



Community Connections

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

Important dates:

July 24

Cheney Public Schools
Teaching & Learning
Conference Room
Board Work Session
5:30 p.m.

July 31

Cheney Middle School
School Board Meeting
5:30 p.m.

August 6

Elementary and Middle
School New Student
Registration at school
sites

August 14

Sunset Elementary
School Board Meeting
5:30 p.m.

August 20

New Student Registra-
tion continues at all
school sites

September 4

First day of school

Parents, Guardians and Community Members,

It is a busy time across the district as construction projects wrap up at Sunset and Windsor elementary schools, and we enter phase two of expansion and renovations at Cheney High School. In addition to our capital projects, we have been busy analyzing growth in our region and planning for ways to meet the needs of our growing district.

This spring our district contracted with Davis Demographics to assist in analyzing and predicting growth within our school district boundaries. We have received their draft report (including enrollment projections) and will have a final report by the end of the month. Davis Demographics will share their findings with our Board of Directors on July 31st and then the final report will be posted to our website for the community to view.

In addition to addressing the growing enrollment of our district through capital projects, and our work with a demographer, the district has actively engaged with a realtor in search of available property for future school sites. Currently, the district has approximately \$1,000,000 in the capital projects budget for property purchases. These funds are from the sale of the Fisher Building (\$686,000) and the \$250,000 earmarked for property acquisition in the 2017 bond.

When searching for property for future school sites there are many considerations. For example, flight zone requirements related to the airport and Fairchild Airforce Base, access to utilities, whether the property is currently in the UGA (urban growth area), and a variety of other factors. In addition, the amount of property needed depends on the type of school to be built; elementary school sites require 10-12 acres, middle schools 25-30 acres, and high schools 40+ acres (including athletic fields, parking, etc.).

Property prices in the region also vary depending on a multitude of factors (location, access to utilities, whether the property is within the UGA, etc.). As an example, prices can range from \$1.00 per square foot (\$43,560 per acre) to \$2.50 per square foot (\$108,900 per acre) and higher. Using these estimates, an elementary site alone can range from \$435,600 to \$1,089,000.

It is my belief that our region and district are destined for significant growth (not a matter of if but when). I also believe that in order to plan for increases in enrollment we must acquire property for future school sites. Consequently, as a district we have been working on the possibility of a short-term capital levy which would provide the financial support for property acquisition. To continue the planning process there will be a School Board work session on July 24th and then the Board will consider a capital levy resolution on July 31st. As we continue to analyze growth projections and the need for additional school sites (including a capital levy) further information will be shared with the community. As always, please contact me at 509-559-4502 or roettger@cheneysd.org if you have any questions about our work to address growth projections or any other aspect of our school system.



Enjoy the rest of summer!

Robert W. Roettger

Robert W. Roettger, Superintendent

Our essential foundations

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

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Character Trait for July

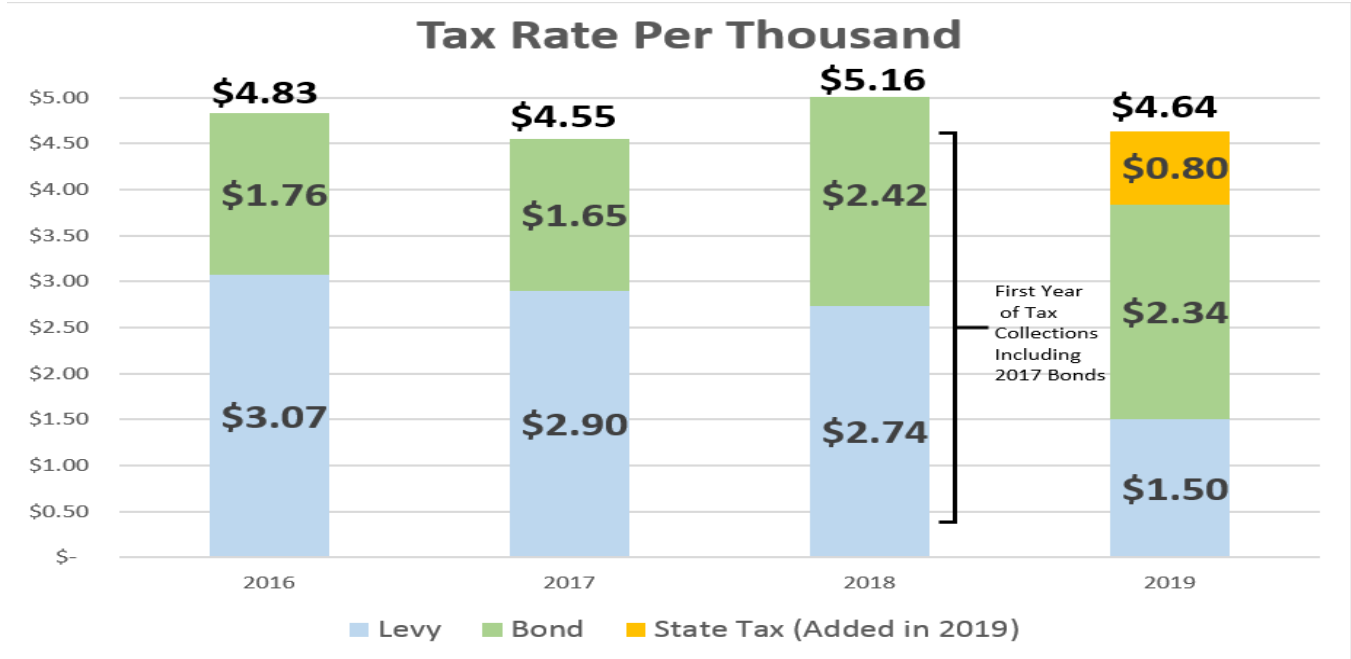
GENEROSITY

Unselfish giving and sharing of resources,
time and talents with others

Levy Structure Changes and General Levy Information

In recent years the State Legislature has made several changes to the school district levy structure. As mentioned in the May newsletter, the district is providing a summary of these changes and the impacts on tax collection in the district.

Prior to 2019 tax collections, the Washington Legislature set the levy lid as a percentage of each district's basic education allocation funding (28% in Cheney Public Schools and \$2.74 per \$1,000 of assessed value in 2018). For 2019 tax collections, the Legislature set the levy lid at an amount equal to the lesser of (i) \$2,500 per pupil or (ii) \$1.50 per \$1,000 of assessed value. Following these changes the district's Educational Programs and Operations Levy, or EPO (formerly Maintenance and Operations, or M&O) was approved at \$1.50 per \$1,000 of assessed value. An additional state tax was added to help offset the funding reduction due to the new levy lid, \$0.80 in Spokane County. For 2020 tax collections, the Legislature has reset the levy lid under ESSB 5313 to an amount equal to the lesser of (i) \$2,500 per pupil (\$3,000 for districts with 40,000+ students) or (ii) \$2.50 per \$1,000 assessed value. Although the Legislature provided school districts with additional levy authority, the Cheney Public Schools EPO Levy will remain at the \$1.50 rate in 2020.



The following is a summary of the district's tax rates for the past four years. If you have any questions about changes to the levy structure or district tax rates, please contact Finance Director Jamie Weingart at (509) 559-4501 or Superintendent Rob Roettger at (509-559-4500).

2016: The district's total tax rate was \$4.83 per \$1,000 of assessed value including \$3.07 in a M & O Levy and \$1.76 in Bonds.

2017: The district's total tax rate was \$4.55 per \$1,000 of assessed value, including \$2.90 in a M & O Levy and \$1.65 in Bonds. In February 2017 a bond was passed to provide safety and security upgrades and expansion and renovation to several schools in the district (Betz, Salnave, Sunset, Windsor, and Cheney High School). At the time, the estimated total tax rate for 2018 (including M & O, previous bonds, and the 2017 bond) was \$5.42 per 1,000 of assessed value.

2018: First year of tax collections on the 2017 Bonds. The district's total tax rate was \$5.16 per \$1,000 of assessed value, including \$2.74 in a M & O Levy and \$2.42 in Bonds. Total tax rates were \$0.26 below initial estimated collection rates.

2019: Under the new levy formula, the total voter approved tax rate is \$3.84 per \$1,000 of assessed value with \$1.50 in EPO Levy and \$2.34 in Bonds. When including the additional 2019 state tax, the total tax rate is \$4.64 per \$1,000 of assessed value.

Special Tax Exemption for Senior or Disabled Citizens:

If you are at least 61 years old or disabled, you may be eligible for the Washington State property tax exemption program (dor.wa.gov). For information about your status, call the Spokane County Assessor's Office at 509-477-3698 or Whitman County Assessor's Office at 509-397-6220.

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