



The Liberty Lantern

September 2026



LIBERTY OFFICE PERSONNEL:

Principal: Shane Street

Administrative Assistant : Leah Hundley

Assistant Principal: Ed Lesniak

Administrative Assistant: Deanna Agnos

School Office Hours: 7:00am - 3:55pm

Telephone Number: 815-462-7951

[Liberty Jr High Website Link](#)

A NOTE FROM THE MAIN OFFICE...



The Liberty Junior High School staff would like to say a big “WELCOME” to all of our Patriot families as we begin the journey that is the 2026-2027 school year. We are excited, eager, and looking forward to a great year!

Shane Street
Principal

Ed Lesniak
Assistant Principal





We welcome the following staff members as they are new to Liberty Junior High:

Nicole Lane: Special Education

Samantha Schroeder: Art Teacher

Nicole Ebbert: Social Worker (Intern)

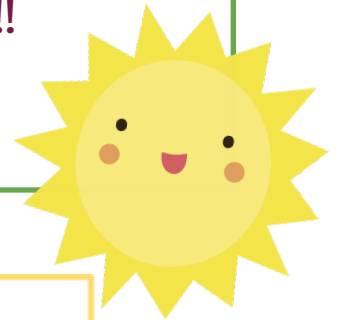
Renee Wyatt-Hall: Paraprofessional

Kara Noble: Paraprofessional

Leah Hundley: Administrative Assistant

Deanna Agnos: Administrative Assistant

We are delighted you decided to join us!!!
"A smile is the universal welcome"



Assignment Notebooks...

Students are strongly encouraged to utilize their assignment notebooks on a daily basis. They are a key to developing responsibility and maintaining organization. When used properly, they can be very helpful with homework completion and remembering events. We also encourage parents to check their child's assignment notebook as it is a great way to stay updated on their child's progress.



Student iPads...

All students are issued a NLSD 122 iPad and are expected to have this with them for all classes and to bring it home each night. Bringing a fully charged iPad to class each day is essential for maximizing learning opportunities and ensuring seamless participation in digital activities. A dead battery can hinder learning, disrupt the classroom and put students at a disadvantage. **Please assist your child with creating a routine that ensures they have a fully charged iPad to start each and every day of school.**

Please also be sure you have submitted the iPad agreement online. You may do this in PowerSchool. Login, Click on Forms, Click General, Click on NLSD122 Student iPad Equipment Agreement, After reading and confirming all items were received, click "I agree". Click Submit.



School Absence...

It is very important that your child be in attendance each and every day, but we do realize that there will be times when they are sick and need to stay home. If your child is going to be absent, please be sure to call the main office at 815-462-7951 by 8:30am the day of the absence.

Please be sure to call even if you send a note or email your child's teacher. School personnel will call parents/guardians and emergency contacts if we do not receive a call by 8:30am. To arrange an early pickup for your student, please call the main office to let us know the time you will be arriving and we will do our best to have your student ready.

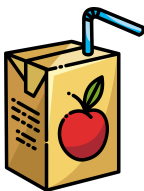
Please be aware that the NLSD 122 Student Attendance Procedures have been updated for this year. One important change is for Excused Illness/Medical Visits. For an illness or medical appointment to be recorded as excused, written documentation from a licensed healthcare provider is required. So, please be sure to ask for a note from your doctor when your student is missing school.



Lunch

The school lunch order link is sent out by district office every other week to the parent/guardian email listed in powerschool. Please place your order by the deadline in order to ensure your child will receive lunch. You can find more information on the lunch program here:

[Lunch Program](#)



Ice Cream & Snacks

Hershey Ice Cream and other snacks ex: chips, granola bars, are offered every day during lunch. A variety of flavors/items are available for \$1.00 each. **Ice Cream/Snacks are a cash only purchase and cannot be deducted from the student's lunch account.**



News You Can Use

Emergency Drills Notification:

We regularly schedule emergency drills throughout the year. These drills include evacuate (fire) drills, shelter (tornado) drills, bus evacuation drills, and lockdown (intruder) drills. The dates for these drills will be listed in the "Calendar Reminders" section of our newsletter. We practice all drills in a non-threatening, as minimal a stress level manner as possible. We also do not do unannounced lockdown drills. **The next round of evacuate, shelter, and lockdown drills are scheduled for Friday, September 11th. We will have another lockdown drill on October 1st, 2026.** Please contact Mr. Street should you have any questions about our drills.



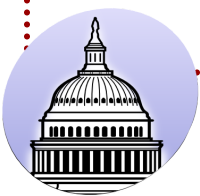
New District Grading Procedures:

Our District has implemented some changes to our late and missing work procedures that we'd like to make you aware of. Please see the letters linked letters explaining those changes:

- [7th Grade Late Missing Parent Letter.pdf](#)
- [8th Grade Late Missing Parent Letters.pdf](#)

Homework Club:

Start the year off right by completing homework on time, getting the help you need, and staying organized. Students that would benefit from a quiet place to work, would like help in any class, need to work with a group or partner, get caught up on absence or late work, or need to retake assessments, please come join us at Homework Club. This club is open to all Liberty Junior High students. Join us as needed in room C220 on Tuesdays or Thursdays after school until 3:30pm and Wednesdays before school starting at 7:30am. Students must have a completed permission slip to participate. Please see Mrs. Patras or Mrs. Zettergren with any questions. Permission slips can be picked up in the main office. Homework Club will begin September 8th.



Washington DC Trip

The 8th grade students that are signed-up for the Washington, D.C. trip, from October 9–11, 2026, must complete and return their behavior agreement, medical forms and roommate requests to room C220 by September 4. A mandatory meeting for students and parents/guardians will be held on Thursday, September 17th, at Peace Lutheran Church (1900 E Lincoln Hwy, New Lenox). To accommodate everyone, the meeting is divided into two sessions based on students' last name:

- Last names A–K: 5:30–6:30pm
- Last names L–Z: 7:00–8:00pm

For any questions regarding the trip, please contact Mrs. Zettergren at dctripzettergren@gmail.com.

Cross Country

The 2026 Cross-Country season is off to an incredible start! Following high-energy tryouts in early August, our athletes have jumped straight into their training with remarkable dedication. The energy from our runners and supporters has been palpable, from the first whistle of the season to the final stretch of our opening races. Our first meet was a resounding success. Both the boys' and girls' teams ran exceptional races, navigating the course with speed and determination that reflected their hard work during the pre-season. We are incredibly proud of the sportsmanship and grit displayed by every single runner. To maintain this momentum, the team is following a rigorous training schedule focused on building a strong aerobic base and improving running form. We continue to practice our "Want It, Work It, Win It" motto, emphasizing hydration, proper nutrition, and team camaraderie. We are proud to announce the student athletes representing the Liberty Junior High School Cross Country team this year:

Boys' Team:

Julian Centeno
Thristian Christakes
Holden Flanigan
Josh Galka
Caleb Green
Nathan Jastrzab
Jaymeson Kozik
Henry Ramel
Andrew VanPuyenbroeck

Girls' Team:

Carmella DeCesare
Kiersten Kaster
Eva McCann
Anne McSherry
Johanna Thompson
Nora Wilke

Baseball

The Liberty Patriots Baseball Team earned their first varsity wins Saturday in a doubleheader against Joliet St. Raymond. The team has been in competitive games up to this point and are working hard to add some more W's to the win column. The Patriots have a full week of games coming up as they take on Mokena, Martino, Homer, and doubleheader against Minooka to round out the week. This year's roster is made up of:

Nate Berlin
Ethan Cartolano
Chase Davis
Tyson Gagan
Mason Gray
Beckham Gremley
Connor Lucas
Ryan Meyer
Brennan Moore
Owen Pearl
Camden Pettit
Rocco Saso
Troy Sweeney
Nicolas Tapia
Declan Trotter
JD Washow
Logan White
Andrew Zajc



Boys' Volleyball:

Looking for a great way to be a part of the school community right at the start of the school year? Calling all 7th and 8th grade boys...this one's for you! Tryouts for this season's 7th and 8th grade boys' volleyball teams are just around the corner! Beginning Monday, August 31st, tryouts will be held for this season's boys' volleyball teams. It is a quick six-week season and no previous experience is necessary. If you are interested, please listen to the school announcements for how to sign-up or see Coach Zumpano with any questions. We look forward to a fast paced and exciting season. We hope to see a lot of you at tryouts! Any questions, see one of the coaches.

Google Classroom Try-Out Code - **76c2nliy**

8th Grade = Coach Havlin - jhavlin@nlsd122.org

7th Grade = Coach Zumpano - azumpano@nlsd122.org

Girls Softball

The Liberty Patriots look to improve on their 9-2-1 record heading into the last week of the season before regionals. The girls have been dominant both on the mound and at the plate outscoring opponents 91-28. The girls took 2nd place at the Manteno tournament and 3rd place at the DPVC conference tournament. The team includes...

7th Graders

Reagan Smith
Emily Jagoda
Mya Storako
Kam Busse
Sophia Granata
Ellie Greenhill
Daphne Lovato

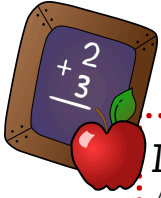
8th Graders

Katia Ball
Violette Agema
Aubrey Wondrasek
Aubrey Landefeld
Megan Michals
Kloe Smith
Mackenzie Hadac
Molly Jagoda
Alaina DeBeor

Girls Basketball:

With the start of a new school year comes the start of a new girls' basketball season. Both coaches Bollini and Didier are looking forward to another successful year of basketball starting with after school tryouts on Monday, September 14, and Tuesday, September 15, after school from 3:00 to 4:30pm. All girls who intend on trying out need to have an updated sports physical on file with the main office. Any questions? Please reach out to Coaches Bollini or Didier.

News You Can Use



Mathletes:

Are you ready to put your math skills to the ultimate test? Mathletes is back! Experience the rush of cracking complex problems and going battle-to-battle against top teams nationwide in live virtual competitions. We meet one morning a week from September to December. Grab your spot... See Coach Bahret (7th grade) or Coach Zettergren (8th grade) to join!

student
COUNCIL

Student Council:

The Liberty Student Council is a group of students who work together to plan activities, such as pep assemblies and spirit weeks. We also participate in service-based activities in our community and at Liberty. Anyone can join Student Council at any point during the school year; there are no elections. The first Student Council meeting is **Tuesday, September 8th, after school until 3:45pm**. Student Council meetings are held in Mrs. O'Brien's room, C-216. Please see Mrs. O'Brien or Mrs. Patras to get a permission slip. All students must have a signed permission slip turned in to be a part of Student Council. If you can't make the meeting or have questions, please feel free to stop by and see Mrs. O'Brien or Mrs. Patras at your convenience. We are looking forward to another great year with the Student Council here at Liberty!



Poms:

Have you ever considered joining the poms team at Liberty? Now is the time! Whether you've danced your whole life or never stepped foot in a dance class, come to tryouts! The **clinic** will be held on Monday, September 21, and will begin after school and end at 5:00pm. The **tryout** will be held after school on Wednesday, September 23. Once a student has completed their tryout, they are free to leave. **All participants MUST have a current physical on file to attend.** Please join the Liberty Pom's Google Classroom using the following code: scl77ii7

News You Can Use



Orchestra:

Welcome to the 2026-2027 school year musicians! The Liberty Junior High Orchestra is ready to make some great music this year. Make sure you mark your calendars right now with our 2026-2027 concert schedule:

- Wednesday, October 21 - Fall Concert
- Wednesday, December 16 - Winter Concert
- Thursday, March 4 - Lincoln Way Step Up Concert
- Thursday, May 13 - Spring Concert

Information on Allegro, ILMEA, Solo Contest and more will be coming out throughout the year. For now, let's get ready to make some great music!



Band:

August has been an exciting month for our band students! From the hard work and dedication demonstrated during band camp to performances throughout the community, our musicians have been building their skills, confidence, and teamwork. Students kicked off the season with an energetic band camp, spending many hours rehearsing music, learning marching fundamentals, and developing the teamwork and discipline needed to perform as an ensemble. The band was also proud to perform at the Lincoln-Way West varsity football game on Friday, August 28, after only three days of school! The Liberty Band members joined forces with the band members from Lincoln-Way West and Manhattan J.H.S. and the students had the opportunity to showcase their musical talents and school spirit while performing for a huge audience at the game!

At the beginning of September, you can see the Liberty Band perform at the Frankfort Fall Festival Parade. The band will perform America, The Beautiful for thousands along the parade route. Come out to cheer us on at the parade on Sunday, September 7, at 1:00pm in downtown Frankfort. We are incredibly proud of our band students for their hard work, dedication, and commitment to representing our school and community throughout the fall season!





- **2nd** Home Baseball Game 4:00pm
- **3rd** Home Baseball Game 4:00pm
Expectation Night 6pm-8pm
- **4th** Team Pictures X-C, Softball, Baseball & B-VBall 3:00pm
- **5th** Home Baseball Game 10:00am & 12:00pm
Expectation Night 6:00-8:00pm
- **6th** Band Performance @ Fall Fest Parade in Frankfort
- **7th** Labor Day - No School
- **10th** Home Boys V-Ball Game 4:15pm
- **11th** Patriot Day - School Assembly "Tribute to Valor" - Main Gym 8:45-9:15am
- **14th** Boys V-Ball Game 4:00pm
- **16th** Board of Education Meeting 6:00pm
@ The Manville Admin. Center
- **17th** DC Trip Parent Meeting @ Peace Lutheran Church A-K 5:30-6:30PM L-Z 7:00-8:00PM
- **25th** Evacuate, Shelter & Lockdown Drills
- **28th** Picture Day in PE Classes
- **29th** Home Girls B-Ball Game 4:15pm



- **1st** Boys' Lockdown Drill @ 10:40am
- **5th** Home Girls B-Ball Game 4:30
- **6th** Home Girls B-Ball Game 4:15
- **8th** Home Girls B-Ball Game 4:00
- **9th** Full Day Institute Day
-Washington, DC Trip, departs from Liberty (?) Midway (?)
- **11th** Washington DC Trip Returns
Midway (?) Liberty (?)
- **12th** No School Indigenous People's Day
Columbus Day
- **13th** Home Girls B-Ball Game 4:15
- **15th** Home Girls B-Ball 4:15pm
- **21st** Band, Orchestra, and Choir Concert Main Gym (6:30pm)
- **22nd** Home Girls B-Ball Game 4:15pm
- **24th** Band & Chorus Performance @ New Lenox Commons (TBD)
- **27th** Home Boys B-Ball 4:15pm
- **28th** Pre ACT Test (8th grade only)
-Team Pictures - B-Ball, G-Ball, Cheer, Poms (3:00pm)
- **30th** Early Dismissal 11:25am



Welcome Back, Liberty Families!



As we begin a new school year, please take a moment to familiarize yourself with our District's general health procedures, which are outlined in the *Health and Related Information* section of the Parent/Student Handbook.

MEDICATION: Our District's Board of Education has adopted a strict medication policy and requires a Student Medication Authorization Form to be completed by both the physician and parent/guardian for any medication to be taken at school, including prescription and over-the-counter medications. This includes medication for headaches, menstrual cramps, or any other "as needed" conditions. Please note that over-the-counter medications, including Tylenol and ibuprofen, must be supplied by the parent/guardian and cannot be supplied by the school. If it is necessary for your child to take any medication during school hours, please contact the nurse.

FOOD ALLERGIES REQUIRING AN EPIPEN: Students who have food allergies requiring an EpiPen are required to have an Emergency Action Plan in place. If your child has a food allergy requiring an EpiPen, please make sure to submit a completed *Illinois Food Allergy Emergency Action Plan and Treatment Authorization* form. The form must be completed by a licensed health care provider and the parent/guardian.

GENERAL ILLNESS: Please keep your child home if they are sick. Students should be fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications before returning to school. Fevers are temperatures over 100.4F. We also ask that you keep your child home for 24 hours after the last episode of vomiting or diarrhea.

HEARING AND VISION SCREENINGS: Screenings will be performed over the next couple of months. Hearing and vision screenings are performed for all students who receive special education services, and vision screening is performed for all 8th-grade students. You will be notified if your child has any difficulty with the screening.

ATHLETICS: Please be sure to have your child's sports physical completed prior to tryouts. A current sports physical is required for tryouts. Sports physicals are valid for 13 months. Please note that a 6th-grade physical may not meet the requirements for participation in sports.

Please do not hesitate to call 815-462-7806 or email me at jkerzman@nlsd122.org if you have any questions or concerns. I am in the office Monday–Friday, 7:55 a.m.–3:10 p.m.

I look forward to a healthy and successful school year!

Jeana Kerzman, BSN, RN, PEL-CSN
Liberty School Nurse



STANDARD RESPONSE PROTOCOL

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

Our school has adopted The "I Love U Guys" Foundation's Standard Response Protocol (SRP). Students and staff will be training, practicing, and drilling the protocol.

COMMON LANGUAGE

The Standard Response Protocol (SRP) is based on an all-hazards approach as opposed to individual scenarios. Like the Incident Command System (ICS), SRP utilizes clear common language while allowing for flexibility in protocol.

The premise is simple - there are five specific actions that can be performed during an incident. When communicating these, the action is labeled with a "Term of Art" and is then followed by a "Directive." Execution of the action is performed by active participants, including students, staff, teachers and first responders. The SRP is based on the following actions: Hold, Secure, Lockdown, Evacuate, and Shelter.

HOLD

"In Your Classroom or Area"

Students are trained to:

- Clear the hallways and remain in their area or room until the "All Clear" is announced
- Do business as usual

Adults and staff are trained to:

- Close and lock the door
- Account for students and adults
- Do business as usual



SECURE

"Get Inside. Lock outside doors"

Students are trained to:

- Return to inside of building
- Do business as usual

Adults and staff are trained to:

- Bring everyone indoors
- Lock the outside doors
- Increase situational awareness
- Account for students and adults
- Do business as usual



LOCKDOWN

"Locks, Lights, Out of Sight"

Students are trained to:

- Move away from sight
- Maintain silence
- Do not open the door

Adults and staff are trained to:

- Recover students from hallway if possible
- Lock the classroom door
- Turn out the lights
- Move away from sight
- Maintain silence
- Do not open the door
- Prepare to evade or defend



EVACUATE

"To a Location"

Students are trained to:

- Leave stuff behind if required to
- If possible, bring their phone
- Follow instructions

Adults and staff are trained to:

- Bring roll sheet and Go Bag (unless instructed not to bring anything with them, dependent on reason for evacuation.)
- Lead students to Evacuation location
- Account for students and adults
- Report injuries or problems using Red Card/Green Card method.



SHELTER

"State Hazard and Safety Strategy"

Hazards might include:

- Tornado
- Hazmat
- Earthquake
- Tsunami

Safety Strategies might include:

- Evacuate to shelter area
- Seal the room
- Drop, cover and hold
- Get to high ground

Students are trained in:

- Appropriate Hazards and Safety Strategies

Adults and staff are trained in:

- Appropriate Hazards and Safety Strategies
- Accounting for students and adults
- Report injuries or problems using Red Card/Green Card method.

