

Vol 1., No.4



# THE LIBERTY BELL

Spring 2026



Liberty High School Academy For Newcomers

April 2026

School Edition

Fourth Issue

## Liberty High School

### Radamadan Reflections, Eid Celebrations



## How Ramadan Affects Life at School

By Mamadou Madina Balde



Ramadan is a sacred month for Muslims around the world.

During this time, Muslims fast from sunrise to sunset, pray more, and try to improve themselves spiritually. To better understand how Ramadan affects life at school, I interviewed four people from my school community: a teacher, a counselor, a student, and a cafeteria chef.

Mr. Kassim, a teacher, explained that he practices Ramadan because of his faith. He said, “Yes, I practice Ramadan because I am a Muslim.” He also described the experience of fasting while teaching. According to him, “Fasting and teaching can be very difficult but exciting at the same time.” He explained that fasting helps Muslims build self-endurance and understand the struggles of less fortunate people. As he said, “Muslims fast to challenge themselves in endurance.” Mr. Kassim also believes that practicing Ramadan in school can be beneficial for students because “It’s a great way to show the other students a different faith and a different culture that they are not familiar with.”

Another perspective came from Ms. Edyta, the school counselor. She shared what she knows about Ramadan, even though she does not practice it. She said, “Ramadan is a Muslim holiday that lasts 30 days.” She also explained that “During that time people are fasting from sunrise to sunset.” Ms. Edyta believes that schools should support students who fast during Ramadan. She said that “The school can inform other students about the holiday and ask them to respect people who are fasting.” She also mentioned that “Students need to pray at a certain time,” so teachers should understand if students need a few minutes during the day. Similar to Mr. Kassim’s sentiments, Ms. Edyta also believes that supporting Ramadan in school helps students understand and respect different faith and culture.

A student named Aicha also shared her personal experience with Ramadan. She explained how important this month is for her, saying, “Ramadan means a lot to me.” She added that “It is a month when I feel much closer to God.” During Ramadan she tries to do more good actions, and she said, “Ramadan is a time when I pray more, make duas (blessing), give charity, and help people.” Even though school days can sometimes be harder during Ramadan, she admitted that “I often feel tired and sleepy.” However, she believes fasting is meaningful because “It is worth it because it is for a good reason.” For her, “Ramadan is my favorite month.”

Finally, Dolly, the school cafeteria chef, shared what she notices during Ramadan. She explained that “the Muslim students respect their beliefs and they don’t come to get food because of Ramadan.” She also observed a difference in students’ behavior, saying “their attitude is calm, especially in the cafeteria.”

In conclusion, these interviews show that Ramadan is more than just fasting. It is a time of faith, patience, and self-discipline for many Muslims. It also helps people in the school community learn about different cultures and develop respect and understanding for one another.

**Our school hosted an Eid Education Event on Tuesday, March 24th in the cafeteria. Students learned and reflected on the importance of Ramadan and Eid. Ali Al-Saedi gave an inspirational speech about what Ramadan means to him.**



## LHS Hosts First Annual West African Family Night

Liberty High School hosted a West African Family Night on Wednesday, March 18th. It was a really meaningful evening for everyone who came. Students and their families had the chance to learn more about the school, their child's progress, and how they can make it to college.

There was a guest speaker who led the presentation in Wolof. That made it much easier for many families to fully understand the information and feel comfortable asking questions and participating.

Because the event took place during Ramadan, the school also made sure to provide halal food so families who were fasting could break their fast together. That shared moment brought a strong sense of community and made the night feel even more special.

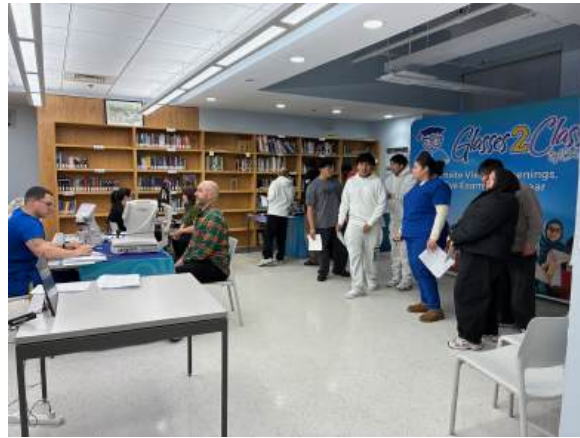
Overall, it was a wonderful experience, marking the first of many such events.



## Eye Checks for All!

On Tuesday, March 17th all students and staff members were given the opportunity receive a vision exam and be fitted for eyeglasses. The event ran smoothly overall. A total of 255 students and staff participated in the screening. Of those, 74 students and 30 staff members were fitted for eyeglasses.

Everyone was excited about receiving new glasses. Thank you to Dr. Huegel for providing such a wonderful service to our school community!



## Senior Picture Day

By Stephane Kafando

Senior picture day for the Liberty High School class of 2026 took place on March 12th, 2026. This gave students the chance to capture one of their final high school memories.

Tabara, a senior at Liberty High School, said she felt excited but also a little sad because it means high school is coming to an end. She explained that senior pictures are important because they represent a big moment in a student's life and show that graduation is getting closer. Tabara stated, "I am thinking about wearing something that represents my future goals." Since she plans to go into business, she would like to wear something more professional-looking to reflect the career she hopes to pursue.

Mr. Judd, who is a teacher and coordinator for student activities, explained that senior pictures are important because they represent a significant moment in a person's life. According to Mr. Judd, "Graduating from school is a time when students can look back at everything they have achieved and the hard work, they have done to reach that point." Similar to Mr. Judd's previous comment about how graduating high school is important, Tabara and Mamadou also share the same ideas.

Mamadou, who is a senior at Liberty High School, said that "I was not nervous and felt excited to complete high school." He also explained that graduating is an important step because he hopes to attend college and start building his future. Mamadou shared that one of his favorite moments was the basketball game where he scored the winning point for the school in the last five seconds of their first playoff game. He described the moment as exciting and memorable for both the team and the school.

Senior picture day was more than just taking a photo. It reflected the joy of student achievement and all the hard work that came with it. The day was filled with reflection and excitement.



## How Strong Is Your English? The NYSESLAT Helps You Find Out.

By Ms. Cohen

Every spring, multilingual students across New York take the NYSESLAT — the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test. But this isn't just another test. It's actually one of the most useful tools you have for understanding your own growth as an English learner.

The NYSESLAT shows you what you already do well and what skills you're ready to level up next. Your teachers use your results to plan lessons that match your needs, challenge you in the right ways, and help you become a stronger reader, writer, listener, and speaker. Think of it as your yearly progress check — your chance to see how far you've come.

If you've taken it before, you'll notice how much easier certain parts feel now. If this is your first time, it's a great opportunity to show what you can do. The test covers the four major language skills:

- **Speaking** — having a conversation and expressing ideas
- **Listening** — understanding spoken English
- **Reading** — making sense of texts
- **Writing** — communicating clearly on paper

Your score places you in one of the NYSESLAT proficiency levels, from Entering to Commanding. These levels help you understand your English journey and celebrate your progress each year.



### Important Dates — Attendance Matters!

#### Speaking Test

**Monday, April 6 – Friday, May 22**

A teacher will come to your ESL class and bring you for a short one-on-one conversation.

#### Listening, Reading & Writing Tests

**Tuesday, May 5 – Thursday, May 7**

These will happen in your ESL class. Being present and on time is extremely important.

#### Make-Up Testing

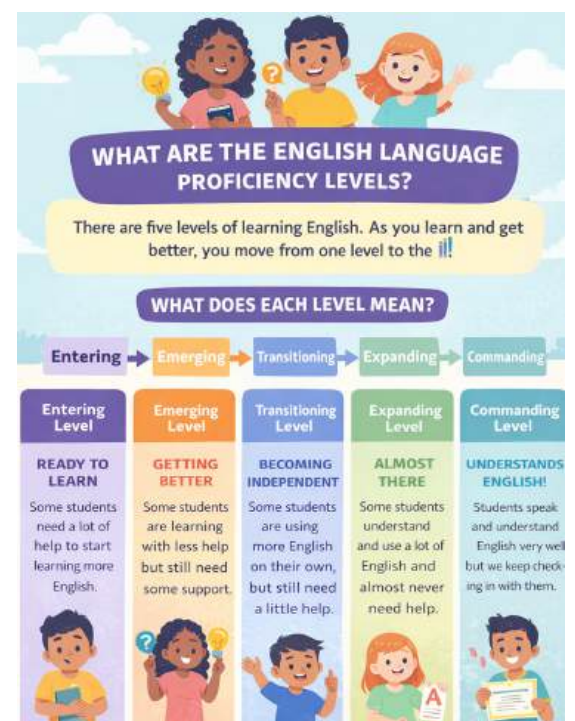
**Friday, May 8 – Friday, May 22**

If you miss any of the test days, you'll complete the sections when you return.

### Why Taking the NYSESLAT Matters

- It shows your **real progress** in English.
- It helps teachers give you the **right support**.
- It can help you move to a **higher proficiency level**.
- It's required if you want to earn the **NY State Seal of Biliteracy** with Mr. Segura.
- It's a chance to **show your voice, your skills, and your growth**.

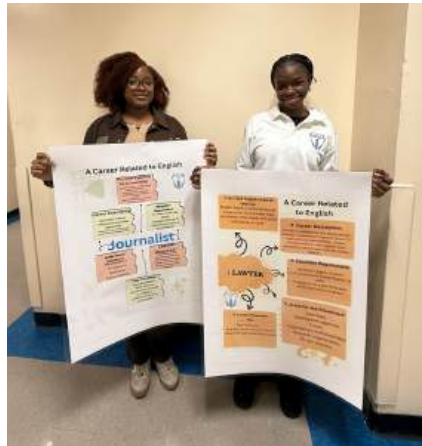
If you want to know more or feel unsure about anything, talk to your English teachers or ask a friend who has taken it before. Everyone is rooting for you — and this test is one more step toward your goals.



# News...

## NHS Students Connect Subjects to Jobs

The National Honor Society recently completed career cluster projects based on various academic subjects. For example, students explored how classes like English can prepare individuals for careers in journalism or law, and how science courses support paths toward becoming scientists. Each project highlighted the benefits of these subjects and provided detailed information about related career opportunities. Be sure to check out the posters displayed around the school!



## Tutoring

Do you want to improve your grades?

Join us every **Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday** during **lunch in the library and after school on the fourth floor.**



**LIBERTY HIGH SCHOOL**

# RESOURCES FOR HOME

SEEK AVAILABLE OUTSIDE HELP IN YOUR COMMUNITY

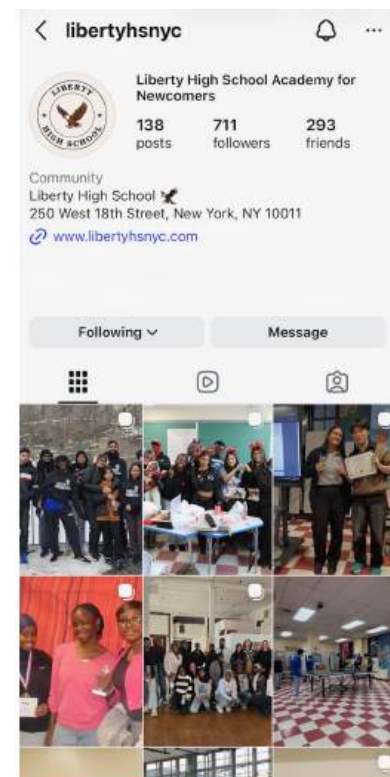
- VIRTUAL SUPPORTS**
  - IXL MATH/ENGLISH
  - ACHIEVE 3000 (ESL 2+)
  - NEWSLA
  - BRAINPOP
  - DUOLINGO
  - SORA
  - NYPL
- BOOKS:**
  - ABC ENGLISH READING SKILLS STORIES
  - HANDWRITING BOOKS
  - NEWCOMER WORKBOOKS
  - EDGE BOOK (STUDENTS HAVE)
- TUTORING PROGRAMS**
  - HUDSON GUILD
  - HARLEM CHILDREN'S ZONE
  - THE DOOR

OR VISIT THE LOCAL LIBRARY FOR WORKSHOPS

YOUR SUPPORT AT HOME IS JUST AS IMPORTANT AS THE SUPPORT WE GIVE STUDENTS IN SCHOOL, TOO!

SCAN QR CODE FOR LINKS!

### Don't forget to follow Liberty on instagram! @libertyhsnyc



## More News...

### Marking the End of Ramadan: A Celebration of Faith, Resilience, and Community

By Mr. Segura



As the month of Ramadan came to a close this past March, our school community joined millions around the world in celebrating Eid al Fitr—a day of joy, gratitude, and renewed hope. For many of our students, this month was a powerful testament to resilience. They balanced academic responsibilities, after school commitments, and daily routines while fasting from sunrise to sunset. Their dedication was visible, and their quiet strength deserves admiration.

Ramadan is not only a time of fasting, but also a time deeply rooted in charity and compassion. The spirit of giving reminds us that generosity is a universal value. You do not have to be Muslim to embody a kind, open, and generous heart. Acts of charity, whether big or small, strengthen the bonds that hold our community together.

As we reflect on the season, let us remember those who may be struggling. A simple phone call to a friend, a warm message to someone who is sick, or a check in on an elderly neighbor can mean more than we realize. Extending kindness doesn't require a special occasion—only intention.

**Students should also remember that support is right here at home. Our Liberty Pantry remains available for anyone in need, offering food, clothing, and essential items with privacy and dignity. No questions asked, no judgment—just help.**

Eid may mark the end of Ramadan, but its lessons endure: empathy, gratitude, generosity, and care for one another. These values belong to all of us, and when we carry them forward, we make our school—and our world—a brighter place.

### College Office

*New Arrival*

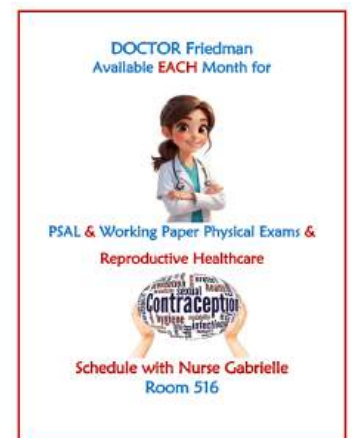
LIBERTY HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMY  
FOR NEWCOMERS

#### Come meet the new Immigrant Ambassador

Liberty High School Academy for Newcomers is proud to announce that alumna Shah Labeeba Muncem has joined the College Office as the new Immigrant Ambassador.

As a former Liberty student who successfully navigated the academic challenges of mastering a new language while excelling in both AP and Regents exams, Muncem knows firsthand what it takes to succeed. Now a student at the City College of New York (CCNY), she is committed to helping current Liberty students pursue their own college and career goals.

Students, be sure to visit the College Office (room 307) to meet Labeeba, ask questions, and learn more about the resources available to you, as you plan for the future.



### Guidance Department

Passing your courses and Regents exams are important for a timely graduation. If you need help with your academic studies, there are many places for support (see below). Any questions, see your guidance counselor!

**University Settlement (free ESL language support):**

**184 Eldridge Street New York, NY 10002**

**Phone Number: (212) 674-9120**

**Hudson Guild: 441 W 26th St, New York, NY 10001**

**The Door: 555 Broome St, New York, NY 10013**

### Catholic Charities

As Decision Day approaches, we wanted to spotlight Liberty alumnus, Moustapha Leye, who made his own big decision on college just a year ago. Moustapha is a freshman at City College majoring in Business Administration. Moustapha was interviewed by Ms. Christine of Catholic Charities on Thursday, March 19, 2025. 43 days ahead of Decision Day.

**Ms. Christine: What is one thing you wish you knew when you were a student at Liberty?**

**Moustapha:** I wish I knew better study habits, and not to wait for the deadline of when an assignment is due. I also wish I made more connections with fellow students, and talk to them, greet them when I'd see them.

**Ms. Christine: You were an intern while you were a student at Liberty. How did the internship program help you prepare for college?**

**Moustapha:** It helped me grow personally and professionally. Before I started working, I was dependent on my dad and older brother for money. Once I started working, I became independent and could purchase what I wanted to. I was also nervous when I worked at UPS but over time, I got comfortable with my tasks. The internship also helped me have a resume.

**Ms. Christine: What skill did you develop in high school that you still use?**

**Moustapha:** I developed resilience during high school. There were moments when things didn't go well, whether it's the mask, falling behind on assignments, feeling misunderstood, or dealing with personal challenges, but I learned how to keep going. Those experiences taught me how to stay focused under pressure and bounce back from setbacks. I started using mistakes as lessons to improve. And that mindset has stayed with me, I still rely on it today whenever I face obstacles or need to push through difficult situations.

**Ms. Christine: What advice would you give to current Liberty students?**

**Moustapha:** Don't focus too much on what's going on around the world. Go outside with your friends. There are so many things out there waiting for you. Dream big and be you.

**Ms. Christine: Is there anything you miss about Liberty?**

**Moustapha:** I miss my friends; I wish I could see them more. I didn't realize the time we had together at the time. I also miss teachers that supported me while I was a student, and the Catholic Charities team, they helped me a lot, they were always there for me.



## Your April Horoscope!

**Aries:** April brings energy and new ideas. Start projects, but listen to others before acting.

**Taurus:** Focus on money and future plans. A calm and steady approach will help you succeed.

**Gemini:** This is a social month. Talking with friends and meeting new people brings good opportunities.

**Cancer:** Work or responsibilities may change. Stay calm and ask family or friends for support.

**Leo:** April is good for learning and exploring. New ideas or advice can help you grow.

**Virgo:** Think carefully about your goals. Slow and careful planning brings good results.

**Libra:** Relationships are important now. Kind communication will keep things balanced.

**Scorpio:** Focus on daily habits and health. Small improvements can make your life better.

**Sagittarius:** Fun, creativity, and romance grow this month. Enjoy yourself, but remember your duties.

**Capricorn:** Home and family need attention. Spend time relaxing with people you love.

**Aquarius:** Your ideas and communication are strong. Sharing your thoughts can bring new chances.

**Pisces:** Think about money and personal goals. Confidence in your skills will help you succeed.



<b>Aries</b> March 21 to April 19  Ram	<b>Taurus</b> April 20 to May 20  Bull	<b>Gemini</b> May 21 to June 20  Twins	<b>Cancer</b> June 21 to July 22  Crab
<b>Leo</b> July 23 to Aug. 22  Lion	<b>Virgo</b> Aug. 23 to Sept. 22  Virgin	<b>Libra</b> Sept. 23 to Oct. 22  Balance	<b>Scorpio</b> Oct. 23 to Nov. 21  Scorpion
<b>Sagittarius</b> Nov. 22 to Dec. 21  Archer	<b>Capricorn</b> Dec. 22 to Jan. 19  Horned goat	<b>Aquarius</b> Jan. 20 to Feb. 18  Water bearer	<b>Pisces</b> Feb. 19 to March 20  Fish

## Word of the Month:

**Ameliorate** (verb): to make (something bad or unsatisfactory) better

The students worked hard in class to **ameliorate** their grades.



## Regents Multiple Choice Practice:

Show your answers to your teachers to see if you're correct!



Source: Jacob Riis, *How the Other Half Lives*, 1890

11. The purpose of this photograph was to
- (1) raise public awareness for conditions in the tenements
  - (2) support unrestricted immigration
  - (3) expose the unsafe working conditions in factories
  - (4) promote the use of child labor
12. Individuals who were influenced by the work of Jacob Riis would most likely agree that
- (1) federal income taxes should be eliminated
  - (2) monopolistic business practices should be encouraged
  - (3) labor unions should be banned
  - (4) social and economic reforms should be addressed by the government

Base your answers to questions 1 through 5 on the information below and on your knowledge of biology.

### Heads or Tails?

In the mid 1990s, people across several states were finding large numbers of frogs and other amphibians with extra limbs. Possible explanations regarding the cause of these abnormalities ranged from UV radiation, chemical contaminants in the water, parasites, or even airborne substances.

### Pacific Chorus Frog with Extra Legs



1. Which question could be asked in order to determine if the abnormalities seen in the frog legs were caused by an inherited mutation?
- (1) Do the offspring with an abnormality live in the same environment as the parents?
  - (2) Were the parents exposed to the same environmental factors as some of their offspring?
  - (3) Is a mutation that causes abnormal legs present in the DNA of the sex cells of the parents?
  - (4) Do the cells within the legs of the parents contain DNA with a mutation that causes abnormal limbs?

## Sports

### Liberty Running Team Places at CPSAL Indoor Championship

*The team continues their best year in program history*

On March 4th at the Nike Armory, the Boys & Girls Running team competed at the CPSAL Indoor Championship for the first time in team history. Liberty began scoring during the girls 1500 meter, where top runner **Oumou Diallo**, recently nominated by New York Road Runners for Female Athlete of the Year, finished 2nd place and Melany Abrajan finished 4th. The boys followed suit in the One Mile, with Ronardo Montilla finishing 3rd (breaking a school record) and Alpha Diallo finishing 5th.

Next was the 4×200m relay with captain **Priscila Aguilar** and veteran runner **Bintou Toure** teaming with rookies **Nagale Kaba** and **Maily Wajarai**, earning 4 more points for Liberty. The girls added to their score, earning 28 points in the 3,000 meter race, with **Osdarlah Moreau** and **Wuilianin Pina** earning their first points of the day. Veteran runner, **Leydi Wajarai**, finished 6th place in the 800 meter dash, earning a crucial point for Liberty. The final event for the girls team was the 4×400 relay where **Wuilianin**, **Leydi**, **Melany**, and **Oumou** finished 2nd place, earning 8 points for Liberty and securing 2nd place overall in the CPSAL Championship meet.

The boys team scored in the 800 meter dash with **Aboubakr Diallo** finishing 4th place, breaking a school record in the process. Aboubakr also finished 7th place in the Shot Put. Team Captain **Ibrahime Diallo** placed 3rd in the Long Jump, clearing over 15 feet, earning 6 points. This was his first competitive jump and he only practiced it the prior day. **Pedro Say** also broke a school record in the 400 meter dash. The final event for the boys was the 4×400 meters, where **Ayman Hassanin**, **Alpha Diallo**, **Aboubakr Diallo**, and **Ronardo Montilla** were able to score 6 points, with the boys team ultimately finishing 5th place out of 10 teams.

"Both teams worked incredibly hard all winter, running on weekend, in the snow, etc. This was a race where we needed everyone to contribute. They all did their part to make this the best race in Liberty Running Team history," said Coach Cheema.



### Liberty Running Team Opens Spring Season in Times Square

After placing among the top teams in both the Fall and Winter, the team looks to continue this trend in the Spring. The runners opened up the season at the Rising NYRR Mile at Times Square. Out of 430 runners, top runner **Alpha Diallo** finished 15th overall, running the mile in 6:06. Teammates **Ronardo Montilla** (6:07, 16th overall) and **Ayman Hassanin** (6:38, 47th overall) also had strong performances. For the girls, **Leydi Wajarai** ran her best mile in 7:38 followed by teammates **Melany Abrajan** (8:13) and **Wuilianin Pina** (8:41, also a personal best)

This was a competitive way to begin the Spring season, competing against over 400 other runners, as the team looks to once again place at the CPSAL Championship this June!

