

COMMUNITY *Connections*

News of Cheney Public Schools



For our children, our world, our future



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

IMPORTANT DATES

July 16 – July 27

Qmlativ Migration – no public access to Information Systems

July 28

Access to Qmlativ restored

August 20

School Board Meeting – 5:30 p.m.
Cheney High School

August 26

First day of School

August 29

First day of Kindergarten

September 1

Labor Day Holiday – No School

September 8

First day of Preschool



On the Cover:
A large excavator sits in front of Windsor Elementary during the bus loop construction on July 11, 2025.

LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Parents, Guardians, Staff, and Community Members,

It is amazing how fast summer flies. We start with full calendars and long to-do lists, and before we know it, July is nearly over. August is just around the corner, and our team is hard at work getting ready to welcome students back. The energy is building, and we are excited for a strong start to the school year.

Witnessing the work being done on bond projects throughout our district brings a smile to my face. Construction crews broke ground on the Salnave bus loop soon after school ended in mid-June, and week by week, we have witnessed progress on that project. New chillers have been installed at three of our elementary schools—Betz, Salnave, and Windsor—and the interior upgrades at both Sunset and Windsor are well underway. The upgrades at the Cheney High School stadium, a project that has been ongoing since mid-May, are amazing to see. A big thank you to our community for making these projects possible with the passage of the November 2024 bond package. I encourage you to follow along on our website [here](#), or on our Facebook page [here](#).

It has also been great to see the progress at Crunk's Complex, a project funded through capital levy dollars that were passed in February 2024. In case you missed it, Crunk's is becoming the designated home for Cheney High School boys and girls soccer. Designating Crunk's as the soccer complex is twofold: it provides a specific facility for soccer, with field maintenance specific to the sport, and it also reduces the use of playfields at CHS. In turn, this will provide the necessary time for the fields to 'rest' and grow properly. [This video](#) provides more information on the reasoning behind this transition. A big thank you to our maintenance and operations department for helping to maintain our fields throughout the summer season!

Our maintenance and operations department, along with business office staff, human resources department, transportation, information technology, nutrition services, building secretaries, and administrators, have been hard at work this summer preparing for the 2025-2026 school year. Summer is a great time for projects across the district, as any work being done in schools will not disrupt our students or our staff. A big thank you to each of these departments for your continued hard work and dedication to our district throughout the summer months.

Our district has begun its massive information system overhaul, transitioning from Skyward Student Management System (SMS) 2.0 to Qmlativ. Several districts across the region are undergoing the same transition as Skyward has become outdated and is no longer feasible to update. Qmlativ is the next iteration of Skyward SMS, offering a user-friendly design and easy-to-navigate interface. This move will provide enhanced functionality across all areas of our data management. This transition will continue through July 27, and you should expect to gain access on July 28. Thank you for your patience as we make this major technological upgrade! We are Cheney Public Schools!

Onward,

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.



DISTRICT UPDATES

Summer Food Service Program Offers Free Meals, New Recipes to Area Children



Area children enjoy lunch as part of the Summer Food Service Program at Sunset Elementary on June 26.

Through a Child Nutrition Program funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Cheney Public Schools' Nutrition Services department has been able to provide area children ages 1-18 free breakfast and lunch since June 23. The Summer Food Service Program, which runs Monday through Thursday and continues through July 31, is offered at three district schools: Cheney High School, Snowdon Elementary, and Sunset Elementary.

The program is free, and there is no registration or paperwork; children just have to show up to be eligible for a meal. Through the first three weeks of the program, there have been an average of 300 meals served per day between the three sites, providing up to two balanced and nutritious meals daily to hundreds of children across our district.

Nutrition Services has also tested a few new breakfast and lunch recipes as part of the Summer Food Service Program. This includes several new breakfast breads, like strawberry shortcake, and new lunch options like a chicken and cheese tamale and a Moroccan-style chicken curry.

"[Chef Klinkenberg] is having us look at and test to see if it's something we can do during the year," Sunset Elementary's Lead Kitchen Manager Rita Whittaker said on June 26 as part of an interview with the Airway Heights Police Department. "We've tried scratch-made apple cinnamon coffee cake, banana oatmeal bars, and strawberry bread this week alone."

As a reminder, breakfast is scheduled from 8-9 a.m. and lunch is scheduled from 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. at all three locations.



The chicken and cheese tamale recipe test at Snowdon Elementary on July 1.



The Moroccan-style chicken curry with brown rice pilaf recipe test at Sunset Elementary on July 15.



Sunset Elementary Lead Kitchen Manager Rita Whittaker interacts with a local child during the Free Summer Food Program on June 26.



This child grabs some fresh fruits and veggies from the colorful salad bar at Sunset Elementary on June 26.



Strawberry shortcake breakfast recipe test at Sunset Elementary on July 8.

DISTRICT UPDATES

Benefits Application: Action Needed From District Families

Cheney Public Schools operates under the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) for meal services, which means that all students in the district are eligible to receive free breakfast and lunch at school, regardless of their family's income.

Although meals are free for all students, families who believe they qualify for additional reduced fees are encouraged to complete the Benefit Application. Completing this important application helps our district keep important funding for educational programs. As well, students who qualify can receive additional benefits like Sun Bucks Summer EBT, waived extracurricular fees, community discounts, and many other benefits.

To qualify, families must complete both the

Benefit Application AND a Parental Consent Survey.

The 2025-2026 Benefit Application will open on August 1, 2025; the Parental Consent Survey also opens on August 1, 2025. Both applications will be available on the district website [here](#) on August 1.



Busing Registration Reminder

Families with an incoming freshman, an incoming sixth grader, or a student who is new to Cheney Public Schools will need to re-register their student(s) for bus transportation for the 2025-2026 school year. As students move from elementary to middle school or from middle to high school, their bus routes and schedules often change. Re-registering ensures they are assigned to the correct bus for their new school.

Bus registration is accessible online through [this link](#).

Please note, if your address has changed since the 2024-2025 school year, please notify your student(s) school of the address change so it can be updated in our transportation system.

Thank you for helping us provide safe and accurate transportation for all students.



Teaching and Learning Department Updates

New Team to Serve District Students

Our district Teaching and Learning team has undergone multiple transitions over the past three years; this includes reorganizing our team structure to better align with our strategic priorities. Director of Teaching and Learning Dr. Kelly Niccolls has been instrumental in the restructure, as well as the hiring of additional Teachers on Special Assignment (TOSAs).

With the new hires, the District's Teaching and Learning support includes dedicated Professional Learning Communities (PLC), Professional Development and Resource & Assessment leads who will be working closely with school teams in support of their school improvement goals.

Portrait of a Graduate/Profile of a Learner

The 2025-2026 school year will mark the first year of the Cheney Public Schools Profile of a Learner (POL) / Portrait of a Graduate (POG) guiding principles for all students to expand their evidence of learning to include key skills and

competencies. Portrait of a Learner relates to all K-5 students, while Portrait of a Graduate is for our 6-12 students.

Thank you to the community for your collaboration in developing the POL/POG. Cheney Public Schools is proud that district students will have robust portfolios of evidence throughout their K-12 experience in the district, and that they will graduate with an extended transcript.

Strategic Plan - Student Learning and Growth

The Teaching and Learning department continues to make progress toward the district's growth goals by focusing on strong, high-quality tier one instruction. The team is working with school leaders to build effective teamwork in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), research based resources and practices in classrooms, and meaningful and aligned professional development for our staff. The team is also continuing to improve the Schoolytics dashboard for real-time assessment results, providing transparency to our families with the ability to see their students' growth.





District Snapshots



Superintendent Ben Ferney (center right), addresses administrators from across the district at the annual Leadership Council Retreat at Inland Power on June 26.



This construction crew member works to assemble the new visitor bleachers at Cheney High School's stadium on July 11.



The Airway Heights Police Department stopped by Sunset Elementary during the Summer Food Program to spend time with local kids on June 26.



Educators from across the district and region gathered at Sunset Elementary for G.L.A.D. (Guided Language Acquisition Design) Training on June 25.



The colorful salad bar at Snowdon Elementary as part of the Summer Food Program on July 1.



The vinyl wall covering has been removed, carpet demolition has started, and painting has started at Windsor Elementary!



Construction crews moving dirt at Windsor Elementary as part of the updated bus loop project on July 11.



Sunset Elementary Lead Kitchen Manager Rita Whittaker smiles with this student during the Free Summer Food Service Program lunch service on June 26.



Cheney High School Assistant Principal Ryan Goodwin and CTE/Secondary Success Administrator Stacy Delcours at the Leadership Council Retreat on June 26.

NOTICES

Information System Upgrade: Accessibility Reminder

Our district is currently in the middle of a major system upgrade as we transition from Skyward SMS 2.0 to Skyward Qmlativ now through July 27, 2025. As a result, the district is unable to access Skyward or Qmlativ during this time. Access will be restored on July 28, 2025.

This lack of access will be the most significant effect on our district families. For most, the only noticeable difference with the new information system will be a slight change in the look and feel of the application. **If you have downloaded the Skyward app prior to this migration, you will need to uninstall, then reinstall, the Skyward Qmlativ app.** The app must be configured for Qmlativ. It will not automatically update.

There is a robust FAQ section on our website, along with how-to videos specific to Qmlativ. Scan the QR code below or visit cheneysd.org/our-district/qmlativ-migration.



Qmlativ

Join Our Team!

Interested in joining our team? Scan the QR code below or visit cheneysd.org to view all available job openings.



We're Hiring



Cheney Public Schools @cheneyschools



@CheneySchools

Are you a member of a military family?
Please visit <https://www.cheneysd.org/community/military>
for more information.

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: →



Questions or Feedback?

Do you have questions or feedback?
We're here to help! If you have any questions, concerns, or if there is something you would like to know more about, please reach out to Jenna Larson, Communications Coordinator at jl Larson@cheneysd.org.

Title IX/Chapter 28A.640 Officer/
Civil Rights Compliance
Officer/Gender Inclusive Schools
Coordinator
Tom Arlt, Assistant Superintendent
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Requests for Disclosure of Public
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Megan Kensok, Public Records
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