

Elementary Executive Summary- Liberty

Description of the School

Liberty Elementary is located in Margate, Florida. It was constructed in 2002. Due to an increase in student enrollment, and additional building was constructed in 2006. Enrollment is currently at 990 students and has increased over the past three years, partially due to becoming a STEM Museum Magnet School and the addition of an ESE preschool program. Currently 182 students are attending Liberty on reassignment.

The student population is very diverse. Ethnic demographics are as follows: Black/African American 57%, Hispanic 21%, White 34%, Asian .02%, Multi-Racial .07%, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander .03%, and Native American .002%. With 76% of the students on free and/or reduced lunch, Liberty qualifies as a Title 1 school and receives associated services.

Liberty is unique due to the fact that it borders two local municipalities. The front of the school is in the boundary of the City of Margate and the rear entrance of the school is in the City of Coconut Creek. As a result, both cities recognize Liberty during community events. The City of Margate hosts a student and teacher of the month recognition program on a monthly basis. Honorees are recognized during City Commission meetings. City officials visit the school to have lunch and read to students on an annual basis.

There are 106 faculty and staff members at Liberty Elementary. Instructors hold both masters /doctoral degrees and National Board Certifications. Many instructional and non-instructional staff members have been employed at the school since it opened. All teachers and staff are highly qualified. The Principal has 9 years of administrative service with the school and the Assistant Principal has 5 years of administrative service.

Liberty has an expansive boundary zone that services students from Margate, Coconut Creek and North Lauderdale. Therefore many students take the bus to and from school. This proves to be challenging to the afterschool tutoring program. More students would have the potential to receive tutoring if they did not have to rely on the school bus for transportation home.

School's Purpose

Liberty's mission is to prepare our students to become critical thinking problem-solvers who will compete in a global society by facilitating an engaging & challenging learning environment in which they work cooperatively to gain real-world experiences through a rigorous curriculum including the application of science, technology, engineering & mathematics.

The school embodies its purpose through its program offerings. All students at Liberty Elementary are part of the STEM Museum Magnet Program. Students whose home school is Liberty do not have to apply for the STEM program. Students living outside of Liberty's boundaries have to apply for the program through an application process. The school embodies its purpose through its program offerings

The magnet program has a focus on STEM while also incorporating museum aspects. Students complete quarterly projects that are displayed during quarterly showcase nights. During the showcase, the students act as museum docents and share with parents and community members what they have learned through their STEM projects that quarter. Students also have the opportunity to participate in STEM related field trips and have increased opportunities to use various technology programs supplemented through STEM programs. Students utilize a Gizmo program. Gizmos are interactive math and science simulations for grades 3-5 that are aligned to the latest educational standards.

Liberty has three engaging STEM clubs for students: SECME, Robotics, and Environmental. SECME is a strategic alliance to renew and strengthen the professional capacity of K-12 educators, motivate and mentor students, and empower parents so that all students can learn and achieve at higher levels. STEM is a nationwide initiative, which focuses on Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). The SECME – STEM Olympiad combines these two philosophies into one event and focuses on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics principles as well as SECME national competitions. Every April, the SECME club participates in a district competition to compete against other elementary schools within the same categories.

Students in grades 2-5 are invited to tryout for the Liberty

Elementary Robotics team. Selected students meet after school twice a week to learn how to program robots and work on a specific research project. This year's theme is "Trash Trek". Students are researching a student-found problem related to garbage and creating a presentation about their findings. They are also programming robots to complete different missions with the First Lego Robotics program, an international competition that introduces scientific and real-world challenges for teams to focus and research on.

Liberty's Environmental club was established so that students can get involved in improving the current conditions of the environment through projects such as recycling, informing their peers and helping the community. Each week, students work in teams to collect paper recycling from classrooms. In previous years, students collected data about the amount of recycling they collected and displayed the data in the main hall on the "Liberty Green Meter". The Environmental club also works on planting and growing indoor and outdoor plants

Notable Achievements and Areas of Improvement

During the 2017-2018 school term, Liberty was the recipient of Magnet School of Excellence award. Liberty Elementary was also is 2015-2016 Magnet School of Excellence recipient. This award was received based on student achievement, increased school enrollment, decreasing minority isolation, the integration of STEM learning in the classrooms and the school's quarterly STEM museum magnet nights. Liberty successfully launched the third year of the STEM Museum Magnet Grant. Each grade level participated in exhibition nights each quarter that highlighted their STEM research project. Some of the projects included beach erosion, bridge construction, and rover construction for space life.

The school has recently received a nomination for a P3E Co challenge award. This award is based on increased usage of vegetable gardens and the addition of more gardening lessons in the classrooms. Liberty Elementary has multiple vegetable and herb gardens. During STEM exhibition nights, families often sample tasty items such as salads and salsa that students created from crops harvested in their gardens. Selected students were honored at "Evening of the Stars". This district event recognizes students with perfect attendance from K-5 grade. Students, families, teachers and administrators attend this annual event.

A Golden School Award for volunteer programs was earned for the 2013-2018 school years. Eligibility for this award was based on volunteer hours. Volunteer hours must double the amount of students enrolled at the school. Each year Liberty Elementary accumulated over 3000 volunteer hours. In addition, Liberty was also the recipient of the Five Star School Award for Outstanding Community Involvement for 2013-2016. These volunteers have logged at least 200 or more individual volunteer hours and attended a volunteer orientation program sponsored by the school.

Due to funding sources such as STEM grants and SMART bond initiatives, Liberty has experienced a large increase in technology. In 2015, over 500 laptop computers were distributed to 2-5th grade classrooms. During the 2014 school year, over 200 iPads were distributed to K & 1st grade classes. Classrooms also received additional document cameras and projectors to enhance instruction. During the 2016-2017 school year, the school will receive upgrades to the cafeteria's sound system and the Media Production room. Students will have the opportunity to work with state of the art technology.

Liberty Elementary has gifted and high achieving classes in K-5th grades. Placement in these classes is based on a combination of Individual Educational Plans (IEP's), standardized test results, and teacher recommendations. Students are enriched across all subject levels and engage in a rigorous curriculum.

Liberty Elementary strives for continuous improvement, particularly in the area of student achievement. Over the next three years, Liberty will continue to put structures in place to close student achievement gaps in reading, math, and science. From 2004-2011 one of the schools' notable achievements was being a Florida Department of Education "A" school. Faculty, staff, students and families are making strides towards regaining this notable achievement.

Provide any additional information you would like to share with the public and community that were not prompted in the previous sections.

Areas of Focus for the 2018-2019 school year will be the Florida

Standards, continued STEM Magnet grant implementation, Response to Intervention and Tier I-II-III interventions, Writing (Grades 3, 4, 5), Accountable Talk, and biweekly Curriculum Chats. Liberty will incorporate more hands on science experiments and science labs across all grade levels. In addition, Engineering is Elementary (EIE) curriculum will be enhanced to increase real world science problem solving skills. These areas of focus will assist in increasing student achievement by providing the knowledge and tools necessary to effectively differentiate instruction and meet the needs of all students.