



## **CHEYENNE MOUNTAIN SCHOOL DISTRICT 12**

Dr. Walter C. Cooper, Superintendent of Schools

*Note: This letter is the first of what will be a monthly correspondence from Dr. Walt Cooper, Superintendent, to the constituents of Cheyenne Mountain School District 12. Each month, this correspondence can be accessed via any District 12 school's website, or on the District's website at [www.cmsd12.org](http://www.cmsd12.org).*

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The month of June is very typically one of significant transition for school districts in Colorado. On one hand, June provides an opportunity to quietly reflect on the successes and challenges of the recently completed school year. On the other hand, June requires that we move forward with great speed planning and preparing for the next school year that looms on the horizon.

When reflecting on the year just completed, I find it easy to create a long list of successes and reasons for celebration. Undoubtedly, this list is topped by District 12 being once again named by the Colorado Department of Education as the highest performing school district in Colorado. This list also includes numerous individual student accomplishments in athletic achievements and fine arts projects and performances, District 12 Teacher Al Pocock being named Colorado's Star Teacher by the U.S. Department of Education, a record number of national merit scholars, and Cheyenne Mountain High School winning the coveted National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence award.

The past year also presented us with some significant challenges as well. None of these challenges was greater than our dealing with a significant decline in student enrollment and the resulting negative fiscal impact on the District's budget. The declining enrollment, a result of aging neighborhoods and virtually no new home construction, is expected to continue well into the future and will continue to limit the District's finances.

So, one might ask, "How will the District both keep its academic excellence intact *and* maintain the strong financial position it has developed?" There is no simple answer to this question and there is no single strategy in preparing future budgets and planning for future school years. Rather, our forward thinking must be a combination of many things, including:

1. Reducing expenditures in our budget while at the same time preserving student curricular and extracurricular programs.
2. Consolidating our elementary school programs from our present six schools to five schools.
3. Growing our enrollment by recruiting students to a level acceptable to our community.
4. Utilizing the Tradition of Excellence Foundation and other entities for fundraising and alternative funding.
5. Restructuring the District's present contract with our charter school.
6. Passing mill levy override when the time is appropriate.

Clearly, none of the above strategies can be effectively accomplished without tremendous support and the engagement of our community. However, I am confident that, together, we can ensure our tradition of excellence continues.

Sincerely,

Walter C. Cooper, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools