


# Liberty Common Junior High School
# Grades 7–8
# Curriculum Guide
# 2025–2026

Revised 01/2025

Dear Friend of Liberty:

The most important factor in determining a student's academic success is the support and guidance received from parents. The next most important factor is the strength of the school's curriculum.

On behalf of our Board of Directors, our school's faculty, staff, and administration, thank you for your interest in Liberty Common Junior High School's robust curriculum. We have carefully aligned our course offerings with the school's Core Knowledge Sequence undertaking to equip each LCJHS student with the knowledge, skills, and study habits required for high-school success.

Liberty's sustained track record of extraordinary academic achievement is predicated upon a rich curriculum expertly delivered by truly professional classroom instructors. The coursework for Liberty Common 7th- and 8th-grade students is ambitious. The pacing, exhaustiveness, and precision of Liberty's curriculum is informed and guided by the exacting specifications of the Core Knowledge Foundation. Course content at Liberty also reflects our institutional philosophy toward character education, leadership, informed citizenship, and freedom.

Again, thank you for your interest in the subjects and organizational delivery of the most apposite academic content taught at Liberty Common Junior High School. Should you have any comments or questions about any of the materials described in this Curriculum Guide, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours,

Bob Schaffer, Headmaster
Liberty Common Schools

# Academic Philosophy of LCJHS Grades 7—8

The mission of Liberty Common Junior High School is 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 higher order thinking, and the values of a democratic society. Liberty 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 Liberty's educational offering. Liberty acknowledges the leadership of teachers in the classroom, and recognizes the responsibility of each student for his/her academic effort.

## DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

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.

1. 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.

2. The skills of learning—reading, writing, speaking, calculation, and higher order thinking—are most meaningfully learned from a combination of the knowledge or content of the curriculum, modeling, coaching, and sensible practice.

3. 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.

4. 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.

5. 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.

6. The principal determinants of individual academic success are individual ability and effort. The policies of Liberty (grading, discipline, homework, teaching) 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 Liberty acknowledges that children can and should be held accountable for their own schoolwork and behavior with the support of teachers and parents.

Liberty's curriculum, the Core Knowledge Sequence, encompasses language arts, mathematics, science, history, geography, fine arts, and physical education. The curriculum is characterized by knowledge that is

- Solid—lasting, unchanging knowledge such as important events of world history;
- Sequenced—a planned progression building on students' previous knowledge and eliminating excessive repetition and gaps;
- Specific—clearly defined knowledge at each grade level ensuring fairness for all students;
- Shared—providing all students, regardless of background, with the shared knowledge they need to be included in our national literate culture.

The classical approach to education can be described as a journey to meaning. It begins with students acquiring knowledge through a wide familiarity with literature, history, science, math, music, arts, people, and places. Liberty's purpose is to lead young people on an odyssey of the mind and heart, which will steer them towards self-reliance.

# Order System

The LCJHS Order System is a student organizational structure designed to help 7th and 8th grade students achieve specific academic and student-life objectives through the establishment of small groups. The system provides a framework for student governance allowing greater opportunity for development of meaningful leadership and is a precursor to the LCHS House System.

## Purposes

1. To increase institutional and peer-to-peer support for each student.
2. To ensure individual care for each student with at least one adult who will monitor and support the academic, social, moral and behavioral growth of each LCJHS student during their time as 7th and 8th-graders.
3. To multiply occasions to build strong, healthy student relationships.
4. To develop leadership skills in every student.

## Organization

- Orders consist of thirty to forty students in the 7th and 8th grades.
- Each Order has two faculty members who serve as Order Deans.
- The Orders are led by elected students who serve as Order Captains and Executive Officers.
- Order assignments are made by the Order Director and school administration.
- Each Order is responsible for organizing and running various special events and activities.

## Activities organized in the 2024-2025 school year included

- Water Party
- Patriotism Assembly
- Canned Food Drive
- Family Fall Harvest
- Holiday Dance
- Roller Skate Night
- Winter Ball
- Spring Dance

# LCS Foundation Stones and Capstone Virtues

The goal of character education at Liberty Common Junior High School is to instruct students as they refine the foundational character traits they learn in the elementary school. Students will begin to live out these foundation stones as the classical and robust virtues that define student life at the high school level.

## Foundation Stones

- **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.

## Capstone Virtues

- **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.[1]
- **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 America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

[1] With regard to Prudence, Temperance, Justice, and Fortitude, Plato identified these virtues with the classes of the city described in The Republic and with the faculties of man. They are also known as the "cardinal virtues," indicating "the hinges upon which the door of the moral life swings."

# Junior High Athletics

| Fall Sports | Winter Sports | Spring Sports |
|---|---|---|
| Girls' Volleyball | Boys' Basketball | Track and Field (Co-ed)* |
| Boys' Soccer* | Girls' Basketball | Girls' Soccer* |
| Cross Country (Co-ed)* | Wrestling* | |

LCJHS (6th*–8th Grades) competes in the Northern Plains Middle Level Association.

# EAGLE Time

EAGLE Time stands for **E**xtended **A**cademic **G**uidance and **L**eadership **E**ndeavors. Liberty Common Junior High Students will participate in EAGLE Time daily, and each day has a distinct focus. EAGLE Time is part of the academic day, and thus the expectation is that all students attend EAGLE Time every day.

Monday—Advisory

Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday—Extra Help/Study Hall/Club

Wednesday—Order Time

## Sample of Club Offerings:

Creative Writing Club
Students share and discuss prose, plays and poetry. Come to read; come to recite; come to listen.

Science Bowl
This is a fast-paced, question-and-answer format similar to Jeopardy quizzing students' knowledge in all areas of science.

Sports Clubs
Students play pick-up soccer, ultimate Frisbee, Spike Ball, and have open gym time with faculty during 9th hour either outside or in the Colosseum.

Drama Club
Drama Club is fun and enriching and gives a safe place for students to play roles and games while other members profusely applaud them. Join us, we might have snacks.

Botany Club
Celebrate and experience all things plant. Students will expand their knowledge of the plant kingdom while gaining practical experience with plants and having fun.

Chess Club
Students learn to play chess and play against one another and computer opponents.

Builder's Club
Student-led, community service organization where members have the opportunity to make a difference in the school and the greater community while learning valuable leadership skills.

Card and Board Games Clubs
Students meet to play board and card game emphasizing strategy. They will play Carcassonne, Settlers of Catan, Puerto Rico, Cribbage, Risk, and many more.

Junior Classical League
CL encourages an interest in and an appreciation of the language, literature, and culture of ancient Greece and Rome to impart an understanding of the debt of western culture to that of Classical antiquity.

Nerdfighter Club
A place for students to discuss or present on their favorite nerdy topics. Students suggest topics and discuss how nerds and nerdy things make the world better by connecting to our character education through art, literature, pop culture, games, music, science, and more.

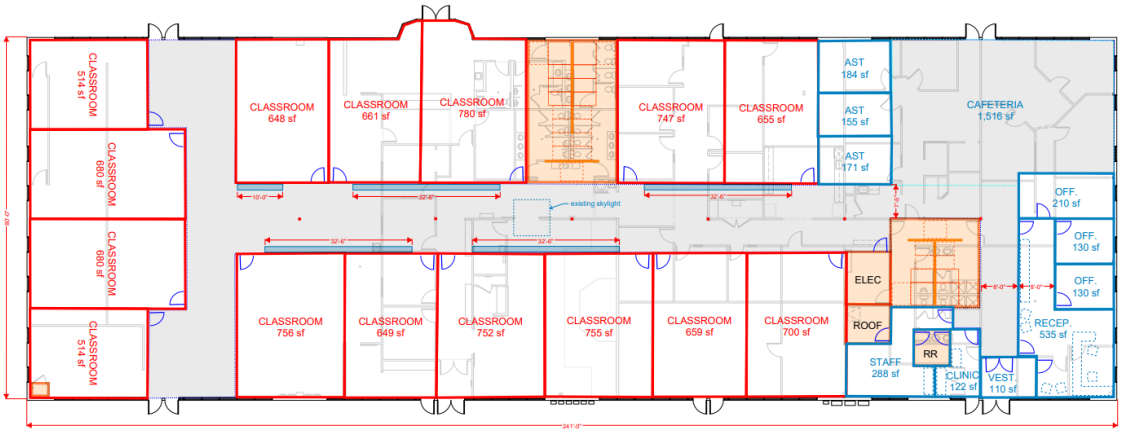
# Liberty Common Junior High and High School Curriculum Progression

## 2025-2026 Phase 1

| | | | Junior High | | High School | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Period** | **Course Type** | **High School Credits** | 7th Grade | 8th Grade | 9th Grade | 10th Grade | 11th Grade | 12th Grade |
| 1 | **Math** | 10 | See Flow Chart | See Flow Chart | See Flow Chart (Algebra 1 or Higher) | See Flow Chart (Algebra 1 or higher) | See Flow Chart (Algebra 1 or higher) | See Flow Chart (Algebra 2 or higher) |
| 2 | **Science** | 40 | Core Science 7 | Core Science 8 | Biology | Chemistry or Conceptual Chemistry & Physics (CCP) | Physics or Chemistry | Science Elective(s) or Physics |
| 3 | **English** | 40 | Core English 7 | Core English 8 | Western Literature | British Literature | American Literature | English Elective |
| 4 | **History** | 40 | Core History 7 | Core History 8 | Western Civilization | World History | AP US History or US History | American Government / Personal Finance |
| 5 | **Other Required Courses** | 15 | Computer Essentials | Composition 1 | Economics | Intro to Engineering | Composition 2 or AP Language & Composition (2 semesters) | Fine Arts |
| | | 10 | Core Art 7 | Core Art 8 | | Composition 2 | PE/Health | Elective |
| 6 | **Foreign Language** | 20 | Latin 1 | Latin 2 (May add Spanish 1 or French 1)* | Latin 3<br>Spanish 1 or 2<br>French 1 or 2<br>Latin 1<br>Ancient Greek 1 | Latin 4<br>Spanish 2 or 3<br>French 2 or 3<br>Latin 2<br>Ancient Greek 2 | Latin 5 or AP<br>Spanish 3 or 4<br>French 3 or 4<br>Latin 3 | Latin 6 or AP<br>Spanish 4 or AP<br>French 4<br>Latin 4 |
| 7 | 1st Semester | | Core Music 7 | Core Music 8/PE 8 | Elective | Elective | Elective | Elective |
| | 2nd Semester | | PE 7 | Elective | Elective | Elective | Elective | Elective |
| 8 | 1st Semester | | Elective/SH | Elective/SH | Elective/SH | Elective/SH | Elective/SH | Elective/SH |
| | 2nd Semester | | Elective/SH | Elective/SH | Elective/SH | Elective/SH | Elective/SH | Elective/SH |

*8th grade students wishing to begin a modern foreign language in addition to Latin 2 may request a waiver for Composition. Please see the waiver requirements listed on page 11 of this guide.

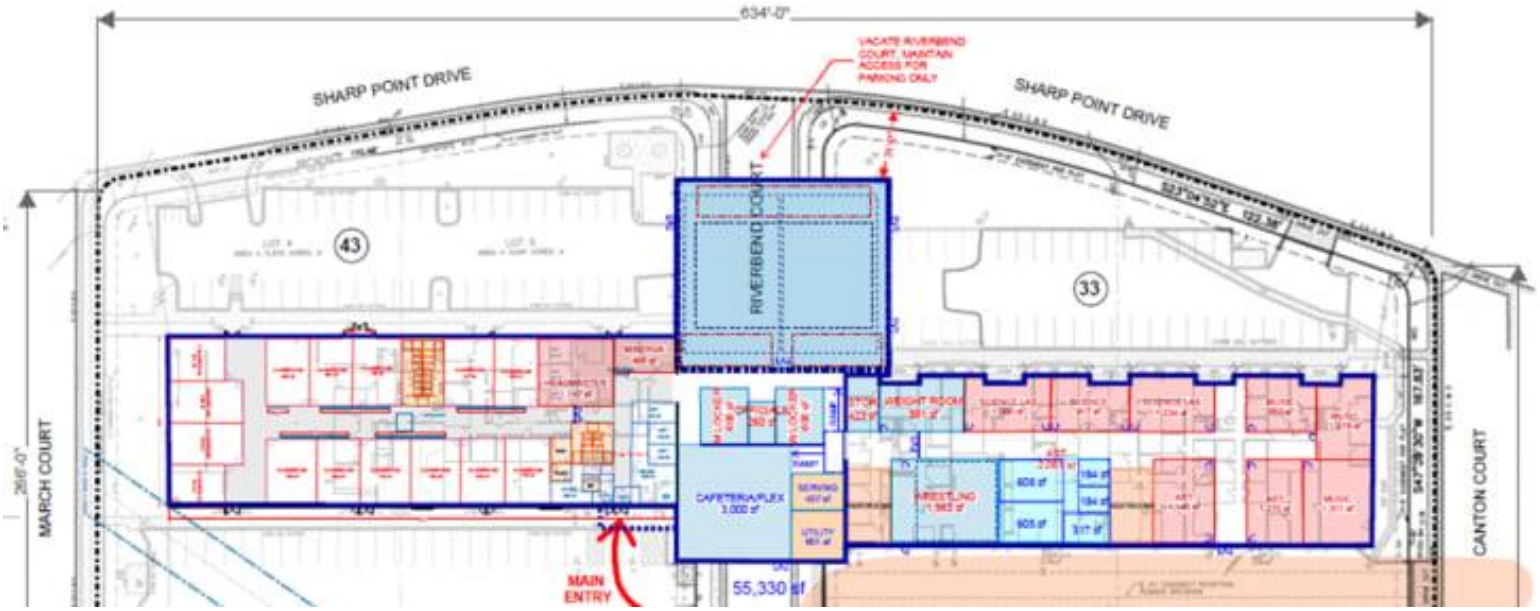
**Junior High students may have only one Study Hall per semester.



# Liberty Common Junior High and High School Curriculum Progression

## 2026-2027 Phase 2

| | | | Junior High | | High School | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Period** | **Course Type** | **High School Credits** | 7th Grade | 8th Grade | 9th Grade | 10th Grade | 11th Grade | 12th Grade |
| 1 | **Math** | 10 | See Flow Chart | See Flow Chart | See Flow Chart (Algebra 1 or Higher) | See Flow Chart (Algebra 1 or higher) | See Flow Chart (Algebra 1 or higher) | See Flow Chart (Algebra 2 or higher) |
| 2 | **Science** | 40 | Core Science 7 | Core Science 8 | Biology | Chemistry or Conceptual Chemistry & Physics (CCP) | Physics or Chemistry | Science Elective(s) or Physics |
| 3 | **English** | 40 | Core English 7 | Core English 8 | Western Literature | British Literature | American Literature | English Elective |
| 4 | **History** | 40 | Core History 7 | Core History 8 | Western Civilization | World History | AP US History or US History | American Government / Personal Finance |
| 5 | **Other Required Courses** | 15 | Computer Essentials | Composition 1 | Economics | Intro to Engineering | Composition 2 or AP Language & Composition (2 semesters) | Fine Arts |
| | | 10 | Core Art 7 | Core Art 8 | | Composition 2 | PE/Health | Elective |
| 6 | **Foreign Language** | 20 | Latin 1 | Latin 2 (May add Spanish 1 or French 1) | Latin 3<br>Spanish 1 or 2<br>French 1 or 2<br>Latin 1<br>Ancient Greek 1 | Latin 4<br>Spanish 2 or 3<br>French 2 or 3<br>Latin 2<br>Ancient Greek 2 | Latin 5 or AP<br>Spanish 3 or 4<br>French 3 or 4<br>Latin 3 | Latin 6 or AP<br>Spanish 4 or AP<br>French 4<br>Latin 4 |
| 7 | 1st Semester | | Core Music 7 | Core Music 8/PE 8 | Elective | Elective | Elective | Elective |
| | 2nd Semester | | PE 7 | | Elective | Elective | Elective | Elective |
| 8 | 1st Semester | | Elective/SH | Elective/SH | Elective/SH | Elective/SH | Elective/SH | Elective/SH |
| | 2nd Semester | | Elective/SH | Elective/SH | Elective/SH | Elective/SH | Elective/SH | Elective/SH |



# Junior High Course Plan

Junior High students take both CORE and ELECTIVE classes.
Core classes are required for all junior-high students.

## 7th Grade

**Core Classes:**

**Math** (Pre-algebra OR Algebra 1)
**CK Science 7** (Chemistry and Life Science)
**CK English 7** (Select fiction and non-fiction classics, poetry, writing)
**CK History 7** (World and American History)
**Latin 1**
**CK Art History/Appreciation 7** (one semester)
**CK Music 7** (one semester)
**PE 7** (one semester)
**Computer Essentials** (one semester)

**Electives:**

**Study Hall or Elective** (one year-long or two semesters)

## 8th Grade

**Core Classes:**

**Math** (Introductory Algebra OR Algebra 1 OR Geometry)
**CK Science 8** (Physics and Respiration)
**CK English 8** (Select fiction and non-fiction classics, poetry, writing)
**CK History 8** (World and American History)
***Latin 2**
**CK Art History/Appreciation 8** (one semester)
**CK Music 8** (one semester, 2 days/week, shared period with PE 8)
**PE 8** (one semester, 3 days/week, shared period with Core Music 8)
***Composition 1** (one semester)

**Electives:**

**Elective** (one semester)
**Study Hall or Elective** (one year long or two semesters)

***Latin 2 Requirement:**

- Latin 2 is an 8th- grade core requirement.
- Latin 2 is also an LCHS high school graduation requirement.
- Students who complete Latin 2 in 8th grade will fulfill the Latin 2 LCHS high school graduation requirement. They will have the option to have the grade recorded on their high-school transcript, but the grade will not count towards their high school GPA.
- Also, all LCHS high school students are required to earn a minimum of 20 foreign language credits during high school beyond any classes taken in Junior High (grades 9–12).
- 8th-grade students who wish to begin a modern foreign language in addition to Latin 2 may request a waiver for Composition 1.

***Composition I Waiver**

8th grade students wishing to begin a modern foreign language in addition to Latin 2 may request a waiver for Composition I. Please note the requirements below:

- Must have an A in 7th grade Core English (1st and 2nd semester percentage averaged)
- Must have an A average on *all* essays combined.
- Score a 245 or better on the most recent NWEA language usage test.
- Earn the recommendation of the 7th grade Core English teacher—based on the student's participation, character, and other relevant factors.
- *Ultimately, the administration will make the final decision.*

**(Students wishing to free up time in their schedules for an additional elective other than a second foreign language may take Composition I over the summer.)**

## Student Fees

Liberty Common School Administration charges an annual student-activity fee of $50 per student (k-12) to help offset the cost of special events throughout the year. A few expenditures include, but are not limited to: field trips, Eagle Games, and House/Order t-shirts.

Additionally, LCJHS charges an academic fee once per year. This fee covers consumable materials such as art supplies, sheet music, or 3D-printer filament as well as the physical-education uniform purchase. LCJHS students will be assessed a single $30 academic fee at the beginning of the school year.

Students may incur additional charges for lost or damaged items including, but not limited to, damaged textbooks and lost physical-education uniforms. The academic fee covers the cost of one physical education uniform per year. If an additional uniform is issued, a replacement fee will be assessed. Students are encouraged to reuse physical education uniforms from previous years as long as they still fit and are in good condition.

# Junior High Core Course Descriptions

## Core Knowledge English

**CK ENGLISH 7**

Seventh-grade core English is part of the Core Knowledge curriculum. This class introduces students to Naturalist, Romantic, Realist, and Modernist short stories and novels. Literature is studied from a historical, cultural, and literary perspective. The class looks to other disciplines, like history and art, to understand literature in context as well as looking inward to learn moral lessons from books. Students are exposed to a variety of poetry spanning hundreds of years. Grammar and mechanics are taught and practiced throughout the year along with literary devices and concepts. One of the greatest hurdles in this course is the transition to analytical writing. Students read one hundred and fifty minutes of a book from the required reading list outside of class and also learn a new list of etymological Greek and Latin roots each week. In addition to writing daily, students will also practice public speaking and academic discussion.

**CK ENGLISH 8**

Eighth-grade core English is the culminating year of literature studies in the Core Knowledge sequence. Beginning with an intensive Grammar unit, the class introduces its study of literature with the American classic *To Kill a Mockingbird*. This book sets the stage for the study of literature and writing about literature for the rest of the year. Understanding not only narrative elements, students will learn how literature is *crafted*, and as such, will learn to analyze literature. Shakespeare, poetry, short stories, and George Orwell's *Animal Farm* are among the great pieces read. Throughout the year Latin and Greek roots are studied alongside further Grammar instruction.

**COMPOSITION 1**

*Note: This course is offered during LCHS Summer Session.*

All writers face three problems every time they write: how to come up with something to say, how to arrange what they have to say, and how to express what they have to say. Using the curriculum of *The Lost Tools of Writing*, students will learn classical tools of rhetoric that will help them with each of the three problems. Over a series of essays, students will learn the Five Topics of Invention, the Complete Persuasive Essay Template, and a variety of schemes and tropes such as Parallelism, Antithesis, Simile, and Metaphor. Students who graduate Composition I will be prepared not only for high school writing but for any future writing they will do.

## Mathematics

**PRE-ALGEBRA**

This course prepares students for a successful transition into Algebra 1. Pre-algebra introduces basic concepts for algebraic equation solving. It also includes expressions, linear equations and graphs, inequalities, percent, and data display. Topics from geometry and statistics are introduced as well.

**INTRODUCTORY ALGEBRA**
This course will bridge topics from Pre-Algebra and Algebra 1. Topics will include: operations and word problems involving whole numbers, decimals, fractions, percentages, rates and ratios, exponents, expressions, simple two-step equations, roots, area and volume of polygons and solids, linear graphs, graphing (x, y) coordinates, box-and-whisker plots, bar graphs, and pie graphs.

**ALGEBRA 1**
Prerequisite: Pre-algebra
This course introduces basic concepts for algebraic equation solving. It includes expressions, linear equations and graphs, inequalities, systems of linear equations, and quadratic equations and graphs. Topics from geometry and statistics are introduced as well.

**GEOMETRY**
Prerequisite: Algebra 1
This course provides a thorough knowledge of the main topics of classical plane and solid geometry. Students learn how a large body of results may be deduced from a comparatively small number of assumptions. Through regular practice, students are trained to present an argument in a clear and orderly fashion using classical geometric definitions, postulates, and theorems. Finally, students are introduced to coordinate geometry and the geometric aspect of trigonometry.

## Computer Science

**COMPUTER ESSENTIALS**
This course is an introduction to the computer. Students will learn proper typing; file management; and word processing, spreadsheet, and presentation software.

## Core Knowledge Science

**CK SCIENCE 7**
This course introduces students to basic chemistry, cells and genetics, and the history of earth and life forms. Students learn how the models for atomic structure have changed from the early Greek theory to current theories along with the development of the periodic table. Chemical bonds and reactions are studied to include ionic and covalent bonds, chemical formulas, chemical reactions and balancing chemical equations. Basic cell structure and the two types of cell division (mitosis and meiosis) are presented along with how changes occur from one generation of living organisms to the next. Gregor Mendel's experiments with plants, dominant and recessive genes, and Punnett squares are learned. Students study how DNA was discovered and by whom, how DNA makes new DNA and how DNA is modified through genetic engineering. The Paleontology unit introduces fossils as a record of Earth's history and past life forms. Geologic time and plate tectonics are studied to show how life has changed over time and how the Earth's surface is still changing. The last unit deals with the theory of evolution and natural selection. Students will study how Charles Darwin developed the concept of the theory of evolution and the evidence that supports that theory. Extinction and the environmental changes involved with extinction and speciation are also covered.

**CK SCIENCE 8**

This course is an introduction to physics. After reviewing the scientific method and metric system, students are introduced to one-dimensional motion involving speed and velocity. Newton's laws of motion will show how balanced and unbalanced forces affect how an object moves. Density and buoyancy are presented to show how fluids affect objects. The physics definition of work, energy and power are used to solve various problems associated with each. Electricity and magnetism are the next units. Students learn about magnetic fields and how magnetism and electricity are related. They build electric circuits, measure voltage, current, and resistance, and solve problems involving parallel and series circuits. The electromagnetic spectrum is studied and how light is reflected and refracted. Both light and sound waves are discussed and demonstrated. The final unit presents how energy is obtained from food through respiration and the chemical processes of photosynthesis and respiration are covered.

## Core Knowledge History

**CK HISTORY 7**

This yearlong course is part of the Core Knowledge history sequence. Its primary focus is on United States history from 1898 to 1945. The course is naturally framed by three events of overarching significance: World War I, the Great Depression, and World War II. In addition to the base in US history, the course includes a substantial unit on the Russian Revolution. The history curriculum is grounded in the study of important primary sources and also includes a significant focus on understanding the geography relevant to its subject matter.

**CK HISTORY 8**

This yearlong course is the final year in the Core Knowledge history sequence. Its primary focus is on United States history from 1945 to the present including major political, cultural, foreign policy, and military issues. In addition to the base in US history, the course includes units on European Imperialism, the history of the Middle East, and U.S. Civics and Government. The history curriculum is grounded in the study of important primary sources and also includes a significant focus on understanding the geography relevant to its subject matter.

## Latin

**LATIN 1**

This course covers the first sixteen chapters of *Wheelock's Latin*. It is designed not only to fully prepare students to continue their study of Latin in higher-level courses, but also to cover the historical and cultural achievements of the Romans and how they affect Western Civilization. The course also emphasizes English vocabulary that comes from Latin roots and the study of both Latin grammar and English grammar.

**LATIN 2**

Prerequisite: Latin 1

This course starts with an extensive review of Latin 1 and expands into further development of the students' skills with an emphasis on preparing the students with the knowledge necessary to move on to Latin 3. The course covers the first thirty-two chapters of Wheelock.

## Core Knowledge Music History/Theory

**CK MUSIC HISTORY/APPRECIATION 7**
This one-semester survey course covers major points in the development of Western European music, with an emphasis on the music of the Romantic Period and Opera. The class also covers the fundamentals of music theory within the context of the musical works studied in the class and applies them in both written and aural forms.

**CK MUSIC HISTORY/APPRECIATION 8**
This class finishes the requirements for the Music portion of the Core Knowledge Sequence. This one-semester course continues with the development of Western Music by focusing on the 20th-century and the development of an American musical style, then breaking away from Western Musical traditions by exploring the music of Japan, India, Africa, Latin America, Tibet, and Ireland. Special emphasis is placed on students being able to identify various styles of music by listening.

## Core Knowledge Art History/Appreciation

**CK ART HISTORY/APPRECIATION 7**
This one-semester course is part of the Core Knowledge Art Appreciation sequence. The primary focus is on the story of Modernism in art beginning with Impressionism and following its evolution through European abstraction. We also cover American artists' reactions to European developments in art and touch on the origins of Postmodernism and Institutionalism. This course is primarily art history, but we complete a few art projects related to the artistic periods covered.

**CK ART HISTORY/APPRECIATION 8**
This one-semester course is the final chapter of the Core Knowledge Art Appreciation sequence. In this course we study the history of art from the mid-1800s to contemporary times. We emphasize sculpture, architecture, photography, and post-WWII painting. This course is primarily art history, but we will cover artistic and aesthetic analysis and there is a final studio project at the end.

## Core Physical Education

**Physical Education 7**
This course is an introduction to a variety of Physical Education sports. Students learn the rules, history, and skills associated with each sport. Students then move to playing games in a variety of teams for that specific sport. The students are assessed on information covered at the end of each unit, including health-related components of physical fitness and other fitness terminology.

**Physical Education 8**
This course is an extension of 7th grade Physical Education through continued game play. Students learn about more of the fitness-related principles associated with Physical Education. Circuit training, health-related components of physical fitness, and fitness vocabulary are covered in depth.

# Junior-High Elective Course Descriptions

Please note, these selections are subject to change.

## Art Electives

### Core Knowledge Studio 7

Grade: 7

This is a one-semester course that supplements the art history component of the Core Knowledge curriculum. Students will have the opportunity to deepen their appreciation of masterworks by exploring their media, processes, and concepts in art history-oriented studio projects. The content for each of these projects will directly coincide with the portion of the art history timeline covered in 7th grade: mid 1800s-late 20th century. The 7th- grade art history curriculum emphasizes the development of Modernism in Europe, artistic reactions to the World Wars, and 20th century art in North America. The studio projects in CK Studio 7 will illuminate these lessons for the students through intentional artmaking. Students will also learn how to write about their work clearly and eloquently through lessons in writing artist statements.

### Core Knowledge Studio 8

Grade: 8

This is a one-semester course that supplements the art history component of the Core Knowledge curriculum. Students will have the opportunity to deepen their appreciation of masterworks by exploring their media, processes, and concepts in art history-oriented studio projects. The content for each of these projects will directly coincide with the portion of the art history timeline covered in 8th grade: 1700-present. The 8th-grade art history curriculum has a strong emphasis on discovering the modern story of architecture, photography, and sculpture in addition to painting; it also ties firmly into the visual expression of major world events of the 20th century. The studio projects in CK Studio 8 will illuminate these lessons for the students through intentional artmaking. Students will also learn how to write about their work clearly and eloquently through lessons in writing artist statements.

## Computer Electives

### Computer Science Explorations

Prerequisite: Computer Essentials
Grades: 7-8
This one-semester course introduces coding and computer science by way of making and design, using the micro:bit microcontroller board. Students will learn about fundamental computer science concepts such as variables, conditionals, iteration, coordinates, bits, bytes, binary, radio communications, and array through the act of making programming physical objects. Students will make many engaging, creative digital projects such as digital pets, motorized creatures, scorekeepers, digital wallets, games, animations, alarms, cash registers and counters, interactive art, physical activity monitors, and musical instruments.

When students complete this course, they will have a good understanding of many computer science concepts that can serve as a foundation for future study. They will develop powerful design skills that they can use in future projects of all types, whether they are creating apps that serve a real-world purpose for designing projects for the pure joy of making, reasoning, and learning.

## Foreign Language Electives

### FRENCH 1

Grades: 8–12
This course focuses on introductory French, covering language skills emphasized through basic reading, listening, speaking, and writing. Emphasis is placed on practical vocabulary in written and oral use of the language along with proper use of grammar and cultural information. Lessons cover the varied use of the present tense for verbs. The simple past tense is introduced after students have had significant practice with the present tense. Students are exposed to various cultural themes relevant to French-speaking countries. Some literature is introduced as fits the curriculum and class readiness. The teacher consistently uses French in class and encourages students to speak in French as much as possible.

### SPANISH 1

Grades: 8–12
This course focuses on introductory Spanish, covering language skills emphasized through basic reading, listening, speaking, and writing. Emphasis is placed on the proper use of grammar, practical vocabulary in written and oral use of the language, and cultural information. Lessons cover the varied use of the present tense for verbs. The simple past tense is introduced after students have had significant practice with the present tense. Students are exposed to various cultural themes relevant to Spanish-speaking countries. Some literature is introduced as fits the curriculum and class readiness. The teacher consistently uses Spanish in class and encourages students to speak in Spanish as much as possible.

## Science Electives

### ENGINEERING EXPLORATIONS

Grades: 7–8

This project-based semester course will introduce fundamental engineering principals for mechanical, electrical, civil and aerospace disciplines. It will focus on the engineering method which will be demonstrated through iterative problem-solving cycles. This course will serve as a good foundation to the Intro to Engineering Course offered in tenth grade.

### THE SCIENCE IN SCIENCE FICTION

Grades: 7–8

Science Fiction captivates our imagination and takes us on adventures to strange worlds. Detective mysteries invigorate our curiosity and our desire to discover truth. It is fiction, but there are science facts to be learned and knowledge that increases our sense of wonder. The Science of Science Fiction is a one-semester class discovering the wonder that can be found traveling *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* in a submarine, in rockets that take us to Mars, and in the laboratory and investigations of Sherlock Holmes. Excerpts from the works of Jules Verne, Ray Bradbury, H.G. Wells and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle will be read to investigate the science of submarines, marine life, rockets, space travel and crime scene forensics. Topics to be studied include Archimedes Principle, desalination and distillation, ocean life and geology, rocketry, space missions, fingerprint and fiber and chemical analyses. The course will involve laboratory experiments, research and writing.

### NATURAL DISASTERS

Grades: 7–8

Note: This course is not always offered.

This semester course is designed to give students an understanding of the events that lead up to natural disasters that impact not only the victims but also the rest of society. The three main categories are Meteorology, Geology, and Astronomy along with some of the natural disasters that fall in those categories. The Meteorology unit covers floods, severe thunderstorms, tornadoes, hurricanes, and major snow storms. The Geology unit introduces students to the Theory of Plate Tectonics and evidence from earthquakes and volcanoes that support that theory along with other events like tsunamis and mudslides. The Astronomy unit starts with the Solar System and star evolution, then moves out to the Milky Way and galaxies and the universe. The students gain a basic understanding of the principles of each category so they can see how the disasters come about. The class also includes individual and/or group projects to enhance understanding.

## Music/Theater Electives

### EAGLE SINGERS

Grades: 7–8

This is a one semester or full-year course. The choir performs two concerts each semester with a focus on technique and part-singing.

**INTERMEDIATE BAND**
Grades: 7–8
This is a full-year course. This class will focus on developing skills on band instruments and performing concert music of increasing difficulty. This band performs four concerts per year. Students are graded on their participation during class, public performances, and weekly practice logs.

**STRING ORCHESTRA**
Prerequisite: 2 years orchestra experience or equivalent private study (teacher's discretion)
Grades: 7–8
This is a full-year course for string players (violin, viola, cello and bass). The LCJHS orchestra focuses on developing and expanding student knowledge of string techniques, performance repertoire, ensemble skills, musicianship, and music appreciation. Students are graded on their participation during class, public performances, and weekly practice logs.

**MUSICAL THEATRE PRODUCTION**
Grades: 7–8
This semester class is designed to develop skills in various aspects of producing a musical. It is open to students with a variety of interests including singing, acting, and dancing. The Fall show will be in December. Auditions will be held during the first couple weeks of class. Participants will be required to attend the final performances and additional rehearsals and meetings beyond regular class time. Please note there will be evening rehearsals prior to the show, and full participation is mandatory.

## Other Electives

**PHYSICAL EDUCATION ELECTIVE**
Grades: 7-8
In this semester course, students learn and practice physical wellness. Elective Physical Education's emphasis is centered around learning cardiovascular fitness (using heart rate monitors), identifying major muscles/muscle groups, and introducing weight training principles. Elective Physical Education also provides an opportunity to play a mix of competitive team and individual sports each week. Students are required to wear the Liberty PE uniform.

**SILENT STUDY HALL**
This semester course is a quiet study hall. Students are expected to complete schoolwork or read silently. Computer access is not guaranteed in study hall. Students are allowed one study hall per semester.

# At-Home Recommendations for Junior High Success

## Environment

Choose a homework area that is quiet, low traffic, and well-lit.

Reduce the number of visual distractions. Move away from windows and doors.

Remove distractions from the homework area:
TV, internet, radio, cell phones, stereo, etc.

Provide a table or desk. Help keep that work surface uncluttered.

Have a few extra supplies in the homework area (pens, pencils, paper, dictionary, etc.).

If there is no environment in the home conducive for completing homework, check out the library or community center.

Have a designated area for students to place completed assignments to be returned to school.

## Homework Plan

Set simple homework expectations: stay on task, finish task, and meet task requirements

Allow the student to take short breaks between tasks when necessary. Snacks may be appropriate.

Set a consistent time for completing homework and stick to it every day.

Even when your child doesn't have homework, make homework time an academic time. Have the child read, review class notes, study for Latin or Word Day or get extra practice with math concepts.

Be mindful and present to assist when needed or prompt your student to stay on task.

## Parent's Role

Teach your child to organize homework by subject, according to a plan.

- If your student struggles to begin homework, work from easiest subject/task to hardest subject/task.
- If your student struggles with endurance, then work from hardest subject/task to easiest subject/task.
- Or alternate between hardest and easiest subjects/tasks.

Encourage the student to follow a less desirable task with a more desirable task. Make completion of the first task necessary to perform the second task.

Encourage students do their homework independently. Monitor from a distance.

Help only when asked and/or in two situations:

- Child is stuck after really trying.
- Homework is finished and needs to be looked over.

Set a consistent deadline or time in the evening for homework completion.

Provide authentic verbal praise when your child completes a task, answers a question correctly, figures out a difficult problem, or shows improvement in penmanship/typing speed, etc.

Provide a tangible award for completion of homework. Awards can be nightly or weekly, depending on the child.

Review finished homework for completeness and accuracy.

## Communication

Have student bring all work home each day, completed and not completed.

Compare work with student planner to determine which work needs to be completed.

Check your child's planner to see if the teacher wrote a note. Respond when appropriate.

You can contact teachers directly by getting their email addresses from the school's website.

## PowerSchool

PowerSchool is an excellent resource for checking on grades and missing/late work. If you do not have your parent login, please contact the front office for assistance.

## Planner Plan

All LCJHS Student are expected to use a planner to keep track of assignments. If your student is not keeping an accurate planner there are a few things you can do.

Some teachers create weekly assignment lists. If you email them directly, they are usually happy to share those with you. You and your student should also check google classroom using your student's google log-in.

If your student does not record the assignments for a specific class or two, then putting him/her on a planner plan can be helpful. You can initiate a planner plan by yourself at any time; however, it helps to notify the teacher as well.

- Student will accurately fill out the planner for the class and show it to the teacher by the end of class.
- Teacher will initial it to verify accuracy
- Parent checks planner at home. This seems to work best when there are at-home rewards and consequences attached.
    - For example, if the student got a teacher initial s/he earns a reward (snack, screen time, etc.) If s/he did not get the signature there could be a consequence (chores, email teacher to ask for assignments, no rewards, etc.)

*The large sized planners (11 in. x 8 in.) provided through LCJHS hold more information and are less likely to be misplaced.

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LIBERTY COMMON
JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL
EST. 2025
Fortitudinis • Justitiae • Gratitudinis • Prudentiae • Temperantiae
Respect • Responsibility • Self Control • Cooperation • Citizenship • Integrity • Perseverance

2025-2026