CougarCall!

SEPTEMBER 20, 2024



Happy Friday, Cougar Crew! There is so much good news to celebrate across Asheville City Schools. From the start of Latine and Hispanic Heritage Month to exciting updates from our schools, ACS has started the year on such a joyful note. Here are just a few of the inspiring things that have been happening across our district. Wishing everyone a fun and restful weekend!

P.S. Don't forget to submit a nomination for our CLAWsome Prize Patrol! Complete this easy, brief **Google Form** to nominate an ACS crew member who has gone above and beyond and/or has demonstrated traits that reflect ACS's Three Promises (Sense of Belonging, Challenging and Relevant Content, Making Every Second Count). Please share this form and nominate a crew member at your school TODAY. **GO COUGARS!**



Who to Call: Updated Directory

Exciting news! Our updated ACS Services Directory is now live, making it easier than ever to connect with our dedicated department leads and support staff. Whether you're looking for a familiar face or you have a request for support, this handy tool has all the info you need. Check it out by **clicking here** and connect with the team working hard to make this school year the best one yet!



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Ira B. Jones Pizza & Pops Celebration!

On September 5th, Ira B. Jones Elementary hosted their annual Pizza & Pops Welcome Back Picnic for students and families! The Jones community had a great turnout and celebrated the new year with friends, food, and fun. They even had special guest appearances by ACS's Dr. Mark Dickerson who DJ'd, and the Buncombe County Library who provided free books for students to take home! To top it all off, Jones revealed their new school logo which celebrates their magnet theme of Global Scholars. There's no place like Jones!!!






AHS & SILSA Completed Gym Renovations

Cougar pride has never been stronger on our high school campus! ACS was thrilled to unveil the completed renovations to our high school gym on September 5th before our first women's home volleyball game. Our students even did the honor of cutting the ribbon! There is no doubt about the legacy that she has left on our high schools, but now Coach Vette's signature is permanently enshrined on the gym floor, forever cementing her impact on our student athletes and high schools. Sorry (not sorry) TC, we know this will add insult to injury after all of our Cougar wins this year!



Celebrating Chef Sara Monson

Our very own Chef Sara Monson from Asheville High School was highlighted recently in a wonderful ***edible* ASHEVILLE** feature! As a teacher at Asheville High and SILSA, Sara oversees the popular culinary arts and hospitality management courses, offered through the schools' Career and Technical Education program. They are the most sought-after CTE courses offered at the school.

Each year, Sara introduces cooking skills to well over 100 students, oversees the schools' student-led Groundhogs Café restaurant and prepares a promising batch of young chefs for state and national competitions run by the National Restaurant Association. Chef Sara, Asheville City Schools is beyond grateful to have your talent, expertise, and passion at our high schools. Thank you for shaping and mentoring future generations of chefs, bakers, and culinary artists!



HFE Awarded Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program

Hall Fletcher Elementary has been chosen to participate in the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) for the 2024-2025 school year! A total of 212 elementary schools across North Carolina were selected to participate in the program.

The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program snacks are provided to enrolled students as an opportunity to experience, at no cost, nutritious fresh fruit and vegetable snacks during the instructional school day throughout the school year, or until funds are exhausted. This program will create an even healthier school environment and will expand the variety of fresh fruits and vegetables students experience so they learn that healthy choices are delicious, too! Through our partnership with Chartwells, there will be Discovery Kitchen events where students will try unique fresh fruits and vegetables, which will also incorporate a hands-on educational component. Students will sample fresh fruits and vegetables, try to identify them and win prizes with their correct answers. A huge thank you to Deborah Jones, Melissa Allen, and Chef Nick Bobotas for ensuring our HFE students have healthy, delicious food choices everyday.



TAPAS Educator Application is Open!

The Asheville City Schools Foundation's TAPAS (Teaching Artists Presenting in Asheville Schools) Educator Application is now open! Bring the arts into YOUR classroom! Choose from a variety of artist residencies and local field trip opportunities to provide your students with creative and hands-on art experiences! Review the **TAPAS Fall Catalog** and **apply today!**

TAPAS is a program of the Asheville City Schools Foundation that implements high quality artists residencies in ACS PreK-12 classrooms to create craft and performance experiences across all curriculum. Between 2010-2024, TAPAS has impacted more than 10,900 ACS students, trained over 58 artists, and provided more than 950 days of artists in residence. Educators overwhelmingly report that classroom artists residencies successfully promote student enthusiasm and participation and student understanding of curriculum is deeper when taught as a creative project. To learn more, **click here**!



Celebrating Hispanic and Latine Heritage Month

Happy Hispanic and Latine Heritage Month! Every day offers us opportunities to celebrate the rich cultures, histories, and incredible contributions of Latine and Hispanic communities, but especially this

month (September 15th-October 15th)! From music and art to science and leadership, their impact has shaped our district, city, country, and world in countless ways. Let's take this time to honor the stories, advance equity, and inspire future generations to embrace their storied heritage with pride! Our amazing Curriculum and Instruction and Equity Departments have collaborated to provide a variety of resources and activities for our educators this month (**such as these**). ¡COUGAR ORGULLO!



Congratulations Maya LeRoy!

In case you missed it! With more than 2,300 people casting a vote, Buncombe County Election Services announced that Asheville Middle School 7th grader Maya LeRoy's 'I Voted' sticker design won the 2024 Youth Election Sticker contest! Young artists across Buncombe County submitted almost 70 different sticker designs, which were narrowed down to 10 finalists. Maya's design will be available to all Buncombe County voters in the upcoming presidential election. Congratulations, Maya! Your design and the values that it represents are truly beautiful. You make your Cougar family incredibly proud!

"*I want voters to know that it is important for all different types of people to vote because they should get to have a say in the people that will run our country.*" - Maya LeRoy

ACS is hosting a series of voter registration opportunities across our district over the next few weeks. Upcoming opportunities to register and make your voice heard:

- Isaac Dickson Elementary - September 24th, 4:00-6:00 PM
- Hall Fletcher Elementary - October 1st, 5:00-6:30 PM



Celebrating our Asheville Middle Community

We have loved hearing all of the positive stories of connection, belonging, and exploration from our new Asheville Middle School community! Staff and students ended the first week of school by wearing student Avery Ortega's t-shirt design which represented the joined communities of Asheville Middle and Montford North Star. We'd like to extend another *huge* thank you to the following members of our Middle School Reconfiguration Team whose passion and tireless efforts have truly made our new middle school community a special place:

Vicky Allen	Brian Powchak	Dr. Jim Causby
Katy Hardy	Jen Doherty	Shannon Baggett
Jason Conklin	Kelli Madkins	Dr. Kim Dechant
Leah Kiell	Katlyn Hughes	April Dockery
Sarah Armstarong	Chiloh Reece	Ann O'Brien
Ebony Johnson	Rachel Flaherty	Tima Williams
Alice Armstrong	Kate Young	Steve Martinez
A'miya Seagraves	Breon Ireland	Marilee Woodard



Delicious ACS meals for students and staff

Fueling our future! Our Asheville City Schools' Nutrition Program has some exciting updates to share about adult meals in our cafeterias. Starting this school year, there is a punch card program available to any and all ACS employees. It's just like a rewards program and every time you eat breakfast or lunch with us, you earn a punch on your card. On your 8th punch, your meal is free! Once you redeem your card, you get another one! If you're interested in dining with us and getting a card, see the amazing cafeteria staff at your school.

ACS is so proud to offer a wide variety of really great food, including daily vegetarian options, fresh fruits and vegetables, and tons of delicious made-from-scratch meals. To see our menu, **click here** and select your school. Adult lunches are served a la carte: lunch entrees are $2.50 each and sides and milk are $.75 each. We'll see you in the lunch line!



Special visit from the Asheville Fire Department

In case you missed this heartwarming story from this summer: On the last day of summer school at Hall Fletcher Elementary, students experienced a very special visit from the Asheville Fire Department! Firefighters answered questions and gave students an up close look at some of the tools they use on the job. Thank you Asheville Fire Fighters for taking time out of your busy schedules to give our students truly special memories - you may have just inspired the next generation of the Asheville Fire Department! An extra special thank you to Trinette Ruff-Beck, Malorie Lewis, and Melissa Hedt for making our summer programming such a fun and magical place for students.





Exciting Communications Updates and Reminders

BIG NEWS COUGARS! We are so excited to announce that our new and improved **website is now live**! Get ready to explore all the amazing things happening in our district! From important announcements, school calendars, and staff and student highlights, this is your one-stop shop for everything ACS.

Want to stay in the loop and get the inside scoop on all the awesome things happening in our district? Then make sure to follow ACS on social media!

From student shoutouts and sports victories to behind-the-scenes fun with your favorite educators, our social channels are packed with highlights you won't want to miss. Plus, you'll be the first to hear about important events, announcements, and opportunities to get involved. Hit that follow button, join the community, and let's keep the Cougar pride spirit going strong, online and off! Our handle for both **Instagram** and **Facebook** is @avlcityschools.





Cougar Academy for Leadership and Learning

Dr. Fehrman is thrilled to launch Cougar Academy for Leadership and Learning (CALL). CALL is a leadership development academy open to each and every staff member in ACS. No matter your role in ACS, this is an opportunity to invest in your growth as a leader. If you are interested in building your leadership skills and gaining a deeper understanding of district-level operations, don't wait to apply! The inaugural cohort will be capped at 15 learners.

We will explore critical topics such as leadership fundamentals, district and school finance, human resources, equity initiatives, community partnerships, best practices in teaching and learning, and operational excellence.

Don't miss this chance to accelerate your career growth. **Apply Now** to secure your spot in this transformative program. Applications are due by Monday, October 7.



Alumni Spotlight: Caleb Rudow, Class of '05

ACS alumni go on to do incredible things! Caleb Rudow is a Cougar through and through; Caleb first joined ACS as a student at Issac Dickson Elementary School before attending Asheville Middle and Asheville High. From 2012-2014, he served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Zambia. Caleb has worked as a consultant with the World Bank Group and serves as a Research Fellow at the Center for Open Data Enterprise in Washington DC. Caleb currently serves in the NC House of Representative and is running for the 11th Congressional District. On top of all that he does on behalf of our community, Caleb took time during the first week of school to welcome students as they arrived. Caleb, you make your Cougar family incredibly proud!

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GoodNews!

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BELONG
HERE


CHALLENGING
AND
RELEVANT


EVERY
SECOND
COUNTS