



# Community Connections

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

## Important dates:

**Feb. 15**  
Presidents' Day —  
No school

**Feb. 24**  
School Board Meeting  
Zoom, 6:00 p.m.

**March 1**  
Kindergarten  
registration begins

**March 10**  
School Board Meeting  
Zoom, 6:00 p.m.

**March 11 –12**  
Parent-Teacher  
Conferences

**March 25**  
School Board Meeting  
Zoom, 6:00 p.m.

Parents, Guardians, and Community Members,

In addition to my role as Superintendent of Cheney Public Schools I am also a proud community member and a parent of five children. I consider myself very fortunate to live and help educate children in a district that has such amazing community support. One way our communities support our district is through levies that provide a significant portion of the operating budget and provide for capital improvements. Recently, voters in Airway Heights, Cheney, and the West Plains were asked to consider three-year replacement Educational Programs and Operation (EP&O) and Capital Projects Levies for collection in 2022, 2023, and 2024. As of today, both measures are passing with the EP&O levy approval rate at 56.2% and the Capital levy at 58.8%. The financial support of our communities is critical to the success of our students and something we are extremely grateful for and it is something we will never take for granted. Thank you, voters and community members for your continued support!

Even though we are in the midst of a pandemic, the mission of our school district remains the same. Things might look different because of our circumstances, but we are continuously striving to achieve our goals. A primary goal of Cheney Public Schools is preparing students for graduation and ensuring they have options following high school. Our five-year strategic plan established a goal of increasing graduation rates to 95% by 2022 (from 82.3% in 2016). Over the course of the past three years significant progress has been made toward achieving this goal as district-wide graduation rates have increased annually from 84.5% in 2018, and 86.4% in 2019, to 91.5% in 2020. It is exciting to see graduation rates climb as this means more students are prepared for life after high school. To achieve improved graduation rates staff members have worked diligently across our entire system to identify essential skills and standards for each grade level and content area, assess student learning of standards, and strive to provide intervention and extension opportunities for students (this is the work of Professional Learning Communities, or PLCs). While the pandemic has impacted our PLC progress, the foundation of our collaborative focus is set, and it is the driver behind the way we do business in Cheney Public Schools. Achieving a graduation rate of 95% will be an outstanding accomplishment yet we will not rest there. Rather, we will continue to identify ways to meet the needs of every child so that we can ensure each student graduates with options for post-secondary education, careers, and civic engagement. In Cheney Public Schools, All means All!

The past eleven months have been stressful and difficult for many families, the community, and our school system. I know the changes associated with the reopening of our schools have created additional challenges for many families as well. However, while not what we would consider "normal", it is exciting to see our students on campus as K-3 is back fully five days per week, 4-5 is back in a hybrid model, and grades 6-12 began a slow hybrid phase in this week. I often ask for patience and grace as we work through reopening our schools and the many changes we have implemented due to the pandemic. Our goal as a system is to provide this same grace to our students and families as we understand many of the challenges that exist at this time.

In closing I want to thank our students, families, community, and staff members for your grit, determination and ability to persevere through the past eleven months. While I do not believe we have reached the end of the COVID-19 journey yet, I know that together we will continue to overcome every obstacle and chart the best course forward for our school district. THANK YOU!

*Robert W. Ruetzger*

## Our essential foundations

- ★ High Expectations and Continuous Progress
- ★ Involvement and Engagement with School District Community
- ★ Stewardship and Planning

Follow Cheney Public Schools on:

Instagram  Facebook  and Twitter 

or go to [www.cheneysd.org](http://www.cheneysd.org) for current news and information.



Character Trait for February

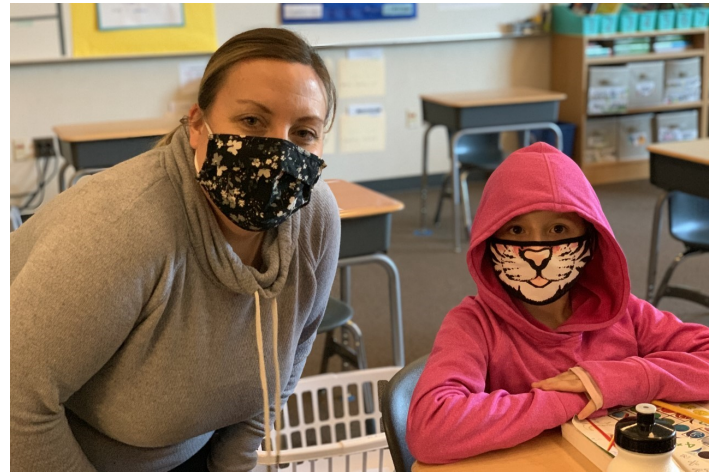
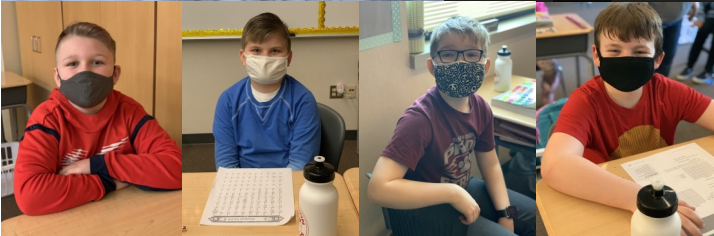
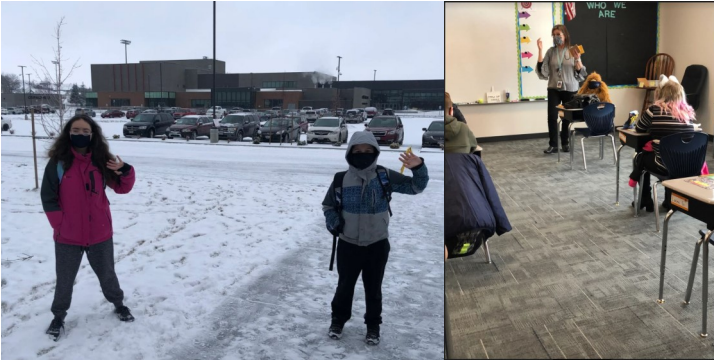
**HONESTY**

Sincerity and reverence or love for the truth.

February, 2021

## Intermediate Students In-Person

In recent weeks we've been able to welcome back some of our intermediate students, and a little bit of snow didn't dampen their spirits! Thank you to our community and to our students, staff and families for making this possible!



### **Bus Drivers Needed**

We're looking for bus drivers! Interested? Applicants must be at least 22 years of age and have carried a valid drivers license for 5 years. Call our Transportation Department for more information.

**(509) 559-4523**

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  
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