thereby shifting the boundary between BOD and Headmaster domains. By doing so, the BOD changes the latitude given to the Headmaster. So long as any particular delegation is in place, the BOD members will respect and support the Headmaster’s choices.

Only decisions of the BOD acting as a body are binding upon the Headmaster.

Decisions or instructions of individual BOD members, officers, or committees are not binding on the Headmaster except in rare circumstances when the BOD has specifically authorized such exercise of authority.

In the case of BOD members or committees requesting information or assistance without BOD authorization, the Headmaster can refuse such requests that require—in the Headmaster’s judgment—a material amount of staff time or funds or are disruptive.

Adopted: 2-25-99

Amended: 12-16-04

3.2. Headmaster Job Description

General

The Headmaster is accountable to the Board of Directors of LCS as the authority in charge of (1) leadership, (2) educational mentoring, (3) school and staff management, and (4) the finances of the charter school. The Headmaster is employed at-will and is the executive decision-maker for the operation of the school, and is ultimately responsible for the success of the education of the pupils in accordance with the principles established in the charter document and the vision of the Board of Directors. The Headmaster's resources are a faculty of professional teachers and classroom aides, and a small administrative staff. The Headmaster will also take advantage of volunteer staff organized in boards and committees. The following expands on the four main areas of responsibility previously introduced.

Leadership

Leadership consists of communicating and implementing the mission of the school as the team leader, fostering the school charter, and sharing it with faculty, staff, parents, and with the community. For example, the Headmaster is expected to:

- adopt and promote the vision of the Board of Directors and the principles of the Charter
- motivate and unify staff and faculty in a non-threatening environment
- liaise with stakeholders as the school's advocate
- mediate communication among Board of Directors, faculty, staff, and parents
- interpret the school to the community soliciting creative participation
- foster collegiality among staff by cultivating and rewarding individual contribution

Educational Mentoring

Educational mentoring consists of coaching and supervising the educational environment of the school with particular attention to the implementation of the school's curriculum. For example, the Headmaster is expected to:

- assure that the curriculum and its delivery is academically sound and consistent with the Core Knowledge sequence (K-8) and college preparatory expectations (9-12)
- assure that teaching methods and contents are consistent with the philosophy of the school

- assure the values of a democratic society are taught in appropriate and sanctioned ways
- assure skills of learning and habits of mind are taught in a manner consistent with the school charter
- plan for the academic and professional growth of faculty
- interview for and appoint department heads
- keep informed of current trends in education
- act as an educational consultant to the Board of Directors
- be the guarantor of proficiency testing for the students
- establish guidance and counseling programs for students, students' families, and faculty
- be involved with students' academic progress
- support academic awareness among students and families
- recognize achievement
- provide coaching and expertise to staff that facilitates effective delivery of the total educational program

School and Staff Management

School and staff management consists of providing direction to and evaluation of students, faculty, and staff. For example, the Headmaster is expected to:

- manage physical resources
- oversee, guide and mentor the Principals at the elementary and high school campuses.
- recruit and recommend paid staff positions to the Board of Directors
- evaluate personnel performance
- facilitate conflict resolution
- be responsible for abiding by and maintaining compliance with all relevant legal statutes pertaining to school operations
- be responsible for after-school and extra-curricular activities
- work closely with parent groups and committees
- recommend corrective action to address recognized problems
- initiate and supervise disciplinary procedures

Finances

To assume a supervisory and directing role for the monetary obligations of the school. The Headmaster is expected to:

- lead the development and implementation of the annual budget
- authorize extraordinary expenditures
- oversee and approve contract stipulations

- review monthly the ordinary administration of the school and the implementation of the budgets
- review annually the financial performance of the school
- prepare financial policy documents for the attention of the Board of Directors
- oversee and approve all fund-raising efforts
- supervise business manager
- perform duties of the business manager in the event that this position is not filled by another individual

Minimum Job Requirements

- Master's degree in related field or equivalent combination of education and experience
- Three to five years of classroom teaching experience
- Experience in educational management or administration
- Experience in developing and implementing organizational budgets
- Management/supervision experience

Other Desired Characteristics

- Knowledge of Core Knowledge Curriculum including sequencing and teaching
- Experience/knowledge of entrepreneurial education systems
- Experience/knowledge of developing instructional curricula

Adopted 12/3/2011

3.3. Business Manager Job Description

The Business Manager at Liberty Common, under the guidelines set forth in our charter, is accountable to the Headmaster as the authority in the areas of:

- Finance
- Building and Grounds
- Non-Academic Personnel
- Legal Compliance of the School

Finance

Oversee the development and maintenance of a positive financial position for the school.

- LCS Accountant
- Provide all necessary documentation for and oversee successful, on-time completion of LCS annual audits
- Work with the Headmaster, BOD, Core Knowledge Charter School Foundation and LCS Building Corporation to develop budget and effectively use funds.

- Provide monthly reports on
 - Budget
 - Grant monies and status
 - Areas of concern in budget, purchasing, facilities, or grants including specific proposals for dealing with these issues
- Develop financial support information for grant applications.
- Liaison with PSD in financial matters
- Responsible for school assets and supplies including procedures for ordering and inventory, and negotiating maintenance contracts for equipment

Building and Grounds

Oversight responsibility for all physical school facilities including safety, security, maintenance, and relationships with third party contractors to maintain and improve the facility.

- Traffic flow and effectiveness
- Student safety in building and outside on all school grounds
- Oversee safety response team and related volunteers
- Ensure that this process is in place, documented, and periodically tested
- Communicate with local authorities in regards to safety matters

Personnel

- Coordinate with Poudre School District and manage Liberty Common School's portion of all non-performance related personnel issues for all school employees including payroll, benefits, hiring paperwork, documentation, etc.
- Maintain faculty and non-academic staff records including interview and hiring paperwork, benefits, evaluations, contracts

Legal Compliance

Assure LCS is in compliance with all applicable state, federal, and local laws & regulations; including adherence to charter contract. Stay abreast of changes to applicable laws and regulations, and communicate to Headmaster and Board of Directors how such changes may affect LCS.

Minimum Job Requirements

- Bachelor's degree in Business Administration or Finance
- Management experience in a non-profit educational setting
- Management experience in facilities and auxiliary departments
- Computer literacy and proficiency with appropriate software applications

Adopted 6-28-01
Amended 12/3/2011

3.4. Elementary Principal Job Description

The Principal at Liberty Common School is accountable to the School's Headmaster, and will assume the role of the Headmaster in his or her absence. The Principal works closely with the Headmaster and other faculty and staff to successfully fulfill the responsibilities that follow.

Leadership

- Maintain academic excellence at Liberty Common Staff by promoting the vision of the school
- Work with the Headmaster and the Board of Directors to achieve school-wide goals
- Motivate and unify staff and faculty
- Assist with curriculum decisions
- Hold weekly staff meetings
- Assist with professional development opportunities
- Attend all executive, finance, and administrative meetings
- Assist with public information nights
- Head school wide functions (ie. Fall Festival, Winter Carnival, Olympic Day, May Fest)
- Conduct monthly character education assemblies

Educational Mentoring

- Assure that the curriculum and its delivery is academically sound and consistent with the Core Knowledge sequence
- Develop yearly accountability report to Poudre School District
- Lead school wide Assessment Data Interpretation and the development of Data driven instructional goals

School and Staff Management

- Oversee the hiring and retention of LCS staff
- Monitor staff leave requests
- Develop and audit safety procedures each year
- Maintain a school schedule that fosters teaming between teachers
- Athletic Director for the elementary students
- Manage facility usage
- Manage and monitor school wide discipline

- Observe and evaluate staff
- Evaluate personnel performance at the end of the year

Non-Academic Personnel

- Ensure effective performance, communication, and professionalism among all non-academic staff
- Oversee all non-academic programs
- Administrative staff
- Health office
- Custodial services
- Lunchroom attendants
- Playground monitors
- Before and after school care

Finances - Work with Business Manager to coordinate school activities and cost of LCS operations

Character Education—Develops and oversees implementation of the character education program, which is based on the school’s established foundational character traits.

Student Life - Develops and encourages a positive school culture and school traditions with the help of all faculty, staff, and administration. Develop student connectedness to the school. Ensure student security and safety.

Student Behavior - Lead school-wide programs and efforts related to managing student behavior including establishing discipline policies. Responsibilities in this area include communication with parents, detention procedures, and dress code compliance.

Adopted: 6-28-01

Amended: 5-06-04

Amended 12/3/2011

3.5. High School Principal Job Description

Oversee all academic programs 7-12.

Curriculum.

- Monitor implementation and effectiveness of curriculum in classrooms.
- Confer with teachers on curriculum issues.
- Confer with parents on curriculum issues.
- Advise BOD on curriculum issues.

- Research programs and textbook offerings.
- Work with AAC and other academic committees.
- Oversee teacher professional development.

Classroom Instruction.

- Observe classroom instruction; document observations.
- Confer with teachers and provide corrective strategies, as needed.
- Track academic progress in all academic subjects.
- Meet with teachers and parents regarding students' academic performance, as needed.

Assessments.

- Analyze test results; create reports for Board and parent community.

Supervision of Teachers.

- Make hiring, retention and firing decisions for teachers.
- Manage staff performance improvement.
- Develop and monitor remediation process for teachers, as needed.
- Provide evaluations for teachers.

Staff Meetings.

- Lead staff meetings.
- Arrange for outside training services, as needed.

Principal Meetings.

- Attend District Principal meetings as needed.
- Attend Charter-School leadership meetings.

District and State Reports.

- Write and submit district and state reports in a timely manner.
- Write school accountability plan.
- Complete Assessment Data Interpretation and the development of Data driven Instructional goals.

Communication with Board.

- Prepare LCHS Principal Report to BOD.
- Advise BOD of relevant issues in timely manner.

Communication with Parents.

- Supervise weekly communications with the parent population.
- Maintain mass- and targeted communication with school community.

Development of Policies.

- Develop new policies and revisions for BOD as needed.

Salaries and Performance Pay.

- Develop compensation adjustments for all LCHS staff for Headmaster approval.

Supervision of non-educator/office Staff.

- Make hiring and retention decisions.
- Supervise job performance.
- Determine areas of responsibility.

Budget.

- Work with Business Manager, advise BOD of relevant issues in a timely manner.

Set goals for LCHS.

- Identify weaknesses.
- Identify strengths.
- Manage improvement.
- Conduct net assessment of LCHS.

Assist in carrying out expansion plans.

- Classrooms.
- Gymnasium.
- Engineering labs.
- Athletic program/facilities.

Carry out innovation improvements.

- Technology.
- Engineering, science equipment, labs.
- Establish, expand academic relationships – CSU, Front Range, private sector, etc.

- Foreign-language.
- Music program.
- Theatre.
- Art.

Foster maturity of House System.

Grow and formalize fund-raising strategies.

Expand media exposure including social media.

Adopted 12/3/2011

3.6. Dean of Students

3.7. College Counselor/Administrator Job Description

General

The College Planning Counselor/Administrator at Liberty Common School is accountable to the School's Headmaster and High School Principal. The College Planning Counselor/Administrator works closely with the Headmaster, High School Principal and other faculty and staff to successfully fulfill the responsibilities of a College Planning Counselor and Junior High Athletic Director.

College Counselor

- Assist all students (returning and new) with registration process and course selection.
- Assure students have proper courses for graduation and college entrance.
- Communicate with parents/guardians in regards to student course deficiencies for graduation and college entrance.
- Assist the administration in the design and implementation of the Liberty Common High School information nights.
- Coordinate all college level entrance tests.
- Promote, market, and connect Liberty Common High School to colleges and universities.
- Assist in development and maintenance of a course catalog and course selection sheet.
- Provide newsletters and other information to parents/guardians and students that relate to testing dates, college visitation dates, deadlines for filing applications, presentations that are held for career speakers and dates of military recruiter visits.
- Maintain a library of catalogs, pamphlets and directories from colleges, technical schools and military academies. This information shall include forms, scholarship

information, financial aid information, military services information and occupational briefs.

- Identify and promote appropriate College Fairs.
- Coordinate individual visits from college representatives.
- Initiate contacts with professionals in the community and arrange for students to job shadow.
- Assist outside agencies visiting the school and speaking to groups of interested students. This shall include military, college and technical school representatives and representatives of careers available without post-secondary training.
- Process post-secondary and scholarship applications.
- Write letters of recommendation for students who want to enter post-secondary institutions or are applying for jobs.
- Prepare and process scholarship materials; establish, organize and meet with scholarship committees; make scholarship applications available to students; and guide students through the total process.
- Be responsible for programming meetings with the parents/guardians of seniors to explain financial aid.
- Guide students through the entire college preparation process -- touring prospective colleges; deciding which colleges to apply to; completing and submitting applications by the deadline; registering for SAT and other admissions tests; and securing financial aid, scholarships and other forms of financial assistance,"
- Introduce students to online resources (Naviance).
- Maintain a college planning website for LCHS students and parents.

3.8. High School Athletic Director/Administrator Job Description

- Oversee athletic programs
- Maintain records for all student release forms, assuring all participating athletes have a current physical form on file.
- Responsible for the scheduling of all High School athletic events.
- Run a grade report for active athletes each week to determine eligibility, and communicate this information to students, coaches, teachers, and parents.
- Manage the parent carpool, assuring that all parents participating in the carpool have the necessary paperwork on file.
- Manage the bus schedule for games at other schools.
- Attend all home high school athletic events.
- Attend all NCIL Athletic Director meetings.
- Communicate with the Business Manager regarding all coach's stipends and salaries.

Administrative responsibilities

- Provide administrative coverage when the headmaster or principal are not in the building.
- Assist in supervision and coverage of school events.
- Actively participate and serve as a member of the High School administrative team.
- Serve as School Assessment Coordinator for the Upper School.
- Head the creation of the Master Schedule for the Upper School.

Minimum Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university and demonstrated teaching experience at the lower, middle or upper school level.
- Possesses the ability to work with adolescents.
- Adheres to the standards of professional ethics and exercises discretion in dealing with confidential information.

Desired Qualification

- Master's degree and/or two years of experience in a college counseling role.
- Demonstrates ability to work independently and with others as a member of a school team.

Adopted 12/3/2011

3.9. Subject Specialist

According to Liberty Common School's Charter:

1. The School's curriculum, and the Thinking Framework within which it is delivered, requires specialization as the students progress through the grades. For this reason, teachers in the upper grades are to have advanced training in their specialty (English, Math, Science, or History/Economics). The typical training of an elementary teacher does not prepare them to deliver the Core Knowledge Sequence, nor the related thinking skills required. (*Section (d) I. A. School Design, page 12**)
2. "The interaction of faculty between lower and higher level classes is fundamental to providing the preparation support, higher order thinking mentoring, and the coherence of the curriculum which builds on itself over time." (*Section (d) I. A. School Design, page 13*)
3. "Upper grade teachers will mentor elementary grade teachers in their areas of specialization. They will help ensure continuity in subject content throughout the curriculum." (*Summary, page 2*)

In order to meet these requirements of our Charter, Upper School Specialists:

- Have primary oversight responsibility for the academic programs of the school in the areas of English, Math, Science, and History/Economics. Report annually to the

- Headmaster and the BOD about the state of the curriculum and skill development in their area of academic specialty.
- Assist in developing improvements to the K-8 curriculum as directed by the BOD.
 - Oversee continuity of subject content and cohesive delivery across all grades.
 - Review content and skills assessments and other methods of gathering data to assess student progress in English, Math, Science, and History/Economics. Recommend necessary improvements and changes based on assessment data to staff, Headmaster, or BOD as appropriate.
 - Train and mentor teachers in the content of the Specialist's area of academic expertise.
 - Suggest opportunities for teaching English, Math, Science, or History/Economics across disciplines such as identifying historical connections in literature, historical roots of math concepts, economic concepts in politics, Latin vocabulary in science, and cooperative projects between teachers in all areas.
 - Define the specific critical thinking skills unique to their area of specialization, i.e. the Habits of Mind. References for Habits of Mind in Science, Math and History are included in the Charter (*Section (d) I. B. Philosophy and Approach, Skills, page 16*).
 - Train and mentor teachers and suggest methods for teaching skills (which are reading, writing, speaking, listening, calculating, and thinking) (*Section (d) I. A. School Design, page 13*) in accordance with our Charter which requires skill instruction integrated with content. (*Section (d) I. B. Philosophy and Approach, Skills, page 15*).
 - Communicate regularly with Headmaster on issues of scientific, historical, mathematical and/or English literacy at Liberty Common School.
 - Communicate regularly and professionally with colleagues.
 - Communicate annually, or on an as needed basis, with the BOD on the progress of their mentoring program and advancement of the curriculum in their area of academic expertise.
 - Have and continue to seek advanced training annually in order to bring new ideas, programs and curriculum to school at various grade levels. Present annual plan for advancement and training and assesses need for and requests budget for necessary training for self and others.
 - Teach content classes for grades 7-9 and follow all criteria for the Teacher job description.
 - Develops annual plan for advancement and refinement of Upper School Specialist job including requests for funding and compensation.

** Page numbers correspond to those in the original Charter document written and submitted by parents to the PSD Board of Education on October 1, 1996. The on-line version of the Charter may have different pagination.*

Adopted 7-25-02

3.10. Board Notification

The Headmaster will notify the Board of Directors of any law enforcement or social services investigation which takes place on school grounds involving students, volunteers, employees, or parents. The Headmaster will inform the BOD that the investigation occurred and, unless instructed otherwise by law enforcement officials or Liberty's legal counsel, the nature of the investigation. The Headmaster will not disclose names of the individuals involved unless it is public record, or necessary to ensure safety at the school.

Adopted 5-20-04

4. Personnel

4.1. Employee Manual

Refer to Employee Manual for additional information regarding employees.

4.2. Selection of School Staff

The Board's specific personnel service goals are as follows:

1. Recruit, select, employ, train, and retain the best-qualified personnel available to staff the school. This staff will be committed to the Core Knowledge curriculum (K-8th) and subject matter experts (High School) and share the vision of the school as described in the charter.
2. Provide equal employment opportunities for all candidates for positions in accordance with the board's non-discrimination policy. Develop high quality human relationships conducive to high levels of staff performance and satisfaction.
3. Interview committees may consist of members of the personnel committee, Board members, Headmaster, Principals, other staff members, and others appointed by the Board.
4. Develop and manage staff compensation, leave, and benefit programs in ways that attract and retain qualified employees.
5. Manage the development and updating of job descriptions by appropriate administrators.
6. Oversee an employee evaluation program that contributes to the improvement of staff performance and professional development.
7. Effectively administer contracts and personnel policies with the aim of safeguarding good relations between the board and its staff.

Adopted: 6-28-01

Amended 12/3/2011

4.3. Teacher Evaluations

Information regarding teacher evaluations can be found in the employee manual.

At-will provision: Notwithstanding this policy, teachers may be terminated by the Headmaster, at their sole and absolute discretion, with or without cause. Each teacher specifically acknowledges, by signed contract, that he/she is an at-will employee and that there have been no promises of continued employment at Liberty Common School from any of its agents or representatives.

Adopted: 6-28-01

4.4. Staff Conflicts of Interest

At no time shall any employees of Liberty Common School engage in any employment that would (1) affect their usefulness as employees of the school; (2) make time and/or energy demands upon the employees that interfere with their effectiveness in performing their contractual duties; (3) compromise or embarrass the school; (4) adversely affect their employment status or professional standing; or (5) in any way conflict with or violate professional ethics.

Teachers shall not engage in any other employment or in any private business during the hours required to fulfill assigned educational duties.

Employees shall not sell any books, supplies, musical instruments, or equipment to any student or to the parents or guardian of a student unless prior approval has been received from the Headmaster.

No administrator shall be responsible for the supervision and or evaluation of a relative.

No member of the Board of Directors shall be responsible for evaluation of a complaint against a family member.

Adopted: 6-28-01

4.5. Sexual Harassment

Refer to Employee Manual

4.6 Leave of Absence Policy

All employees are expected to work the scheduled workdays in the calendar year.

The purpose of this policy is to recognize the occasional need for an employee to be excused from a regular workday based on varying reasons and personal circumstances.

Leave Day classifications as outlined below are intended to: 1) define rules or conditions and will serve as a general guideline for an employee requesting leave days from regular or daily school assignments, 2) serve as policy and procedure for administrative guidance and compliance, and 3) for BOD governance.

A. Short Term Leaves - Paid Days

i) Flex Time Off

Flex Time Off (FTO) provides all full-time staff members with paid time away from work that can be used for personal time, personal illness, or time off to care for dependents. All time away will be deducted from the employee's FTO bank with exceptions of time off in accordance to Liberty's policy for jury duty, military duty, and FMLA leave.

Teaching and non-teaching staff are entitled to eight (8) days of FTO per year.

Flex days accrued beyond sixteen (16) days will be paid out annually at \$80 each for all employees. Employees can bank a maximum of 16 days. For example, a teacher could have 16 days in the bank and 8 days for the year which would provide them with 24 days to use in the current year. The intent of banked days is to be used in the event of significant injury or illness.

Employees will receive 8 flex days at the start of each year and will be asked to sign off on days used. Employees that have over used their 8 flex days and any banked days shall be deducted in their June paycheck. Any unused flex days at the end of employment at Liberty Common School will be surrendered to the employer.

Use of flex days for personal time off is not allowed immediately before or after scheduled school breaks and holidays. Extreme circumstances will be evaluated on a case by case basis by the Principal. Employees are encouraged to be consecutive in their use of flex days.

Use of any flex days requires prior permission from the building principal. Failure to do so may result in unpaid days.

ii) Vacation Time

(10) days annually for non-teaching staff members to be taken in the summer subject to administrative approval. Summer break at the end of the academic school year is vacation time for faculty.

iii) Paternity Leave

(5) days of paternity leave may be taken from accumulated sick leave days, not contiguous with holidays, or use of sick days for personal reasons.

iv) Professional Time

Employee will be granted a limited number of days for professional reasons. Requests are made directly to the building Principal who will have discretion to authorize.

v) Jury Duty/Witness Leave

Employee will be released for any required jury duty or witness process.

vi) Bereavement Leave

Employee is granted 5 days in case of death of a nuclear family member (spouse, child, employee parent or spouse's parent). Employee may request to leave during a workday to attend funeral services for anyone. Requests are directed to the building Principal for approval.

B. Short Term Leaves - Unpaid Days

i) Religious Observance

Employee may request a full leave day or partial day to participate in a religious observance. Requests are directed to the building Principal for approval.

C. Long Term Leaves - Unpaid Days

i) Sabbatical Leave

Employee (Faculty member only) may request a sabbatical leave for 50% of a school year or for 100% of a school year. A written request will be directed to the Headmaster who will then recommend support or non-support to the BOD within a reasonable time. Return from a sabbatical is not guaranteed because the school is an "At-Will" employer. Any accrued compensation and benefits will be paid out to employee at the beginning of a sabbatical leave.

Recommended professional development as may be outlined in a performance evaluation falls outside the parameters of this leave category.

ii) Family Extended Leave

Employee may request a family leave for the purpose of: 1) birth of his/her child or to care for his/her child following birth, 2) placement of a child with employee for adoption or foster care, and 3) serious health condition of employees' child, spouse, parent, sister or brother. The school will comply with any provisions of the federal law - The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993. The website link provided here gives details of the law.

http://www.dol.gov/dol/allcfr/ESA/Title_29/Part_825/toc.htm

D. Maternity Leave

For full-time teachers:

1. Up to Six work weeks paid for female maternity leave based on years of service.

Sliding scale as follows:

- a. 1st year = 1 week paid
- b. 2nd year = 2 weeks paid
- c. 3rd year = 3 weeks paid
- d. 4th year = 4 weeks paid
- e. 5th year = 5 weeks paid
- f. 6th year and beyond = 6 weeks paid

** Liberty Common School adheres to all FMLA rules and regulations**

2. Employer contributions for Benefits will continue to be paid for three calendar months according to the following schedule: For employees that leave by the 15th of the month, benefits will be paid for that month and two subsequent months. For employees that leave after the 15th of the month, benefits will be paid for that month and three subsequent months. During the period that the benefits are covered the job will be protected should the employee desire to return.

For all other employees receiving employer contributions for their benefits:

3. Employer contributions for Benefits will continue to be paid for three calendar months according to the following schedule: For employees that leave by the 15th of the month, benefits will be paid for that month and two subsequent months. For employees that leave after the 15th of the month, benefits will be paid for that month and three subsequent months. During the period that the benefits are covered the job will be protected should the employee desire to return.

Adopted: February 19, 2004

Revised: April 21, 2005

Revised: June 21, 2007

Revised: 12/3/2011

Revised: 11/21/2013

5. Students

5.1. Student Handbook

Yearly Student Handbook Available in Front Office

5.2. Student Accountability

All quality students are capable of learning to accept responsibility for their own education and behavior by arriving on time, turning in homework and class work on time, being prepared with class supplies, etc., and taking responsibility for their actions. The philosophy and practices this school incorporates acknowledge that young people are free to act and are therefore moral “agents”, accountable for their actions. Our policies will

encourage discipline, hard work, cooperation, decision-making and acceptance of the consequences for decisions made. Such policies, and a clear understanding of academic expectations, help our students to choose their quest for intellectual and personal growth. The students' sense of alignment between their personal educational goals and those of their school further reinforce their desire to accept responsibility for their education. Such an approach to student accountability has been termed "agency education." (See PHILOSOPHY) In addition, all students and their parents **MUST** read and adhere to the Student/Parent Contract (see appendix A) and the handbook.

Adopted 6-28-01

5.3. **Good Sportsmanship**

What is sportsmanship?

Good sportsmanship is viewed by the National Federation of State High School Associations as a commitment to fair play, ethical behavior and integrity. In perception and practice, sportsmanship is defined as those qualities which are characterized by generosity and genuine concern for others:

- Play fair, take loss or defeat without complaint or victory without gloating
- Treat others as you wish to be treated
- Respect others and one's self
- Impose self-control, be courteous, and gracefully accept the results of one's actions
- Display ethical behavior by being good (character) and doing what is right (action)
- Be a good citizen.

Sportsmanship Traits

Respect is showing high regard for coaches, officials, opponents, fans, administrators, self, team, and the school you are representing.

Responsibility is being dependable in carrying out obligations and duties, showing reliability and consistency in words and conduct, and being accountable for your actions.

Self-Control is demonstrating hard work and commitment to purpose, regulating yourself for improvement and refraining from inappropriate behaviors, maintaining composure at all times and doing your best in all situations

Integrity is having the inner strength to be fair and courteous during athletic events, doing the right thing when others don't, to play according to the rules, acting positively and honorably not only to your team, but to your opponent

Perseverance is being persistent in pursuit of worth objectives in spite of opposition, difficulty, injuries, handicaps or discouragement and exhibiting patience and having the fortitude to try again when confronted with mistakes or failures

Cooperation is working together, being considerate and courteous to the opposing team and officials, following the rules, understand that to be successful we must all work together in achieving our common goals

Citizenship setting priorities in agreement with league and team rules, leading others to follow and abide by these rules, being a good student/athlete by maintaining good grades and being a good role model.

Sportsmanship at Liberty Common School

- A positive attitude is the highest quality needed to play sports and to be successful in life. Attitudes are contagious, be sure to have a positive one.
- Emphasize the proper ideals of sportsmanship, ethical conduct and fair play.
- Show courtesy to visiting teams and officials
- Establish a good relationship with visiting team and fans.
- Respect the judgment and integrity of the sports officials.
- Cheering should be for our team, not against the opponents.
- Achieve thorough understanding and acceptance of the rules of the game and standards of eligibility.
- Remember that an athletic contest is a game – not a matter of life or death for player, coach, school, official, fan, community, state, or nation.
- Parents have to demonstrate good sportsmanship and serve as role models.
- No vulgar or inappropriate language on or off the court by anyone on the team.
- Taunting and trash-talking will not be tolerated.
- Outsiders must never intrude upon the court or field during a contest.
- Understand that the purpose of athletics is to promote the physical, mental, moral, social, and emotional well-being of the individual players.
- No players are allowed to talk to the game officials. Only the coaches or speaking captain may address the officials.
- Be humble in victory and gracious in defeat.

Adopted 12/3/2011

5.4. Discipline

School discipline procedures are defined in The Liberty Common School Student/Parent Handbook for the current school year.

5.5. Tardy Policy

Tardiness is a form of absence and interferes with student learning. Late arrivals interrupt the learning environment and the daily procedures and will be handled in a serious manner. Liberty Common School Tardy policies for the Elementary and High School policy can be found in The Liberty Common School Student/Parent Handbook for the current school year.

Adopted 2-28-01
Amended 12/3/2011

5.6. Student Privacy

It is the policy of Liberty Common School to respect and protect the privacy of Liberty Common School students and families for unwonted intrusion. Therefore written parental consent must be obtained before students participate in any survey, analysis, evaluation, or test that reveals information about the student and or the student's family concerning political affiliations, religious beliefs, income, or mental or physical condition, sexual behavior and attitudes, parenting styles, substance abuse, or any other information that could be potentially embarrassing to the student and or the student's family.

Certain "directory information" including the student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, awards received, and other similar information may be released without parental consent unless the parent notifies the school in accordance with the Students Records Policy that they do not want certain designated directory information released without prior consent. Please complete the Directory Form if you DO NOT want your name, address, and phone number published in our school directory.

In addition, classroom activities and events sponsored by schools occasionally are photographed or videotaped by representatives of the news media for publication in newspapers or broadcast on television. If for any reason you DO NOT wish to have your student(s) photographed or videotaped for these purposes, please complete the Non-Permission Form. If this form is not completed and returned to the school, it will be assumed that you have given your approval. The non-permission form does not include the filming at The Liberty Common School musicals, plays, sporting events, or special events.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1984 is broadly outlined: Parents have rights over student records until the child is 18 years of age. Parents have the right to examine their child's records. The parent has the right to have their child's records corrected if the information is "inaccurate, misleading, or is otherwise in violation of the privacy or other rights of the student". A record must be kept with each student record showing who examined it, the date, and the purpose of the examination. School officials

and personnel of this district who have a legitimate education interest, are exempted from this requirement. Any person may receive the records if the parents execute a written consent, and the parents may request a copy of any student record released to another school for transfer.

Adopted 6-28-01
Amended 12/3/2011

5.7. Promotion Policy:

A. Elementary and Intermediate Students (K-6)

Our primary goal at the elementary levels is solid literacy. A child cannot go on to more complex studies if he or she does not have adequate reading skills. Not meeting any one of the following categories is grounds for retention. The policy for passing to the next grade is as follows:

1. Reading Level

A student may pass to the next grade if the child has adequate reading ability. For example, first graders must read at a minimum of 1.8 instructional level to pass to second grade; second graders must read at a minimum of 2.8 instructional level to pass to third grade; third graders must read at a minimum of 3.8 instructional level to pass to fourth grade; fourth graders must read at a minimum of 4.8 instructional level to pass to fifth grade. The teacher will test all students and determine grade level.

2. Phonograms (Kindergarten)

In addition, students in kindergarten must achieve mastery of the phonograms at the following levels:

- 100% of the first 45 phonograms taught.

3. Age

Age is the second criteria for placement in a grade level at Liberty Common School. A student must fall within district guidelines to enter a grade:

- A student must be 5 years old by September 15th to enter Kindergarten
- A student must be 6 years old by September 15th to enter first grade
- A student must be 7 years old by September 15th to enter second grade

4. Math Automaticity

Students must demonstrate math fact automaticity standards for his/her classroom by the end of the year.

NOTE: FPM = Facts Per Minute

Grade	Addition	Subtraction	Multiplication	Division
K	Not tested	Not tested	Not tested	Not tested
1*	Not timed to 9+9	Not timed to 18-9	Not tested	Not tested
2**	20FPM to 9+9	20 FPM to 18-9	Not tested	Not tested
3	20 FPM to 9+9	20 FPM to 18-9	15 FPM to 9x9	15 FPM to 81÷9
4	25FPM to 10 + 10	25 FPM to 18-9	20 FPM to 12x12	18 FPM to 144÷12
5	30 FPM to 10+10	30 FPM to 20-10	25 FPM to 12x12	25 FPM to 144÷12
6	35 FPM to 12+12	35 FPM to 20-10	35 FPM to 12x12	35 FPM to 144÷12

*1st Grade tests are limited to 15 min. and number lines are not available during the second semester

** 2nd Grade only tests during the second semester

5. Classroom Grades

Students need to be receiving grades that are at a passing level. We have determined that at or above a 70% is a passing level to be considered for promotion. This percentage is acquired by averaging the semester grades. Students with a cumulative failing grade (D or an F) at year-end in any two core classes or three or more failing grades in all classes (including specials and electives) will fail the grade and will not be promoted to the next grade.

The final determination for promotion will be made by STAT (Student, Teacher, Assistance Team), administration, and the classroom teacher. The parent will be notified in advance if retention is a possibility.

Special education students on IEPs with modified curriculum requirements will be considered separately from this policy.

B. Junior High School (grades 7-8)

It is our goal for parents, teachers, and students to work together during the year to ensure that student are developing responsible work habits and achieving at passing levels. We do not force a bell curve. Rather, our metaphor is that 70% is the bar, and all students need to “jump” that bar. For this reason a failing grade is defined as a D or an F in a subject. A student with one failing year-end grade in a core course (Math, English, History, or Science) will be required to remediate his/her grades by completing a summer school packet or attending Summer School.

Students with a cumulative failing grade at year-end in any two core classes or three or more failing grades in all classes (including specials and electives) will fail the grade and will not be promoted to the next grade.

Special education students on IEPs with modified curriculum requirements will be considered separately from this policy.

C. High School (9 –12)

Student must have a minimum amount of credits from the proper courses in order to be promoted to the next grade. To be considered a sophomore a student is required to have 60 credits, to be considered a junior a student is required to have 120 credits and to be considered a senior a student is required to have 180 credits. All students must meet the minimum credits required for each core content area as detailed in the high school graduation requirements.

D. Graduation Requirements:

SUBJECT	REQUIRED CREDITS
English	40
Western Literature	10
British Literature	10
American Literature	10
English Elective	10
Social Science	40
Western Civilization	10
World History	10
US History	10
American Government	5
Social Studies Elective	5
Economics	10
Math	40
Algebra 1 and above	40
Science	40
Biology	10
Chemistry	10
Physics	10
Science Elective	10
World Language	30
Spanish, French or Latin	30
Personal Finance	5
Introduction to Engineering	5
Health/PE	5
Subtotal	215
Elective Credit	25
Total Credit	240

Credit Enrollment Minimums:
Freshman= 70 credits
Sophomore= 70 credits
Junior= 70 credits *
Senior= 70 credits *
* = must have administrator approval to take less than 70 credits

Credit Benchmarks:
Sophomore= 60 credits
Junior= 120 credits
Senior= 180 credits

Transfer Credit
All credit earned at another institution will be considered as credit that can be put towards the completion of Liberty Common High School graduation requirements. Only courses taken at Liberty Common High School will count toward a student's GPA.

Valedictorian and Salutatorian
In order to qualify for valedictorian or salutatorian consideration, a student must have completed at least 120 credits at Liberty Common High School.

* Special education students on Individualized Education Plans with modified curriculum requirements will be considered separately from this policy.

Adopted 4-5-01

Amended 6-03-04
Amended 12/3/2011
Amended 4/19/2012

5.8. Interrogations and Searches

School administration will make every reasonable attempt to notify parents prior to permitting any person from outside the school, including law enforcement officials, to question or detain a student. In no circumstance will a student be questioned or detained without the presence of either a parent or school official; the school having legal custody of the student during the school day and during approved extra-curricular activities must ensure that each student's rights are protected.

Searches: All school property is under the control of the board and its officials. A search of school property (including, but not limited to lockers,) may be made at the discretion of school administration if a reasonable suspicion arises that items considered illegal, disruptive, or a general nuisance to the educational process are being kept at the school.

School officials will detain a student if there is a reasonable suspicion that a student has drugs, narcotics, weapons, explosives, or other dangerous contraband in his possession, and if such possession constitutes a clear and imminent danger to the safety and welfare of the student, other persons, or school property. Further, school officials will notify parents and the appropriate law enforcement agency of illegal possession of such materials.

Adopted: 6-28-01

5.9. Students Missing Class Time

It is necessary that students be in class each day to fully benefit from Liberty's rigorous academic program. It is reasonable that students will occasionally miss class due to illness, doctor appointments, or family emergencies. Such absences will be excused with a call from a parent. In these instances, students will be allowed to make-up tests and quizzes without penalty. The teacher will determine appropriate adjustments, if any, to due dates for late or missed assignments.

If parents are planning an unexcused absence (e.g., vacation, absence for special events), they must make advance arrangements with their child's teacher(s) to complete any work that will be missed. In the case of an unexcused absence, make-up test/quizzes and adjustments to assignment due dates may be allowed at the discretion of the teacher.

Recurring or routine absences from school are discouraged, however individual cases may be allowed at the discretion of the Headmaster and staff. In all instances, the student and teacher(s) must agree on a plan to ensure that the student remains current with all class requirements.

Junior High and High School students may leave during last period to participate in sports not offered by Liberty, or to participate in Liberty “away” athletic events, only if the student is in good academic standing, and the student and teacher have agreed on a plan to ensure that the student does not fall behind in their work. Students desiring to play sports are strongly encouraged to take electives or study hall for their last period class.

Adopted: 10-03-02
Amended 12/3/2011

6. PARENTS

6.1. Parental Involvement and Volunteering

Liberty is a school of choice. This means that parents have the option to choose, for their child, the philosophy of this school as articulated in the Charter. Liberty believes that the school’s design will result in parents wanting to play a strong role in their children’s education. When parents have the opportunity to choose the kind of education they prefer, they find the necessary energy, time, and resources to devote to their children’s education. Liberty anticipates that parents will be directly engaged in tutoring, coaching, classroom instruction, preparing resource materials, and providing other necessary and invaluable assistance.

The family naturally provides the most influential and effective context for basic lifelong learning and teaching. For this reason, and at the discretion of the classroom teacher or headmaster, parents are invited to teach or assist with learning projects in all subjects, depending on their interests and expertise. Parents are also encouraged to spend time reading aloud to children at school and/or in the home, coaching them in skill development, and otherwise contributing time and talents in a variety of ways. Parents with children in a specific grade level will have opportunity to volunteer in that grade at the teacher’s discretion.

Parent Involvement, Observation, and Volunteering

Liberty Common School is a charter school. As such, there are many new ideas being implemented. The classroom itself is the context for several of these innovations. There is great emphasis on parent volunteers in this school. There is also a need to establish a learning environment that best serves the students. At Liberty Common School we have defined the general parameters for parents volunteering in Liberty School classrooms.

1. Parent volunteers are an integral part of the Liberty Common School. Parents are not only welcome, but also crucial if we are to have high quality teaching of the entire curriculum each year. Primary and Intermediate parent volunteer activities are coordinated by Liberty’s Classroom Volunteer Coordinators. Volunteers in school must have a signed and current volunteer form on file with the school Classroom Volunteer Coordinator.

2. The teacher's "individual teaching style" sets the tone for the classroom. This includes everything from delivery of the educational program to classroom management. The teacher has primary responsibility for the classroom and student learning within the classroom.
3. Parents who wish to be volunteering in the classroom need to learn the teaching style of the teacher they wish to assist. If the teaching style conflicts with the parent's volunteering style, the parent will need to either adjust their style or find a more compatible setting within Liberty to volunteer.
4. There will be a classroom volunteer coordinator (CVC) for each primary and intermediate classroom. This parent will be responsible for organizing and delegating the volunteer needs both of the teacher/classroom and the parents.
5. Any grievance or concern a parent has with a classroom or a teacher will be handled by the procedures defined in this handbook.
6. Under **NO CIRCUMSTANCE** is it ever acceptable for a parent/volunteer to confront a teacher about an issue *"in the classroom, or any other part of the school, when students are present."*

Liberty encourages every adult—parents, stepparents, grandparents, aunts and uncles—to take a special interest in the lives of Liberty's students, to act as mentors and tutors, and to instill in every student a love of learning.

Parents work in conjunction with the staff to ensure the most effective education possible for their children. To this end, parents are responsible for knowing and understanding the contents of Liberty's Charter, and are encouraged, but not required, to participate on school committees and provide other volunteer services, as they are able.

Parents are a welcome and encouraged to participate in the school, to reasonably observe and/or assist the teacher. However, any parent whose presence or actions are deemed by the teacher and headmaster to be a distraction, to exhibit hostility, or to interfere with the instruction or learning of the students, will be barred from the school.

In order to create a consistent school atmosphere for learning, parents wishing to observe a class must arrive before class begins. Each class will have two teacher-provided chairs for observers. Observing parents do not participate in classroom activities unless invited to do so by the teachers, and observers must not interrupt teachers and/or students. Observers may take a few notes; however computers, tape recording, etc. may be a distraction to students and are not permitted. Primary and Intermediate Parents wishing to be active in Liberty Common School and volunteer in various ways must go through procedures given by the Classroom Volunteer Coordinators. Parents will receive specific training in areas of interest to them so that they may be the most efficient helpers.

Adopted 6-28-01

7. Educational Program

7.1. Educational Priorities

The BOD desires that all students receive a classical liberal education. To do so, the appropriate skills must be developed by each student. Therefore, the BOD has determined the following educational priorities:

1. Reading/Writing
2. Math/Arithmetic
3. Arts and Sciences

Fundamental skills-Reading/Writing/Math

- Reading is our first priority. This means the ability to read at grade level supersedes all other academic goals for students.
- All fundamental skill areas in the Core Knowledge Sequence are to be taught. When a conflict exists between the timeline of a skill program utilized at the school and the timeline of the Core Knowledge Sequence, teachers should follow the timeline on the skill program.
- Teachers are to inform the Principal of any inconsistencies between the Core Knowledge Sequence and a skill program.
- The BOD directs the Principal to ensure that all skill areas in the K-8 Core Knowledge Sequence are taught at some point in grades K-8.

Content Areas

- Content area priorities are determined first by the Core Knowledge Sequence.
- The BOD may, at its discretion, identify areas of emphasis in the Sequence. These items will be documented in the form of a directive to the Headmaster.
- The BOD may approve additions to the Core Knowledge Sequence to be taught at the school. (e.g. computer technology, foreign languages, band, economics). The BOD directs the principal to maintain curriculum outlines for such additions.

College Preparation – Secondary Education

- The high-school years at Liberty are devoted to preparing students to excel in college.
- The high-school curriculum shall be consistent with a classical education building upon the Core Knowledge Sequence.
- Character education will be enhanced and amplified throughout the high-school years suffusing meaning to the K-6 “Foundation Stones” with “Capstones” rooted in classical philosophy and the “Keystone” of wisdom.
- The high school will maintain excellence through its core, classical approach to humanities.

- The high school will accentuate math, science and engineering through enhanced requirements and rigor notably beyond the norm of mainstream American high schools.

Adopted: 5-27-00
Amended 12/3/2011

7.2. Equal Educational Opportunity

It is the policy of Liberty Common School to make all educational services available without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex or disability.

Adopted: 2-24-97

7.3. Policy on Teaching Science

We are committed to providing an excellent education with an additional emphasis on science, as outlined in our Charter. The foundation of our science curriculum is contained in the Core Knowledge Sequence. Our high school science program requires all students to complete biology, chemistry, and physics, plus one elective science course.

We adhere to the following view of science:

Science is not just a body of knowledge that reflects current understanding of the world; it is also a set of practices used to establish, extend, and refine that knowledge. Both elements—knowledge and practice—are essential.

In science, knowledge, based on evidence from many investigations, is integrated into highly developed and well-tested theories that can explain bodies of data and predict outcomes of further investigations. Although the practices used to develop scientific theories (as well as the form that those theories take) differ from one domain of science to another, all sciences share certain common features at the core of their inquiry-based and problem-solving approaches. Chief among these features is a commitment to data and evidence as the foundation for developing claims. [*A Framework for K-12 Science Education: Practices, Crosscutting Concepts, and Core Ideas*, National Academies Press, 2012, p. 26-7]

Principles for Teaching Origins:

- Topics such as evolution and the Big Bang model of cosmology can lead to discussions about whether or not supernatural forces play a role in the origin of the universe, the origin of life, and the origin of human beings. The role (a presence or an absence) of the supernatural in natural events is beyond what we will discuss in science classes.
- Topics such as Creationism (origins explained by reference to a deity), Intelligent Design (origins explained by reference to an unspecified designer), and Metaphysical

Naturalism (the philosophy that the natural world is all that exists) extend beyond the scope of a high school science curriculum and will not be taught.

- As with other topics in grades K-8, we will adhere to the Core Knowledge Sequence for determining when the theory of evolution is introduced to students (7th grade) and which subtopics will be covered.

Curriculum Considerations

Science text books which support the Core Knowledge Science Sequence and the High School Science program have been approved for use in some grades. These are:

Science textbooks

5th grade uses the Prentice Hall Science Explorer series books From Bacteria to Plants and Chemical Building Blocks.

6th grade uses the Prentice Hall Science Explorer series books Astronomy, Earth's Water, Inside Earth, Motion, Forces, and Energy.

7th grade uses Glencoe Science Introduction to Physical Science, and the Prentice Hall Science series books Cells, Heredity, Evolution.

8th grade uses Glencoe Science Introduction to Physical Science, and the Prentice Hall Science series book Human Biology and Health.

9th grade biology uses Prentice Hall Biology (2006) by Miller and Levine.

10th grade chemistry uses Prentice Hall Chemistry by Wilbraham, et al.

11th grade physics uses Holt Physics by Serway and Faughn.

11th grade conceptual physics uses Prentice Hall Conceptual Physics by Hewitt.

Natural Disasters uses The Weather Book by Jack Williams and the Prentice Hall Science Series book Exploring Earth's Weather.

Astronomy elective uses Journey to the Cosmic Frontier by John D. Fix.

Earth Science elective uses Earth Science by Tarbuck and Lutgens.

Anatomy and physiology uses Essentials of Human Anatomy and Physiology by Elaine N. Marieb and Martini's Atlas of the Human Body by Frederic Martini

AP Biology uses Campbell Biology, AP 9th Edition by Reece, et al.

AP Chemistry uses Chemistry, The Central Science 12th AP Edition by Brown.

Calculus Based Physics 1 and 2 use Matter & Interaction by Chabay and Sherwood

Adopted: 9-07-00

Amended: 1-20-05

Amended 12/3/2011

Amended: 5/22/2014

7.4. Teaching Human Sexuality

Parents own the fundamental responsibility for their children's education, which includes the areas of morality and sexuality. The school's role should be viewed as a supportive one. It is apparent that sexuality is more than biology and physiology. It also includes the emotions. Because it is a part of the whole human experience, in teaching it, it must be treated with respect and sensitivity.

Children are naturally modest concerning their body and its functions and are not ready to learn everything at once. They are naturally curious, however, and need to get answers to their questions in a way appropriate to their stage of development. In teaching this topic, we want to minimize the embarrassment associated with it for both children and parents.

We refer parents to chapters 1 and 3 of *Why Johnny Can't Tell Right from Wrong*, by William Kilpatrick, as a supporting reference for our philosophy on teaching human sexuality.

What is our plan for moving forward?

We will adhere to the Core Knowledge Sequence which includes human reproduction in fifth grade science. These discussions will occur during regular school hours in gender-separated environment. Parents will be notified in advance and invited to attend class with their child. An alternative activity will be provided for students whose parents choose to excuse their child from the class.

The fifth grade material dealing with human sexuality and reproduction will be repeated in an evening class. In addition, we will provide additional evening classes on human sexuality geared toward seventh and ninth grades. The evening presentations will also be separated by gender, and parents will have the opportunity to preview the material to be covered. Parents may choose to attend any of the evening classes with or without their child.

Why does the Board of Directors want human sexuality taught at Liberty?

1. Character education is part of our program. Sexuality involves serious moral decision-making. It is important to help children build the capacity to make sound moral choices and to live them out.

2. The biology portion of the Core Knowledge Sequence for 5th grade is linked to human sexuality and leads to discussions on this topic.
3. Because we teach human reproduction per the Core Knowledge Sequence, we would like to offer a springboard to initiate and facilitate discussions between parents and children on this sensitive subject.

What are the principles the BOD wants to communicate?

1. Sexuality in practice is best accompanied by marital commitment and fidelity.
2. Premarital abstinence is a positive, practical, achievable lifestyle that promotes self-control, self-respect, respect for others, responsibility, maturity, and good health.
3. Abstinence is the only 100% safe approach to sex physically, emotionally, and morally.
4. The program will include discussion on sexually transmitted diseases (including AIDS), condoms (only with respect to their limited effectiveness in prevention of sexually transmitted diseases), and fetal development.

Adopted: Sept 2000

7.5. Field Trips:

A. Purpose

To establish a policy and related procedures for field trips that involves students, parents, faculty, staff and/or persons. Liberty Common School recognizes the importance of out of classroom experiences for students.

B. Definition

“Field Trip” means a journey or excursion away from school grounds, involving two or more persons that is organized and/or sponsored by the school or by an authorized employee of the school, for curricular relevance.

C. Guidelines for K - 6 field trips

- All field trips must have curricular relevance and are considered part of the school day.
- The school faculty or staff member (i.e. the “trip director”) designated to be in charge of a field trip has the responsibility to enforce compliance with school policy by all persons participating in the field trip.
- The trip director must obtain assurance, prior to the commencement of the field trip, that any personal vehicle used on the field trip will be covered by liability insurance.
- The trip director is responsible for ensuring that all students are accounted for on departure, arrival at destination(s) and on return, except those brought by their own parents.

- The parent or guardian of each student participant must sign a Field Trip Permission Slip.
- No student is allowed to leave the field trip with anyone but his or her parent or guardian without notifying the trip director prior to initial departure without director approval.
- A Poudre School District bus must be used for all out of town field trips that are approximately 10 miles beyond the city limits of Fort Collins. A bus may also be required for a closer area at the teacher's discretion.
- When a bus is required all students must ride on the school bus or with their own parent.
- Siblings will not be allowed to ride on a Poudre School District bus. It is up to the teacher's discretion to determine the number of chaperones and siblings allowed on each field trip.
- All drivers must provide proof of current insurance and valid Colorado driver's license.

***UPPER SCHOOL POLICY**

All bullets above apply. In the case that a Poudre School District bus is not available or fewer than 20 students attend, prohibiting the cost of a bus, exceptions may be considered and approved by the Principal or the Headmaster.

Adopted: 5-4-00

7.6. Student Publications

Liberty Common School encourages students to express their views in school-sponsored publications, but they must observe rules for responsible journalism. This means that libelous statements, obscenities, defamation of persons, false statements, material advocating racial or religious prejudice, hatred, violence, the breaking of laws or school regulations, or material designed to disrupt the educational process will not be permitted.

The school also encourages school-sponsored publications as an educational activity through which students can gain experience in reporting, writing, editing and an understanding of responsible journalism. The sponsors or teachers of the student publications have the responsibility to review the contents of these papers before publication and to assist students in improving their skills and modes of expression, and to recognize material that is in poor taste, misleading, false, ill-advised, prejudiced or libelous. Final responsibility for school publications lies with the Headmaster.

Review of the content of school-sponsored publications prior to publication is not censorship, but part of the educational process. A publisher (in this case, the school) enjoys freedom to determine what it will and will not publish, and the school is free to impose restrictions on school-sponsored expression that it deems necessary for pedagogical purposes.

Adopted 6-28-01

7.7. Technology Policy

VISION:

To use established and evolving computer technologies to increase the ~~capabilities and~~ productivity of all teachers and staff for the benefit of the students. To provide all students with the technical, productivity, research and problem-solving skills necessary for college and future careers, while supporting and enhancing learning within the Core Knowledge curriculum in grades K-8. To prepare upper-school students having a specific interest in technology for entry into college computer technology programs.

Teacher Productivity

Teacher Productivity refers to the ability to work efficiently, effectively, and with minimal distraction to accomplish tasks, both inside and outside the class to maximize student learning.

- Facilitate effective assignment preparation.
- Provide teachers and staff with reliable productivity, communication, and collaboration tools.
- Provide appropriate devices for classroom instruction.
- Provide training in the use of appropriate technology.

Teach Computer Technology

- Computer classes are taught to evolve critical skills, increase student productivity, and prepare students for college and future careers.
- Critical skills taught to all students include basic computer use; keyboarding; creating documents, presentations and spreadsheets using industry-standard applications; doing online research; and problem-solving. These skills support learning and productivity in other Liberty classes, as well as prepare students for success in college and future careers.
- More in-depth technology classes, such as hardware and programming classes, are available to upper-level students interested in learning more or preparing for technology-related college programs.

Integrate Software-based Technology to support the curriculum –Integration refers to the evaluation, testing, and implementation of technology that has demonstrated effectiveness in meeting the goals of the core knowledge curriculum, enhancing and maximizing student learning and teaching effectiveness.

- Utilize computer-based evaluative tools.
- Offer skill-building opportunities.

- Create a safe and appropriate environment for internet research.
- Facilitate effective assignment preparation.

Support Computer Technology – Supporting Computer Technology refers to the activities that fundamentally support the effective use of technology by staff and students to meet established goals.

- Help staff and students understand the appropriate role of technology in the Core Knowledge curriculum and college preparation arena.
- Provide appropriate assistance to staff and students in the use of technology
- Seek ways to include area university students in assisting where both parties benefit.
- Encourage the involvement of knowledgeable volunteers or semi-professionals to strengthen a variety of technology-driven components.
- Collaborate with the media specialist (librarian) in the use of computer based technology through the library.
- Enable computer/IT staff to stay informed on current and new technology.
- Keep students and staff informed of the expectations for the use of technology.
- Maintain an up-to-date technology infrastructure that allows the staff to do their jobs.

Liberty Common Students must all sign an Internet Acceptable Use Permission Slip.

Adopted: 2-8-99

Amended: 10/18/2012

7.8. Elective Courses

In accordance with our school's philosophy, elective courses are to be developed and offered to students with three principles in mind:

Academic: In *The Schools We Need and Why We Don't Have Them*, Dr. E.D. Hirsch states, "having received foundational knowledge and skill (in the early grades) students can follow more varied and intensive strands of academic and vocational study according to their interests and abilities." At Liberty, the elective courses are the avenue for this.

Liberty's Thinking Framework: By grades 7, we want to provide opportunities for students to develop the 4th order thinking skills - creativity and problem solving. This is

a productive effort requiring both discipline and knowledge. It is the goal of Agency education, the journey toward self-reliance.

Physical Development: Students in their early teenage years undergo tremendous changes. Many require controlled, physical outlets for the energy associated with their hormone fluctuations.

Liberty will offer a range of academic electives that appeal to a variety of student interests (both boys and girls) and provide opportunities for creativity, problem solving, and physical activity.

The class registration process should encourage students to select a range of different electives to achieve a balanced course schedule.

The BOD will approve the elective course offering for the following school year no later than February of each school year.

Adopted: 7-18-02
Amended 12/3/2011

7.9. Upper School Curriculum

Liberty Common High School Curriculum 2011-12								
			Upper School		High School			
Period	Course Type	Credits	7th Grade	8th Grade	9th Grade	10th Grade	11th Grade	12th Grade
1	Math	40	See Flow Chart	See Flow Chart	See Flow Chart (Algebra 1 or higher)			
2	Science	40	Science 7	Science 8	Biology	Chemistry or Conceptual Physics	Physics or Chemistry	Science Elective
3	English	40	English 7	English 8	Western Literature	British Literature	American Literature	English Elective
4	History Geog	40	History 7	History 8	West Civilization 1	World History	AP US History or US History	American Government and History Elective
5	Foreign Language	30	Latin 1	Spanish 1 or Latin 2	Spanish 2 or Latin 3	Spanish 3 or Latin 4	Spanish 4 or AP Latin	Personal Finance
6	1st Semester		Comp Essentials	Composition 1	Economics	Intro to Engineering	Composition 2 or AP Lang and Comp	
	2nd Semester		Core Music 7	Core Music 8/PE 8				
7	1st Semester		Core Art 7	Core Art 8				
	2nd Semester		PE 7					
8	1st Semester							
	2nd Semester							
Core Credits			70	65	60	55	55	45
Elective Credits			10	15	20	25	25	35

Electives Required for Graduation:

- Personal Finance
- Physical Education – Can be fulfilled with PE elective, Health or High School Athletic Participation

Math Pathways

Grade Level	Pathway 1	Pathway 2	Pathway 3	Pathway 4
7th Grade	Algebra 1	Pre-Algebra	Pre-Algebra	Varies: Two years in one course, transfer from PSD, Homeschool, etc.
8th Grade	Geometry	Algebra 1	Algebra 1	
9th Grade	Algebra 2	Geometry	Geometry	Algebra 1
10th Grade	Pre-Calculus	Algebra 2	Algebra 2	Geometry
11th Grade	AP Calc AB/BC	Pre-Calculus	College Alg	Algebra 2
12th Grade	Calc 3 / Diff Eq	AP Calc AB/BC	College Trig	College Alg

Adopted 12/3/2011

7.10. Summer Reading

Liberty's Charter states, "*Because television viewing is diametrically opposed to reading, may stifle cognitive development and imagination, trivializes information, undermines values, distorts cause and effect, and is unable to portray thought, the School will discourage excessive (greater than 10 hours per week) viewing.*" Our Charter explains that Liberty will encourage students to replace non-instructional television watching with activities that will foster the development of imagination and skills, such as reading.

According to our Charter, "*The development of literacy will be one of the primary aims and focuses of effort in the School. This will include a great deal of reading from a variety of both fiction and non-fiction primary literature. Particularly in the early grades, the School will emphasize reading and more reading.*" Finally the Board acknowledges that nationwide teachers observe a decline in student reading ability over the summer.

The administration, Board of Directors, and faculty all agree it is critical for our students to read quality literature during the summer to help prepare them for the demands of the Core Knowledge sequence for the upcoming year. In addition to keeping our student's skills sharp, it is our hope that students will develop a desire to read for pleasure and begin to think of themselves as readers.

For all of these reasons, the school will implement a summer reading program. Books selected for summer reading should expose children to literature with a rich use of language that they might not otherwise encounter. The books should help to nudge

students toward a higher level, not just in matters of syntax and vocabulary, but also in sophistication of plot, character development, conflict and resolution, etc.

The books for students entering kindergarten through 3rd grade are intended to be read to the child by the parent (or another capable adult). Students entering 4th grade and up should be capable of reading the books themselves. The reading will provide a common foundation for class discussion as students begin the new school year. Teachers will determine what is expected from the students to demonstrate they have completed the summer reading.

The Board will appropriate funds to purchase all of the required books on the summer reading list.

Adopted: 5-15-03

Amended: 6-03-04

Amended 12/3/2011

7.11 Mathematics Policy

Principles for Teaching Elementary Mathematics:

The United States has historically taught mathematics procedurally. With the *procedural* approach students are taught “cookbook steps” for solving problems. Studies show that students are able to extract simple concepts from procedural teaching in the early grades, but in later years, as concepts become more difficult, understanding is lost, and students retain less knowledge.

Liberty utilizes a *conceptual* approach to teaching mathematics. With the conceptual approach, it is not enough to assert something is true; instead teachers (and students) must be able to prove why something is true every step of the way, based on concepts the students already know and understand. Once students understand why something works, they can apply the concept to other situations.

New knowledge builds on old knowledge. To be successful, students need to thoroughly master a math concept before moving on to the next.

As students progress along the Thinking Framework, students should recognize multiple ways of solving a problem, be able to evaluate each approach, and determine which would be the most reasonable to use.

The Singapore National Math Curriculum is a conceptual math curriculum which supports these principles and been approved for math instruction in kindergarten through 6th grade at Liberty Common School.

Principles for Teaching Upper School Mathematics:

Many junior high schools in the United States employ an integrated approach to math that attempts to spread the material from Algebra 1, Geometry, and Algebra 2 over the course of three years. The math material is sometimes diluted with social studies and science to solve “real world” problems. This curriculum is inconsistent with conceptual mathematics because in many cases the math concepts are presented in a fragmented way so that mastery is not developed and thus student understanding is reduced.

A fundamentally sound understanding of Algebra is critical to further studies in math and science.

The study of Geometry/Trigonometry develops logic and thinking skills necessary for higher level mathematics, science, mature writing composition, philosophy, and general research.

Through an in-depth study of Algebra and Geometry students become very familiar with multiple approaches to solving the same problem and develop the thought process (reasoning) involved in identifying the “best” option for a given problem.

The following texts support these principles and have been approved for upper school mathematics courses at Liberty Common School:

Pre-Algebra: Bittinger (Pearson)

Algebra 1: Foerster (Pearson)

Geometry: Jurgensen (McDougal - Littel)

Algebra 2: Foerster (Pearson)

Pre-Calculus: Sullivan (Pearson)

AP Calculus: Larson/Edwards (Brooks/Cole)

Skill Development

Skills and understanding are heavily intertwined. Teachers must combine the approved math curriculum with proper emphasis on automation of skills

Automaticity, the ability for students to immediately recognize math facts, takes practice. Automaticity allows students to focus their mental energies on the demands of more difficult math concepts. Teachers will establish expectations for math fact automaticity at each grade level.

Fluency in executing basic math skills is essential for students to progress to the next level. Once concepts are taught, students should be assigned sufficient practice problems so that students develop fluency of the math operations.

Calculators

Calculators prevent automaticity and are not to be used for math in grades K-6.

Calculators may be used in upper school math, science, and economics courses only after students have developed automaticity and mastery of the math concepts being used.

Upper school teachers may develop additional policies and procedures for the use of calculators, as appropriate.

Curriculum Considerations

- The approved curricula may not cover all math content in the Core Knowledge Sequence. In accordance with the school’s Educational Priorities policy, teachers should follow the timeline in the approved math curriculum rather than the Core Knowledge Sequence. Teachers should verify, however, that the Core Knowledge math content for their grade level is covered at some grade level in the approved curriculum. Any gaps in the approved curriculum should be documented and provided to the Headmaster.
- Teachers must review Colorado state standards and ensure students have covered the required standards.

Supporting References

- *Knowing and Teaching Elementary Math* by Liping Ma
- *Basic Skills Versus Conceptual Understanding*, by H. Wu, American Educator, Fall 1999
- *A Review of an Integrated High School Mathematics Program* by Diane Fogler, mathematicallycorrect.com

Adopted: 11-18-04

Amended 12/3/2011

7.12. Science Fair

The Science Fair at Liberty Common School provides the opportunity for students to learn firsthand the foundational principles and skills involved in scientific inquiry. In addition the Science Fair satisfies the requirements of Colorado state science standard 1, as well as providing preparation for the CSAP. The primary goal of the Science Fair is to cultivate interest in science by using the “scientific method.” This includes the following steps:

1. An inquiry concerning some aspect of the natural world.
2. the collection of background information relevant to the area of inquiry
3. The formulation of a hypothesis.
4. The design of an experiment to test the proposed hypothesis.
5. Performing the experiment and data collection.
6. Data analysis to determine whether the hypothesis is supported.

In consideration of these goals, the following policies will apply to the Science Fair at Liberty Common School.

- Science fair projects will be experimentally based, including all of the elements described above; no descriptive, informational, “social science” (e.g. opinion surveys) and/or engineering projects will be allowed.
- Faculty approval will occur at defined stages to ensure that the Science Fair requirements are adequately addressed.
- In accordance with Liberty’s Technology Policy, students will learn to use Excel spreadsheet software as a part of science class. Students will demonstrate basic proficiency by using Excel for data collection and analysis of science fair projects.
- Science Fair projects will be judged to insure that all of the criteria described above are included. Originality, creativity, and scientific integrity (use of appropriate variable and controls) as applied to the particular project will be evaluated. Particular emphasis will be placed upon student understanding and “ownership” of the project.

Adopted: 1-20-05

7.13. Reading and Literacy

“The development of literacy will be one of the primary aims and focuses of effort in the School. This will include a great deal of reading from a variety of both fiction and non-fiction primary literature. Particularly in the early grades, the School will emphasize reading and more reading.” (LCS Charter)

Most American schools dedicate two or more hours each day to “literacy.” A majority of time is spent teaching children the fundamentals of reading strategies, such as making inferences, predicting, classifying, and “looking for the main idea.” The purpose of these exercises is to bolster test scores, independent of real knowledge. In contrast, Liberty strives to develop the appreciation of language, increase specific knowledge, and provide meaning to students through the achievement of Primary Literacy, Mature Literacy, and Moral Literacy.

A. Primary Literacy

Primary Literacy begins with phonic recognition. Our Charter states, *“In the early grades, students will receive explicit, systematic phonemic awareness and phonics instruction. Children will be provided deliberate, coherent, direct instruction in letter-sound correspondences. Practices which teach children to rely on word-memorization (the look-say method) and guessing (through illustration and/or context) will be avoided.”*

Once phonetic decoding skills are introduced, fluency must be developed. Fluency allows students to focus their mental energies on comprehension rather than

decoding. Fluency means “flowing,” and in this context it also means “fast.” **Fluency takes practice - a lot of it.** Riggs & Open Court Phonics, selected stories from Open Court, and selected books from Accelerated Reader (AR) have been approved by the BOD for the development of decoding skills and fluency at Liberty.

Teachers should use discretion and select Open Court stories and AR books which are content-based and meet the principles of this policy and the Literature Acquisition policy to the greatest extent possible. Child-centered stories and books of a trivial nature (see Mature Literacy below) should be avoided. If a teacher is uncertain as to the appropriateness of a particular book or story, he/she should consult the Headmaster and/or Academic Advisory Committee. AR books (and the corresponding tests) which do not meet the principles of this policy should not be maintained in the classroom.

Although the approved Open Court and AR materials are necessary for practicing early literacy skills, these books can quickly bore students and may not develop language appreciation. Language is at the heart of reading. The love of the sound of language will carry with a child, if it is properly developed. Children need to discover at an early age the peculiar satisfaction that comes from experiencing form in language, as in nursery rhymes and poetry. When this occurs, children will continue to prefer the sound of beautiful or interesting language as they later select books for meaning. Furthermore, we believe young children should be shown incrementally what is outside their realm of experience. Children who are exposed to complex speech patterns learn to express themselves earlier and more fluently than those spoken to in careful sentences.

In the early grades nursery rhymes, poetry, fairy tales, and captivating stories, beyond the students’ own reading abilities, will be read aloud to children. In addition to the development of language appreciation, this practice fosters the desire in children to master the difficult of skill of reading in order that the students might gain personal access to the exciting world of stories.

B. Mature Literacy

“Mature literacy develops as students become acquainted with a broad and rich body of knowledge and become familiar with many well-written, diverse and meaningful works of literature.” (LCS Charter)

According to E.D. Hirsch Jr., one of the reasons children lag behind in their reading ability, and are thus prevented from achieving mature literacy, is a huge vocabulary deficit. Hirsch advises, and Liberty advocates, time devoted to activities that “foster vocabulary, domain knowledge, and fluency.” Domain knowledge is the threshold level of knowledge needed to understand a topic. If one knows nothing of the game of baseball, for example, one can’t comprehend the sentence: “Jones sacrificed and knocked in a run.” The more domain knowledge acquired, the easier it becomes to read and understand a wider variety of material. Hirsch suggests, “Such knowledge

could be conveyed through read-alouds, well-conceived vocabulary instruction, and a variety of cumulative activities that immerse children in word and world knowledge."

In today's schools, the teaching of the kind of specific knowledge needed to become a fully literate individual is woefully inadequate. The texts and literature used in most American elementary schools are, for the most part, of a trivial nature. There is no shortage of material on topics like pets and sharing, but little on history, geography, and science. At Liberty, vocabulary and domain knowledge are developed by teaching the rich body of content knowledge defined in the Core Knowledge Sequence. Vocabulary is further developed through Greek roots and Latin language instruction.

Finally, in order to immerse students in word knowledge and expose them to many well-written, diverse and meaningful works of literature, we have supplemented the Core Knowledge Sequence with (primarily) classic works of fiction – stories which have withstood the test of time. In accordance with Liberty's Charter, *"The literature suggested by the Core Knowledge Sequence, as well as other literature that will be introduced, is chosen not only for its place in the core body of knowledge, its multi-cultural representation, and its rich use of language, but also because it provides access to deeper meaning of universal human problems, particularly those which preoccupy children's minds."*

Additions to the Core Knowledge literature sequence, recommended read-aloud lists for primary grades, required reading lists for 4th - 12th grades, and K- 12 summer reading lists have been developed by the faculty and Academic Advisory Committee and approved by the Board. The books on these lists were selected with consideration to exposing children to literature that they might not otherwise encounter. The books are intended to nudge students toward higher levels, not just in matters of syntax and vocabulary, but also in sophistication of plot, character development, conflict and resolution, and the sustained reading of lengthy works rather than simply excerpts. Teachers should become familiar with the books on the lists for their grades so that they can assist students in selecting books according to student interest and ability.

C. Moral Literacy

At Liberty, character education is achieved through a coherent program of expectations, modeling, and study of historical and literary figures. Stories, poems, essays and other writings in our curriculum are intended to help children achieve moral literacy. That achievement involves recognizing the virtues (e.g. honesty, compassion, integrity, perseverance, courage, citizenship), understanding what they are in practice; and developing a desire to do what is right. How is this accomplished?

First, literacy gives children specific moral reference points. Literature and history are rich in moral literacy. Children need specific illustration of what is good and bad so that what is morally right and wrong can be known and promoted. Through the

power of imagination children become vicarious participants in a story; they share in a hero's choices and challenges and identify with his suffering and triumph. Because a child's allegiances are based not so much on right versus wrong, but on who arouses his sympathy and who his antipathy, it is important to choose stories in which virtue wins over vice, as in fairy tales and other classic works. Frequent and strong identification with virtuous and victorious heroes allow children to rehearse and strengthen their commitment to goodness.

Second, reading and literacy promote fascination. Nothing compares with a story that begins "Once upon a time..." The imaginative process gives us hope because we want to believe that in the stories of our lives we too can make the right choices. Stories help us to make sense out of our lives. A plot. A purpose. A sense that our struggles have meaning.

Third, reading and literacy create a living link to our culture, its history and traditions.

Fourth, by teaching a domain knowledge, children will become a part of a common world, a community of moral persons. Reading affords us the opportunity to do what we can't often do in life - to become thoroughly involved in the inner lives of others. As with visiting foreign cultures, the sustained involvement with a character in a story enlarges a child's sympathies and gives them those broad, wholesome and charitable views that are the reward of both travel and reading. This involvement is not simply the sharing of adventures, but also of ideas, emotions, loyalties, and principles.

"...Shall we just carelessly allow children to hear any casual tales which may be devised by casual persons, and to receive into their minds ideas for the most part the very opposite of those which we should wish them to have when they are grown up? We cannot...Anything received into the mind at that age is likely to become indelible and unalterable; and therefore it is most important that the tales which the young first hear should be models of virtuous thoughts..." PLATO's Republic

Application of Liberty's Reading & Literacy Program

- In addition to regular homework assignments, each student should read or be read to every day.
- Teachers will set expectations for reading homework for grades K-3.
- Older students are required to read literature for homework as follows:
 - 4th - 6th grades - at least 20 minutes per night
 - 7th - 8th grades - at least 30 minutes per night (150/week)
 - 9th - 12th grades - at least 100 minutes per week
- If required reading is not assigned from the Core Knowledge Sequence or the approved additions to the Sequence, students shall select books from the approved reading lists for their grade(s). Required reading is limited to the approved reading

- lists in order to ensure that the principles of this policy are fulfilled. Students may read books from the reading lists for higher grades with teacher and parent approval.
- Students may submit suggestions for additions to the reading lists to their teachers or the Headmaster for consideration and possible approval.
 - Students are encouraged to read additional books of their own choosing over and above the required reading. Parents are encouraged to steer their children toward selections which support this policy and the school's Literature Acquisition policy.
 - All students are required to participate in the school's summer reading program. Teachers will set accountability measures to ensure students complete the summer reading.

Supporting References

- Liberty Common School Charter Application, October 1, 1996
- LCS K-3rd Grade Recommended Reading List
- LCS 4th Grade Reading List
- LCS 5th – 6th Grade Reading List
- LCS 7th – 8th Grade Reading List
- LCHS 9th – 12th Grade High School Recommended Reading List
- LCS Summer Reading List
- *The Vocabulary Deficit* by Andrew Wolfe, The New York Sun, May 2, 2003
- *The Book of Virtues*, William Bennett
- *On Learning to Read* by Bruno Bettelheim
- *The Uses of Enchantment* by Bruno Bettelheim
- *Books that Build Character* by William Kilpatrick
- *Why Johnny Can't Tell Right from Wrong* by William Kilpatrick
- *Why Johnny Can't Read* by Rudolf Flesch
- *Beginning to Read* by Marilyn Jager Adams
- *Honey for a Child's Heart* by Gladys Hunt
- *Amusing Ourselves to Death* by Neil Postman
- *The Disappearance of Childhood* by Neil Postman
- *The New Read-Aloud Handbook* by Jim Trelease
- *The Plug-In Drug* by Marie Winn
- Core Knowledge Newsletter

Adopted: 2-17-05

Amended 12/3/2011

Amended 4/21/2016

7.14. Literature Acquisition

Liberty Common School will be discerning when selecting books purchased with our limited financial resources, as well as in accepting book donations, so that all materials at the school support the school's literacy goals as described in our Charter and the Reading and Literacy Policy. Books are to be selected according to criteria beyond current popularity. The quality of language, the value of a story to the human experience, the contribution to character education, and the support of the Core Knowledge Sequence will play a part in Liberty's selection of books. The majority of literature at the school should be generally acknowledged as traditional classics or children's classics. To support our character education program, we will make available books which provide examples, over and over again, of the reasons for living well.

This policy applies to any book or media available to students in the school's library or classrooms as well as books read to students by parents and teachers. To support their children's education at Liberty, parents are encouraged to understand the principles of this policy and assist their children in selecting books for outside reading which are consistent with school policy.

Literature Purchased by the School:

Fiction

As described in our Charter and Reading and Literacy Policy, the focus of the school's reading program is the development of mature and moral literacy "*as students become acquainted with a broad and rich body of knowledge and become familiar with many well-written, diverse and meaningful works of literature.*" According to Neil Postman, whose ideas are frequently referenced in our Charter, "Human beings require stories to give meaning to the facts of existence... If our stories are coherent and plausible and have continuity, they will help us to understand why we are here, what we need to pay attention to, and what we may ignore." Our goal, then, is to immerse students in great stories.

How do we identify great stories, i.e. good literature? Great authors do not write stories so that students can identify the main characters or write plot summaries. Rather, they seek to portray characters struggling with the great issues of life (e.g. truth, love, war, faith, politics, even loneliness). As our Charter states, "*literature that will be introduced is chosen... because it provides access to deeper meaning of universal human problems.*" We recognize these stories because they hold our interest, even as adults. We recognize these stories because the characters have something to learn. They develop and grow as the plot unfolds. We recognize these stories because readers desire to emulate their heroes. Good literature has withstood the filter of time, speaking to the universal struggles of humans throughout the ages.

Great stories are intended to be enlarging experiences, rather than cures prescribed for a given sociological, political or emotional problem. Genres which encourage narrow self-preoccupation, are void of meaningful character development, encourage acceptance of and identification with poor role models, or strive to give children "appropriate" attitudes

about contemporary social issues (e.g. divorce, sex, war, gender) will be avoided. (See “Reading and Fiction” in the Student & Parent Handbook.)

The school will give first priority to the works of fiction required by the Core Knowledge Sequence, Board approved additions to the sequence, and books on the Board approved reading lists below:

- LCS K-3rd Grade Recommended Reading List
- LCS 4th Grade Reading List
- LCS 5th – 6th Grade Reading List
- LCS 7th – 8th Grade Reading List
- LCHS 9th – 12th Grade High School Recommended Reading List
- LCS Summer Reading List

Non-Fiction

The school will strive to provide content-based non-fiction books necessary to support the Core Knowledge Sequence, Board approved additions to the Sequence, and a student reference section. Teachers may recommend books for purchase (other than text books - which require the approval of the Board of Directors) which support their instruction of the curriculum. These suggestions should adhere to the parameters of this policy, the Charter, and the Reading and Literacy Policy.

Children’s ‘non-books,’ a prevalent trend in children’s non-fiction, are composed of tiny facts and snippets of interesting material with visually pleasing photography which have no sustained narrative, carefully developed argument, or background knowledge. They require little concentration or focused thinking, but like television, are instantly accessible. The most conspicuous example of a ‘non-book’ is the *Guinness Book of World Records*. Such books commonly are but diverting filler and fail to meet our criteria for prioritized acquisitions.

In addition to the student reference section, a teacher reference section and a parent education section will be acquired. The school will purchase copies of the Core Knowledge Sequence for each grade along with supporting books and references published by the Core Knowledge Foundation and the books referenced in the bibliography of our Charter.

Donated Literature

Classroom teachers and the school librarian will be the initial arbiters of the quality of books donated to the school. This discernment will require adherence to this policy, the Charter, and the Reading and Literacy Policy.

Media Acquisition

It is the policy of this school to expose students to subject matter through direct instruction, project, practice and literature to near exclusivity. Professional video productions should not serve as isolated exposition of subject matter. Video and film

media will only be purchased and utilized to the extent that these materials supplement the pedagogy outlined herein, with the approval of the Headmaster.

Requests for Library Additions

Students, teachers and parents may request additions to the school's library and classroom collections. These requests will be considered with respect to the criteria outlined herein with the understanding that not all literature is destined to be considered "classic" and that student interest in reading should be affirmed and encouraged. These purchases will be subsequent to those necessary to satisfy the curriculum and required reading program, and must be consistent with the intent of this policy.

Questions about literature acquisition should be directed to the Academic Advisory Committee or the Headmaster. The Board of Directors is the final authority regarding any book or other media offered by the School for education or enjoyment.

Supporting Reference

The Case for Good Taste in Children's Books, Meghan Cox Gurdon, *The Wall Street Journal*, July/August 2013, Volume 42, Number 7/8

Adopted: 3-24-05

Amended 12-3-11

Amended 9-19-13

7.15. Video Viewing

It is the policy of Liberty Common School to instruct the approved curriculum of the school without the use of video presentations.

This policy is supported by the attached report from the Academic Advisory Committee (November 17, 2005), which is incorporated herein by reference.

In rare instances with the written approval of the Headmaster or Principal, videos may be used to compliment the instruction of the approved curriculum. The presentation of videos is particularly discouraged for younger students who are developing reading skills. When an approved video is shown, it will be done interactively and with frequent stops in order that students make connections and inferences, are prompted for questions and are discouraged from daydreaming. When explicit visual images are not critical, audio presentations (story narration and music) are preferred. When motion is not critical (e.g. art, architecture), slides, photos, and posters are preferred.

No videos which represent literature taught at school will be shown to support the instruction of that literature. No videos will be shown for 'entertainment' purposes.

When a digital device (computer, etc) is used to display an approved video, the video must be displayed without any distractions such as advertisements, suggested videos, comments, or

anything else not appropriate for a classroom setting. It is preferable to have videos reside on a storage device within the libertycommon.org domain for performance reasons and reliability of access. No Internet searches for videos should occur with the students viewing during class time.

Teachers wanting to use video presentations in their instruction of the approved curriculum, or for required homework, will complete the incorporated video presentation request form and submit it to the Headmaster or Principal for approval. In order to streamline the process, teachers are permitted to display up to 10 total minutes of video per semester prior to receiving approval, provided that they have completed and submitted a request form for each video. If a video is subsequently reviewed and not approved, the decision supercedes the 10 minute allowance and the video shall no longer be used in the classroom. The Headmaster or Principal may approve the following material:

- Video presentations of performances or works of art which are intended to be viewed (e.g. plays, operas, orchestras, ballets).
- Video presentations of actual events not geographically, temporally or practically accessible.
 - (e.g., A rocket launch or volcano eruption).
 - Historically accurate documentaries - factual storytelling which is not dramatized (e.g., WWII documentary).
 - Science "dry labs" which explain and demonstrate principles not practical in a school setting. Animation is acceptable for this purpose. Types of animation that are not restricted include digital simulations of events, processes, or concepts that are difficult for an instructor to clearly illustrate.
- Video presentations produced or dubbed in a foreign language where viewing is critical for comprehension.

Adopted 03-23-06

Adopted 08-27-15

7.16 Instruction of Composition

Great writing is two things: the ability to explain ideas with the appropriate level of detail for the reader and the ability to unfold those ideas in a captivating manner. Such an explication of ideas is critical to schooling because it completes the educational cycle as students solidify what they have learned by “tutoring” the anonymous reader. At Liberty we strive to give students 1) fundamental writing mechanics and 2) a depth of content knowledge while providing exposure and guidance in developing the 3) advanced thinking skills and 4) artistic aspects of writing.

How does one become proficient in writing? By reading excellent writing, talking about excellent writing, copying and modeling excellent writing frequently, and by having one's writing graded and critiqued by a good writer. This means our teachers must be good writers. Teachers must continue to develop, practice frequently, and desire to master their own writing abilities. They must have detailed knowledge of the requirements of the next grade, as well as knowledge and mastery of the skills taught in the previous grade.

CMAS is only one reference point for assisting us in realizing our composition goals. Much more is required for quality writing than proficiency on this test. The classroom teacher and parents, in concert with the rest of the staff and headmaster, will determine whether students are becoming proficient in writing. The headmaster will consider the judgment of the upper school English and Literature teachers as primary measures of elementary student writing ability.

1) Fundamental Writing Mechanics

Students will progressively develop good penmanship, learn the rules of spelling and grammar, and expand their vocabulary through reading good literature and direct development exercises.

- **Penmanship** practice is essential for organization of the mind and clarity of expression. Writing assignments will be handwritten. Students will not use word processors prior to completing the keyboarding course, and then only at the discretion of the teacher.
- **Spelling** is essential for clarity and is the basis for vocabulary. Liberty will incorporate a coherent and sequenced spelling pedagogy. The spelling word lists are built on three pillars: the study of Greek and Latin roots, words from the Core Knowledge Sequence and literature, and BOD-approved spelling lists. These lists will be sequenced by grade to reduce redundancy and enrich vocabulary systematically. A master list of spelling words for each grade will be kept by each teacher.
- **Grammar** is an organizational tool for fluency, structure, and coherence. Traditional grammar is a beautiful and practical form of higher order thinking about language. All editing marks and grammar terminology will be consistent K-9. Student responses on homework or worksheets should be given in complete sentences when practical. Teacher feedback and corrections should also be provided in complete sentences when practical.
- **Vocabulary** is essential for reading comprehension and the conveyance of one's ideas. A well-developed vocabulary not only improves one's ability to communicate, but also one's ability to think. Latin and Greek based vocabulary, the words within our words, and vocabulary from literature will be used for direct vocabulary instruction.

2) Depth of Content Knowledge

Good writing is born in knowledge and discovery. Students must have something to say. They must write about that which they know. Students will write about what they are learning, the topics of classroom discussion, rather than new topics requiring independent student research. This does not preclude assignments requiring further research by the student on topics of classroom discussion. Students must read extensively. What they write must be based upon text. Students must show evidence of their claims in the texts which they have read.

“Creative writing” and “journaling” exercises which encourage students to put their thoughts and feelings on paper or to write on topics about which they possess little or no *content* knowledge do not promote writing mechanics, organizational skills, or thinking skills required for good composition. These approaches are inconsistent with content-driven skill instruction and will not be used at Liberty.

3) Thinking Skills

Coherency and fluency are developed by mental modeling. This is accomplished through copying, reconstructing, and composing. Memorization and recitation are also critical and will be required. Renaissance schoolboys learned content through copy and exercise books. This form of practice helped produce the world's best writers and thinkers in their time. At Liberty students will practice the word-for-word copying of excellent writing enabling them to incorporate good ideas and language skills into their own writing, as they gradually acquire the "inner voice" of great writers of the past.

Myra Linden's "Improving Grammar and Other Writing Skills with Text Reconstruction," gives the proper technique for copy exercises:

- i. Read as many words as you believe you can write correctly from memory (usually 5-10 words)
- j. Write those words from memory, including all capitals and punctuation marks
- k. Check back to the original sentence and correct any errors
- l. Read the next group of words and repeat the steps.

Students in each grade will use copybooks for neatly copying word-for-word text from content rich sentences, paragraphs, poems, short essays (or pieces of other works) and speeches. Each teacher will compile a collection of content samples for this purpose. In addition, teachers will compile a progression of composition exercises by each student, which will include some copy work, most of which are graded, so that improvement over time can be tracked.

In addition to direct copying, students will practice reconstructing text through exercises (e.g. ordering sentences) and their own note taking. Students begin by learning to take notes and making key word outlines from short selections. They then narrate and re-write the passage from their notes to create a unique composition in their own words. All writing composition should include an outline with a consistent format. On major writing assignments, at least 2 to 3 rewrites should be required and turned in with the final paper.

4) Artistic Aspects

An immense amount of regular practice with continual feedback from teachers and parents will be required in order for students to internalize writing mechanics as well as to develop an appreciation for the artistic aspect of writing. The study of poetry, poetic meter, and the art of versification helps give writing life. Diction, inflection, and intonation when reading aloud or reciting also help to give life and form to language as students hear their own voice and the voices others speak. These elements of language must be core components of formal language study as well.

Writing guidelines may be used to encourage students to incorporate a variety of writing elements and styles into their work. However, strict adherence to checklists can cause stultified writing and should be avoided.

SUPPORTING RESOURCES

Parental cooperation is needed. Parents are expected to review student assignments on a regular basis - checking for correct mechanics and accurate content, as well as fluency and coherency. Students are not allowed to edit or correct other students' written works.

The following programs have been approved to assist in the implementation of this policy. Any portions of these programs which are inconsistent with this policy, as determined by the headmaster, will not be used.

- **Getty-Dubay** is an italicized handwriting program for penmanship instruction. Books A-G will be used in grades K-6. Book G will be repeated each year in the upper school. Subsequent books (such as the adult version of the program and the calligraphy version) may also be used for upper school elective courses. A penmanship grade will be appear on the report card for all grades.
- **Riggs & Open Court** - will be used in K-1st grades
- **Primary Spelling by Patterns** - will be used in 2nd & 3rd grades
- **McDougal Littell Spelling Words** - will be used in 4th - 6th grades
- **Shurley Grammar** will be used for direct grammar instruction in K-3 grades.
- **Michael Clay Thompson** will be used in grades 4-9 for grammar, vocabulary, and poetics.
- **Writing with Structure and Style** by Andrew Pudewa will be used in all grades.
- **The Elements of Style** by William Strunk Jr. and E.B. White will be provided to each teacher for use as a fundamental reference for writing composition.

Adopted 02-15-07

Amended 09-31-15

Amended 10-15-15

7.16. Foreign Language

Foreign language instruction was incorporated into the original school design because the acquisition and appreciation of other languages is essential to understanding one's own. The foreign language of instruction at Liberty Common School for Kindergarten through 7th grade is Latin. The desired result of Liberty's foreign language instruction is an increase in student knowledge and understanding of *English*. This includes vocabulary, grammar, spelling, usage, sentence structure, reading, speaking, and composition skills. Additional modern foreign language instruction is included in the curricula from the 8th grade onward.

Adopted 12/3/2011

7.17. Academic Support Team

Liberty Common School's excellent teaching methods, rich curriculum, and strong character education reaches the majority of students and helps bring about amazing learning, high achievement, and strong character. While students are expected to do all they can to reach the high bar, their parents are also asked to help at home. For most students, this is enough to achieve their academic success. When a student needs more than this to achieve at grade level, the school is required to intervene.

Academic Support Team's primary mission is to support students who are at risk academically by identifying and addressing barriers to their success. It improves student success toward mature literacy and independence by providing specialized instruction. AST addresses concerns through many avenues: Response to Intervention, English Language Acquisition, 504s, Advanced Learning, and special education. Support is given judiciously and only as needed. Liberty Common School intervenes with solutions while still ensuring that its students are educated with the Core Knowledge curriculum. When difficulties arise, the following steps occur. Students move to the next step if improvements are not seen.

1. General education teachers work with the student and his or her parent/s to alleviate the problem.
2. The Student Teacher Assistance Team (STAT) – a group composed of general educators, administrator/s, and AST representative/s – through referral, offers advice to teachers and/or parents and determines the next step.
3. The student may be referred to AST for further intervention and support through the RTI process (RTI=Response to Intervention.) A student may also need screenings, observations, other testing, or an accommodation plan. STAT monitors progress and may revisit to change the plan as needed.
4. If steps 1-3 do not remediate the problem, STAT may refer a student for a special education evaluation. Written permission is required before such an evaluation can take place.

Parents are apprised of this process along the way and are encouraged to support their children in any manner they can to bring academic success. Questions about your child or this process should be directed to his or her classroom teacher or the Academic Support Coordinator.

Adopted 12/20/2012

8. Enrollment

8.1. Enrollment Policy

Per the Admissions Process defined in our charter application and contract with Poudre School District (PSD), Liberty Common School (LCS) will not make any distinction on account of disability, race, creed, color, gender, national origin, religion, or ancestry of any student who

seeks admission. Furthermore, admission will be offered publicly to incoming students with an effort to invite all families in the Poudre School District to carefully review the LCS Charter and enroll their children if the parents value the school's philosophy and educational offering.

Before a child's name may be added to the lottery list, attendance by a parent or guardian at a LCS or LCHS Public Information Night will be mandatory. The purpose of this requirement is to ensure all parents understand Liberty's philosophy and educational approach prior to enrollment. Exceptions to this attendance requirement will be considered on a limited, case-by-case basis by the Principals and Board of Directors.

Vacancies exist whenever the number of students enrolled in class is below that class' capacity. As vacancies occur, those vacancies will be filled using a lottery system. Students will be eligible to fill a vacancy after participating in a conference between the student, parent, Headmaster and/or Principal to discuss curriculum, required levels of performance, dress code, rules, and other expectations. This conference may include discussions of academic achievement in previous schools and written or verbal evaluations. Upon completion of the meeting and review of the academic data, the administration will provide a grade recommendation for the student.

The following lottery enrollment procedure will be implemented in the following order of precedence:

- Currently enrolled students
- Founding parents' children names in the 2009 contract addendum with PSD
- Children of full-time staff
- Siblings of currently enrolled students
- Children of graduates of Liberty Common High School from 2013 and beyond, and children of graduates of Liberty Common School's 9th grade from 2009 and before.
- Students on the lottery list residing *within* the Poudre School District whose parent or guardian **has** attended a public information night
- Students on the lottery list residing *within* the Poudre School District whose parent or guardian **has not** attended a public information night
- Students on the lottery list residing *outside* the Poudre School District whose parent or guardian **has** attended a public information night
- Students on the lottery list residing *outside* the Poudre School District whose parent or guardian **has not** attended a public information night
- All other students on the lottery list

Adopted: 8-23-01

Amended 12/3/2011

Amended 2/21/2013

Amended 12/19/2013

Amended 03/04/2014

8.2. Classroom Placement Policy

The classroom placement policy is designed to promote educational excellence and fairness by optimizing the learning environment in both tracks at each grade level while meeting special needs of individual students.

Parents may provide a written request to the Headmaster for a specific teacher for their child. However, such requests are not guaranteed because they can lead to imbalances in the classroom environment. Parents are encouraged to complete a confidential Student Classroom Profile Form to assist teachers in determining classroom assignments. Sending and receiving teachers at each grade level will use the information from this form in addition to their knowledge of classroom dynamics, special needs, availability of volunteers, diversity of student achievement, etc. to determine classroom assignments in order to provide a fair and common education for all students.

Parents are required to submit a Student Classroom Profile Form

Adopted 6-28-01

9. Finances and Accounting

9.1. LCS Fundraising Policy

LCS Board of Directors (BOD) and the Core Knowledge Charter School Foundation have chosen to support the following specific fundraising activities:

1. One annual all school fundraiser targeted at current families, grandparents, families of Liberty graduates, and ultimately Liberty graduates directly by way of the Annual Fund Campaign. Letter sent mid-December of each year with funds generated to support the projects identified in the annual Liberty Fundraiser Needs Letter. Generally, the projects identified are based on the greatest need and will directly benefit the students and/or school community.
2. One annual Silent / Live Auction Gala to be held in April of each year. This event will be organized by an Auction / Gala Committee; chaired by a member with at least one year of experience on the Gala Committee. Funds will be generated through Sponsorships, Advertising, Ticket Sales and Silent / Live Auction proceeds.
3. Capital Campaigns may be implemented for building/grounds construction and renovation projects.
4. Sponsorships, to be identified by the BOD at the beginning of each school year, and mailed to local businesses in early January of each year with the opportunity to choose which event(s) at the school the business would like to support. All sponsorship opportunities would be identified with a schematic showing what sponsor would get for each level of sponsorship.
 - a. Events to sponsor: Annual Auction Gala, Sporting Events or sports seasons, Banners in the gyms, Music performances, Theater performances, Team sponsorships (i.e.

- Robotics, Odyssey of the Mind, Golf Tournament) or other annual Fundraisers as approved by Liberty Common School BOD.
- b. Sponsorship Dollar amounts and related benefits and publicity at the school.
5. Discretionary Funds generated by Scrip Program, cereal box tops, Target Credit Card, cartridge recycle program, milk bottle tops, and others identified and approved will support programs or projects determined on an annual basis by the Headmaster in conjunction with the Principals, and the Fundraising Committee Chair.
 6. Book Fairs held one to two times per school year with funds generated going for library.
 7. The selling of reproductions and recordings of LCS musical and drama productions is allowed. All profits will go to support LCS programs and not individual enterprises.
 8. Opt-In programs will include the following:
 - a. Concessions at sports events – Proceeds divided equally between all groups that work.
 - b. Restaurant nights or lunch hours – Scheduled twice per month on the school calendar and equally dispersed between programs. Communicated via calendar and newsletters.
 - c. Annual sales of special items with proceeds going to originating and staffing club or group:
 - i. Poinsettia Sales
 - ii. Mother’s Day and Teacher Appreciation Carnation sales – O.M.
 - iii. Pumpkin Sales
 - iv. Others with prior approval
 - d. Car Washes – Various groups with proceeds going to “working” group
 - e. Golf Tournament for Athletics
 - f. Fishing Derby for Odyssey of the Mind
 - g. Liberty 2 Liberty Fun Run for the House System
 - h. School wide Garage Sale
 - i. Pledging money for community Service Hours – proceeds to “working” group

Additional fundraisers may be added if they successfully complete the approval process outlined below.

New fundraising ideas must be approved initially by the Fundraising Committee Chairperson, who will present the idea to the BOD for approval.

- All other committees and/or individuals interested in developing fundraising ideas must follow the same approval process.

- LCS will not support fundraisers connected with personal businesses, in which the member or agent of the business has potential for personal gain through the relationship.
- All school fundraisers will be limited in number, will avoid door-to-door, telephone, and supermarket student solicitations, and will complete the approval process prior to commencing.

Adopted 3-23-00

Amended 5-21-05

Amended 12.3.11

9.2. The Financial Condition Policy

With respect to operating the School in a sound and prudent fiscal manner, the Headmaster may not jeopardize the financial condition of the School. Accordingly, the Headmaster may not:

1. Cause the School to incur indebtedness other than trade payables incurred in the ordinary course of doing business and short term equipment leases.
2. Use funds from grants to the School for any purpose other than the uses stated in the application approved by the granting entity, even on a short-term or temporary basis.
3. Use restricted contributions for any purpose other than that required by the contribution.
4. Settle payroll and debts in other than a timely manner.
5. Allow expenditures to deviate materially from BOD-stated priorities.
6. Create new job positions at the school without BOD approval, or complete a salary plan for staff that exceeds BOD guidelines for the overall annual payroll increase.

The annual audited fund balance shall include amounts sufficient to maintain any required reserves as may be necessary to comply with Colorado State Statutes. These reserves include a set aside of 3% of budgeted expenditures to satisfy the requirements of the Tabor Act. Other amounts from the Unreserved Fund Balance may be specifically designated by the Board of Directors to recognize stated objectives. \$150,000 is designated for Bond facility repair and replacement as required by the Bonding authority. The Undesignated Unreserved Fund balance shall be called *General Contingency*. The Headmaster may not allow the funds in the *General Contingency* to be less than \$500,000 without approval of the Board of Directors.

Adopted: 2-25-99

Amended: 12-16-04

I. Student Funds

Student activity funds must be deposited in specific accounts or investments authorized by law. Funds must be expended in accordance with Liberty Common School financial procedures for the purposes authorized by the student organizations. Student activity funds are subject to annual audit as part of the school's annual audit. The board will establish supervision of all funds raised by any student group or student organization using the school's name. The board may also provide for a continuing audit of student funds by school personnel. The Headmaster shall establish procedures for student activity funds.

Adopted 6-28-01

II. Cash Management System

See Cash Management in Procedure Manual

III. Investment Policy

i. Purpose

- a. The primary purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to the Board of Directors (BOD), Financial Advisory Committee (FAC), staff and consultants in the discharging of their responsibilities over the investing of trust, endowment, annuity and other funds which have been committed to them. The policy is designed to achieve an appropriate balance between long-term appreciation and current income by investing in securities and other investments of high quality. Preservation of capital (on a current value basis) is a major goal, and hence highly speculative investments are to be avoided. Only the BOD, upon recommendation of the Financial Advisory Committee, has the power to amend, revoke or add to this policy.
- b. As a guide, this policy is subordinate to any Federal, State or local law, or the provisions of any trust or donor restrictions which may be applicable to the investment responsibilities and activities of the FAC acting on behalf of the BOD. The individuals having responsibility for carrying out the provisions of the policy are to be cognizant of laws and trust and donor's restrictions, which may be applicable to specific investment assets. This policy shall govern all school owned or controlled investment assets unless otherwise exempted by Board action.
- c. It is expected that the provisions of this policy will be reviewed annually by the FAC to insure timeliness and relevance to current investment goals and environmental conditions.

ii Responsibility for Investment Policy and Administration

- a. Responsibility for the development, approval, or amendment of this investment policy is that of the BOD upon recommendation of the FAC.

- b. The FAC, which is appointed by the BOD, has the responsibility of carrying out the provisions of this policy. This includes, but is not limited to, such activities as evaluating and recommending specific investment opportunities and transactions. The committee may seek the guidance from any source it deems appropriate in the conduct of its duties.
- c. The school's Business Manager is responsible to implement report on and maintain adequate records of investment decisions recommended by the FAC and approved by the BOD. The Business Manager will have delegated responsibilities for entering into specific investment transactions without prior review if investment decisions are of a renewal of term of existing investments. Decisions to utilize new investment instruments must be reviewed by the FAC and approved by the Board of Directors. It is expected that the Business Manager will provide timely and informative investment status reports to the FAC and the BOD.
- d. A professional investment manager or advisor may be recommended for engagement by the FAC with final approval from the BOD. The professional manager is to be aware of and follow all the provisions of this policy unless specifically exempted by written notification from the BOD. All compensation rates and terms will be set by the FAC and approved by the BOD, at the time of engagement. Investment managers and advisors shall be subject to periodic, at least annual, performance reviews by the FAC using performance measurements mutually agreed upon.

iii. Investment Goals and Objectives

- a. **General Philosophy.** In general, funds held for investment are to support the educational objectives of Liberty Common School through the production of income and preservation of principal. Investment decisions are to be prudent, without taking undue or unnecessary risks. Highly speculative investments are to be avoided and are to be liquidated as soon as practical if received as a gift in trust or endowment. Unless specific provisions of a trust or endowment provide for otherwise, investments should be of high quality and diversified as to types of fixed income securities, cash and equivalents. Government obligations from Treasury and Federal agencies are preferred over commercial notes and mutual funds.
- b. **Income Distribution—"Pay-Out" Definition.** The term "pay-out rates" is defined to be the income return currently paid, credited, or distributed for the benefit of trustor, annuitant or endowment beneficiary. It is to be distinguished from income return, which is retained and added to principal (reinvestment). Endowment funds' "pay-out" assumes a "total return concept," that is, income eligible for "pay-out" includes net realized and unrealized capital gains and losses in addition to traditional cash income yields. Trust fund and annuity fund "pay-out" rates and income definition are determined by the specific provisions of the applicable agreement.
- c. **Endowment Funds.** The FAC, representing the BOD, has the delegated responsibility for investment management of all the Liberty Common School

endowment funds. The FAC will specifically authorize and inform the BOD of individual endowments to be managed separately or by others. Agreements established with trust departments from financial institutions are preferred. Asset appreciation, long-term growth, maintenance of purchasing power and preservation of capital are the primary investment objectives of endowment funds.

- d. **Trust Funds.** The FAC, representing the BOD, has the delegated responsibility for investment management of all the Liberty Common School trust funds. The FAC will specifically authorize and inform the BOD of the trusts to be managed separately or by others. Agreements established with trust departments from financial institutions are preferred. Investment objectives for trust funds are current income earnings equal to, or in excess of the required trust "pay-out" rates, and preservation of capital and maintenance of corpus (i.e., remainder interest) purchasing power. The investment strategy for any specific trust will also take into account the individual income and other needs of the trustor or other income beneficiary. (These objectives apply also to "Pooled Income Fund Agreements.")
- e. **Annuity Funds.** The FAC, representing the BOD, has the delegated responsibility for investment management of all the Liberty Common School annuity funds. The FAC will specifically authorize and inform the BOD of any annuities to be managed separately or by others. The primary investment objective is to provide sufficient cash flow from income and principal to fund the required annual annuity payments to the donor or trustor. The investment strategy for any specific annuity trust will also take into account the individual annuitant income needs.
- f. **Limitations and Constraints.** Investment in individual securities should be limited to those companies whose principal or subsidiary business is not in conflict with the general philosophies and specific policies of the school. Securities which are received as gifts in trust or endowment and do not meet these qualifications or the investment goals and objectives outlined in this policy will be liquidated as soon as possible, unless specifically prohibited by terms of the trust or endowment agreement.

iv. **Investment Composition**

- a. **Short-Term Investments and Liquidity.** Short-term investments can be made in insured or collateralized obligations of approved (U.S.A.) banking institutions, triple "A-rated" corporate commercial paper, and obligations of the federal government. Short-term investments are fixed income investments with maturities of less than two years.
- b. **Long-Term Debt Securities (Fixed Income).** Investments in long-term debt securities are to be limited to government obligations of the Treasury and Federal agencies. Long-term investments are fixed income investments with maturities of less than five years.
- c. **Marketability.** All debt securities should be readily marketable.

V. **Performance Standards**

- a. The measurement of investment performance is an important part of the annual review of this investment policy. Performance goals are designed to be realistic and achievable within the resources (experience, expert counsel, time, etc.) available to the FAC. Although performance will be measured annually, change in policy, managers, committee members will be done with prudence giving reasonable time for achievement of goals. Due to their fees and costs, professional investment (money) managers will be expected to achieve returns and growth superior to the goals established for the Business Manager, as may be set forth by the FAC and the BOD.
- b. The minimum or "base-line" performance standard is that the provisions of this investment policy are to be complied with. Adequate records, clear and comprehensive reports and analysis are to be maintained and prepared in order to document compliance with the various and specific provisions of this investment policy.

VI. Transaction Authorization and Custodial Responsibility

- a. **Authorization Thresholds.** Investments considered as part of the Operating Fund, Restricted Fund or Endowment Fund are managed directly by the Business Manager. Any investment transactions under consideration that may represent a departure from current investments, as previously reviewed by the FAC, must be recommended by the FAC and approved by the BOD. The Business Manager will have authority to rollover any existing securities within the Operating and Restricted Funds assuming reasonable market conditions. In these types of security transactions, no authorization thresholds apply. New money received to the school in the amount of \$100,000 or greater, which may represent a short-term or long-term investment opportunity, will require the Business Manager to seek advice from the FAC as to the most suitable investment instrument to utilize.
- b. **Custody of Assets.** All securities, notes and other investment assets are to be kept in safekeeping -- under the custodial control of either a reputable brokerage firm or bank. Securities delivered to the school shall be transferred to the Business Manager for safekeeping with supporting receipt and inventory records kept by the school's bookkeeper. Collateral pledged on short-term investments must be either in the possession of the school's bookkeeper or a reliable third party custodian. The Business Manager is charged with the responsibility of ensuring that all investment assets are adequately secure and that proper procedures are established to control transfers and remittances.

10. Facilities

10.1. Room use Policy

See Procedure Manual for additional information

10.2. Building Use

It is the Board's policy to make the school property, building and facilities available to associated school groups and the community when not in use for school activities. Permission for use of school property does not constitute board or school endorsement of any organization, the beliefs of an organization or group, the expression of any opinion regarding the nomination, retention, election or defeat of any candidate, or expression of any opinion as to the passage or defeat of any issue.

The board reserves the right, and delegates to the administration the right, to refuse approval or to cancel any and all activities for the use of school property, building or facility when it determines that such action is necessary for the best interests of the school.

Refer to Procedure Manual for other building procedures.

Adopted: 6-28-01

10.3. Non-School Use of Facilities

The purpose of this policy is to define the expectations and procedures for the accepted use of the school facility by clubs or associations that are a part of the greater Liberty School community and by other outside groups who provide healthy activities for children. Interested parties may apply for consideration and will follow a process for qualification.

To Qualify:

- Clubs, groups or associations must be nonprofit entities formed to provide activities for youth.
- Proof of Liability Insurance is required and Liberty School must be identified as a named insured. The insurance coverage limit is negotiable and depends on the scheduled activity.
- Users of facilities will respect the property at all times.
- Reserved spaces are used for intended purposes and for appropriate activities.
- Must prepay for rental use and accept all terms of the application/agreement.

The Process:

- Request and complete the applicant portion of the Non-School Use of Facilities Rental /Application-Agreement Form and submit to the Business Office for processing. Allow two weeks for determination and approval.
- Upon approval, submit proof of insurance and prepayment.
- Business Manager will contact group representative to confirm scheduled dates and times for use.
- A designated person for the group will interview with the Business Manager in order to finalize arrangements.

Fee Structure:

- Gymnasium - \$50 Per Hour plus \$10 per hour for custodial/supervisor labor.
- Stage/Multipurpose Auditorium (same as for gymnasium)
- Classroom - \$20 Per Hour plus \$10 per hour for custodial/supervisor labor.
- Sports Fields - \$10 Per Hour plus \$10 per hour for custodial/supervisor labor.

Adopted: September, 2002

11. Athletics and Extracurricular Activities

- 11.1. Liberty Common High School athletes are governed and will adhere to the Colorado High Schools Activities Association bylaws.** For complete version of CHSAA Constitution and Bylaws 2011-12 visit:
http://www.chsaa.org/about/pdf/Handbook_2011.pdf

11.2. Liberty Common School Athletics Eligibility Policy

Participation in athletics at Liberty is both a privilege and a responsibility. As members of a Liberty Common athletic team, student-athletes are expected to make a personal commitment to represent Liberty in an exemplary fashion and to follow rules of training and conduct necessary to maintain strong, healthy minds and bodies. Because student-athletes are in a highly visible position requiring leadership and responsibility, they will be held to a higher accountability of conduct and behavior than students who choose not to participate in interscholastic athletics.

The following rules apply to all students participating in interscholastic athletic activities. These rules apply for each sport season students choose to participate in throughout the school year. This policy only needs to be filled out once for the year. **All eligibility decisions are at the discretion of the administration.**

The Athletic Director will check grades at the beginning of each week and report failing grades to the coaches and teachers. This eligibility applies to the entire week. Students

that have one D or F will be put on the “Planner Plan” for two weeks where they will need to get their planner signed by the teacher in the failing class. The student-athlete will then need to show this signed planner (calendar, personnel planner, etc.) to the coach in order to practice and participate in the games. The student-athlete will **not** be able to practice or play in a game without the planner signed by the teacher. If progress is not demonstrated after 2 weeks, athletes will be dismissed from the team until their grade is raised.

If a student has two failing grades (D or F), they are immediately placed on probation for two weeks where they are not eligible to practice or play in sports until one of the two failing grades is raised. Students are also to be away from the practices and contests and studying until they raised their grades. **Athletes should use this time to study and raise failing grades.** If one grade is raised then the student-athlete is placed on the planner plan and will be able to practice and play games.

Failure to raise failing grades will result in dismissal from the team for the rest of the season. Missing assignments can contribute to failing grades so student-athletes need to have all work completed and turned in on a timely fashion. If you have any questions regarding the eligibility process, please advise the athletic director.

If a student has two failing grades (D or F) at the conclusion of a semester, that student is ineligible for the following semester’s activities. Students can regain eligibility by having no more than one failing grade by the 6th Thursday following Labor Day in the fall semester, and by the Friday preceding March 10th in the Spring semester.

Adopted 12/3/2011

12. School Community Relations

12.1. Official Spokespersons

The Board chairman, Board vice chairman, Elementary School Principal, High School Principal and Headmaster will serve as the official spokespersons for Liberty Common School. The Business Manager may speak on non-academic issues.

Adopted: 9-05-02

Amended 12/3/2011