

Ashe County Schools

# WEEKLY UPDATE



Our Superintendent, Dr. Eisa Cox, took story time to kindergartners at Westwood Elementary during Read Across America Week. See more on following pages.

THROUGH  
**14**  
**MARCH**



## Important Upcoming Dates



- ✓ **March 17** - Elementary and Middle School Battle of the Books, Ashe County Museum 9:00 a.m.
- ✓ **March 17-20** - NC Pre-K DIAL Screening
- ✓ **March 21** - ELC Pre-K classes visit elementary schools
- ✓ **March 22** - AEC Prom at Summit on Cross Mountain
- ✓ **March 25** - EC Parent Night 5:30 p.m.



# Congratulations, Grant Winners!

At the March BOE meeting, we celebrated the amazing teachers who received Academic Innovation Mini Grants! These educators submitted their creative proposals and impressed in a pitch competition at Appalachian State University. Rachel Nave Lewis, Asst. Director of Curriculum and Instructional Design, ASU GEARUP, presented the awards to our winning teachers. Pictured with the winners are also Dr. Eisa Cox, Ashe County Schools Superintendent, and Karee Mackey, Ashe County GEAR UP Coordinator.



**\$5,000**

## AWARDEES:

**Jonathan Greene** - "The AEC Mountain Peak Players," geared toward building a theatre club and production at the Ashe Early College.

**\$5,000**

**Tonya Denny & team of Josh Beckworth, Nathan Colvard, Jennifer Miller, Megan Colvard** - "Criminal Minds: Where Literature Meets Investigation," focused on creating an interdisciplinary unit focused on bridging literacy and real-world forensic science.

**\$10,000**

**Ashe County Schools** - "Building Thinking Classrooms" partnership with New Teacher Support, focused on increasing accessible math modalities and approaches to increase student outcomes.

**#ASHEPROUD**



Tonya Denny was also honored as the first GEAR UP Innovator of the Year for her dedication to innovation in the classroom and community! She had the opportunity to attend a special event at the 2024 Academic Innovation Conference with external stakeholders. Her insights were highly praised and valued by the panel. And her peers also shared why she is so deserving of this honor: **WATCH HERE.**





# ACS Welcomes Jody Corum



Ashe County Schools welcomes Jody Corum to the team as Maintenance Director. He holds a master's degree in Business Administration from Queen's University of Charlotte and a Bachelor of Science from Appalachian State University. A proud graduate of Watauga High School, Jody has built a career marked by leadership, service and a commitment to making a difference.

*Outside of work, Jody enjoys spending time with family, reading and studying the Bible, and exploring the outdoors.*

*About his new role, he said, "I am honored to be joining Ashe County Schools, where I can contribute to a community that values education, collaboration and student success. I look forward to building strong relationships and making a positive impact in the lives of our students, staff and families."*

Most recently, Jody served as a Director at Pierce College in Lakewood & Puyallup, Washington (2023-2025) and previously held the role of Assistant Director of Engineering at Great Wolf Lodge in Grand Mound, Washington. Beyond professional accomplishments, family remains at the heart of Jody's life. His son, Clay, is 22 and works in Gastonia, N.C., supporting children with disabilities.

We wish Jody the best in his career here!

## Summer Camp Ahead

Ashe County Schools Afterschool is now accepting applications for its 2025 Summer Camp! This TUITION-FREE camp includes breakfast, lunch, and snacks every day! Plus, every week is packed with new adventures — 7 weeks of fun, summer themes and exciting field trips!

Summer Camp Orientation night is the last week of April. Apply now for more info. Scan the QR code at right or [CLICK HERE](#).

A colorful poster for 'ASHE CENTURY SUMMER CAMP'. The poster features a sun icon in the top left corner with the text 'BREAKFAST LUNCH, SNACK EVERYDAY'. In the top right corner, it says 'FREE TUITION'. The main title 'ASHE CENTURY SUMMER CAMP' is in large, bold, red letters. Below the title, it says '2 LOCATIONS WWES AND BRES \*WWES CURRENTLY FULL\*'. To the right of the title, it says 'Grades K-8'. Below the title, it says '7 WEEKS OF FUN!'. At the bottom, it says 'SPONSORED BY AFTERSCHOOL 21ST CENTURY GRANT' and 'JUNE 16- AUGUST 8'. There is a QR code with the text 'SCAN FOR APPLICATION' above it. At the bottom, it says 'CONTACT AFTERSCHOOL DIRECTOR MOLLY PORTER: (336)246-7175 (EXT 1014): MOLLY.DAWES@ASHE.K12.NC.US'. The background of the poster is light blue with clouds and a green field with two children running.



# Building the Future

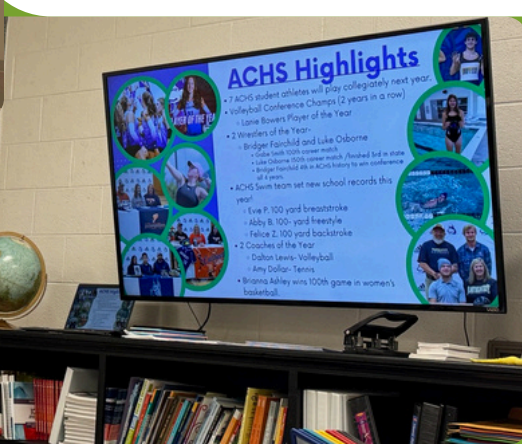
## ACS and AI Education

*ACS is collaborating with a diverse team of educators to develop a comprehensive AI education plan for teachers. Fully funded by the Burroughs Welcome Fund, we're proud to be one of three selected districts in our state. With Dr. Bill Daggett and his team, we're gaining valuable insight into preparing students for AI-driven careers and higher education. The three school superintendents present also came face-to-face with their AI versions!*



## Data Meetings

*Quarterly data meetings provide school leaders a chance to showcase strengths and progress. The first meeting of 2025 highlighted numerous student and faculty successes, offering plenty to celebrate!*





# Sharing Insights on Crisis Response

*In February, superintendents and community college presidents gathered for their fifth annual convening, focusing on strengthening community partnerships. Dr. Eisa Cox, our Superintendent, joined a panel on lessons learned from natural disasters and crises, sharing strategies for resilience and collaboration. Moderated by Mr. Mike Krause of the John M. Belk Endowment, the discussion brought together education leaders, including Dr. Rob Jackson (Buncombe County Schools), Dr. Tracy Mancini (Carteret Community College), and Dr. John Gossett (Asheville-Buncombe Community College). Dr. Cox shared her experiences and strategies in navigating crises, highlighting the resilience and collaboration necessary to support students and communities during challenging times.*



[Read More Here](#)

**YUM!**

## Making Summer Deliciously Healthy

It's back! Our FREE Summer Meal Program for Ashe County kids & teens (18 and under) is getting ready to fuel your summer.

This summer, the program kicks off at our elementary schools after school lets out in June. **Stay tuned: Dates and more info to come on our social media and website!**

For more info on nutrition & summer meals, visit:

- [SummerMeals4NCKids.org](https://SummerMeals4NCKids.org) @NCSchoolMeals #NCSummerMeals
- [NCDHHS.gov/SUNBucks](https://NCDHHS.gov/SUNBucks) @NCDHHS #SUNBucks
- [CarolinaHungerInitiative.org](https://CarolinaHungerInitiative.org) @CarolinaHungerInitiative



**12,664**

**nutritious meals—including  
breakfast & lunch—served to kids  
in our community last summer**





# Reading Celebration!



See our social media channels for more!



Read Across America Week in March is always a blast! Our students, teachers and staff celebrate reading and Dr. Seuss' birthday. Students enjoy visits from special guest readers (even the Cat in the Hat) and fun activities all week long ...



EARLY  
LEARNING  
CENTER



More smiles from the 100th day of school and Read Across America Week!

100th Day of School!





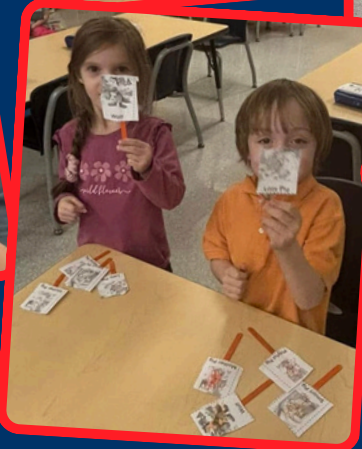
# BRES



BRES and Mrs. Williams hosted a High Country MathCounts Competition. The 6th-grade team worked throughout the year to master math concepts and competed in four rounds of challenging math questions!

Meanwhile, 4th graders learned about electricity and practiced building their own series and parallel circuits to light the bulb.

4th Grade Crafts Club made slime, and during Wit and Wisdom, kindergarteners worked with their accountability partners and made puppets to recall "Three Little Pigs."



# MIVES

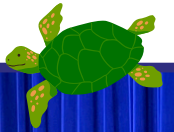


Diving into a fun math review, 6th graders visited interactive stations that let them practice key concepts through hands-on activities.

And in an awesome teamwork activity, our 5th graders got creative with an awesome STEM challenge! After reading "Salt in His Shoes," they invited 1st graders to design their own basketball hoop and put it to the test. 🏀 Looks like it was a slam dunk of success!



# WVNES



Snakes,  
turtles  
and more!



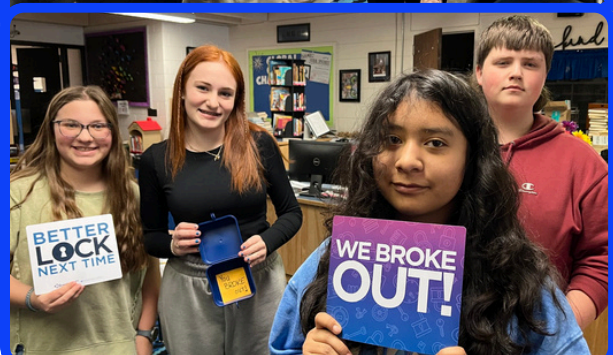
When @NC Aquarium at Pine Knoll Shores visited, it was an adventure like no other! Students took a Journey through NC to explore the amazing ecosystems and animals that call our state home. The best part? The aquarium brought LIVE animals for everyone to meet! Huge thanks to Mrs. Taylor for securing the grant that made this awesome experience possible!

# ACMS



Social Studies students took a deep dive into the history of WWII's Navajo Code Talkers with a super fun escape room activity! They cracked codes, solved puzzles and discovered the incredible role these heroes played during the war.

It was teamwork, problem-solving and history all wrapped into one epic learning experience — and every team completed the challenge!



NAVAJO WORD	LITERAL TRANSLATION	ALPHABET
WOLLA-CHIE	ANT	A
SHAGH	BEAR	B
MEGASH	CAT	C
BE	DEER	D
CHOD	BOX	E
CHAD	FOX	F
SH TAD	GIRL	G
CHIA	HAT	H
NIN	ICE	I
AN YA TIANE	JAW	J
SHO-HO-LONE	KETTLE	K
AN-JAD	LEG	L



Congratulations to our ACHS athletes for representing us so proudly at the Blue Ridge Hot Stove Dinner Awards!



#### 🏆 Baseball Finalists:

- Jordan T. – Rising Star of the Year & Utility Player of the Year
- Drew C. – Outfielder of the Year & Scholar Athlete of the Year
- Brodie B. – Catcher of the Year
- 

#### 🏆 Softball Finalists:

- Nadilyn E. – Outfielder of the Year
- Ally G. – Slugger of the Year



Junior Lily C. has been accepted to the prestigious Yale Young Global Scholars program this summer, earning an incredible opportunity to learn, grow, and connect with scholars from around the world.

Sophomore Alayna L. earned 3rd Place in the 2025 Blue Ridge Energy Leadership Track Speech Competition!



**Congratulations!**

3rd Place  
Leadership Track Speech Competition



Ashe Early High School students had a wonderful visit to Lees McRae College! They received great info during the admissions session and enjoyed the tour!

