

*LEARNERS TODAY, LEADERS TOMORROW.*

## New program helps students succeed

This fall, staff and students at Chehalis Middle School began a new program aimed at time for students to make up assignments or to work with staff in given subject areas.

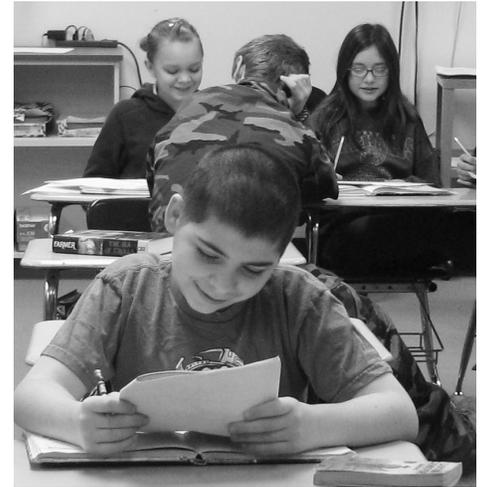
Called Core Flex, the program offers a “core” time where those who are struggling in a particular area can focus their attention on that subject, or perhaps make up work they missed. This is balanced with a “flex” time for students who are meeting expectations to pursue an area of interest. The process began a few years ago when staff visited other schools in the region

already using the program. They were pleased to see how the program helped students turn their grades around.

The core time helps students who are struggling to get back on track by devoting a little extra time to a specific subject area by working in small groups with staff. Students who are right on track can choose to spend the “flex” time working in subject areas they may be interested in or participating in reward activities, such as extra computer time.

“It’s a great balance between

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### *A message from Superintendent Rothlin*

The year is flying by and everyday outstanding teaching and learning are going on in the Chehalis School District. This year, we have many new staff members who joined the Chehalis family, in addition to three new administrators who are already deeply immersed in the great work of education. If you haven’t yet had an opportunity to meet them, you can learn a little about Loretta Duncan, Trisha Smith, and Bob Hunt by going to our website. We are also implementing some new programs, notably Core Flex, which you can read more about in this newsletter. I am so impressed by the commitment of staff to work through schedule changes to accommodate a daily “core” time so that students have an opportunity to make up missed work or focus on areas of challenge. Change is not always easy, but our staff adapts in order to do what’s best for kids.

Speaking of kids, Chehalis students continue to amaze me! We’ve had many awards and accomplishments to brag about this fall. Several band and choir students have been named to the All-State Band and Choir and eight students were selected to participate in the 2012 Western International Band Clinic in Seattle. Our W.F. West Jazz Ensemble has been selected to participate in the KPLU School of Jazz where they will be mentored by professional jazz musicians. What an amazing opportunity for our students! We are also proud of W.F. West student Kelly Giffey who is one of just two students in our state to receive the Washington State Academy of Sciences Award. You’ll read more about Kelly in this issue of our newsletter. And let’s not forget about our Forensics Team, which, as I write this, continues to bring home trophies and ribbons from nearly every competition it enters. Congratulations to these hard-working students!

This is a time of great change in education as we face new state and federal requirements, such as the new teacher and principal evaluation system that will change the way most of our staff is evaluated, as well as new Common Core Standards that define what all students need to know and learn. Our staff works hard to ensure that Chehalis students have outstanding learning opportunities, and we continue to do our best with aging facilities. Addressing facility needs is crucial, so we can provide the best possible learning environment for our students. A district-wide facilities advisory group will reconvene this year to reexamine options for improvements to our facilities.

Thanks for your support and all you do for Chehalis schools!

*Sincerely,*

*Ed Rothlin, Superintendent*

# W.F. West High School student wins prestigious science award

W.F. West High School student Kelley Giffey is one of just two in the state to receive the Washington State Academy of Sciences Award. Kelly earned the recognition for her advanced research on zebra fish. Kelly studied the effects of an agouti-related protein gene in the fish, which has been identified as triggering the hunger response in animals. The gene is proving critical to better understanding diabetes and weight control issues.

Kelly received the award and presented her research project to some of the top scientists in the field during the 5th Annual Symposium on Water in Seattle in September. She will also travel to Boston in February, 2013 to attend the American Junior Academy of Science (AJAS) Convention, which brings together the top middle/high school researchers from throughout the country to honor their work and induct them as lifetime fellows into AJAS.

"We're pleased to have one of our own students selected for such an esteemed honor," said Ed Rothlin, Superintendent. "We are so proud of her academic efforts and the all the high level work she accomplished on this research project."

Kelly is a student in the W.F. West's innovative Advanced Molecular Genetics program, which is funded through donations from the Chehalis Foundation and the Central Children's Charities. "Without the commitment and financial assistance from these organizations, our students might not be afforded these kinds of advanced academic opportunities. We thank them for their continued support," said Rothlin.



KELLEY GIFFEY, W.F. WEST HIGH SCHOOL

## New program helps students succeed, continued from front page

intervention and rewards," said Principal Chris Simpson.

Excitement about the program spread throughout the staff as they began brainstorming how it would work and what it could mean for student achievement. In fact, staff was so excited about the program's potential, they decided to start right away in the fall, rather than waiting until later in the year. Lots of planning took place last spring in order to make the changes that would be necessary for the new program to work. Because Core Flex required changing the school's daily schedule, it was essential to have the buy-in and support of all.

Simpson said that staff support was tremendous and key to getting the program started on the right foot. And the students are excited too, generating suggestions for increasing the impact of flex time, by suggesting peer tutoring so that they could help their classmates succeed.

So far, all reports are good. Student feedback is positive and staff report fewer failing grades.

"It has gone very well," said Simpson. "It's still a work in progress, but everyone is on board, working together to make it better and better." Simpson says that later in the year staff will have more data to show how the program is working, numbers of students making progress and working their way up from a failing grade.

W.F. West High School rolled out its Core Flex program after conference week in November. Staffs from both the middle school and the high school have been working together to share tips and suggestions to address challenges and make adjustments to the program as necessary.

## Long-serving employees recognized



Staff who have worked for Chehalis School District for 25 years were recognized for their longevity at the fall opening meeting. Pictured with Assistant Superintendent

Mary Lou Bissett (left) and Superintendent Ed Rothlin (far right) are: Joan Jahanson, Clay Bedford, Mary Dahlstrom, and Sheryl Dean.



## This COW helps technology mooove at OES

The Computer on Wheels (COW) turns any classroom into a technology lab. At Olympic Elementary, teachers reserve the COW, a portable computer lab housed on a cart, for classroom use. The system allows flexibility for staff and students to use the computers as needed in their own classrooms.



## Welcome new staff - The School District welcomed several new staff this fall.

**PICTURED: Back Row from left:** Trisha Smith, R.E. Bennett Elementary Principal, Jamie Rakevich, Aaron Julyan, Kathy Westergard, Kaitlin Dykstra, Tammi Johnson, Sarah Veach, and Caitlin Lieseke.

**Second Row from left:** Charly Bridges, Seana Ditterline, Kelley Bremgartner, Missy Crosby, Tiffany Parish, and TJ Tripp.

**Front Row from left:** Bob Hunt, Cascade Elementary Principal, Brenden Shallow, and Mike Haller.

Three new administrators were introduced to our district through short YouTube videos. (See them on our FB page or website.)

-Loretta Duncan is the new director of Chehalis-Centralia Student Support Cooperative.

-Trisha Smith, the new principal at R.E. Bennett Elementary

- Bob Hunt, the new principal at Cascade Elementary

## Cascade Cub kindergarteners received Ridership Awards for displaying exemplary behavior on their school buses.

**Pictured:** Transportation Supervisor Lionel Pinn, Cascade Elementary Principal Bob Hunt, bus drivers Rick Hamilton and Jennifer Foughty with three of six students who received the award: Allen, Peyton, Talia and their families. The award is part of School Bus Safety Week and Lewis County Safety City activities.



## Girls show their skills in Robotics Robot Rumble

In September, a girls-only robotics competition, Girls Generation, brought together female rooteers from several area high schools to test their robot "driving" skills. W.F. West Robotics Head Advisor Clif White called the experience "fun and rewarding." Female members of the W.F. West High School Robotics Team include: Sara McAllister, Kayla Johnston, Rachel Johnson, Marissa Reynolds (not pictured), Kennedy Johnson, Devanie Franck, and staff mentor Caitlin Lieseke.

The W.F. West Robotics Class and Club are made possible through Science, Technology, Mathematics and Engineering (STEM) funds, community donations, and financial assistance from The Chehalis Foundation.



## Staff trained to pilot iPad program

W.F. West High School students use iPads in their Biology class as part of the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) program.



## Postal Patron

### the **LEARNING NETWORK**

#### **R.E. Bennett garden looking great thanks to students and volunteers**

Last spring, the Master Gardeners helped R.E. Bennett 2nd grade students plant a wonderful garden. This fall, after the long summer break, student, staff and community volunteers weeded and pruned and got the garden looking great again.

This fall, Mrs. Cavness's class (now 3rd graders), along with four parent volunteers, continued their "garden" studies by planting bulbs in the front of R.E. Bennett.



#### **Veterans' Day**

Chehalis schools celebrated Veterans' Day with assemblies recognizing our Veterans. Student vocal and instrumental performances and poetry readings helped remember and celebrate those who served our country. Many local Veterans were in attendance on this special day.



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