

Ashe County Schools

# WEEKLY UPDATE



Teachers and students jumped into new literacy modules in ELA classes throughout the county! What a fantastic way to kick off the learning journey!

THROUGH  
**14**  
**FEB**

## Important Upcoming Dates



- ✓ Feb. 14 *HAPPY Valentine's Day*
- ✓ Feb. 15 - School Resource Officer Appreciation Day
- ✓ Feb. 17 - BOE special called meeting, 4:00 p.m.
- ✓ Feb. 20 - WWES Family Literacy Night / Wax Museum, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.
- ✓ Feb. 27 - BRES LIM Breakfast





# Showing Appreciation



## THANK YOU, SCHOOL BOARD

We appreciate your leadership and commitment

Josh Roten  
Chairman

Dianne Eldreth  
Vice Chair

Polly Jones

Janet Ward

Teresa Calhoun



SCHOOL BOARD APPRECIATION MONTH



January was School Board Appreciation Month! THANK YOU to our Board of Education members, whose hard work, dedication and passion for our students truly make a difference and doesn't go unnoticed. From tough decisions to supporting resources and ensuring quality education, their efforts shape a brighter future for all. We're grateful for all the ways their leadership and commitment create a strong foundation for our next generation!

During National School Counselor Appreciation Week, we celebrated the vital role our counselors play in helping students thrive. From removing barriers to learning, to guiding career paths and supporting emotional growth, their dedication makes all the difference. They're a key resource for students, parents, teachers, and administrators alike. We appreciate these amazing individuals for everything they do!



## LOVE THE BUS & SCHOOL BUS DRIVER APPRECIATION WEEK

February 10-14

Ashe County school buses travel more than half a MILLION miles a year!



Ashe County school buses travel more than HALF A MILLION miles each year, safely getting our students to school, activities, sports events, and summer camps. THANK YOU to our incredible bus drivers who've gone above and beyond this year, navigating route changes after Hurricane Helene and overcoming weather challenges! And thanks to the amazing our transportation department employees for their hard work in coordinating, maintaining our buses and responding quickly.



# Winners!

Congrats to our Ashe Post & Times “Best of the Best” 2024 winners, recognized at an awards luncheon at Jefferson Landing Jan. 27.



## BEST PRINCIPAL



**Sherrie Hines**  
Ashe County Middle School

*Ashe County Middle School was honored, as well as ACMS Principal, Sherrie Hines. She said, “The teachers, staff and kids are the real rockstars!”*

*WWES 3rd grade teacher, Courtney Elliott, was honored to be selected as Best Teacher.*

## BEST TEACHER



**Courtney Elliott**  
3rd Grade, Westwood Elementary



*Our Ashe County Schools BOE Chairman, Josh Roten, won best pre-planning agent and funeral home (Badger Funeral Home), as well as best cremation service (Ashelawn Memorial Chapel & Gardens).*



# Shout Outs



*Jones was celebrated by her fellow BOE members and from left to right: NSDAR Rendezvous Mountain chapter members Phyllis Moulton, Pat Norman and Margaret Cooper; Ralph Jones (Mrs. Jones' husband) and Mrs. Polly Jones; Barbara Pendry (Rendezvous Mountain chapter member); Joann Eller and Emma Sexton (Mrs. Jones' sisters); and Ashe County Schools Superintendent Dr. Eisa Cox*

Mrs. Polly Jones, a beloved member of our Board of Education, was honored with a special surprise at February's BOE meeting. She received the prestigious National Women in American History award, presented by the Rendezvous Mountain Chapter of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR) in celebration of her outstanding contributions to our community across education, culture, and beyond. We are proud of Mrs. Jones' accomplishments!

CONGRATULATIONS to ACMS math teacher, **Andy Cerrillo**, named one of 27 finalists for the 2025 Burroughs Wellcome Fund NC Beginning Teacher of the Year Award! He was recognized at the February Ashe County Schools BOE meeting by NCCAT Chief Academic Officer Gin Hodge.



Mr. Cerrillo will be attending the BTOY event in March at the Truist Leadership Center in Greensboro, NC. The winner will be announced during a ceremony on March 27 at the Elliott University Center at UNC Greensboro. Best of luck!

CONGRATULATIONS to ACHS Media Specialist, **Tonya Denny**! She is one of five of the participating educators representing GEAR UP Appalachian who will be participating in the prestigious Education Policy Fellowship Program (EPFP), hosted by the Public School Forum of North Carolina! She also serves as a dedicated board member and Region 7 Director for the North Carolina School Library Media Association. Her hard work and passion for education are truly inspiring.





# Bright Futures Ahead



CONGRATULATIONS to our 22 amazing Ashe County High School early graduates! On February 3, 2025, we celebrated their incredible achievements at a special ceremony filled with reflection, food, fellowship, family, and lots of joy! We are so proud of each and every one and can't wait to see all the success that lies ahead in your futures!

Graduates in attendance (pictured left to right, with Dr. Eisa Cox, ACS Superintendent, and Dustin Farmer, ACHS Principal):

Kathleen M.  
Yamil J.  
Wendy D.  
Ava C.  
Brooklyn L.  
Dedrick C.  
Shelton P.  
Trinity Y.



And a round of applause for our other incredible early graduates (not pictured):

Keaton B., Dakota C., Chrystal C., Lindsey F., Christopher H., Ian I., Dahayana J., Mason L., Derek M., Hunter L., Nathaniel P., Solomon S., Imri W. and Trevor W.



## Grants for ACS Educators!

Have an incredible classroom project idea but need funding to make it a reality? Applications for the 2025/2026 Endowment Fund Grants are OPEN! Here's your chance to bring your project to life:

- ✓ Apply now for a chance to win funding!
- ✓ Get all the details and apply [HERE](#).
- ✓ Deadline: March 17, 2025, at 5:00 p.m.

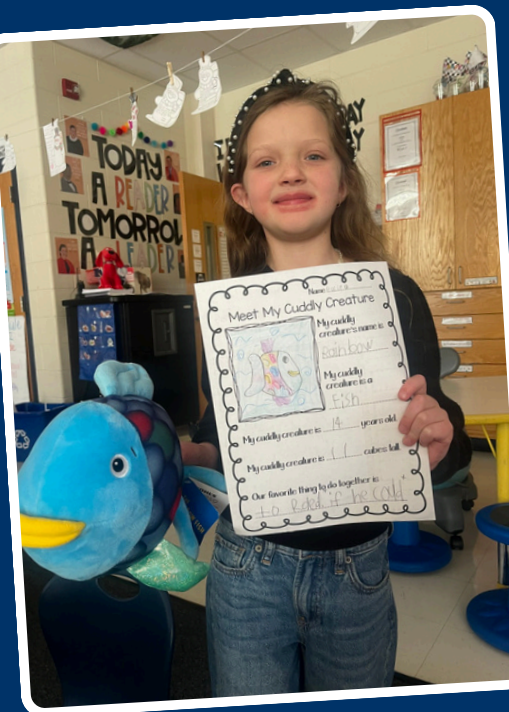
**ENDOWMENT FUND  
GRANTS AVAILABLE**

**APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN!**



# Learning Fun!

Teachers and students are engrossed in new literacy modules in English, Language, Arts (ELA) classes across the county! Students are exploring their new texts through creative activities like book tastings, STEM, animal habitat projects, and sip-and-paint sessions. They're also expanding their knowledge on topics such as the solar system, animal life, survival and Westward Expansion.



EARLY  
LEARNING  
CENTER

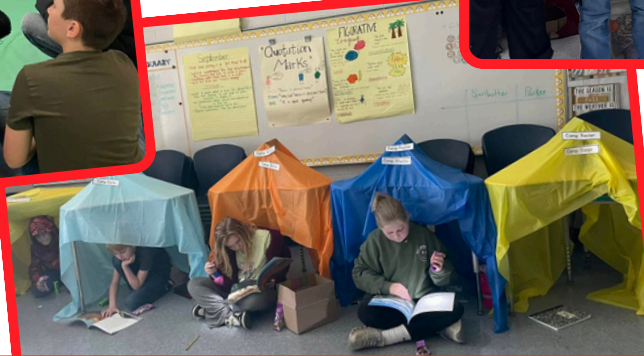
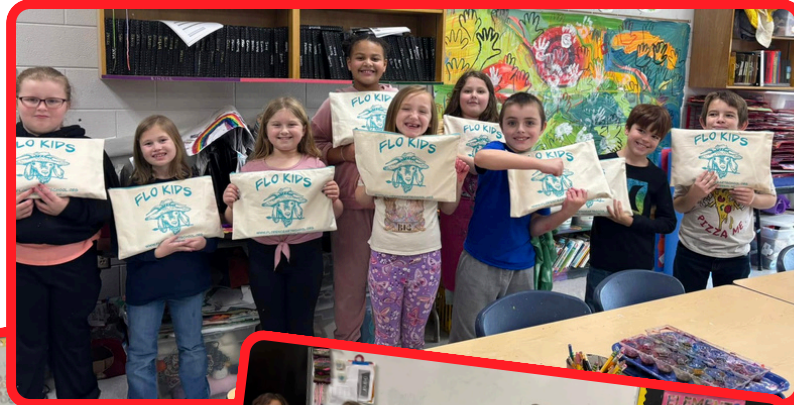


Our youngest learners had a blast with remote learning!  
One student even joined from his Florida vacation and  
another used his Alpha Bots to spell out his name during a  
Zoom session. They also had fun playing in the snow.





## BRES



Students dove into a Wit and Wisdom module on extreme settings, wilderness and survival. Ms. Wilson's class explored what it takes to build a civilization, shared survival strategies, and enjoyed a 'book tasting' with trail mix while cozying up in their tents. And 3rd-grade students received a generous donation of art supplies to take home, thanks to Florence Thomas Art School!

## MINES

Students raced into fun with Indi cars and coding mats, creating their own paths! And check out just a few of the lucky prize winners from the family engagement package, complete with a reading bingo card, a writing framework about a game, and a STEM challenge. They also showed off their attire for Western Day!







# WWVES



Congrats to Emerson L., our district winner of the Soil and Water Conservation Essay Contest! Her essay, 'Wetlands are Wonderful,' showcases the wetland ecosystem and American alligators. She'll advance to the regional round in March. And shout out to students who logged over 50,000 minutes in the January reading challenge. All 200+ minute readers earned a fun keychain. Plus, 3rd graders tackled an area and perimeter escape room!

# ACMS



Ms. Richardson's class soaked up the sunshine with a well-deserved trip to the track. Their smiles made the day even brighter!





# ACHS



ACHS wrestlers L. Wilson (left) and L. Osborne (right) will continue their careers at Emory & Henry University next season! Best of luck!  
#AsheProud  
(Pic: Ashe Post & Times)

Congrats to the ACHS swim team on a fantastic season! They set three school records, earned personal bests and came close to regionals. Evie P. broke the 100-yard breaststroke record, Abby B. set the 100-yard freestyle record, and Felice Z. topped the 100-yard backstroke. Head coach Adam Widner said everyone's time improved throughout the season.

Follow their [Facebook page](#) and [@achs.swimteam](#) on Instagram



Exciting news! A group of ACHS culinary students is one of five teams selected for the NC Jr. Chef Competition! They'll create a school lunch entrée that meets nutrition standards and uses local ingredients. Finalist teams will be announced in March—good luck, chefs! Stay tuned!  
Above: Mrs. Sturgill's class making homemade yeast rolls & pizza crust!

# AEC

What a fantastic turnout at AEC's Rising Freshmen Family Night! Incoming 9th graders and their families met teachers, toured classrooms, connected with student leaders, and learned about clubs, PTSO, and more. Big thanks to everyone who helped make it a great welcome to the AEC family!

