



Community Connections

For our children, our community, our world, our future

Important Dates

Dec. 20-Jan. 1

Winter Break - No School

Jan. 10

School Board Meeting

11 a.m.

Cheney High School

Jan. 15

Martin Luther King Jr. Day -

No School

Jan. 22

Semester Break Day - No

School

Jan. 24

School Board Meeting

6 p.m.

Cheney High School

Important Links

[- Cheney Public Schools](#)

[Nutrition Services](#)

[- Cheney Public Schools Jobs](#)

[- Bond & Levy Homepage](#)

[- District Facilities Summary](#)

Parents, Guardians, Staff, and Community Members,

December is such a fun month in K-12 education as we have the opportunity to attend numerous events around the district. Cheney High School kicked things off this month with the Holiday Extravaganza craft fair that featured several of our community's talented artists and vendors. It was spectacular to see so many of our community members at that event! The festivities continue with winter band, choir, and orchestra concerts across the district, as well as winter sports events. I have enjoyed watching our students thrive in these levy-funded programs, whether it be on stage or in the gym.

As a district and/or community member, you have been receiving information in multiple formats about the three measures the district is running in the upcoming Feb. 13, 2024 special election. This includes a replacement educational programs and operations (EP&O) levy, a construction bond, and a replacement capital levy.

The EP&O levy replaces the district's expiring three-year levy to continue funding for learning experiences like music and fine arts, athletics, and extracurriculars (these activities are 100% funded by the levy). The EP&O levy also funds additional school and classroom supports like school nurses, psychologists, custodial staff and paraeducators above what the state funds, along with school resource officers (YES Officers), nurses, health aides and speech therapists. See the funding breakdown in the graphic below and more information is available [here](#).

The construction bond will provide funding to address the district's highest-priority facilities needs, as determined by the Long-Range Facilities Planning Committee. This includes growth projects to address capacity, district-wide health and facility improvements, and safety and security improvements. For more information, click [here](#).

The capital levy replaces an expiring levy to continue funding for student, teacher, and classroom technology to sustain the district's investment in learning technology, upgrades to safety and security systems and infrastructure, including security cameras, and a replacement cycle of student and staff devices. For more information, click [here](#).

Be on the lookout for additional information regarding the three measures in your mailboxes in January 2024. If you have any questions about the bond or levies, please reach out to the district's communications coordinator, Jenna Larson, at jl Larson@cheneysd.org.

I look forward to welcoming our students back in the new year; have a wonderful and safe winter break!

We are Cheney Public Schools!

Take care,

Ben Ferney, Ed.D.

Superintendent, Cheney Public Schools

What Does the Education Programs & Operations Levy Pay For?

Current Breakdown of each EP&O levy dollar*

25¢

Special Education

Provides adequate funding for Special Education to provide required services that meet student needs

6¢

Student Transportation

Funding provides additional transportation services for students such as activity buses

49¢

Educational Programs & School Support

Provides staffing-including teachers, paraeducators, and counselors-above the prototypical model in addition to advanced classes, library, administrative support, summer programs, technology, and professional development

19¢

Athletics, Performing Arts & Clubs

Pays for 100% of all performing arts, athletics, clubs, and student extra-curricular activities

1¢

School Food Services

Pays for the additional cost to run the School Food Services program outside of state and federal funding

*The numbers above are based on the 2021-22 financial statements. Since the pandemic, the district has utilized Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief fund (ESSER) dollars to support enhanced staffing levels including nurses, health aides, and YES Officers, totaling approximately \$3 million per year. ESSER funding will expire at the end of 23-24 fiscal year, thus funding for these enhanced staffing levels will shift to being funded by the local EP&O Levy.

Our Essential Foundations

- High Expectations and Continuous Progress
- Involvement & Engagement with Community
- Stewardship & Planning

Follow Cheney Public Schools on:

Instagram Facebook and Twitter

or go to www.cheneysd.org for current news & information.



PACE
PARTNERS ADVANCING
CHARACTER EDUCATION

Character Trait for December

CARING

Showing a genuine concern for the welfare of others and being a kind, supportive helper.

December 2023



Middle School to High School Athletic Transition

The transition to high school athletics is a little less daunting, thanks to a combined effort from Westwood Middle School, Cheney Middle School, and Cheney High School. The final 8th-grade event of the season between WMS and CMS is held at the high school, giving student-athletes an opportunity to compete inside their future high school in front of their future coaches.

“These are phenomenal transition opportunities for our student-athletes and their families,” Westwood Assistant Principal and Athletic Director Tami Skillingstad said. “Each of the athletes see themselves as Blackhawks for the first time.”

The transitional event began with volleyball back in 2019, and it has grown to include all middle school sports. It’s a big lift for CHS Athletic Director Ken Ryan, but it’s paying off with an easier transition for middle school students. Current high school athletes have helped support the event, engaging with 8th-grade athletes by answering questions and providing context for the transition to high school athletics.

“The goal was to pull all the 8th graders together at the end of the event and share that we are now competing as one,” CMS Assistant Principal and Athletic Director Heather Zorroza said. “It’s been a major hit.”



High School 9th Grade Registration



If your student is currently an 8th grader, the High School 9th Grade Registration deadline is Feb. 23, 2024. Your student has three options for high school: [Cheney HS](#), [WIN Academy](#), and [Three Springs HS](#). More information will be coming in the January 2024 Community Connections newsletter.

Betz Elementary & Generation Alive

Fifth graders at Betz Elementary partnered with Generation Alive to lead the school through a service project. Generation Alive is a Spokane-based non-profit organization working to activate youth to lead with compassion. On Nov. 29, the 5th Grade Action Team presented to the district’s board of directors about what it means to be a leader, as well as their main reason for joining the team: to help curb hunger and help those in need.

The team began a coin drive in early November, and as of Dec. 12 had collected \$2,930. The final collection date is Dec. 18. On Dec. 19, the team will lead the school through a food packing event where students will pack one meal for every \$0.25 raised. That equates to 11,723 meals! Every meal will be donated to local food banks. Great work, Betz Elementary students!



Thank You for Your Service

Stacy Nicol was honored in her final board meeting on Nov. 29. Director Nicol served on the Board of Directors for eight years. Thank you for your service to our district, students, and community!



- BUS DRIVER POSITIONS
- PARAEDUCATORS
- SPEECH LANGUAGE PATHOLOGIST
- CUSTODIANS
- COACHES

Visit [Cheney Public Schools](#) for more information on available jobs and to apply!

Cheney Public Schools does not discriminate in any programs or activities on the basis of sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, veteran or military status, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, economic status, pregnancy, familial status, marital status, disability, or the use of a trained guide dog or service animal, and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following employees have been designated to handle questions and complaints of alleged discrimination.

Title IX/Chapter 28A.640 Officer/
Civil Rights Compliance Coordinator/ADA Coordinator/Gender Inclusive Schools Coordinator
Tom Arlt, Assistant Superintendent
Cheney School District, 12414 S. Andrus Rd.
Cheney, WA 99004 Phone: (509) 559-4550

Section 504 Coordinator
Franklin Day, Director, Student Support Services
Cheney School District, 12414 S. Andrus Rd.
Cheney, WA 99004 Phone: (509) 559-4507

Requests for Disclosure of Public Records
Helen Page, Public Records Officer
Cheney School District, 12414 S. Andrus Rd.,
Cheney, WA 99004 Phone: (509) 559-4502