



## It's more than just buildings; Technology in Cheney Schools

As Cheney Public Schools has grown in recent years, the most visible sign of progress has been the construction of three new school buildings.

Less visible, but equally important, however, has been a concerted effort to upgrade technology capabilities within all school buildings.

The process began in earnest seven years ago when voters approved a capital levy providing a top-to-bottom technology update. Subsequent grants and additional district resources have continued the momentum.

Upgrades have included a stronger technology backbone providing more bandwidth and equipment, a larger wireless network and new technology courses.

The Washington K-20 network, a statewide video conferencing system, also has become a district staple. The network allows member districts to conduct virtual field trips and research with students and staff at nearly 500 sites, including universities and libraries, across the state.

Overall, the district's efforts have been deliberate and methodical, following a long-range planning schedule.

While many technologies are common across the district, schools also have the flexibility to be creative; to select the tools that best meet local need. This document highlights just a few of the many ways technology enhances student learning in every district school.



*Sunset teacher Joy Adams assists a first-grader working math problems on a tablet PC.*

## Elementary schools

Sunset Elementary first-grade teacher Joy Adams embraces technology. Resources at her disposal include seven computers, four netbooks, four tablet PCs, 3 iPads and a Mobi interactive whiteboard that allows her to write on a screen from anywhere in the room.

“For the teacher, technology makes us more efficient, as we don't have to build as many things from scratch,” says Adams. “And for the student, the benefit is that learning is more interesting.”

Student outcomes in her class also suggest technology is highly effective. In the most recent round of standardized testing, every student in her class (19) recorded gains in reading and math ranging from 6-27 percent. Test scores, she says, have followed the increase in technology.

Throughout the building, students use iPads for a host of functions including math and reading assignments and library catalog searches. Librarian Beth Toulou also uses



*At Salnave Elementary, students work in teams, using presentation rubrics to evaluate classmates' work.*

electronic response devices, or “clickers,” to instantly chart student comprehension.

At Salnave Elementary, students deliver morning announcements through an in-house TV broadcast, Hawks News. Students handle all on-camera “anchor” duties and behind-the-scenes technical functions.

Down the hall, in the multi-age classroom of teachers Celina Brennan and Ann Ottmar, mini-iPads assist with reading and math instruction, research and video book reports delivered in the form of movie trailers. Text and sound playback allow teachers to not just see completed work, but also hear students orally articulate their evidence of learning.

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Title IX/Chapter 28A.640 Officer/ADA Coordinator  
Sean Dotson, Associate Superintendent  
Cheney School District, 12414 S. Andrus Rd.  
Cheney, WA 99004 Phone: (509) 559-4550

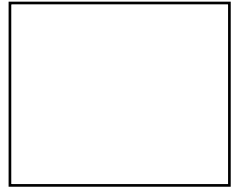
Section 504 Coordinator  
Kristi Thurston, Director, Student Support Services  
Cheney School District, 12414 S. Andrus Rd.  
Cheney, WA 99004 Phone: (509) 559-4507

Requests for Disclosure of Public Records  
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Cheney School District, 520 Fourth Street  
Cheney, WA 99004 Phone: (509) 559-4502



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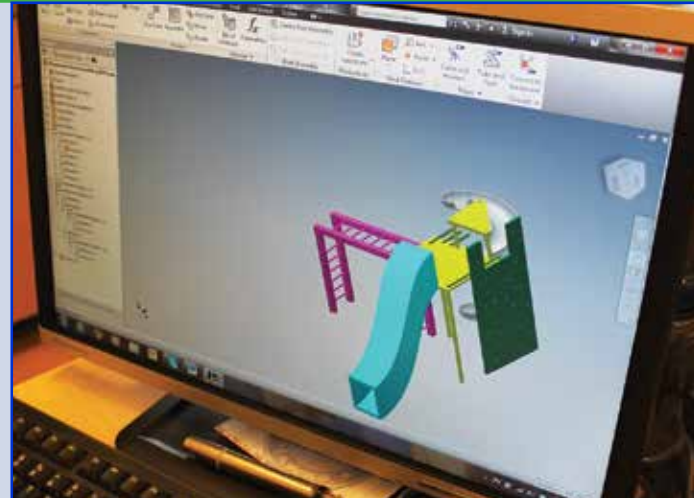
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### Middle schools

No retrofitting was required here. Cheney and Westwood middle schools, which opened their doors in 2012, were designed and built for technology. They are two of the state's most technically advanced schools, with state-of-the-art amenities that include iPads, Computers on Wheels, advanced robotics programs and sophisticated computer-aided design software.

Robotics classes include the production of land and water vehicles built for competition.

The schools, which are identical in size and design, contain smart boards (interactive touch systems involving a computer, projector and screen) in every classroom, and hallway video monitors to keep students apprised of school announcements.



*The drawing board: Middle school students use professional engineering software to design products before they're built.*

### High school

Teacher Adam Smith's classroom may look like a computer lab, but it might be more accurately described as a launching pad – for ideas and innovation. High school students can earn 63 college credits through a dozen courses in Web design, computer applications, accounting and Cisco networking.

Advanced Placement Computer Science was added to the roster this year, providing yet another dimension of learning focused on programming logic, app development and more.

Smith's students don't just learn – they also compete and compete very well, as evidenced by literally dozens of regional, state and national awards from the Future Business Leaders of America.

In the most recent regional event drawing more than 500 students from 20 schools, Cheney students captured 15 first-place and 16 second-place awards in 85 events.



*Software skills lead to hardware bonanza: Three of the 15 first-place awards won by Cheney High School students in the 2014 regional FBLA competition.*

“Technology literacy is absolutely vital to classroom and career success. We need to meld facilities and programs into a seamless package that gives our students the tools they need to be competitive long after they leave our system. At the same time, we need to be prudent stewards of taxpayer dollars – to invest for the long-term by making wise purchases that have the most impact.”

– Dr. Debra Clemens, Superintendent



**Building our children's future**