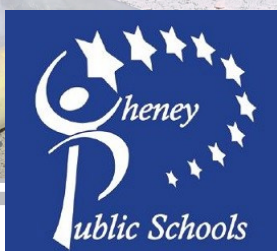


COMMUNITY *Connections*

NEWS OF CHENEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS



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

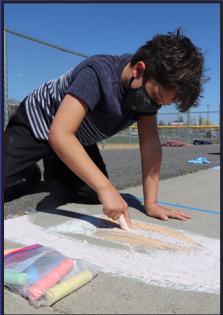
LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT



Rob Roettger
Superintendent
rroettger@cheneysd.org

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ON THE COVER:

A Betz Elementary School student is hard at work on a chalk masterpiece displayed in front of the school.

Community Members,

Although the previous eighteen months have presented many challenges to our school district and system, we have been able to weather the storm and meet the academic and social and emotional needs of our students and families as a result of the amazing staff members in Cheney Public Schools and the outstanding community support we receive. I want to publicly thank our staff members for their willingness to do whatever it takes to support our students and keep our system running as smoothly as possible (at all times and especially during the pandemic). And, on behalf of our entire system, I want to thank our community for consistently supporting our district and the children and families we serve. **THANK YOU!**

As a system, we are focused on achieving the mission (values and goals) of our school district while still facing many challenges due to the ongoing pandemic. Our mission is -- *Cheney Public Schools exists to guarantee a safe and caring environment where ALL students learn at high levels and graduate with options for post-secondary education, careers, and civic engagement.*

In order to achieve our mission and goals, we have engaged in the creation of a system-wide professional learning community (PLC) where grade level and content specific teams of educators focus on four critical questions. The four critical questions that guide the work of a PLC are:

- 1) What do we want students to know and be able to do? (Standards)
- 2) How will we know if they have learned it? (Assessment)
- 3) How do we provide intervention when

students have not reached mastery on the standard or target? (Intervention)

4) How do we extend the curriculum when students have mastered the standard or target? (Extension)

As a school district we began the 2021-2022 school year by reaffirming our commitment to a true PLC process. In support of this critical work staff members participated in virtual professional learning events in August. In addition, we started the year with building level teams working through the PLC cycle by engaging in a fifteen-day challenge related to a specific unit of study, including identifying essential standards, creating assessments, and providing on-time intervention opportunities to students. As part of our ongoing support for this important work, our district is participating in a three-year PLC initiative with eighteen districts from across the state. Together, from the Board room to the classroom we are focused and pulling in the same direction as we strive to reach our goals and meet the unique learning and social-emotional needs of each and every child.

In closing, I am honored to have the opportunity to serve our community as superintendent of Cheney Public Schools and would be happy to share additional information about our district with anyone. Thus, if you have specific questions about our professional learning community work, or any aspect of our school system, please email me at rroettger@cheneysd.org or call my office at 509-559-4502.

US/WE/TOGETHER

Rob Roettger

Superintendent, Cheney Public Schools

Robert W. Roettger



Mitch Swenson
School Board President
District 5



Henry Browne
School Board Vice-President
District 3



Suzanne Dolle
School Board Member
District 2



Marcie Estrellado
School Board Member
District 1



Stacy Nicol
School Board Member
District 4

MISSION STATEMENT:

Cheney Public Schools exists to guarantee a safe and caring environment where ALL students learn at high levels and graduate with options for post-secondary education, careers, and civic engagement.



NEWS: Bridging the gap

Big things have been happening in Cheney Public Schools, and one of them is a new approach to helping students learn important concepts. This year, Cheney schools have designed schedules that give students improved access to three things:

1. Tier 1 core instruction on priority standards.

2. Tier 2 intervention on essential standards when students need additional time and support to master those standards.

3. Tier 3 deeper intervention on universal skills in math and language arts.

Interventionists across the district have also been hired to support Tier 3 interventions for K-8 students who need extra support learning critical foundational skills in math and language arts.

At Westwood Middle School, it's called Pride Time. At Cheney Middle School, it's Talon Time. Regardless of the name, those periods are time set aside to hone in on students' social, emotional, and academic learning.

Two days per week, the focus of that time is social and emotional learning through new curriculum known as CharacterStrong. Students might get help with stress or anxiety, and get the opportunity to talk about mental health and managing emotions. (For more information on CharacterStrong, check out pg. 4). Three days a week are reserved for academic learning, where students can get extra help mastering need-to-know skills, primarily in language arts and math. Social and emotional learning needs are addressed first, then academic needs, Westwood Principal Erika Burden said.

This process begins with giving students weekly short assignments known



Students practiced multiplying decimals and multi-digit numbers in a more personalized setting during Pride Time at Westwood Middle School.

as "common formative assessments". These assessments offer an opportunity to gauge how well the student has grasped new material without waiting until the end of the unit to discover that a student is missing concepts. Based on that, students are able to attend personalized class periods where they can receive enrichment or intervention.

If a student fully understands the material, they may attend an enrichment class to deepen their understanding. Other opportunities are available for students who have learned the concept well but just need a little more practice perfecting their skills. Meanwhile, intervention is available for students who may be struggling to digest the new information.

Intervention classes are typically small, with fewer than 10 students and at least two teachers, to ensure students are getting the one-on-one learning time that they need to master necessary material. That information is then en-



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Are you a major sports fan? Do you have children in multiple sports? A new all-access pass to the Greater Spokane League is now available, and it includes admission to regular season events at all sixteen GSL schools for football, volleyball, boys & girls basketball, gymnastics and wrestling - an over \$250 value. A GSL Sports Pass also allows your children younger than high school age to enter with you for free!

Sports Pass advantages include:

- Eliminate standing in line or finding cash each time you attend a GSL event.
- Save on walk-up pricing of \$7/adult and \$5/student per game.
- Your children under high school age attend FREE when accompanied by you, making game night an affordable family activity.

For pricing and more information, visit <https://bit.ly/GSLSportsPass>.

tered into complex spreadsheets that can show teachers trends and potential areas of improvement. The data collected also shows progress toward priority standards.

These methods are already making a difference in student achievement, teachers say, the culmination of countless hours of work by dedicated staff. According to one Westwood student, the new schedule has been extremely helpful for learning new information, frequently resulting in the phrase that's music to teachers' ears: "Oh! I get it now!"

Cheney Community Transitions Program

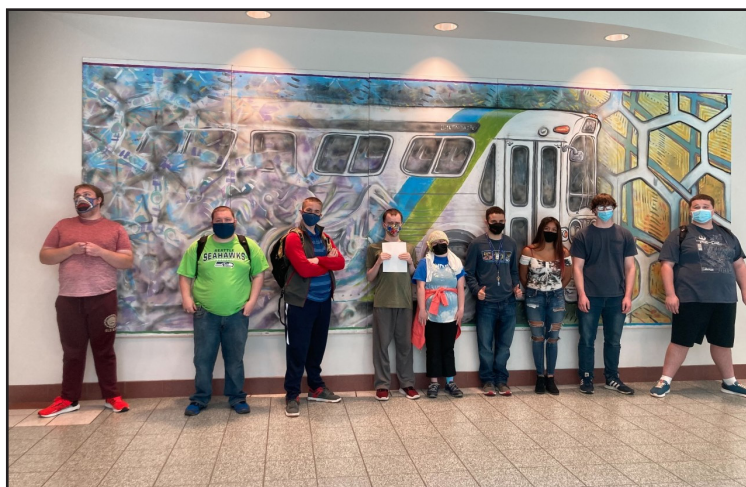
Cheney Public Schools Community Transitions Program prepares young adults with disabilities for life in the community after high school.

The Community Transitions Program started as CAPSTONE, which was part of Cheney High School. The program moved to the campus of Cheney Middle School in 2018 and was re-branded as the Community Transitions Program in 2021.

employment and community access needs of young adults with disabilities. Participants in the Community Transitions Program have completed their graduation pathway and have completed all of their high school credit requirements.

Community Transitions is focused on increasing work skills, independent living skills, and community inclusion. Community inclusion is the opportunity to live and exist as a contributing member of the community while being valued for one's abilities and uniqueness. The ultimate goal of community inclusion is the participation of people with disabilities across a range of areas, including employment and housing.

Young adults in the Community Transitions Program will learn community transportation skills with the Spokane Transit Authority and Paratransit. They will prepare meals, including shopping for and purchasing



As a part of the Community Transitions Program, young adults learn vital community transportation skills with Spokane Transit Authority.



Young adults learn valuable life skills with the goal of community inclusion.

The program is designed to provide specialized instruction to meet the unique

ingredients, for themselves and their peers. Additionally, they will learn about and visit community and leisure resources within Cheney and Airway Heights, as well as in the Spokane area.

Young adults participate for one to two years in the Community Transitions Program. These young adults are connected with the Developmental Disabilities Administration, Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, and other community-based employment services organizations.

In September, the young adults in Community Transitions attended a community leisure activity at the Spokane County Interstate Fair. These young adults also visited the PACE program at Spokane Falls Community College, a community resource. For the last community experience in September, program participants visited the Spokane Transit Authority to learn about the community resources available for transportation, including transportation training and paratransit.

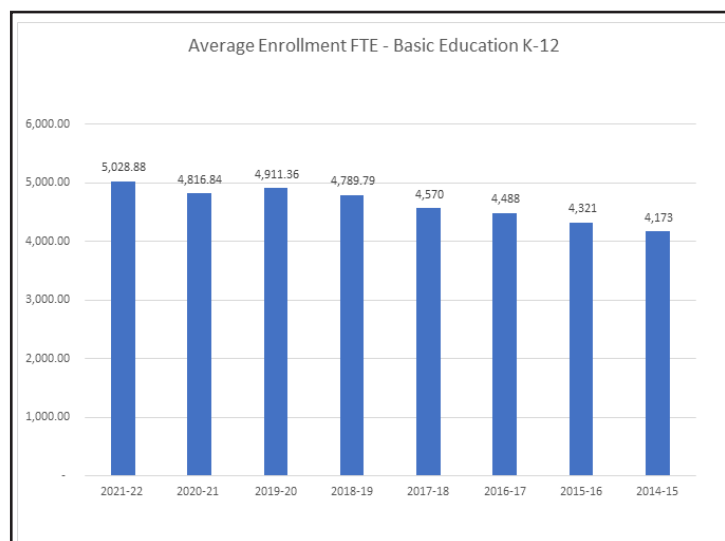
CharacterStrong Curriculum Comes to Cheney!

"Social and emotional learning has always been important," Teaching and Learning Assistant Director of Social and Emotional Learning Kim Lefler said. "But recent history has reminded us how foundational it is to every student and educator." With that in mind, secondary schools in Cheney Public Schools are implementing a new curriculum to be taught during advisory; a program known as CharacterStrong. CharacterStrong features once a week lessons, each about 30 minutes long, that focus on student belonging, well-being, and engagement – three outcomes that studies show to be powerful drivers of academic achievement, school behavior, and long-term positive student outcomes. Lesson examples might include discussions of goals and habits that can help achieve them, leadership and teamwork exercises, and emotional understanding and regulation practices. Each lesson starts with a welcome, a community activity, the main content of the lesson, character development, and a closure activity. One of the greatest strengths of the CharacterStrong curriculum is the relationships it builds between students and peers, students and school staff, students and family, and students and the greater community, and we can't wait to see its meaningful impacts at Cheney Public Schools!

Enrollment Continues to Climb

Cheney Public Schools has experienced a relatively steady climb in enrollment for several years, and this year was no exception. District-wide, enrollment now sits at about 5,028 full-time students in grades K-12, about 212 more full-time students than were enrolled during the 2020-2021 school year.

According to the 2020 Cheney, Airway Heights, and West Plains demographic studies, this trend will likely continue, with estimates placing nearly 7,800 students by the year 2030.



Capital Projects Underway

Recently collected levy funds have provided for essential safety and security improvements, technology needs, and building repairs and maintenance that contribute to a quality education for our students.

Of the \$4.27 million collected in 2020-2021, approximately \$1.6 million has been spent on student and staff technology needs and improved clock and intercom systems across all buildings in the district, with an additional \$500,000 allocated to additional technology needs as we started the school year. Approximately \$200,000 was spent on additional fleet vehicles, many with snow plow capabilities. \$1.7 million is set aside for property purchases for potential future school sites. The district continues to work closely with its realtor on sites both in Airway Heights and on the West Plains in an effort to plan for future growth.

Technology Assistance Available

Many Cheney Public Schools families may be eligible for reduced price internet or assistance purchasing a device! The Emergency Broadband Benefit Program is offering temporary discounts for qualifying households - up to \$75 off your next broadband bill and a one-time discount of up to \$100 for a laptop, tablet, or desktop computer. For more information, please visit: <https://www.getemergencybroadband.org>



Adam Smith
CTE Director

The Cheney Career and Technical Education (CTE) department has a mission of teaching our students skills for high demand careers. With an estimated 1,000 job openings per year in the Spokane region for the next five (5) years, construction trades continue to be a high demand career in our area. Baseline skills for construction trades continues to be carpentry and learning how to use hand and power tools.

The Cheney CTE dedication to teaching the construction trades starts early as both Cheney Middle School and Westwood Middle School have committed to offering construction classes where students learn how to measure and cut, how to use power tools and hand tools, and how to build to blueprint specifications. The skills and exposure students are receiving at our middle schools have led to a higher demand in our high school programs as students learn about all the different careers and jobs available in the construction trades.

With the full reopening of the high school this year, we now have a full-time woods teacher who is teaching more than sixty (60) students per semester construction skills and trades. Our high school program has adopted the Northwest Carpentry union's curriculum to streamline the process between the classroom and apprenticeships with the union. This curriculum is nationally affiliated with carpentry unions across the United States and will ensure the skills learned in our classes at Cheney are transferable and recognized wherever a student pursues a career in carpentry.

Cheney Public Schools CTE is proud to offer these introductory construction skills to our students and will be continuing to build more opportunities like these for students in the future.

Superstars: Celebrating our health staff!

Step into the Cheney High School health room and you'll notice one thing immediately -- the phone never stops ringing. It's not just phone calls, either; there is a consistent stream of students and adults seeking assistance that at times seems never-ending.

If there's ever been a time that highlighted the invaluable contributions of school nurses and health aids, it has been the last 18 months. Cheney Public Schools staff has worked tirelessly -- over weekends, evenings, and holidays -- to get and keep students back in school buildings and to keep them safe, and school nurses have played a vital role in these herculean efforts.

School nurses, who are often the only

licensed healthcare professionals in a school, have risen to the challenge of the last year and taken on new and different responsibilities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"In non-Covid times they're in charge of the day-to-day health and safety of our students," Assistant Superintendent Tom Arlt said. "Now with Covid there's testing and contact tracing, and so many other responsibilities."

In Cheney, nurses have led collaboration with public health experts and encouraged adherence to federal, state, and regional guidelines even when these discussions were challenging. They have been and continue to be in charge of symptom screening, contact tracing, isolation and quarantine procedures, and more, as well as the daily bumps, bruises, and colds that come with maintaining the health and safety of Cheney students.

Health staff have performed more than 2,000 rapid Covid-19 tests in the last three weeks, and not just on students.

"We have parents that call and say, 'I can't find a test anywhere and I have to get back to work,'" District Nurse Allison Hahn said. "It's hard, but being able



Cheney's health staff administer hundreds of Covid-19 tests to the community each week.

to offer these vital services to our community is so rewarding."

In light of this increased need, the district has added three full-time health aides that rotate district-wide based on student need, as well as four full-time nurses.

Nurses encourage families to call their child's health room if they have any questions at all about Covid guidance or any other non-Covid health concerns.

District Nurse Angela Brown said, "I just want families to know that we are definitely doing our absolute best."

Please join us in a profound "THANK YOU!" to all our nurses and health staff for their hard work, incredible dedication, and awe-inspiring commitment to our students and our district.



"Testing is one of the most important things we can offer this community, and one of the biggest assets in this pandemic," District Nurse Allison Hahn said.

"This is our community. This is who I want to be with and help create those healthy individuals for lifelong independence. Being able to provide the support and assistance that kids need...that's why I'm here."

District Nurse Angela Brown

"I continually say that I'd do it all for that one kind person. Just for one person to feel like we cared so much about their child. I do know that we will come out of this pandemic on the other side, and I have to continue doing what I love."

District Nurse Allison Hahn

"It's hard and we're exhausted, but because of the impact that we're making and the resources we can offer people, that supersedes all the hard work."

Health Aide Jessica Fuqua

Together, we uplift lives.

CHENEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Seeking substitutes in all areas...



- ...including teachers, custodians, bus drivers and aides, nutrition services, and paraeducators!
- Set your own schedule.
- Benefits eligible at 630 hours.
- Continue other work.
- Network and expand your skills.
- Earn \$15 - \$22/hr. dependent on position.
- Questions? Call Leigh Lubbers at 509-559-4542.

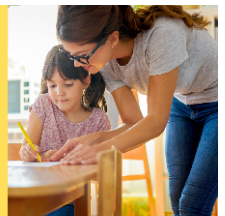
Visit bitly.cheneyhire to see all open positions and to apply!

Seeking Instructional Paraeducators!

- Positively impact the lives of students.
- Positions available across the district.
- Salary: \$15-\$20/hr. dependent on position and experience.
- Questions? Call Angela Moses at 509-559-4509.

Passionate about making a difference for students with additional needs? Consider becoming an IEP Support Instructional Paraeducator!

- Join a team doing meaningful and rewarding work.
- Work one on one with students.
- Build lasting relationships.



“Handle with Care” program protecting students

We all need a little extra kindness sometimes.

With that in mind, Cheney Public Schools is now involved in a new partnership -- one aimed at giving extra support to students who have experienced difficult or traumatic events.

The program is called “Handle with Care.” Within it, law enforcement officials that respond to incidents in the community are able to notify the district that the child may have had a tough night, and school staff are able to give that student additional encouragement and support.

“The goal is recognizing that sometimes a child may need some extra love and attention,” Teaching and Learning Assistant Director of Social and Emotional Learning Kim Lefler said. “Maybe a student is asleep on their desk because there was a fire at their house, and what they need is a snack and a nap, not to get in trouble.”

In the “Handle with Care” program, the nature of the law enforcement response is not divulged during the notification process, to ensure student and family privacy. Instead, when a child has been identified at the scene of a traumatic event, law enforcement will electronically notify designated administrators and counselors that a child needs to be “handled with care” as part of their routine reporting and documentation process. School staff are expected to han-

dle that child with extra care and not ask about the incident.

“Handling the child with extra care” means recognizing that the child is at an increased risk for emotional or behavioral changes due to the experience and trauma-informed practices should be utilized according to the school district’s comprehensive school counseling protocols.

This is an opt-out program, and if you do not want any information shared via this program, please notify your child’s school in writing. This written request can be placed on file with the district at any time during the school year.



A District 3 firefighter shows a Salnave second-grader how firefighters use a water hose as part of a hands-on lesson about fire safety.

STUDENT LIFE

CMS student among best fishermen in the nation

For Mason Bridges, no detail is too small to consider.

The Cheney Middle School eighth-grader now ranks among some of the best fishermen in the nation following hundreds of hours spent fishing from January 1 to August 15 of this year. He recently won the Washington state title for biggest 5-bass limit (tipping the scales at a whopping 20.83-pounds), and he can recount to you how he caught each and every one.

“It’s a lot of strategy,” he said. “What time of day is it? What’s the weather? The water temperature? The depth? What lures are you using, and why?”

These are questions Ma-

son is going to be asking himself as he joins 53 other fishers in the Big Bass Zone Junior Championship World Finals in Branson, MO, in late October. Though it will be one of the first times Mason fishes out of state, somehow the 6,000-mile, 54-hour journey is the least daunting aspect of the trip.

At 14 years old, Mason squeaks into the 13-19 age bracket by a year.

“I’ll be going up against people way older than me with their own boats and trucks,” Bridges said. “It’s pretty nerve-wracking, but I’m going to give it a shot.”

It’s certainly worth that shot, with more than

\$300,000 in prizes up for grabs. That includes a \$35,000 Bass Cat fishing boat, \$30,000 scholarships, \$20,000 in cash, and fishing trips to Mexico.

Mason started fishing with his dad and cousins at a young age, and the passion is a family affair. After one of his first tournaments, Mason says he was hooked – pun intended.

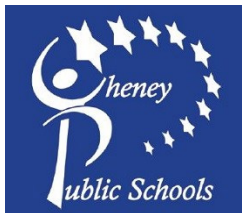
As for the aspiring anglers out there, Mason has one piece of advice. “Be confident in yourself,” he said. “If you’re not catching anything, don’t put yourself down. It might be a bad day, but it’ll be better next week.”

No matter what the out-



Mason’s most memorable catch this year was a bass off the side of a kayak!

come of the Finals turns out to be, Mason’s classmates, school district, and greater Cheney community will be rooting for him -- us, we, together!



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Student Supports: Preschool Partnership



Cheney Public Schools is delighted to announce our expanded partnership with the Community Colleges of Spokane in offering Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) in every elementary building beginning September 2021. Our Inclusionary Preschool students are taught by certificated teachers and supported by paraeducators alongside other designated support staff. Students participate in engaging units of study designed by preschool teachers using Creative Curriculum and Teaching Strategies Gold, which connect teachers, children, and families to engaging learning experiences, informative data, and stronger partnerships. If you are interested in learning more about our preschool programs, information is located on our district website at www.cheneysd.org under Student Support Services, or you can call 509-559-4507.

Important Dates

- **November 11**
 ● Veteran's Day Holiday -- No School
- **November 17**
 ● School Board Meeting, 6 p.m.,
 ● Cheney High School
- **November 22-23**
 ● Parent/Teacher Conferences -- No Students
- **November 24-26**
 ● Thanksgiving Holiday -- No School
- **December 1**
 ● School Board Meeting, 6 p.m.,
 ● Sunset Elementary School
- **December 15**
 ● School Board Meeting, 6:30 p.m.,
 ● District Conference Center
- **December 20-31**
 ● Winter Break -- No School

● 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
 ● Tom Arlt, Assistant Superintendent
 ● Cheney School District, 12414 S. Andrus Rd.
 ● Cheney, WA 99004 Phone: (509) 559-4550
 ● Email: tarlt@cheneysd.org

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

● 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
 ● Email: hpage@cheneysd.org



Cheney Public Schools
 CHS Blackhawks



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 Please visit
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 for more
 information.