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## DECADES in the making

### Details surrounding deaths at Chemawa brought to light

By **JOEY CAPPELLETTI**  
*Of the Keizertimes*

Over 270 Native children from across the Pacific Northwest died in the custody of Chemawa Boarding School from 1880 to 1945.

For decades, the details about their deaths have been difficult to access — buried in federal archives and public records.

On Indigenous Peoples' Day, Oct. 11,

SuAnn Reddick and Eva Guggemos published a public website that for the first time compiles the scattered details surrounding these deaths.

“For us to even begin to acknowledge what happened, and move towards making amends, we have to first know what we are even apologizing for,” said Guggemos, an assistant professor at Pacific University.

Chemawa, which remains open today in north Salem and just east of Keizer Station, was one of the many off-reservation boarding schools created in the late 19th century to assimilate Native children into society while erasing their

Indigenous cultures and languages.

Recently, the discovery of over 1,000 unmarked grave sites of Native children at similar residential schools in Canada led US Secretary of Interior Deb Haaland to announce the Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative. The initiative began an investigation into the history and legacies of more than 365 boarding school sites in the U.S.

But research for the Deaths at Chemawa Indian School website began long before this initiative brought the issue back to light.

In 1995, Reddick for the first time saw Chemawa Cemetery and its many rows of

identical grave markings. While some of the markers were named and dated, none of them listed tribal origins.

“How could we know who they really were and how they died? How could their families ever find them?” Reddick wrote on the website, which is hosted by Pacific University.

In 2003, using data she and others had gathered, Reddick created two spreadsheets: one with all of the recorded deaths at the school since 1880 and the other with names from grave markers at the Chemawa Cemetery. Side by side,

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## ELECTRIC BUSES COMING TO SKPS

By **MATT RAWLINGS**  
*Of the Keizertimes*

For the second straight year, Salem-Keizer Public Schools (SKPS) was selected as one of the winners of the Electric School Bus Fund, which was started by Portland General Electric (PGE).

With the grant, PGE covers the difference in cost between a traditional school bus and an electric bus. According to T.J. Crockett, SKPS director of transportation services, a gas-fueled traditional small bus that seats 20 people is approximately \$76,000, while the electric version of the small bus costs \$252,000. A large, 78-person traditional bus costs \$150,000, while the electric type is \$360,000 — SKPS ordered a small bus for the first grant last year and a large bus for the second grant.

PGE also covers the funding for an electric bus charger with all

associated installation costs, as well as bus driver and technician training.

“We haven't had a lot of opportunities in this district to do any alternative fuel work. The grant gives us an opportunity to enter into that space to see if the vehicle will work for us, without costing us as a district the full price of an electric bus,” Crockett said.

Transportation is the single biggest source of greenhouse gas emissions in Oregon and a major source of other air pollutants. Benefits of the electric school buses include cleaner air and lower costs for fuel and maintenance, plus better safety and comfort for students.

“Electrifying transportation is a key driver of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and an important step toward reaching our goal of

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