

AAST NEWSLETTER

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AAST Welcomes Chris Singleton



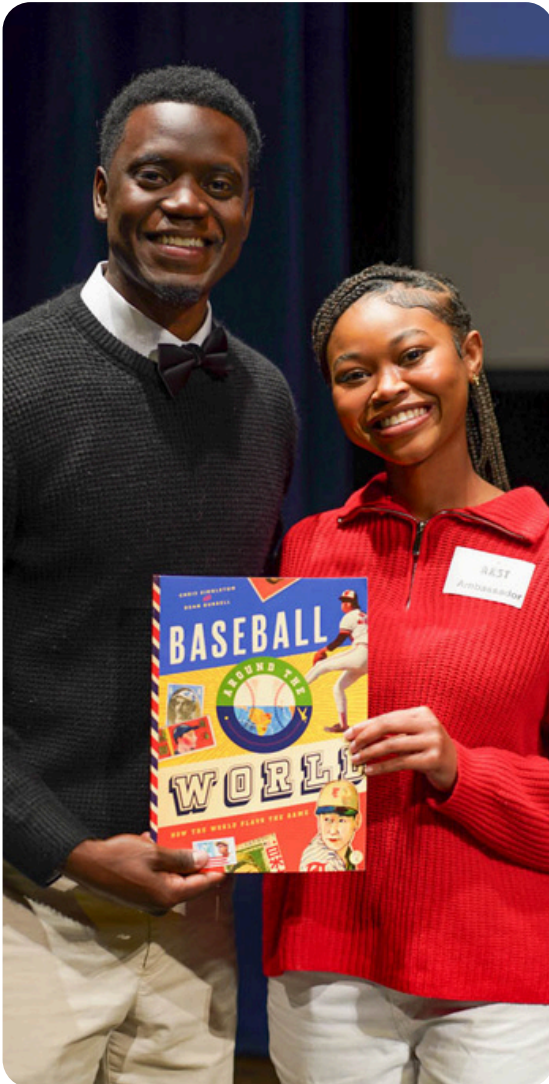
February 9 - February 13, 2026

On Tuesday, junior and senior classes had the privilege of hearing from Chris Singleton, a powerful voice for resilience, unity, and hope.

"Chris is more than a motivational speaker." After losing his mother in the 2015 tragedy at Mother Emanuel Church, he made the courageous decision to choose "forgiveness over hate" and "purpose over despair." Rather than allowing tragedy to define him, he has dedicated his life to helping others come together, build understanding, and move forward with strength and compassion.

Our students were inspired by Chris's honesty, authenticity, and the way he challenged each of us to support one another and lead with heart. His message reminded us that even in the most difficult moments, we have the power

to create connection, healing, and positive change. Thank you, Chris, for sharing your story and for encouraging our students to be leaders of unity in their school and community.



Applications are now OPEN! You may apply on the Horry County Schools or AAST website. Application deadline is February 19, 2026.

Upcoming Events



ACT TEST
FEBRUARY 24

SENIOR TRIP
FEBRUARY 25-MARCH 1

HCS BATTLE OF THE BOOKS COMPETITION
MARCH 5

HOSA STATE CONFERENCE
MARCH 11 - MARCH 13

ROBOTICS @ LOWER RICHLAND
MARCH 12 - 14

TSA STATE CONFERENCE
MARCH 20-21

ROBOTICS @ HARTSVILLE
MARCH 26 - 28

AAST TALENT SHOW
MARCH 31, 6:00

SPRING BREAK
APRIL 3 - APRIL 10

Happy Valentine's Day

The deadline for applying to AAST is next week- February 19. We invite our students and families to share their love for AAST with their friends and neighbors, and encourage them to apply. If they are interested, please share our brochures. Each brochure provides detailed information about the curriculum, opportunities, and career pathways for every program at AAST.

You can find all of the brochures conveniently [here](#) to help learn more about what each major has to offer.

AAST Welcomes Montana Visitors

On Tuesday, AAST hosted student leaders from Kalispell, Montana. They traveled across the country to see student-led, project-based learning in action, envisioning what can be in their own schools. Our AAST student ambassadors shared their experiences with these students and highlighted how they balance personalized learning with base school activities.



AAST Hosts Successful Open House



Our final Open House of the year was a huge success! Thank you to everyone who joined us. Applications will close on February 19 on the HCS website. Applying students will receive notice on March 30.

HCS Job Fair



We loved meeting future teachers at the HCS Educators Recruitment Fair on Saturday. Congratulations to all the new hires, we can't wait to see the impact you have on our communities!

The Yearbook staff needs your help! We would love to highlight AAST students who participate in athletics, clubs, theater, band, chorus, or other activities at their base high school. If your child is involved, please submit a photo of them participating.

Before uploading, rename the file to include your child's full name (ex. JohnDoe.jpeg) and use only .jpeg or .png formats. Photos must be from the 2025-26 school year. Space is limited, so not all photos may be used.

[Submit photos using the form linked here.](#)

Deadline: Thursday, February 19 at 11:59 PM.

No late submissions will be accepted.

Questions? Contact Jodi Rielly at jrielly@horrycountyschools.net

Literacy in the Limelight



On Tuesday, 19 of our talented AAST theatre students and Ms. Penn brought The Magic Box assembly to k4-3rd graders at Ocean Bay Elementary. Using Literacy Connects' Stories that Soar! framework – a program that transforms young writers' original ideas into performance art – our cast introduced the "Magic Box" in a 20-minute performance. Students from Ocean Bay will fill the Magic Box with original stories, and our theatre ensemble will turn those imaginative pieces into a dynamic variety show that celebrates and empowers the voices of young writers. We'll head back to Ocean Bay on March 3 to collect the stories straight from the authors themselves, and then we'll return on April 17 to perform the new work our students create from those stories.

Because when a child sees their story come to life, literacy stops being an assignment – and starts becoming power. #risewithreading

From Classroom to College Stage

On Thursday, Ms. Penn's Theatre classes and Ms. Bell's English students traveled to Coastal Carolina University to see a performance of *Godspell* by the university's theatre department. Seventy students attended, experiencing college-level theatre in action.

For English students, the production showed how literature transforms from page to stage, bringing themes, characterization, and symbolism to life. After the performance, students participated in a talkback with the cast, crew, and designers, learning about artistic choices, technical elements, and theatre career pathways.

Technical Theatre students also enjoyed a backstage tour and met with faculty to discuss college programs and industry preparation – connecting classroom learning to real-world creative opportunities.



Valentine's Candy

A big thank-you to our amazing Parent Involvement Committee for the Valentine's Day candy treat provided for every student! We appreciate your continued support in making our school community so special. ❤️



Game of Life Banners



We would like to recognize and thank our senior students for designing the Game of Life banners for our upcoming end-of-year event with the junior class. Their creativity, time, and effort have helped make this tradition even more special, and the banners will add a meaningful touch as we celebrate and bring our students together for this memorable occasion.

Spirit Week

