



Liberty Newsletter

A Blue Ribbon School of Excellence

Principal's Message



February 2018

Liberty Elementary School

142 Lake Rd.
Valley Cottage, NY 10989

Phone: 845-353-7240
Fax: 845-353-7243

Monthly Highlights

- Feb. 6 Hilltop Gallery Opening (L Exh. - 5:30pm)
School Bd. Mtg. - (H 7:30pm)
- Feb. 7 PTA Mtg. -7pm
- Feb. 19-23 Mid-Winter Recess

Dear Liberty Families,

February is another busy month at Liberty. We begin our month with our PTA sponsored Book Fair on February 6th, 7th and 8th. Each class will have a time to browse. Thank you to our PTA parents for providing this opportunity for our students. The timing is perfect as we will participate in the Rockland Read-in on Friday, February 16th.

We continue to honor our Liberty Acts of Stardom each month. We are very proud of our STAR students and staff who are working hard to be acknowledged at our monthly assembly.

Our theme for this month is Communication. We will celebrate the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and George Washington this month. We will also be highlighting outstanding individuals as February is Black History Month. These events will occur during Morning Program, assemblies and in individual classrooms.

*****PLEASE NOTE*****
School is closed February 19 to February 23

We are asking for your support with these issues. Our morning supervision begins at 8am. Please do not drop off your child before that time as we want them to be safe at all times. Please make sure that we have updated contact information. In the event of early dismissal, delayed openings or school closure, we need to have accurate information to alert you. We appreciate your cooperation.

Winter is upon us, so we would like to remind you that we still go outdoors for recess when the temperature and the wind chill factor are 25 degrees or above. We also consider the conditions of the playground equipment and blacktop area in our decision. It is essential to make sure that your child dresses appropriately for school and outdoor recess. Thank you for your cooperation.

Happy Valentine's Day!



Mrs. Ellen Rechenberger
Principal

Daily Events

- Feb. 5-8 Book Fair
- Feb. 9 Black History Assembly—2pm
- Feb. 12 George Washington Carver & Friends Assembly
- Feb. 13 Gr. 3—West. Philharmonic - 9am-12pm

From our School Social Worker:

Teaching Kids to Be Kind

Children are born kind. It's inherent in their nature. As they develop, though, this can change, especially by the time they are in middle school.

It's unclear exactly what causes the shift. We do know that children emulate the behaviors of the important people in their lives, and none are more important than their parents. Kids watch how these people behave, sometimes in negative ways, and may begin to feel that it's justified to act similarly.

Some studies support the idea that parents feel kindness is more important than academic success. While other studies show that students believe their parents are significantly more concerned about academic success. Somewhere along the way, the kindness message is being lost. Performing acts of kindness boosts our mood, makes us feel more connected and helps us feel positively about ourselves and others. There are lots of ways to teach kindness. It just has to become a priority for you and your child. Here are some suggestions:

Lead by example. Children observe, listen and follow. As parents, you have the most influence of anyone in your child's life, even if it doesn't always feel that way. Be aware of the need to be kind. Your children will follow suit.

Teach empathy. Talk about why people do what they do. Teach your children to think about things from another person's point of view, which may help them understand why someone acts the way they do. In a conflict, it's important to review what your child's role is and to talk about how they might want to handle things differently.

Make a kindness bucket. Use ideas from the children's book "Have Your Filled a Bucket Today?: A Guide to Daily Happiness for Kids" by Carol McCloud. Filling another's bucket can be as simple as offering praise, expressing appreciation or writing a note of thanks. Taking time each day to reflect on how your bucket is filled and how you fill someone else's bucket can promote more positive behaviors.

We have to teach our children that kindness matters. It's important to create a culture where being kind is a priority!

**Enisa Nikocecic, LMSW, CASAC-T
School Social Worker**

From the Psychologist :

Bullying vs. Teasing

Unfortunately, teasing is often part of growing up — almost every child experiences it. But it isn't always as innocuous as it seems. Words can cause pain. Teasing becomes bullying when it is repetitive or when there is a conscious intent to hurt another child. It can be verbal bullying (making threats, name-calling), psychological bullying (excluding children, spreading rumors), or physical bullying (hitting, pushing, taking a child's possessions).

Effects of Bullying:

If your child is the victim of bullying, he may suffer physically and emotionally, and his schoolwork will likely show it. Grades drop because, instead of listening to the teacher, kids are wondering what they did wrong and whether anyone will sit with them at lunch. If bullying persists, they may be afraid to go to school. Bullies are affected too, even into adulthood; they may have difficulty forming positive relationships. They are more apt to use tobacco and alcohol, and to be abusive spouses. Some studies have even found a correlation with later criminal activities.

Warning Signs:

If you're concerned that your child is a victim of teasing or bullying, look for these signs of stress:

Increased passivity or withdrawal

Frequent crying

Recurrent complaints of physical symptoms such as stomach-aches or headaches with no apparent cause

Sudden drop in grades or other learning problems

Not wanting to go to school

Significant changes in social life — suddenly no one is calling or extending invitations

Sudden change in the way your child talks — calling herself a loser, or a former friend a jerk

How to Help:

First, give your child space to talk. If she recounts incidences of teasing or bullying, be empathetic. If your child has trouble verbalizing her feelings, read a story about children being teased or bullied. You can also use puppets, dolls, or stuffed animals to encourage a young child to act out problems.

Once you've opened the door, help your child begin to problem-solve. Role-play situations and teach your child ways to respond. You might also need to help your child find a way to move on by encouraging her to reach out and make new friends. She might join teams and school clubs to widen her circle.

At school:

Schools and parents can work effectively behind the scenes to help a child meet and make new friends via study groups or science-lab partnerships. If you are concerned about your child:

- Share with the teacher what your child has told you; describe any teasing or bullying you may have witnessed. Ask the teacher if she sees similar behavior at school, and enlist her help in finding ways to solve the problem. If she hasn't seen any instances of teasing, ask that she keep an eye out for the behavior you described.

After the initial conversation, be sure to make a follow-up appointment to discuss how things are going.

If the problem persists, or the teacher ignores your concerns, and your child starts to withdraw or not want to go to school, consider the possibility of "therapeutic intervention." Ask to meet with the school counselor or psychologist, or request a referral to the appropriate school professional

Pia Weston, Ed-M., NCSP

Notes from the Nurse:

The FLU VIRUS IS WIDESPREAD in NY: Please keep your child at home if they have a fever. Check your child's temperature if your child is complaining of a headache, body aches, sore throat or other flu-like symptoms. Please notify the nurse at 353-7250 if you suspect that your child has the flu or has a confirmed flu diagnosis by the doctor. Flu prevention is key: get a flu shot if you haven't already, avoid close contact, stay home when you are sick, clean your hands often, avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth, and clean/disinfect surfaces or objects.

February is National Children's Dental Health Month. Did you know that despite the fact that it's almost entirely preventable, tooth decay is the most common chronic disease in children? The good news is there are safe and effective preventive measures that can protect teeth. Good oral hygiene practices such as thorough brushing with fluoride toothpaste can help keep children from getting cavities. In addition, dental sealants and community water fluoridation are two other strategies that can help prevent tooth decay. Now is a good time to call your dentist and make an appointment for your child's checkup. If you do not have a dentist, the Rockland County Health Department has a Dental Clinic for children ages 3-18. Call 364-2865.

Kindly submit your physicals for your children ASAP. If your child is new at Liberty or is in grades K, 2, or 4, he/she must have a recent physical on file in the nurse's office. This is state mandated. If we do not receive a physical for your child soon, he/she will have to see the District Physician to be cleared to attend school.

Please remember to call the school with updated phone numbers when there is a change. Thank you for your cooperation. Stay healthy!

**Kathleen Fredericks, RN
Liberty School Nurse**



**Kathleen Fredericks
845-353-7250**