



# Community Connections

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

## Heartfelt gratitude to an outstanding school district community

As my tenure with the Cheney Public Schools comes to an end on June 30, I wish to sincerely thank everyone associated with our school district community for giving me the opportunity to be a part of this team for the past five years. Both professionally and personally, I have been richly blessed to work for and with outstanding young people, talented and dedicated school district staff members, caring parents and guardians, supportive community members, and a superb Board of Directors. Individually and collectively you continue to assure that ours is a school district deeply committed to doing what is right for the youth we serve and the successful futures they deserve.

As is recognized by most everyone associated with the Cheney Public Schools, ours is a district that is growing in student population and one that continually strives for excellence. As we grow and strive to always be better today than we were yesterday, we also recognize we are not perfect. There is no question that all of us associated with the district make mistakes, which is of course a part of our humanness. A wonderful thing, however, is that it has been my observation over the course of my time here that when any of us – young or old – make mistakes, such mistakes are usually followed with a commitment to learn from them and with a spirit of forgiveness of one another and ourselves. Fundamentally, public education is about continual learning, and a key part of that ongoing process is learning *through* mistakes that are made. The road to real success is dotted with some mistakes and failure, and with a commitment to not allowing those to be final or fatal – but rather to assuring that today’s shortcomings ultimately become tomorrow’s strengths.

Additionally, I have valued the richness of varying perspectives that exist in this vibrant school district, both within our schools and departments and in our larger district community. For certain, in our school district not everyone thinks alike about everything... a reality to be treasured because it means we are truly *thinking*. When we don’t all think alike it is more likely, in the end, that vigorous and respectful conversation and debate will lead to *real* improvement. And so it is here...we all benefit from *continued* striving, *genuine* thinking, and an understanding that while we may never achieve perfection, we are *ever trying to get better*.

My life and my career have been indelibly impacted by the opportunity I have had to serve the Cheney Public Schools the past five years. I offer deepest thanks to everyone who has been part of a journey I will forever treasure.

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

Michael Dunn  
Superintendent

**Friday Reminder:** One hour late start for all schools in our district to provide for teacher collaborative time. Your child’s school day begins one hour later; the buses run one hour later.

## Our essential foundations

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

Cheney Middle School activities line: (509) 559-4488  
Cheney High School activities line: (509) 559-4120

Go to [www.cheneyisd.org](http://www.cheneyisd.org) for more news and information about Cheney Public Schools.

## Important dates

June 4	Three Springs High Commencement
June 6	CHS Commencement
June 18	<b>Early Dismissal 11:30 a.m. -</b> Last Day of School
September 1	Labor Day
September 2	<b>First Day of School, 2008-2009</b>



## Windsor Rainforest Party

First grade students at Windsor are animal “experts” and shared their expertise with parents at a rainforest party this month. Students completed written research projects using the Cheney research model. They also raised crickets and butterflies and planted flowers to beautify home gardens and provide a home for butterflies.

Homework assignments included finding rainforest products at home and making a model of their animal’s habitat. Even though the rainforests are very far away, we discovered that there are many important ways that we can help to save the rainforests, which are home to many endangered animals and in many ways “the lungs of the earth.”

Acting out the play, “Ossie and the Clever Kinkajou,” students demonstrated how spots help the ocelot to be a successful hunter. Songs and poems further entertained our parents and all were treated to a buffet of jungle juice, bananas, figs, pineapple, coconut, and chickle (chewing gum). Teaching our parents to play games such as the camouflage game and “Don’t Bug Me” was fun for all.

We can help our rainforests and our world by recycling, and this need became very real on Earth Day when we cleaned the grounds around our neighborhood and found MANY recyclable items right under our noses! Our recent Scholastic magazine gave us a great idea to help the environment by recycling our sneakers!



## Young Betz Poets



Students in Mrs. Tilque’s second grade class recently enjoyed an excellent story called “Dogku,” recommended by kindergarten teacher Mrs. Knokey. Not only was “Dogku” an entertaining tale about a mischievous stray dog finding a home, it also introduced the second graders to Haiku. Haiku is a Japanese style of three-line poetry in which the first and third lines contain five syllables, and the middle line contains seven syllables.

After listening to “Dogku,” read by Mrs. Mahoney, the students wrote their own Haiku about topics of their choice ranging from animals to winter weather. Mrs. Tilque took the entire class to the Betz computer lab to publish the poems, and then entered every student in a National Schools Project contest in which young writers try to earn publication.

After much anticipation, Mrs. Tilque and her students are very proud to announce that a total of thirteen Betz second graders will soon have their poems published in the 12<sup>th</sup> edition of the *Young American Poetry Digest*. The school will receive a free copy of this publication to keep in the library, so teachers and students can enjoy the work of Mrs. Tilque’s young poets for years to come.

All of Mrs. Tilque’s students should be congratulated for the hard work it took to perfect their poems. Students who will have their work published are pictured.

## Vickie Kennedy nominated for Excellence in Education Award

Vickie Kennedy, Director of Curriculum and Instruction for the Cheney Public Schools and also the district director for the *Partners in Learning* grant, has been nominated by the Alpha Nu chapter of Alpha Delta Kappa for an Excellence in Education Award. This award recognizes members of the sorority for outstanding contributions in education, and is given biennially with the recipient and her school district each receiving \$2500. Mrs. Kennedy, who will officially retire from her leadership position with the district on June 30, is highly deserving of such a nomination. She has worked extremely hard for, and promoted excellence for, all children and staff throughout her distinguished tenure with the Cheney Public Schools!



## Preschool is fun at Salnave!

Preschool is a very fun and exciting place to be right now at Salnave. Through books, music, movement and art we have been studying bugs and flowers to jump start our spring.

In Miss Nell's class the students used slimy green hand prints and glitter to make beautiful caterpillars. The preschool children liked watching the caterpillar grow longer with each hand. By using a special head band and sponges, Mrs. Canton's class pretended to be ants painting with their antennae. They were great little worker ants creating one-of-a-kind art!!

To incorporate more gross motor movement into the daily routine of the preschool classes, we have begun doing a type of brain gym with an exciting twist. Using music and other manipulatives helps prepare our bodies and brains for the day. The kids really enjoyed our scarf dancing to fast and slow music. Ms. Kennedy even joined in to teach us a few new songs!!

Coming up in preschool at Salnave we will be transitioning into a water and ocean theme. As the weather begins to cooperate we are eager to plan our Day-Under-the-Sun. We will spend our whole day outside playing in water, learning new outside games, and even having a picnic. We are learning lots and having fun in preschool at Salnave!

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## Three Springs High School graduation and enrollment news



The Three Springs High School Class of 2008 commencement ceremony will be held on Wednesday, June 4, at 5:00 p.m. in the Viking Room at Betz Elementary School. This year Three Springs will be graduating 12 seniors. Created in 1998, this will be the 10th graduating class from our school. Valedictorian honors for this year go to Jennifer McLain.

Pre-enrollment for fall classes has also begun at the school. Anyone interested in a non-traditional high school experience should call the registrar at 559-4587.



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## Slippery, slimy snail races at Windsor



The kindergarten students at Windsor Elementary have been actively engaged in learning about Life Science. This is the first year that the kindergarten teachers across the district are implementing the FOSS science curriculum Animals 2x2. This curriculum focuses on comparing and contrasting sets of organisms such as guppies and goldfish, land snails and water snails, and pill bugs and sow bugs. One of the activities involving the land snails includes having snail races. The children eagerly encouraged their snails to win the race by tempting them with a piece of lettuce, which is a tasty treat for these slippery, slimy creatures.



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## CMS Band Department highlights experiences

The Cheney Middle School Band Department has had a busy and fulfilling year. In late January, 46 students participated in the E.W.M.E.A. Solo and Ensemble Festival with all students receiving a rating of either II, Excellent, or I, Superior. Two students, Kayla Magers and Hannah Sullivan, received the Gold Award for their flute duet. The Jazz Band took third place at Jazz Northwest in Mead and second at Jazz Unlimited in the Tri-Cities. Outstanding soloist awards went to Danielle Gilmour, Jacob Weisgerber and Quindry Davis-Murphy. Our Gold Band got to attend the E.W.U. Invitational Band Festival on April 12th as a very select group of only three bands who are invited for a day of workshops and performances.

On May 10th the Intermediate and Gold Bands combined for an inspiring performance at the Junior Lilac Parade, marching 130 strong. They performed "Watermelon Man" in their lime green and watermelon red shirts. The crowd showed great appreciation for the band's performance throughout the parade route. Great job band!

Final performances for the year took place May 29 at Jazz Night, and concert bands performed on Tuesday, June 3rd.

## Sunset receives Washington Reading Corps grant



Jennifer Nelson and Tyler Pettis

Sunset School is fortunate to be a recipient of the Washington Reading Corps (WRC) grant for the 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 school years. The mission of the WRC is to improve reading abilities of young students across Washington through research-based tutoring of struggling readers and effective collaborations among schools, families, community members, national service, business and state partners. As a recipient of this grant, we have had an Americorps reading volunteer, Jennifer Nelson, in our building this year.

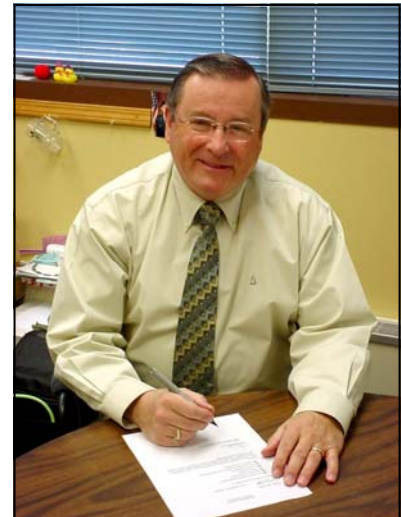
Jennifer is a 2007 graduate of Whitworth College with a degree in Sociology and minors in Psychology and Leadership Studies. Jennifer works with individual or small groups of students to provide intervention to increase their reading skills.

This year she has worked with more than 70 students. These students have made great gains in their reading skills thanks to Jennifer's guided instruction. Jennifer also works with parents, businesses, and community members to support our Sunset kids with volunteer hours as well as donations that support our families. She led a group of 5th graders in a Civic Engagement project in which they created a Drug and Crime Awareness presentation to present to other grade level students.

We feel fortunate that Jennifer has decided to return to Sunset School next year as a second year Americorps volunteer. She will then use her education stipend awards that she is earning while serving Sunset kids to pursue her Master's degree. We anticipate adding an additional Americorps member next year to assist Jennifer in tutoring our growing population of students.

## Larry Keller selected as new Superintendent of Schools

The Board of Directors is pleased to announce the selection of our new superintendent, Mr. Larry Keller. Mr. Keller was selected from a rich pool of candidates, and has a unique background which will be an excellent fit for the Cheney Public Schools. Currently the superintendent of both the Mansfield and Pateros school districts in north central Washington, Mr. Keller holds his MBA and served as the Vice Commander of the 92nd Air Refueling Wing at Fairchild Air Force Base in the 1990's. He is very child-centered and has the ability to communicate well and relate easily to staff, community members, and students. Mr. Keller will assume his new position on July 1 – welcome, Mr. Keller!



Cheney Public Schools complies with all state and federal rules and regulations and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability, familial status, marital status, or age. This holds true for all students who are interested in participating in educational programs and/or extracurricular school activities. Inquiries regarding compliance and/or grievance procedures may be directed to the school district's Title IX/RCW 28A.640 Officer and/or ADA Coordinator or Section 504 Coordinator. Or inquiries may be directed to the Director of the Office of Civil Rights, Department of HEW, Washington, D.C.

Title IX/Chapter 28A.640 Officer/ADA Coordinator  
Dr. Debra Clemens, Assistant Superintendent  
Cheney School District, 520 Fourth Street  
Cheney, WA 99004 Phone: (509) 559-4550

Section 504 Coordinator  
Marilyn Larson, Director, Student Support Services  
Cheney School District, 520 Fourth Street  
Cheney, WA 99004 Phone: (509) 559-4507



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

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