

CRAIG HIGH SCHOOL

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Home of the Panthers!

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CHS CCSD School Board Report — October 2025

We finished up last week with **Parent Teacher Conferences**. Attendance was light, but we understand that personal schedules can be challenging and always appreciate seeing the parents who are able to attend. The staff can be available throughout the year and will continue to reach out to parents as becomes necessary.

I am grateful for the **new sub pay structure**. It has been very difficult to attract substitutes. Everyone is working to ensure classroom and aide coverage but to say that this has been a challenge would be quite understated. I hope that the new policy will help to attract willing substitutes.

And speaking of substitutes, I want to extend a huge **thank you** to Troy Thain and Chuck Hanson, who both stepped out of retirement to help the district provide K-12 PE and Health instruction. That is no small ask and the entire staff appreciates their willingness to share both time and expertise.

Lots of **students have been traveling last week**. Our volleyball team participated in a north seed tournament in Haines, Swim was off to Juneau, and Wrestling had a meet in Metlakatla. It is always good to see students involved in activities. Athletics, student council, drum line, art festivals, and others serve to connect our students to our school and community. A very rough count indicates almost 65% of our student body is involved with some activity.

A high percentage of student participation does present its challenges. Larger participation numbers mean that coaches have to make difficult decisions when it comes to traveling teams. Teachers are stretched to provide meaningful work for those who are traveling - some for extended periods. Students who participate in more than one activity need to balance those activities, school work, and home life. Tina has been very proactive working with multi-sport athletes, their families, and their coaches this year. She has brought all those individuals together to determine practice schedules, competition attendance, and to speak with athletes and their families about the importance of balancing concurrent seasons in terms of physical and mental health, and keeping up with school work. I appreciate that effort she has made on behalf of our families and school.

CHS AD, Tina Steffen, has led local and regional advocacy efforts focused on **mental health awareness** of players and coaches. She has been a tireless advocate of our students for years, and recognizes that changes in the athletic community (and community at large) require an expansion of this awareness to include coaches mental health needs.

Mental health needs generally, are a growing concern in our school. Student resiliency has changed over the years. The continuing impact of COVID on student mental health should not be underestimated. CHS does its best to address needs as they arise, but it feels like we are fighting a wildfire with a plant mister. Sharing a single counselor between our K-12 schools as well as PACE is quite an ask. Liz and I do our best to be available when Ms Peavey is unavailable. It is a relief to have an office staff that works so well and so closely together. The open communication that occurs in the office has already resulted in students receiving important outside support. I am very thankful for their awareness and willingness to involve outside agencies. Ms Hanson has brought additional ideas forward to administration that I am excited about - specifically an app-based counseling subscription that would provide student counseling access 24/7.

Our students will be compassionate, resilient, self-sufficient, engaged members of their community.

In our continued support for mental wellness, we were pleased to host **Mike Donahue with Rise Up** once again. Mike is an engaging , no-nonsense speaker who speaks directly to students about choices, the impact of people in their lives, and how students can find their way out of hopelessness. I have spoken with Mike extensively about his program and how he is working on expanding his message. We are exploring the possibility of including CHS as part of a pilot project meant to empower students as champions of change. I will continue to share as this relationship continues.

We are rapidly approaching the **End of Quarter 1**. The staff and I will be working to finalize a schedule for semester 2. Part of that process is a close examination of all student (especially senior) transcripts - ensuring that everyone has met graduation requirements. For those who still need a class, we prioritize those needs in the schedule.

Parents will soon be receiving information about how their child can qualify for the **Alaska Performance Scholarship**. This merit-based scholarship is a fantastic opportunity for all Alaskan graduates who wish to pursue secondary education or training in the State of Alaska. Annual awards up to \$7000 are available to those who qualify with a rigorous course of study and a minimum GPA or standardize test score.

In addition to our athletic travel, eight students will be participating in the Region V Honor Music Festival taking place in Wrangell this year. Six students qualified for the Honor Choir and two for the Honor Band. Congratulations Panthers!

Finally, at the end of last month, Stephen DeHart and I took a group of 14 students **snorkeling at the point in front of the Wards Cove cannery**. We all had a great time and I am thrilled to have witnessed the amazement and excitement this group expressed seeing below the surface of our waters for the first time. I want to recognize Halcyon Dive Systems, Fourth Element, and Dive Rite for their generous sponsorship of this program and also to Ms. Hanson for directing grant funds that allowed the realization of this project. Mr. DeHart and the Marine Biology class will continue to use this equipment this year supporting that class.



CHS Snorkeling
September 2025

