

News release



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CHS student earns Microsoft Office Masters certification

James Ramirez was only a freshman at Cascade High School when he took the exams.



Can you do a *pivot table* in Excel? Can you insert a video clip in a Power Point presentation? Can you sequence all your footnotes in Word report, create a table of contents automatically and add a bibliography?

James Ramirez could do all that and more as a high school freshman when he took intensive Microsoft Office Masters (MSO) Certification exams last spring.

He is one of fewer than 100 other high school students in the state to pass the exams and earn the coveted certification. He now is officially a "Specialist" in PowerPoint and Access, and an "Expert" in Word and Excel.

Even as a sophomore this year, James' certification gives him an advantage in his future choices of careers and colleges. "As a high school student now, he has clearly carved a path for ongoing skill-building in technology skills if he chooses to do so," notes Career and Technical Education Director, Carl Fender.

Jim Schmidt, James' teacher last year says, "James took Computer Applications two semesters as a freshman. The first semester, he earned Microsoft *Specialist* Certification in Word, PowerPoint, Excel and Access. The second semester he went on to earn the higher *Expert* Certification in Word and Excel. James is a member of the Robotics Club at Cascade."

Each of the district's high schools, including Sequoia High School, are certified as Microsoft IT Academy schools. This means that since 2012 each high school student in the district has access to the classes and instruction to earn 21st century skills and a certification that is recognized by employers, colleges and technical schools around the world.

In 2013-14 alone, 179 high school students in the district earned some level of Microsoft IT certification.

The numbers shooting for that certification and earning has grown since 2012 when 130 earned some level of certification and since 2011 when the number was 45.

Fender emphasizes the advantage certified students have in the competitive world of college placement and career opportunities. "This certification certainly is recognized by other students. Beyond that, every employer covets certified job applicants, and college interest perks up upon seeing that certification on a transcript. Certification is a firm measure of a student's determination to learn and of confidence and personal skills."

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