

A message from Superintendent Rothlin



Dear Chehalis Patrons:

The 2015-2016 school year is off to a great start! In this edition of The Learning Network, you will find an update on our Student Achievement Initiative (Improve, Modernize, Prepare) and an announcement on continued support of this important initiative by the Chehalis Foundation.

You will also see articles on the Chehalis PTA's Watch D.O.G.S. (Dads of Great Students) Program, and on the District's new Safety and Security Officer, Todd Thornburg. These articles are just a few examples of the ways in which Chehalis students are supported every day as they learn and grow.

Speaking of support for our students, the Chehalis community has a proud tradition of standing behind its schools by approving the District's Maintenance and Operations levies. On February 9, 2016, the District will ask voters to replace its current expiring M & O levy. Levy dollars bridge the gap between state funding and the actual cost of operating our schools.

How are levy dollars used in Chehalis Schools?

Levy dollars help to support the following student programs and services:

- » **TRANSPORTATION** to and from school, field trips & activities
- » **TEXTBOOK AND CURRICULUM** adoptions
- » **SUPERVISION AND SCHOOL SECURITY**
- » **TECHNOLOGY** and technology support
- » **GROUNDS, MAINTENANCE AND UTILITIES**
- » **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES** like Honor Society, Knowledge Bowl, the LINK and WEB orientation programs, school newspapers and Athletics.
- » **ARTS PROGRAMS AND CLASSES** (elementary music, band, choir, strings, art classes, and drama, plays and musicals)
- » **ADDITIONAL SUPPORT** for service-oriented programs:
 - **SPECIAL EDUCATION SUPPORT SERVICES**
 - **STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES:** Nursing and counseling services
 - **FOOD SERVICES**

Watch for more levy information coming soon!

Enjoy this edition of The Learning Network. This information is also available on the District's website, www.chehalisschools.org, or you can join our Key Communicators (email keycommunicators@gmail.com), or follow us on Twitter @ChehalisSD or on Facebook.

Sincerely,
Ed Rothlin, Superintendent

Thank you Chehalis Foundation!

The Chehalis Foundation announced the commitment of \$1.5 million over the next five years to support the District's Student Achievement Initiative to help every Chehalis student be career and college ready.

A major focus is to graduate students from W.F. West who are so well-prepared that 60% of them go on to earn four-year college degrees.



Watch DOGS programs brings role models into schools

Chehalis students are benefiting from the support of dads, step-fathers, grandfathers, uncles and other supportive men thanks to a program emphasizing positive male role models in schools.

The national program, known as Watch D.O.G.S., or Dads of Great Students, aims to provide an extra set of eyes and ears on campus to enhance school security, while also providing mentors for young students to look up to. The program is sponsored by the Chehalis PTA and began at all three elementary schools this fall. Male volunteers perform a variety of tasks as determined by school principals, including patrolling the front entrance as students arrive, assisting in the classroom and lunchroom, and on the playground.

For more information contact Cascade, R.E. Bennett or Olympic Elementary School Offices.



AN UPDATE ON OUR Student Achievement Initiative

Chehalis School District is entering the third school year of its Student Achievement Initiative. IMPROVE, MODERNIZE AND PREPARE, are the three elements of our continued focus on improving and modernizing instructional practices and preparing all students in the Chehalis School District for meaningful careers and success in college.

Educational consultants, funded by the Foundation, working with our district have evaluated teaching and learning in more than 40,000 classrooms nationally including every Chehalis classroom twice a year since fall 2013. They report the most consistent jump in powerful teaching and learning here of any school system they have ever evaluated. What a compliment to our teachers and students. But, we aren't close to being finished.

Our goal is to raise learning here to such a high level that every student is prepared and qualified upon graduation to have their choice between college or starting a productive career. Within this decade, our aim is that 60% of W.F. West graduates can go on to earn 4-year college degrees. On average, young Americans with a high school degree working full time earn \$30,000 a year. With a four year college degree they average \$48,000.¹ What about our students who don't go straight to college? The goal is to prepare them so well

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Thanks to the hard work of our students, parents and faculty, the support of the Chehalis Foundation and our community, we are making exemplary progress on our Student Achievement Initiative - Improve, Modernize and Prepare.
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¹ Institute of Education Sciences (ies): National Center for Education Statistics

that they have the choice. If they choose the career path out of school some will have their opportunities enhanced by the remarkable technical skills gained through the STEM program and every student will benefit by a school system providing teaching and learning at such a high level that a majority will go on to earn college degrees.

You can learn much more about the Student Achievement Initiative at www.chehalisschools.org. Here are some of the elements:

IMPROVE

Instructional Practices in the Classroom

One element of this Initiative is having our educators participate in Learning Walks (watching live instruction) in classrooms in our own district and in neighboring districts. Teachers learn from each other watching and then reflecting on their own teaching practices. Every building now has Instructional Learning Teams, as well as college and career ready teams. This fall, for the first time, every Chehalis Freshman, Sophomore and Junior was able to take the PSAT test. The Senior SAT score plays a big role in college admission. Taking the test in the earlier grades helps in two ways. It alerts students, parents and teachers where the student should focus their learning in coming years, plus, practicing the test now will help the student perform better when they are Seniors.

MODERNIZE

Use of Staff Development & Technology to Enhance Instructional Practices

The District continues its commitment to ensuring that teachers have better training and resources needed to enhance instructional practices. A staff development schedule center helps integrate technology into teaching and learning. At the elementary schools, mobile computer labs are used every day. This past summer, a group of 5th grade teachers wrote Social Studies curriculum using an interactive method through Google, which can be updated as needed instead having to wait the traditional seven-year cycle. This curriculum aligns with Common Core standards and TPEP (the evaluation system now used for all teachers). The School Board has committed to a structured annual replenishment schedule for technology.



PREPARE

Aware, Eligible and Prepared = Ready

Middle School Math

Math skills are central to preparing students to be successful in college and careers. The school district informed the community two years ago that we were raising our middle school math goals for every student.

- » This past summer, 151 students participated in the free Summer Math Academy for at least one of each of the four week modules. The Academy combines classroom learning with a field trip to apply the skills learned in a real world setting.
- » Students who want to take higher level high school Science and Math courses need to take Algebra by the 8th grade. Almost double the number of 8th graders completed Algebra than had two years prior.
- » Smarter Balanced assessment in 2014-2015, showed 46% of 8th graders in the state passing the math test while Chehalis 8th graders achieved at a level of 53.7%. We are moving up but our goal is to do better until all students pass.

STEM Education

(Science, Technology, Engineering and Math)

- » W.F. West High School continues to offer STEM classes that are both preparing students for high-skill technical jobs and giving them a leg-up in college preparation.
- » The third annual Summer STEM camp was offered at W.F. West High School. Eighty three students from Southwest Washington region attended the "2015 Drone Zone."
- » Robotics – The female members of the W.F. West High School Robotics Team (SWAG 4060) joined two other all-female teams to win the 2015 Girls Generation Competition, which focused on empowering women in STEM fields.

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College Bound Scholarship

The College Bound Scholarship is one way that academically and economically-eligible students can receive help to pay for college. Across the state, only 77 school districts had 100 percent of their eligible 8th grade students sign up for the College Bound scholarships. Chehalis School District is one of the districts that achieved a 100% sign up rate for its 8th grade students who were eligible for the College Bound Scholarship.

College Advisors

With support from the Foundation and Centralia College, three new college advisors will soon be in place to help Chehalis students. We were able to hire full-time College advisors for the Middle School and the High School, and Centralia College will add an advisor for whom half of their time will be dedicated to helping W.F. West graduates attending CC. This Initiative is about making sure our students are ready for whatever path they take. The District is also taking greater responsibility for tracking our graduates once they have graduated.

LEARN MORE

This information is also available on the District's website:

www.chehalisschools.org

Or you can join our Key Communicators by emailing us:

keycommunicators@gmail.com

Or follow us on **Twitter @ChehalisSD** or on **Facebook**.

Postal Patron

SCHOOL NEWS

W.F. West grad heads back to school as security officer



Todd Thornburg, W.F. West High School class of 1983, is back in school, this time as a school security officer.

A retired Washington State Patrol officer, Thornburg says he is pleased to be a part of the school community. With children and

nieces and nephews attending Chehalis schools, and family members teaching at the school, Thornburg feels right at home. "I've had a vested interest in this school district for a long time," he said.

"As a parent, you want your kids to be safe," he said.

"As a parent, I would want security at the school and I want teachers trained to protect my child whether it's fire, earthquake or an active shooter."

With school safety being a topic of national importance, the Chehalis School District decided to increase efforts in that area.

"As a parent, you want your kids to be safe."

The district initially budgeted for a resource officer through a partnership with a police agency, but was able to hire Thornburg directly.

"I think the district saw the need to have somebody here," he said. "It was really good timing. I think when all these stars lined up it made for a good opportunity."

"It just became a win-win," said Superintendent Ed Rothlin. "We are pleased to hire someone with Todd's skill set and experience."



Welcome new staff!

CASCADE

- » Colette LeBaron (K)
- » Melissa Park (K)

- » Kyle Karnofski (English)
- » Michelle Rogers (Math)
- » Nicole Wegele (Math/ELA)

RE BENNETT

- » Ellen Davis (2nd grade)
- » Sarah Veach (2nd grade)
- » Emily Haynes (Special Education)

WF WEST MUSIC

- » Ashley Giri (Strings & Gen. Music)

STUDENT SUPPORT

- » Karen Foreman (Speech Language Pathologist)

OLYMPIC

- » Nikki Ames (ELA)
- » Erika Jeans (5th grade)

CAREER & COLLEGE ADVISORS

- » Kerri Chaput
- » Cody Ray

CHEHALIS MIDDLE SCHOOL

- » Brady Baildon (Social Studies)
- » Randy Brossard (Social Studies)
- » Melissa Gilbertsen (Art)
- » Marshall Peone (Science)

BILINGUAL/TRANSITIONAL ED PARAS

- » Yesenia Mendez
- » Beatriz Mendez

WF WEST

- » Matthew Bremgartner (Molecular Genetics)
- » Meagan Corey (ELA)
- » Mary Claire Gegen (French)
- » Chris Guenther (Ag. Science)

DISTRICT

- » Katelyn Walsh (Mathematics Instructional Coach)