



Building Strength by Working Together

April 2008



Save the dates:

- PTO Meeting, 6:00 pm in the cafeteria: **Tuesday April 1st**
- George St Playhouse Presentation for grades 5-8, 4-5:30 pm: **Thursday, April 3rd**
- End of 3rd Marking Period: **Friday, April 4th**
- Board Meeting: **Tuesday, April 8th at 1:00 pm**
- Anti-Bullying Presentation for grades 4-8: **Wednesday, April 9th**
- PTO Fundraiser, Family Portraits: **Saturday, April 12th**
- Report Card Conferences and Distribution 1-6:00 pm: **Thursday, April 17th**
- 12 noon dismissal: **Thursday, April 17th**
- NJASK Testing, grades 7-8: **April 28, 29, 30, May 1st**
- NJASK Testing, grades 5-6: **May 5, 6, 7, 8**

"...and it means taking responsibility for our own lives -by demanding more from our fathers, spending more time with our children, and reading to them, and teaching them that while they may face challenges and discrimination in their own lives, they must never succumb to despair or cynicism; they must always believe that they can write their own destiny." - Barack Obama

Barack Obama's words remind us of the responsibility that we have as parents and educators to model to our children ways to be powerful and empowered. If you haven't done so already, please try to listen to or read the transcript of Obama's recent speech (<http://www.cnn.com/2008/POLITICS/03/18/obama.transcript/index.html>). He offers an approach to creating positive change through union by recognizing and honoring the bonds that unite us in spite of our differences. He challenges us to try to understand the roots of our rage and hurt, and not allow them to distract us from our purpose. In his speech, he implores us to teach our children ways to practice self-control and ways to control their lives; to believe that they can affect and shape their destinies.

To work towards "perfecting the union" and avoid giving in to the distraction of divisiveness because we are angry, fearful, confused, disappointed, or misunderstood continues to be the lesson that we are teaching and practicing at

"I chose to run for the presidency at this moment in history because I believe deeply that we cannot solve the challenges of our time unless we solve them together - unless we perfect our union by understanding that we have different stories, but we hold common hopes; that we may not look the same and we may not have come from the same place, but we all want to move in the same direction -towards a better future for our children and grandchildren." -Barack Obama

Lady Liberty Academy as a professional adult community and in our classrooms. Let's continue to commit to working together to model and forge positive and productive "alliances to bring about the real change" that our children need to witness and contribute to in order to create productive and strong futures.

High Expectations Continue!

Spring Vacation is over and the weather is getting warmer, but we cannot relax our focus on academics and conduct! This final marking period is very important for all our students in determining promotion and graduation decisions, and ensuring a successful transition to the next grade or to high school. In addition, important State tests for grades 5-8 are scheduled for the last week of April and the first week of May. Please continue to support us in maintaining a focused and productive learning environment by doing the following:

- Ensure that your child completes his/ her **Homework EVERY night**. Please contact your child's teacher, Mr. Mugambe or Mrs Thomas if your child is not bringing homework home. Completing homework should be a routine event every night. It not only helps your child to reinforce and practice the content and skills that have been taught during the day, but it helps to train him/her to be a serious student and develop high expectations for being prepared for classes the next day.
- Ensure that your child comes to school on time and attends school **EVERY day** unless he/she is sick. Students with more than 20 unexcused absences may be in danger of being retained and as required by law, the Municipal Court will be notified.
- Insist on your child attending the middle school Skills Enhancement Program on Fridays and Saturdays in preparation for the State tests.
- Insist on your child following our school rules and conducting himself/herself civilly by practicing our core values of respect, responsibility, justice and caring. Fighting, play fighting, bullying, and interrupting learning and teaching are not tolerated in our school community,

Please Note! Change of Date

Instead of April 23rd, Report Card Conferences and Distribution, and 12:15 dismissal are now scheduled for Thursday, April 17th.





Reminders!

Check that your child wears the full school uniform, including black shoes, solid colored socks, black belt, and no jewelry.

Ensure you pick up your child's report card and meet with his/her teachers on April 17th.

Follow our fair weather dismissal procedures:

Unless the weather is inclement, dismissal is outside in the playground at 3:30 pm (Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri) and 2:30 pm on Tuesdays. Please do not come into the building for early pick up unless there is an emergency reason or you have a pre-arranged appointment with a staff member. Older siblings may meet their sisters/brothers in the playground. They should dismiss from the double doors and not go downstairs to the K-4 classrooms.

Suggestions, comments, questions:

please contact Mrs. Thomas

Phone: (973) 623-9005

ftomas@ladylibertyacademy.org

<http://www.ladylibertyacademy.org>

Opportunities for Parents in School Improvement Planning

If you are interested in participating in school improvement planning efforts for the new school year in areas of student code of conduct and parent involvement, please contact or schedule an appointment with Ms Brower (ext. 1244), Mrs. Thomas (ext. 1204), or Mr. Mugambe.

Especially for 8th Grade Parents!

As we move into the last quarter of the year, 8th graders and their families begin to plan for and anticipate graduation and all the special events that surround that occasion. While this is a very exciting time, many students may also begin to feel a little anxious, confused, and sad about leaving Lady Liberty Academy, close friends, special teachers, and familiar routines and places. These are normal feelings and we can help relieve some of them by doing the following:

Students:

- Try to talk to a friend, parent, homeroom teacher, Mr. Silver, or Ms Luke about your feelings. You will find that you are not alone in how you feel, and sharing can often help.
- Keep a journal where you can write down your thoughts and work through some of your feelings.
- Make a plan of some practical steps that you can do now to help you prepare for your first days of high school. For example, if you are concerned about transportation to your high school, plan out the route and make the trip now.

- Don't let your academics or conduct at school slide. This will only get in the way of you being able to enjoy and participate in all the upcoming graduation events and rites of passage that are important for you to experience.
- Take advantage of attending the Skills Enhancement Program on Fridays and Saturdays to help you prepare for the NJASK/GEPA tests at the end of April. These tests are important in determining promotion decisions and placement in high school freshman classes.

Parents:

- Create opportunities to talk with your son or daughter about high school and feelings surrounding the transition. You may have experienced the same kinds of feelings and have some practical suggestions and advice that can help normalize and validate anxious, confused, or sad feelings.
- Keep your child focused on excellence in academics and conduct to ensure that the final report card that you take with you to high school is the best that it can be!

Let's work together to help our children SHINE and AIM HIGH every day!