



# NORTHWEST FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE

## Memo

To: Governing Board for the Collegiate High School

From: Dr. Devin Stephenson, President

Date: February 20, 2024

Re: Collegiate High School Updates

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On January 18, the Florida Department of Education completed an unannounced Collegiate High School safe school monitoring. The outcome of that visit was CHS is in full compliance with all safety requirements and best practices. In support of safety as a priority, CHS has added the same bus tracking software that is currently on all buses in OCS D. This software provides law enforcement live tracking of buses, communication from the device for drivers, and maps for routes. Parents can also track their students on the buses.

Collegiate High School informational sessions for enrollment for the 2024-2025 school year were held throughout January at Northwest Florida State College campuses in Niceville, DeFuniak, Fort Walton Beach, and Crestview. More than 600 parents and students attended these events. Prior to these informational sessions, a CHS brochure was mailed to every current eighth, ninth, and tenth grade student in Okaloosa and Walton County Schools. Collegiate High School's primary application period for enrollment opened February 1 and will close on February 29. The first lottery will be held on March 4 at 5 pm.

On February 21, Ninth Grade Student Led Conferences will occur. These required conferences provide students with an opportunity to show their accomplishments to their parents and share future goals.

Congratulations to the CHS Robotics Team! The Aero Coast League Regional Championships were held at the Doolittle Institute, an AFRL Innovation Institute, on Saturday, January 27. Sixteen teams from across the Florida Panhandle competed, and the CHS Robotics Team finished second in the below three categories.

- **Connect:** This judged award is given to the Team that most connects with their local science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) community.
- **Design:** This judged award recognizes design elements of the Robot that are both functional and aesthetic.
- **Inspire:** This judged award is given to the Team that best embodies the 'challenge' of the FIRST Tech Challenge program. The Team that receives this award is a strong ambassador for FIRST programs and a role model FIRST Team. Winning second place in the Inspire award category guaranteed the team an invitation to the state championship, in addition to their previously announced invitation awarded for winning the state-wide t-shirt contest.

Additionally, congratulations to CHS eleventh grade team member Roy Thomas and CHS's Coach Micah Reese. Roy was selected as a Dean's List semifinalist. These are student leaders who have led their teams and communities to increase awareness for FIRST and its mission. Roy will be considered for the Dean's List finalist award, won by CHS senior Allie Cadenhead last year, at the State Championships. Coach Reese was selected as the winner of the Compass Award, which recognizes an adult coach or mentor who has given outstanding

guidance and support to a team throughout the year and demonstrates to the team what it means to be a Gracious Professional.

On Friday, February 16, CHS's ninth grade class sponsored a "Spring Fling" where ninth and tenth grade students were able to participate in games and team building activities.

Finally, CHS will be seeking a full-time principal, which will continue to report to Dr. Sandy Arteaga as the Dean of Education and Charter Initiatives and be supported by the two existing assistant principals. We believe filling this position will continue to position CHS for long-term success as the high school grows and moves forward in upcoming academic years. Having a full-time principal focused solely on CHS is necessitated by the expansion of CHS itself, which is serving more students and offering more programs and extracurriculars than ever before. CHS has increased its enrollment from the 2021-2022 state reporting year of 285 students to 535 students in the 2025-2026 state reporting year. This is an 88% increase in four years. This growth has resulted in state revenue increases from approximately \$2.4 million to \$4.6 million.

In addition to CHS growth, the College has experienced increased demand for the expansion of the College's teacher education programs, early childhood development services, and other emerging opportunities for K-12 educational services in our region, which are also under Dr. Arteaga's leadership in addition to her current duties as CHS principal. By hiring a full-time principal to report up to Dr. Arteaga, she will continue to oversee CHS progress while also having bandwidth to advance additional College strategic priorities. We will advertise for and hire a CHS principal to be onboarded for the Fall 2024 semester.