

# LIBERTY



## Central School District

Fall 2010

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## Meal Plans Help Families Save Money

Food is a necessity, but what's not necessary is spending a lot of money to feed children in Liberty Central School District. The district already offers healthy, low cost meals, but the free and reduced price meals program can help families further lower their food budgets.

Studies have shown that eating healthy meals can improve a child's health and intellectual development, according to the U.S. Department of Health. Schools are required to offer meals that include milk, fruit, vegetables, a starch, and protein. Meals must also follow strict guidelines about fat, sodium and sugar content.

School lunches are \$1.80 at the elementary school and a \$1.90 at the middle school and high school. So, for less than the cost of one large soda at a fast food restaurant, students can have a well-balanced lunch every school day.

"We provide nutritious meals at a reasonable price," said Gary Sawyer, director of Facility Support Services.

School meal prices can drop even further for families who qualify for the free or reduced price meals program.

Approximately 60 percent of Liberty students currently participate in the

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## Enrichment Program Inspires Love of Science

*His surface remained fixed even as his little body spun on its axis. Other little bodies spun nearby, drawn together by the excitement. Planetary motion had never been so much fun!*

With a whirl, boys and girls in Kim Heinle's third-grade class smiled and giggled their way to a better understanding of how the earth, moon and sun move (or don't move) in relation to one another. Kyle McGinn, a middle school teacher and science facilitator, led the activity following a lesson by Heinle. The hands-on experiment was part of a new initiative in grades 3-6 that is helping strengthen students' knowledge of science and the scientific method.

Elementary teachers must understand and expose their students to a variety of subject areas such as science, math and



**Spinning to Understand:** Enrichment teacher Kyle McGinn helps third-graders understand the science behind the earth's rotation.

language arts. As a result, their knowledge of one particular subject may not be as rich and broad as a secondary teacher who specializes in it. The science enrichment program for grades 3-6 brings elementary and secondary teachers together to create a continuous, stronger science curriculum.

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The mission of the Liberty Central School District is to inspire all students to pursue their dreams and to contribute and thrive in a diverse community.

## Golf Tournament Raises \$4,000 to Light up Liberty

This summer the 4th Annual Light Up Liberty Golf Tournament raised \$4,000 to help light up the Liberty High School fields and track.

More than 60 people took part in the tournament, which was organized by the Liberty Booster Club and held at the Swan Lake Golf and Country Club.

The tournament had many high points, including a hole-in-one shot by Jim Smith and an impressive round by the championship team of Mike Williams, Gary Siegel and Bob and Jeff Lugiano.

Some of the other top golfers included putting contest winners Andy Cook and Doug Rohrback, longest drive winners Phil and Kate Fanning, and closest-to-the-pin contest winner Jeff Lugiano.

These golfers all received prizes or gift certificates, with the winning foursome earning a round of golf at Grossingers Country Club in Liberty.

The biggest prize of the day was a three day, two night "Stay & Play" golf package at the Rio Las Vegas Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas, NV. Jim Smith earned the trip with his single shot on the 11th hole, which was sponsored by M&M Auto Group.

This was the second time in the history of the tournament



**Tournament Champs:** (Top, L to R) Winning foursome Bob Lugiano, Gary Siegel, Jeff Lugiano and Mike Williams. (Bottom, L to R) Kate Fanning and hole-in-one winner Jim Smith.

for a hole in one. Two years ago, Josh Goldstein shot a hole in one and won a Ping set of golf clubs, also courtesy of M&M Auto Group.

Thanks go out to all of the golfers and sponsors who helped support Liberty student athletes.



## Show Your School Spirit @ Homecoming 2010

Come get loud and proud as you cheer on your school teams during this year's Liberty Pride weekend!

Following is a list of exciting activities for everyone to enjoy. Visit [www.libertyk12.org](http://www.libertyk12.org) for the most up-to-date information on this year's Homecoming activities.

### Wednesday, 10/20

- 4 p.m. – Varsity Girls Tennis vs. Valley Central
- 4:30 p.m. – Varsity Boys Soccer vs. Chapel Field
- 4:30 p.m. – Varsity Volleyball vs. Sullivan West

### Thursday, 10/21

- 4:45 p.m. – Varsity Boys Soccer vs. Tri Valley
- 7 p.m. – Varsity Girls Soccer vs. Livingston Manor

### Friday, 10/22

- 2 p.m. – HS Pep Rally
- 5 p.m. – Taste the Chili Challenge
- 7 p.m. – Varsity Football vs. Pine Plains

### Saturday, 10/23

- 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. – Fall Sports Festival for Grades K-8 (sporting events, booths, snacks, prizes, and more)
- 7 p.m. – Homecoming Dance



**Liberty Gets a New Look Online!** Liberty Central School District recently launched a new website design with user-friendly features that adhere to the latest accessibility guidelines. The site also provides quick news updates and resources for students, parents and the community. Visit [www.libertyk12.org](http://www.libertyk12.org) to explore the site. New features are still being added, but users can send suggestions or questions via

e-mail to Web master Allison Ruef at [aruef@libertyk12.org](mailto:aruef@libertyk12.org).

## HS & MS Focus on Spanish for Foreign Language Classes

Liberty High School and Liberty Middle School have begun shifting their foreign language programs to focus on Spanish. This change includes the introduction of a new native language arts class at the middle school and the phasing out of French classes at both schools.

Native language arts is designed to meet the needs of non-native speakers of English and to fill their foreign language and English language learner requirements. Such students may speak Spanish at home, but come to school without a background in their native language literacy, according to MS Principal Mary Greynolds.

The class, which will be taught by Cielo Canola and Jeff Hall, will focus primarily on literacy, but will also cover elements of culture and grammar. Research suggests that this knowledge will transfer to their second language, English.

In Sullivan County, almost 10 percent of the population is Hispanic or Latino. "This class will allow us to address the needs of a particular student population in a productive and respectful way," said Greynolds.

Many factors contributed to the decision to focus on Spanish while phasing out French at both schools.

One factor is that Spanish is by far the most common non-English language in the United States, as reported in a 2007 U.S. Census Bureau American community survey. Liberty students' interest in French language



**The Art of Spanish:** Teachers Jeff Hall (left) and Cielo Canola (right) work with students in the new Native Language Arts class.

classes has also steadily declined over the years. Then this summer, the New York State Board of Regents decided to eliminate the grade 8 second language proficiency exams, meaning last year's seventh-graders who took French won't be penalized for switching to Spanish this year.

"The timing was good to make the change," said Greynolds.

At the high school, students currently enrolled in French classes will still be able to take all of the foreign language classes necessary for graduation. For example, a current ninth-grader enrolled in French will be able to take the language all the way through French 4 in their senior year. As of next year, though, French will no longer be offered to incoming freshman.

At the middle school, seventh-graders who took French IA last year are taking Spanish I this year. French is no longer a foreign language option.

HS Principal Jack Strassman said he would like to offer a variety of foreign languages in the future, perhaps by turning to distance learning options. Distance learning makes use of televisions, computers and projectors to allow an instructor at one school to teach students at multiple schools at the same time.

"We're going to explore our options. Technology could allow us to offer more alternatives in a cost-effective way," said Strassman.

## Regents Keep January Exams, Eliminate Some Assessments

The New York State Education Department recently announced that it will not eliminate high school Regents exams in January 2011, but it will eliminate several other assessments in response to a budget deficit.

The Board of Regents approved the following deficit-reduction measures:

- Elimination of component retesting in math and English language arts
- Elimination of grades 5 and 8 social studies exams
- Elimination of grade 8 second language proficiency exams
- Elimination of August administration of algebra 2/ trigonometry and chemistry exams
- Elimination of high school foreign language Regents exams except for Spanish, French and Italian
- Discontinuation of paper-based scoring materials for Regents exams

In June, the Regents considered several deficit-reduction measures in anticipation of a projected funding deficit of approximately \$11.5 million for P-12 programs in 2010-11.

One of the deficit-reduction measures considered was the elimination of the January Regents exams. While Regents exams are most typically taken by public high school students in June, many also take them in January and August. The Regents were able to avoid taking this measure when a request for additional funding was partially approved in the state budget passed this August.

John B. King, Jr., the state's senior deputy commissioner for P-12 education, said, "Unless alternative funding sources can be identified in the very near future, the Regents will need to consider further deficit reduction actions in the fall."

## Liberty Boys and Girls Club Expands to Grade 7

After a successful first year of programming, the Liberty Boys and Girls Club is proud to announce the expansion of the popular after-school program to include seventh-graders.

The Liberty chapter of the Boys and Girls Club began in February 2010. Since then it has grown from being able to enroll 45 fifth- and sixth-graders to now being able to enroll 75 students, including seventh-graders. The expansion was made possible in part thanks to a grant from Liberty Properties, Inc.

This type of program is particularly helpful for students who haven't found their niche by seventh grade, according to Liberty Middle School Principal Mary Greynolds.

"We're committed to keeping students engaged here at school. I hope their experiences in the Boys and Girls Club will eventually lead

to them getting more involved in other activities like clubs, sports and music," she said.



**Supporting Boys and Girls:** Liberty Boys and Girls Club members presented Charlie Barbuti, owner of Barbuti Furniture, with a card and plaque at last year's ribbon cutting ceremony to express their gratitude for his donation of furniture for the club.

The club meets after school in the MS cafeteria until 5:30 p.m. After a homework power hour and snack, student activities focus on five core areas: character and

leadership development, health and life skills, the arts, education and career development, and sports and fitness. Members also participate in community service projects and enjoy visits by guest speakers.

"We are tremendously proud of our program at Liberty and excited to see it grow," said Alexis Eggleton, executive director of the Boys and Girls Club of Orange and Sullivan Counties. "After-school hours can be a dangerous time for kids, especially the age range that the Liberty program serves. We are proud to offer them a program that keeps them safe."

To enroll your student in the Liberty Boys and Girls Club, sign up at [www.bgcorange.org](http://www.bgcorange.org) or contact Shannon Harman by phone at 292-5400, ext. 2305, or by e-mail at [sharman@libertyk12.org](mailto:sharman@libertyk12.org). There is a one-time registration fee of \$40.

## Liberty Music News

Come enjoy the musical talents of Liberty students! School concerts are free and open to the public. All begin at 7 p.m. in the David E. Panebaker Auditorium at Liberty High School unless otherwise noted.

### NYSSMA AREA ALL-STATE MUSIC FESTIVAL

Nov. 19-20 @ Wallkill High School, 90 Robinson Dr., Wallkill, NY

### HS WINTER CONCERT PART I

Wednesday, Dec. 1 (snow date Dec. 6)  
Evening to include performances by the Honors Chamber Orchestra, Honors Chorus and Honors Band, and the Tri-M Music Honor Society Induction Ceremony.

### NYSSMA ALL-STATE CONFERENCE

Dec. 2-5 @ Rochester, NY

### HS WINTER CONCERT PART II

Wednesday, Dec. 8 (snow date Dec. 13)

Evening to include performances by the Symphonic Band, Mixed Chorus, String Orchestra and Jazz Ensemble.

### MS WINTER CONCERT PART I

Thursday, Dec. 9 (snow date Dec. 13)  
Evening to include performances by the 7/8th Grade String Orchestra, 7/8th Grade Concert Choir, 7/8th Grade Band and MS Jazz Ensemble.

### MS WINTER CONCERT ASSEMBLY

Friday, Dec. 10, at 12:30 p.m.  
Performances by the 7/8th Grade Chorus, 7/8th Grade Band and MS Jazz Ensemble.

### MS WINTER CONCERT PART II

Wednesday, Dec. 15 (snow date Dec. 16)  
Evening to include performances by the MS Woodwind Ensemble, 5/6th Grade Orchestra, 5/6th Grade Chorus and 5/6th Grade Band.

### ES WINTER CONCERT ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, Dec. 21, at 8:30 a.m. in LES Gym

## Science Enrichment

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

“This program has wonderful implications for improving the richness of what we’re teaching,” said Mary Greynolds, principal of Liberty Middle School.

McGinn visits all third- and fourth-grade classrooms at least once a week to assist classroom teachers with special activities that enhance their science lessons.

The planetary motion exercise described earlier is one of many activities that he has planned for third-graders this year. For each topic covered by a classroom teacher – such as forces that change the earth’s surface, matter, motion, plants, butterflies, and nutrition – McGinn will lead an activity designed to get students excited about learning about science. Some activities will also give students the chance to learn how to handle and manipulate lab equipment.

Throughout the year, he will also incorporate elements of the scientific method, which involves identifying a problem, doing research, making a hypothesis, testing the hypothesis, analyzing the results, and drawing conclusions. Fellow science enrichment teacher Caryn Decker, who works with fifth- and sixth-graders, weaves the same principles into her own hands-on activities. Their goal is to create a strong foundation in science for students before they reach seventh- and eighth-grade, according to McGinn. That’s because the scientific method is the cornerstone on which most, if not all, upper level science lessons are based.

“If they understand the whole process already, it will make learning science so much easier for them,” said McGinn. “In general, it’s easy to get third- and

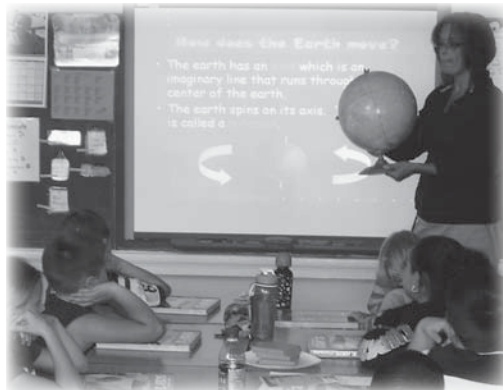
fourth-graders excited about science. They’re not to the point yet where it’s not ‘cool’ to be excited about science. Hopefully, by the time I see these students in eighth grade, they’ll keep more of that enthusiasm now.”

The grades 3-6 science enrichment program may help students in several other ways. For example, a better understanding of scientific principles could improve students’ scores on future New York State science exams for grades 4 and 8. Scientific principles often relate to other subject areas, such as math, so students may perform better on tests for entirely different subjects, too.

Jeri Finnegan, principal of Liberty Elementary School, hopes to give students an opportunity to show off their increased understanding during a science fair later this school year.

“A lot of what [Kyle] is doing is getting students to understand what’s behind the science experiments,” said Finnegan, who would like students to be able to do more than just list facts. “We’d like kids to be able to explain how things work and why.”

Liberty students should see a lot of academic growth thanks to this new science enrichment program. For third-graders who took a brief, imaginary spin around the sun, it means many more years of science-related excitement ahead of them.



**Third-grade teacher Kim Heinle talks to students about how the earth moves.**

## Taste the Chili Challenge

Let your taste buds explore an array of chili at the 2nd Annual Chili Challenge on **Friday, Oct. 22**, from 5-7 p.m. at Liberty High School. This event will raise money for the Ron Francisco Memorial Scholarship, which is awarded to scholar athletes.

For just \$5, you can stuff your belly and help judge who has the chops to be a chili champion. The chef with the winning chili will receive a trophy, but the real winners will be everyone who goes away full and knowing they supported a great cause.

## GED Program Dropped: Regents Diploma the Goal

As of this fall, Liberty Central School District is no longer offering a general equivalency diploma (GED) program during the school day. Students will instead be encouraged to earn a high school diploma or to make use of outside GED programs.

A high school diploma better prepares students for college or technical school and the work place, according to Liberty High School Principal Jack Strassman.

“We want students to strive for higher goals and graduate with a Regents diploma,” he said.

There are several benefits to the change. First, it allowed a teacher who had previously worked with the program to be reassigned, leading to more efficient use of a staff member. It has also allowed the high school to focus solely on preparing students to earn Regents diplomas. This may lead to higher graduation rates because the state does not include GEDs in a school’s four-year graduation rate.

For information about alternative GED programs, call the HS Guidance Office at 292-5400, ext. 2006.

## Renovation Wraps Up This Winter

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Elementary students are also enjoying the benefits of some major renovations.

Capital project work at the elementary school included the addition of eight new classrooms, a cafeteria, a kitchen, and a drop-off loop at the front of the building; an expanded playground; façade preservation; renovated offices and



Capital project work at the elementary school should wrap up this winter.

bathrooms; and the replacement of windows and roofing.

Construction will continue on the north side of the building through the winter to wrap up work on a new foyer, entryway and administrative offices. The school has taken several steps to avoid classroom disruptions during the school day and to keep students away from areas under construction.

The elementary school has also implemented a new traffic pattern. Access to the school is still taking place at the Main Street entrance, but traffic now travels around the back of the building and exits at School Street. Parents who drop off their children do so at the new drop-off loop at the front of the building.

Some adjustments and fine tuning may still be needed, but the



**Hard at Work:** High school students are already using the renovated science classrooms (top) and the new library and media center (bottom).

benefits of the project for students and the community will far outweigh any inconveniences, according to Superintendent Michael Vanyo.

“It is our goal to provide the best environment possible for our students, and this project will provide that,” he said.

## Higher Standards Mean Lower Proficiency Rates

The percentage of students considered proficient on the grades 3-8 English and math exams took a big drop state wide last year – due not to a drop in skills, but instead to a higher standard for proficiency.

The New York State Education Department announced a change in the scoring targets, or “cut scores,” for the exams in July, well after students took them. The cut scores were changed in response to research that showed the exams did not accurately predict a student’s readiness for college.

Liberty Central School District, like most districts, saw a drop in the percentage of students that met or exceeded proficiency standards. Students’ raw exam scores, on the other hand, remained relatively unchanged from the previous year.

For example, the mean score for students who took the grade 4 English exam increased from 661 to 678, but the percentage of students considered proficient on the exam fell from 73.2 percent to 49.5 percent.

These scores reflect a change in state expectations rather than in student performance, according to Superintendent Michael Vanyo.

“We are certainly not in this alone. All school districts in New York State will notice a shift in scores on their state assessments due to this change,” he said.

**“All school districts in New York State will notice a shift in scores on their state assessments due to this change.”**

Students not considered proficient on the exams are typically entitled to receive Academic Intervention Services (AIS). The Education Department anticipated a large increase in the number of students not meeting proficiency standards, so it amended AIS regulations for the coming year to give districts some flexibility in meeting the increased financial obligations.

“We will continue to provide academic intervention services for students needing additional help to meet the new standards,” said Vanyo.

Parents who have questions about their child’s testing reports for 2010 should call their child’s school principal or visit [www.libertyk12.org/News/2010-11/080610\\_testscores.cfm](http://www.libertyk12.org/News/2010-11/080610_testscores.cfm).

## Meal Plans Save Money

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program. Parents who meet federal income guidelines, available at [www.libertyk12.org/FoodService/foodservice.cfm](http://www.libertyk12.org/FoodService/foodservice.cfm), can pay as little as 25 cents for reduced price meals or even qualify for free meals for their children. As a result, students can receive regular, healthy meals no matter what financial hardships their families are facing.

They can also do so without appearing any different from those students who pay full price for their meals.

Parents who pay the full or reduced price can pay for several meals in advance by adding money to a student's meal plan account using cash or a check. Students who are eligible for free meals are given credit for the meals on their meal plan account. No matter how the meals are paid for, all students with meal plan accounts use ID cards to pay for food when they check out with a cashier.

"We use the swipe cards to maintain students' privacy," said Sawyer.

Families are asked to submit new applications for the free or reduced price meals program at the start of each school year, but they may become eligible anytime throughout the year (see eligibility guidelines at right). If you have not yet applied for the program, but think you may be eligible, stop by a principal's office to pick up an application or call Audrey Woolard at 292-5400, ext. 2057.



### LUNCH MENU-NOVEMBER\*

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
<b>1</b> Hamburger/Bun Cheese Pizza	<b>2</b> Supt. Conf. Day School Closed	<b>3</b> Cheese Pizza Sandwich Variety	<b>4</b> Chili Con Carne Tuna Salad Plate Cheese Pizza	<b>5</b> Grilled Cheese Cheese Pizza
<b>8</b> Chicken Patty/Bun Sandwich Variety	<b>9</b> Cheese Pizza Sandwich Variety	<b>10</b> Baked Meatloaf Egg Salad Sandwich Cheese Pizza	<b>11</b> Veterans Day School Closed	<b>12</b> Macaroni & Cheese Tuna Salad Plate
<b>15</b> Hamburger/Bun Cheese Pizza	<b>16</b> Chicken Patty/Bun Sandwich Variety	<b>17</b> Half Day of School Cheese Pizza Sandwich Variety	<b>18</b> Beef Taco Tuna Salad Plate Cheese Pizza	<b>19</b> Grilled Cheese Cheese Pizza
<b>22</b> Hot Dog/Roll Cheese Pizza	<b>23</b> Hot Turkey Sandwich Egg Salad Sandwich Cheese Pizza	<b>24</b> Thanksgiving Recess School Closed	<b>25</b> Thanksgiving Recess School Closed	<b>26</b> Thanksgiving Recess School Closed
<b>29</b> Chicken Patty/Bun Sandwich Variety	<b>30</b> Hamburger/Bun Cheese Pizza			

### LUNCH MENU-DECEMBER\*

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
		<b>1</b> Cheese Pizza Sandwich Variety	<b>2</b> Chicken Chow Mein Tuna Salad Plate	<b>3</b> Grilled Cheese Sandwich Variety
<b>6</b> Beef Taco Tuna Salad Plate Cheese Pizza	<b>7</b> Chicken Patty/Bun Sandwich Variety	<b>8</b> Cheese Pizza Sandwich Variety	<b>9</b> Sloppy Joe/Bun Tuna Salad Plate	<b>10</b> Macaroni & Cheese Tuna Salad Plate
<b>13</b> Hamburger/Bun Cheese Pizza	<b>14</b> Chicken Patty/Bun Sandwich Variety	<b>15</b> Cheese Pizza Sandwich Variety	<b>16</b> Sloppy Joe/Bun Tuna Salad Plate	<b>17</b> Grilled Cheese Sandwich Variety
<b>20</b> Hot Dog/Roll Cheese Pizza	<b>21</b> Chicken Patty/Bun Sandwich Variety	<b>22</b> Cheese Pizza Sandwich Variety	<b>23</b> Grilled Cheese Sandwich Variety	<b>24</b> Winter Recess School Closed
<b>27</b> Winter Recess School Closed	<b>28</b> Winter Recess School Closed	<b>29</b> Winter Recess School Closed	<b>30</b> Winter Recess School Closed	<b>31</b> Winter Recess School Closed

\*Note: Most daily menus also include a sandwich variety and a hero variety even if they aren't listed above.

### Federal income guidelines for reduced price meals

Families may apply for free or reduced price meals at any time during the school year if their household incomes meet federal guidelines (see chart at right). For more information, visit [www.libertyk12.org/FoodService/foodservice.cfm](http://www.libertyk12.org/FoodService/foodservice.cfm).

\*\*Your household includes everyone living with you, related or not.

### REDUCED PRICE ELIGIBILITY INCOME CHART

*Household size	Income of no more than...	
	Annually	Weekly
2	\$26,955	\$519
3	33,874	652
4	40,793	785
5	47,712	918
For each additional family member, add...		
	\$6,919	\$134

# LIBERTY

CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
115 Buckley Street  
Liberty, NY 12754

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Staying in Touch Just Got Easier:

## District E-mail Addresses Change

In Liberty Central School District, a change in e-mail address formats has made it easier than ever to contact teachers and administrators.

As of August 30, all district e-mail addresses now follow the following format: first initial of first name + full last name@libertyk12.org. So, for example, the e-mail address for Judy Brink, the director of technology, is now jbrink@libertyk12.org.

"We had a difficult e-mail configuration before," said Brink of the old format for e-mail addresses. It combined three letters from a person's first name and seven letters from a person's last name.

"This new format is more intuitive. With someone like a Michael who goes by Mike, you no longer have to wonder whether you should use Mic or Mik first. You just need his first initial," she said.

All staff members were sent notifications about the change during the summer. Anyone who has questions about the change should contact the IT Department at techs@libertyk12.org.



## Students Enjoying Many Renovated Facilities This Fall

This fall Liberty students are enjoying many improved education spaces thanks to the \$35.8 million capital project approved by voters in 2007. The capital project is on schedule to be completed by this winter. Most of the work at Liberty High School is finished already, but some work remains at Liberty Elementary School.

One of the most visible parts of the capital project is the library and media center at the high school (pictured above behind the walkway on the right). The unique design of the building makes it a "net zero building" with regard to energy usage. That means it uses its position and features such as solar panels to produce at least as much energy as

it consumes. The center is one of the only known net-zero school facilities in New York State.

Many other renovations greeted high school students who returned this fall. The first changes they encountered were the new covered walkway, foyer and main office. Once inside, students also found extensive locker room renovations and six renovated science classrooms with state-of-the-art laboratories.

HS Principal Jack Strassman said he was excited to see students use the new facilities. "We are fortunate that the community supports our district and our students, and we look forward to sharing these facilities," he said.

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