

# The Eagle's Nest

THE COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER OF PITTSBURGH LIBERTY K-5

November 2019

Vol. 5, Issue 2

## November Calendar

### **Fri. Nov. 1 (half day of school),**

- **Family Friday:** Liberty invites students to bring a family member or other beloved adult to school. It's a chance to see the great work our kids are doing, meet the faculty and your fellow Liberty families, and join our children for activities in the classroom.
  - 9-9:30 – Parent activity
  - 9:30-10:15 – Classroom activities
- **Students' in-school celebration of *Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead)*.** Parent volunteers needed to help make bread! See story page 6.
- **Early dismissal:** 12:56

**Election Day Bake Sale: Tues. Nov. 5, 9am-2pm:** To raise money for ongoing school improvements, we will be holding a bake sale at the corner of Elmer and Filbert. We are looking for bakers and people to help at the sale. Drop off baked goods to the school on Mon. Nov. 4, or directly to the table on Tues. Nov. 5. Questions? Contact Vicki at [vicki.potter78@gmail.com](mailto:vicki.potter78@gmail.com) or 201-892-2637 (text or call). To sign up to volunteer: <https://tinyurl.com/LibertyBakeSale>

**Parent Advisory Council (PAC) Meeting, Thurs. Nov. 7, Pittsburgh SciTech:** PAC is the District's central mechanism for ensuring that parents are well informed and can help develop programming and policy. Liberty is currently in need of a representative at PAC. If you're interested in filling this role, contact LouAnn "Ms. Z" Zwieryznski, principal: [lzwieryznski1@pghschools.org](mailto:lzwieryznski1@pghschools.org)

**Equity Committee & LEAF/PSCC Meeting: Wed., Nov. 20, 5pm-7pm, School Library:** See story page 4. We'll have a brief break for a light dinner at 6pm. Childcare will be provided. Please RSVP Maria: [president@pghleaf.org](mailto:president@pghleaf.org)

**Newsletter submissions due Wed. Nov. 20:** Email to [president@pghleaf.org](mailto:president@pghleaf.org)

**Tues., Dec. 10th, 5-9 pm: Fundraiser at Chipotle Fundraiser, 5986 Centre Ave:** Make dinner a selfless act by joining us for a fundraiser to support LEAF at the

Chipotle in East Liberty. Tell the cashier you're supporting the cause to make sure that 33% of the proceeds will be donated to LEAF!

## Principal's Corner

I would like to thank all the families, teachers and staff members that are supporting the formation of our School Equity Committee. There is an article in this newsletter (see page 4) with more information about what we are doing and our next steps. The need for this committee is evident by our data from multiple sources, such as PSSA data, misconduct data, Tripod Surveys, Panorama Surveys and Academic data. In order for us to embody our Mission and Vision we need to address underlying issues and this committee is one strategy we will use to help bring our Vision and Mission to fruition.

### ***Vision***

All Pittsburgh Liberty students will demonstrate academic excellence and self-efficacy to impact their school, community, and world.

### ***Mission***

All students attending Pittsburgh Liberty will have a strong academic foundation of learning built on collaboration, communication, critical thinking, creativity, and strength of character in a safe, supportive environment. We will support students to become active, compassionate, global thinkers through the study of Spanish language and culture.

### ***Instructional Focus***

A school-wide effort to have all Pittsburgh Liberty students show measurable growth in written expression as measured by PSSAs, content-specific writing prompts, PPS Comprehension Performance Assessments and Mathematics Exemplars.

Our Internal Goal 85% of our students will demonstrate proficiency in written expression in all components of identified scoring guidelines with 15% showing growth.

### ***Student Council***

Elections are right around the corner and are scheduled to occur the week of November 3 so that they coincide with Pennsylvania's election day. Ms. Bender has been kind enough to



sponsor our student council on top of her teaching schedule. Our Student Council is made up of:

- President – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade
- Vice-President – 4<sup>th</sup> Grade
- Secretary – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade
- Treasurer – 4<sup>th</sup> Grade
- Homeroom representatives.

Students can nominate themselves for positions. They give a speech either to their whole grade level for officer positions or their homeroom for homeroom representatives, then elections are held in homerooms. Student Council meetings are normally during lunch and recess or sometimes during the teacher's prep period. The student council officers decide when they will meet. Ms. Jerabek ran Student Council last year and Ms. Bender picked it up this year.



Last year, our Student Council accomplished a lot. The re-started student council at Liberty and held several fundraisers and food drives that benefitted the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank, a local nursing home, and a homeless shelter. The students also sponsored a pizza lunch for our staff during Teacher Appreciation Week.

### ***Uniform Policy***

I am hearing there is some confusion around the uniform policy at Liberty. The policy, as stated in our handbook, is:

#### Everyday Uniform:

Pants, shorts, skirts and jumpers must be navy blue or khaki. Shirts and blouses must have a collar and be a plain solid color. All

Spirit Wear clothing sold by LEAF or clubs can be worn as a piece of the uniform.

#### Gym Days:

Students must wear rubber soled tennis shoes to participate in gym class.

### Sweaters and sweatshirts

Sweaters and jackets are permitted as long as they are a plain solid color. A Liberty sweatshirt with the Liberty logo or emblem is also acceptable.

Sincerely,  
Ms. LouAnn Zwieryznski, Principal

## **LEAF, PSCC, Equity Committee updates**

Thank you to all who have participated in the discussion of Equity at Liberty and the creation of our Equity Committee. The work of the first two PSCC and LEAF meetings resulted in the Equity Committee Mission Statement:

*We, the Liberty Equity Committee, will facilitate necessary challenges to create a positive and healthy educational atmosphere in which all are valued and can reach their maximum potential by embracing diversity and actively working to understand rich and complex identities of self and others.*

At our next PSCC/LEAF meeting on Nov 20, we will continue the work of establishing the Equity Committee by discussing the actions we can take to accomplish our mission, and how we will measure success. Please join us! After this Nov. 20 session, the Equity Committee will meet as a separate group - if you are interested in being a part of this work, please email: [president@pghleaf.org](mailto:president@pghleaf.org)

Our LEAF and PSCC meetings for the rest of the year will be on the 3rd Wednesday of the month - PSCC at 5pm, followed by LEAF at 6pm. Mark your calendars! We are planning online meetings for the future as well.

We have some exciting topics planned - Social Emotional Learning, Math Fun Night, Equity Committees, Spanish, Budget (okay, maybe not *all* fun and exciting? :) ). The dates are: Nov 20, Dec 18, Jan 15, First week of Feb (date TBD), Mar 18, Apr 15, May 20.

## **Volunteers needed for the backpack program**

Through a partnership with the Greater Pittsburgh Community Foodbank, the FOCUS Pittsburgh Backpack Feeding Program provides free weekend meals to local school children. The program provides bags packed with enough food for 2 breakfasts, 2 dinners, 2 lunches, fresh fruit, juice, and several snack items. LEAF volunteers work with Liberty teachers to distribute the backpacks each Friday for about an hour. To volunteer, contact:

Monica Wallace: [wallacemonica8336@gmail.com](mailto:wallacemonica8336@gmail.com) ;

Lisa "Ms. G." Gonzalez: [lisajgonzalez@aol.com](mailto:lisajgonzalez@aol.com)

## Black History

Each year, Black History Month culminates with a K-2nd grade student performance. Building on this beloved school tradition, starting in 2019-2020, LEAF will elect a Black History Chair to more formally organize Liberty's recognition of Black trailblazers throughout the school year. Contact Jennifer Blair Edwards: [jablair1@hotmail.com](mailto:jablair1@hotmail.com)

## Meet Liberty's "double-dose" teachers

At Liberty, we are so lucky to have two "double dose" teachers! Their role is to work with a fluid group of students in the primary grades to give them a second dose or mini lesson on a skill in reading that may have been difficult. When students are able to have more time working on a skill, they are able to be more successful.

### *Ms. Feicht*

Happy Fall! My name is Mrs. Feicht and I am the new double-dose teacher at Liberty. This is my 4th year in the district and my 10th year as an educator. I graduated from Indiana University of Pennsylvania as a dual major in elementary and special education, along with a concentration in reading. I received my Masters' degree from the University of Pittsburgh in reading education with a Reading Specialist Certificate. The first 7 years of my career, I taught special education in different capacities. More recently, I taught 5th grade in the Pittsburgh Public School system. Now that I am at Liberty, I am excited to dig deeper into reading! I have always had a deep love for reading and love to use my down-time to curl up with a good book. However, down-time is limited at home. I have two children; a 6 year old, Aiden and a 2 year old, Ashton. They keep me quite busy!

I am excited to enjoy this school year at Liberty! I am really looking forward to watching the student's progress and to hopefully grow their own personal love for a good book.

### *Ms. Horne*

Hello! My name is Mrs. Jamie Horne and this is my third year as the Kindergarten and First Grade Double-Dose reading teacher at Liberty! A double-dose teacher teaches a second "dose" or lesson that has already been taught in the classroom. I get to work with all of the students in kindergarten and first grade on very important skills they need to be amazing readers. These skills include naming letters and sounds, rhyming, taking apart word sounds, blending sounds to make words, and so much more! I get to help

them learn these skills by using hands-on fun, like playdough, paints, chalk, music, and word building tiles. I love your kiddos and I LOVE it when they learn something new. They are excited when they remember and know what we have learned! My goal is to build a love of learning and confidence in each child and to help them believe in themselves and never give up!

When I am not teaching, I am reading, cooking, camping, singing, working at my church, loving my golden retriever and most importantly spending time with my husband and six kids.

## **Parent volunteers needed Nov. 1st. To make *pan de muertos* (bread) at Liberty!**

Día de los Muertos will be celebrated by the students in school on Fri., Nov. 1, 9:30-noon. On that day, intermediate would appreciate several parent volunteers to assist the kids with the making of their pan de muertos (bread)—a school tradition more than a decade in the making! There are not any prerequisites needed to help out other than a tolerance for some noise, the acceptance of the possibility of food coloring-stained hands—and clearances on file, of course. Visit [bit.ly/pps-volunteer](http://bit.ly/pps-volunteer) for those forms.

### ***Volunteer opportunities for that day (end times are approximate)***

- Kindergarten: 2 volunteers, 9:15-11 am
- 1st grade: 2 volunteers, 9:15-11 am
- 3rd grade: 2 volunteers, 9:15 am-12 pm
- 4th & 5th grades: 3-4 volunteers to help with dead bread, 9:15 am-12 pm

To volunteer please contact Ms. Tracy Theobald: [ttheobald1@pghschools.org](mailto:ttheobald1@pghschools.org)

## **Extracurriculars at Liberty**

### ***Chess Club***

Participants meet weekly during lunch. They learn rules while they eat, then play one another.

*2nd Graders, Contact: Ms. Keri Cox*

*3rd & 4th Graders, Contact: Ms. Tracy Theobald*

### ***Basketball***

Our girls team were the 2018-19 Pittsburgh Public Schools Elementary Basketball Champions, and our boys team came in 2nd!

*Contact: Mr. Carl Parker Jr.*

### **Harry Potter Club**

A beloved book club for 3rd and 4th graders.

*Contact: Ms. Halley Skiff*

### **Grow Pittsburgh Gardens**

Any grade may participate. Homerooms take turns planting, weeding, harvesting, preparing, winterizing beds. They rake, mulch, clean up, and spruce up side gardens and flowerbeds.

*Contact: Ms. Keri Cox.*

### **Shakespeare Club**

This club meets every Monday after school.

*Contact: Mr. Christopher Bassett*

### **Student Council**

See story page 2!

*Contact: Ms. Jennifer Bender*

### **Strong Women Strong Girls**

Champions the aspirations and potential of girls and women through mentorship. For more information: <https://swsg.org/locations/pittsburgh/>

*Contact: Ms. Meiko Mears*

### **Cheerleading**

Students in grades 3 through 5 learn technique. They cheer for several school events and games throughout the school year. All students are welcome.

*Contact: Ms. Danielle Cash*

### **Instrumentals**

The children get an opportunity to learn to play an instrument starting 4th grade through a PPS program and can participate in the All City Arts every year. Signup is in the spring for the following year.

*Contact: Ms. Alexandra Martin*

### **Help Our World (HOW)**

Fourth and Fifth grade students focus on the environment.

*Contact: Ms. Tracy Theobald*

### ***Singing Eagles***

Our school chorus is open to students in grades 3-5 and meets during lunch and recess. Choral music fosters community and teamwork. Shinichi Suzuki said it best: "If children hear fine music from the day of their birth and learn to play it, they develop sensitivity, discipline, and endurance. They get a beautiful heart."

*Contact: Ms. Alexandra Martin*

### ***Jump Rope Club***

In this popular after-school activity, students come to learn to jump rope and/or to display their talents.

*Contact: Ms. Dannielle Cash*

*Editor's note: The above information—and much more helpful info for Liberty families—is online on LEAF's website: [www.pghleaf.org](http://www.pghleaf.org)*

## **Obama Academy 6-12: a parent's perspective**

"Nothing in life is so complicated that it cannot be achieved by discipline and hard work." This is the motto for Obama middle and high school. Obama is an International Baccalaureate World School. This means "connections are made within and across disciplines. Students become aware of the rights and responsibilities of American citizenship, acquire skill in a second language, and develop an appreciation of the common ties among cultures. They meet the challenge of high academic standards through rigorous thinking in all content areas." (vision statement).

I have 2 children currently at Obama and they are thriving. They are involved in sports, of which Obama offers many. Pantelis Papazekos is the soccer coach. He had 3 children graduate from Liberty and currently has children at Obama. There are dozens of clubs, such as cooking club taught by famous Chef Bill Fuller of the Big Burrito Group. The Obama Steel Band performs at many community events including Liberty Fun Fair and welcoming visitors to the Pittsburgh International Airport. The students also put on a play every year that is spectacular.

The kids are expected to do 10 or 20 hours of community service each year depending on the year. The curriculum is challenging but the students are given lots of support and guidance. One of the volunteer opportunities for students is to tutor other students who need help. I am thrilled that my children are at Obama and would recommend it to all Liberty students.

*—Tracy Small*

### ***Visit the Obama Academy***

Prospective middle school students and their families are welcome to Obama Academy 6-12's final tour of the year on Thurs. Nov. 7 at 9:30 a.m. No registration necessary.



# Dave and Busters Fundraiser

Get ready for a FUN fundraiser! For the month of November we will be selling Dave & Buster's PowerCards! You and your student can purchase for yourself and sell to family and friends as well! It will make a great holiday present and they will be available before the winter break. LEAF (Liberty Elementary Academic Fund) will get 1/2 of the money from each card!

How to do it? The Fundraiser order form is attached. When you have completed, send back to the school in an envelope with LEAF: DAVE & BUSTERS written on it WITH PAYMENT included in the envelope (checks can be made out to Liberty Elementary Academic Fund). The deadline to order is December 5th

Any questions? Contact Tamesha Bottoms ([tameshabottoms@gmail.com](mailto:tameshabottoms@gmail.com))

## Spanish

### Common Phrases

- 1) *Como te llamas? Como se llama usted?* What's your name?
- 2) *De donde eres? De donde es usted?* Where are you from?
- 3) *Tienes hermanos? Tiene hermanos?* Do you have brothers and sisters?
- 4) *Que te gusta hacer? Que le gusta hacer?* What do you like to do?
- 5) *Que deportes te gusta ver? Que deportes le gusta ver?* What sports do you like to watch?
- 6) *Cuando empezaste a aprender espanol? Cuado empezo a aprender espanol?* When did you start to learn Spanish?
- 7) *Que musica prefieres? Que musica prefiere?* What is your favorite music?

### Emotions and Feelings

happiness- *la felicidad*

fear- *el miedo*

sadness- *la tristeza*

anger- *el enojo*

tiredness- *el cansancio*

jealousy- *los celos*

pride- *el orgullo*

excitement- *el entusiasmo*

pain- *el dolor*

confusion- *la confusion*

value- *el valor*  
pleasure- *el placer*

## Recipe: Loaded Apple Nachos

### Ingredients

2 apples cored and cut into slices  
1-2 tablespoons peanut butter melted  
1-2 tablespoons white chocolate chips  
1-2 tablespoons chocolate chips  
1/2-1 tablespoon coconut flakes  
handful of sprinkles

### Instructions

1. Place the apples in a platter, lining up the ends of the apples so that they are in a spiral.
2. Drizzle the peanut butter over the apples in a spiral.
3. Top the apples with the chocolate chips, the coconut flakes, and the sprinkles.
4. Enjoy.

Note: You can use any toppings of your choice. Be creative!

## Spirit wear

Liberty spirit wear can be worn as part of the school uniform! Order your child- or adult-sized shirts, hoodies, sweatpants, and sweatshirts online any time at [bit.ly/LibertySpiritWear](http://bit.ly/LibertySpiritWear) ; items are delivered monthly, starting this month (October).



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*This newsletter is produced by the parent-teacher organization known as LEAF (Liberty Elementary Academic Fund), a nonprofit organization. LEAF's mission is to support the students, teachers and families at Pittsburgh Liberty K-5 through fundraising, volunteering, and community events. Visit our site for more info: [www.pghleaf.org](http://www.pghleaf.org)*