

COMMUNITY *Connections*

News of Cheney Public Schools



For our children, our world, our future

LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Parents, Guardians, Staff, and Community Members,



Ben Ferney, Ed.D.
Superintendent
bferney@cheneysd.org

IMPORTANT DATES

March 12

School Board Meeting – 3:30 PM
Cheney Middle School

March 13

Conferences – No School

March 14

Conferences – No School

March 17

Emergency Make-Up Day

March 26

School Board Meeting – 6:00 PM
Sunset Elementary School



On the Cover:
CMS science teacher Mrs. Parrish assists a student during her 6th-grade Veterinary Science class.

Over the past month, there have been several national developments that could affect Cheney Public Schools. As federal policies shift, we continue to follow Washington state law while meeting federal requirements. When these laws do not fully align, we work with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and legal counsel to follow policies in a responsible and lawful way. Our focus remains on serving all students while keeping communication open as we navigate these changes together.

It is hard to believe a month of the second semester has already passed. The collaboration between students and staff continues to stand out! A great example was the February 7 Professional Learning Day (PLD). Students from elementary, middle, and high schools were invited to attend and shared valuable insights on their learning experiences. As part of the Strategic Plan's focus on Student Learning and Growth, students will remain involved in district PLDs. Their firsthand perspective is essential in shaping meaningful learning opportunities.

Work continues on the Strategic Plan, along with the development of the District's Portrait of a Graduate and Profile of a Learner. To gather feedback on the first year of the plan, a district-wide survey was shared through ParentSquare and social media. Dr. Kelly Niccolls, Director of Teaching & Learning, presented the results and provided updates on the POG/POL work at the February 12 board meeting. She is leading a committee of school board members, students, and parents to shape a clear vision of the skills and qualities students need for success. Updates on this important work will continue.

Projects related to the \$72 million bond approved by our community in November are beginning to take shape. Last month, we opened applications for the Bond Advisory Team—a group dedicated to ensuring clear communication, responsible use of funds, and alignment with the District's capital improvement goals. Nearly 20 individuals stepped forward to volunteer, including students, parents, staff members, a board member, and an administrator.

The team held its first meeting on February 10, where members reviewed the charter, gained insight into the bond process from our program managers at Turner & Townsend Heery, and discussed bond communications from multiple perspectives. We are incredibly grateful for this dedicated group, who will continue meeting monthly to support the bond process.

We are Cheney Public Schools!

Take care,

Ben Ferney, Ed.D | Superintendent



Mark Scott
School Board President
District 1



Liz Winer
School Board Member
District 2



Henry Browne
School Board Vice President
District 3



Bill Hanson
School Board Member
District 4



Mitch Swenson
School Board Member
District 5

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.



Cheney High School's Blossoming Floriculture Team

Cheney's Future Farmers of America (FFA) agricultural education program has expanded and now includes a floriculture team.

Per the Washington FFA Association website, "Participants in the Floriculture Career Development Event (CDE) gain real-world knowledge of all aspects of the industry relevant to production and retail of flowers, plants, and foliage. Students must identify plants, make pertinent decisions in solving day-to-day problems that occur in any part of the business and complete an exam that tests their general knowledge."

The Floriculture CDE Handbook is robust, over 40 pages long with extensive scoring rubrics covering everything from floral arrangements, propagation, potting, and making a corsage.

Cheney's floriculture team is flourishing in

its first year with seven active members and an increasing interest in the program. To qualify for the team, students must take a flower arranging class at Cheney High School. Agriculture teacher and FFA advisor Heather Nelson used to teach every section of the class, but due to high demand, fellow CHS teacher Allen Skoog has taken on a period as well.

The floriculture team attended its first-ever contest on Feb. 1 in Yakima, participating in practicums, general knowledge tests, problem solving, a team activity, and plant ID tests. In their second competition Feb. 22 at Lind-Ritzville High School, the team finished in eighth place.

This crew of seven CHS students continues to grow in their knowledge of floriculture. To stay up-to-date on all things FFA, check out the Cheney FFA Facebook page [here](#), or visit <https://www.facebook.com/ffa.cheney>.



Bus Registration Transitions to Fully Online

As a reminder, District bus registration is transitioning from a paper-based process to a fully-online system. All bus registration will now be completed online through Transact, the same system district parents and guardians use to view bus schedules and routing information.

This registration change will only impact families who: Need to register a new student(s), have a change of address, or change schools (e.g. moving from elementary to middle school or middle to high school). Families with currently registered students who are not experiencing any of the above do not need to take any action.

For step-by-step instructions on how to create an account with Transact (if you do not already have one), and to register your student(s), please visit the district website or [click here](#).

HomeWorks! Living Museum Celebration

Students at HomeWorks! brought historical persons and characters to life as part of the program's Living Museum project. Students researched their person or character, learning all about their life and accomplishments. Then, they brought the person or character to life, creating a presentation complete with costumes, props, and dialogue as well as taking on their chosen individual's persona.



On February 21, family, friends, and community members were invited to the Living Museum celebration where students presented what they learned. With the push of a 'button', the person or character came to life and described their life in detail, as well as answered questions posed from the audience.

To see more photos from the event, [click here](#).





District Snapshots



A Cheney High School student adjusts a vase during a flower arranging class.



This student in Ms. Johnson's 5th grade class at Betz worked on setting their iReady math goal.



This CMS student shows their skills during a percussion concert.



This 4th grader in Mrs. Miller's class at Snowdon Elementary works independently on their iReady pathway.



Salhave students enjoy a brain break during recess!



4th grade educators at Sunset Elementary engage in a powerful conversation about re-evaluating the rubric for measuring reading comprehension of informational text in their weekly PLC.



This WIN Academy student measures the nitrate level of the water in the school's salmon fish tank.



Windsor Elementary 5th grade teacher Mrs. Foland helps her students with fractions.



These students in Mr. Wiley's 6th grade ELA class at Westwood Middle School learn about the structure of a personal narrative story.