

NEWSLETTER UPDATE



**Read Across America
Week:** Dr. Susan Mochen
reads to students.

MARCH 2026

asheschools.org

POLLY JONES RECEIVES STATE HONOR

Ashe County Schools congratulates retired teacher and current Board of Education member Polly Jones. She was recently inducted into the Order of the Long Leaf Pine, North Carolina's highest civilian honor. Governor Josh Stein recognized Jones for her lifelong dedication to education and public service. Already a recipient of the National Women in American History Award, Mrs. Jones continues to leave a lasting legacy of leadership. We applaud Mrs. Jones on this well-deserved honor. [Read more.](#)



MILLER EARNS TOP AWARD

Congratulations to Jennifer Miller of Ashe County High School for being named a 2026 Morehead-Cain Impact Educator! This award celebrates teachers who profoundly shape future leaders. As an honoree, Jennifer is eligible for a \$2,500 Discovery Fund grant to support professional development this summer. We celebrate her "legacy of leadership" and the incredible impact she makes on students. Thank you, Jennifer, for your dedication to excellence in education.

NATIONAL BETA CLUB HONORS ASHE EARLY COLLEGE



Ashe Early College was named a 2025–2026 National Beta Club John W. Harris Leadership Award recipient. As one of only five Senior Division nationwide winners, the club is recognized for exceptional service. Ten members will attend a Regional Leadership Summit next year to further develop. Congrats to these students and their leaders.

A GARDEN GRANT FOR ACMS

Thank you to Keep North Carolina Beautiful, who awarded Ashe County Middle School a \$2,000 grant to support the growth of its community garden. Through this project, students will learn organic and sustainable food production techniques that promote healthy living across Ashe County.

The garden is dedicated in memory of beloved media coordinator Kelly Holleman, with the hope that it will serve as a place of healing, reflection, and connection for generations of students to come.



SUCCESSFUL PANC MEETING

We were honored to host a successful PANC meeting on March 6. Sincere thanks to Pierce Group Benefits for breakfast from Sweet and Savory, Wilkes Community College for the accommodating space, and New River Barista for the coffee—and our Northwest PANC colleagues for their meaningful participation and support.



FUND CLASSROOM IDEAS

Ashe County Schools educators, don't miss out! The Endowment Fund Grant application deadline is coming up on April 13. You can apply for up to \$1,500 to fund your innovative classroom projects and new learning approaches.

Submit completed applications to Rhonda Smith at Central Support Services by the close of business. Winners will be announced this summer—apply today to bring your creative ideas to life!

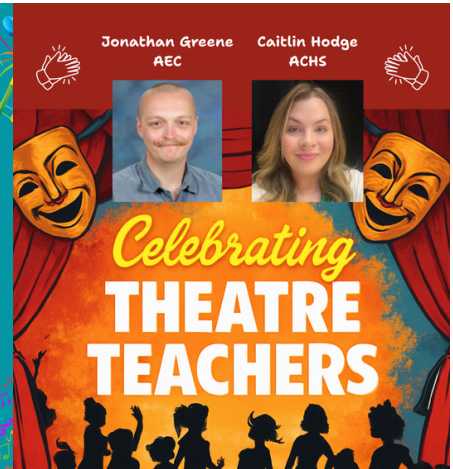


APPRECIATION IN ACTION

This month, we're celebrating the creative spark of our arts educators and the vital support of our school social workers and maintenance teams—and their dedication to keeping our students inspired, safe, and supported every single day. [See more on our Facebook page.](#)

Arts in Education Month

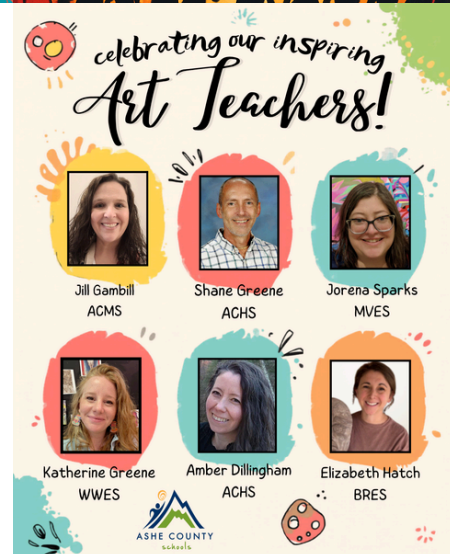
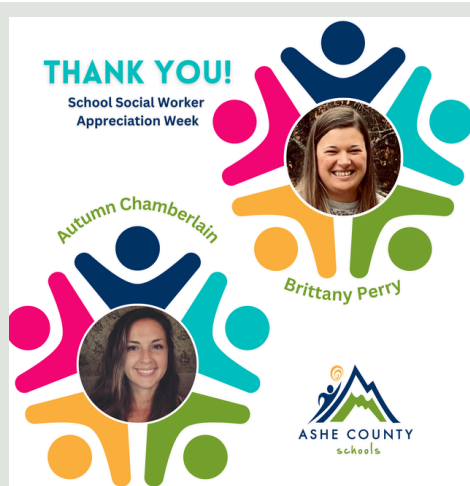
Thank you to our creative art, music and theatre teachers for the many ways they inspire students. Families can visit the "Young at Art" exhibit at Ashe County Arts Center through April 18 to see artwork of our talented youth. And watch our social media for opportunities to catch our students' upcoming music and theatre performances.



School Social Worker Appreciation

Thank you to our amazing ACS social workers — Brittany Perry and Autumn Chamberlain — for their powerful impact and life-changing support for students every day!

Their care and advocacy make a lasting difference.



Maintenance Worker Appreciation

We extend our appreciation to our dedicated maintenance team members across the district.

Their behind-the-scenes efforts ensure our facilities remain safe, functional, and welcoming for students and staff.



Coming in April

4 - School Librarian Appreciation Day

6-10 - Assistant Principal Appreciation Week

20-24 - Afterschool Professionals Appreciation Week

22 - Administrative Professionals Appreciation Day

28 - Bus Driver Appreciation Day

EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH

Ashe County Schools proudly honors Mr. Stefan Kunz and Ms. Tonya Sizemore as our March Employees of the Month. Mr. Kunz, a versatile teacher at Ashe Early College, is recognized for his creative leadership and dedication to student activities. Ms. Sizemore, the Afterschool Programs Director, is celebrated for her heart-led leadership and for creating safe, enriching environments for students and staff alike. Both represent the district's very best.

Click to see why their peers voted Mr. Kunz and Ms. Sizemore as this month's cream of the crop.



SUMMER CAMP'S BACK FOR 2026

The Ashe County Schools 21st Century Summer Camp returns with a free, engaging opportunity for students from all elementary schools and the middle school. The camp will run weekdays from 7:00 AM–6:00 PM across multiple summer sessions. Students will enjoy hands-on activities, field trips, and visits from local programs. Only 80 spots are available. [Register here to secure your child's spot.](#)

Location: Mountain View Elementary

Time: M–F, 7 AM – 6 PM

Dates: June 15–July 3 & July 13–August 7

2026-2027 SCHOOL DATES

Ashe County Schools has released the approved 2026-2027 academic calendar. Students return to classrooms on August 17, 2026, with the year concluding on June 3, 2027. Key breaks include December 21 – January 5 and a spring recess from March 26 – April 2.

As always, calendar dates are subject to change due to inclement weather.

[View the full schedule online to plan ahead.](#)



IMPORTANT DATES

April 1 – WWES Community Visit Day

April 2 – ACMS Career Fair

April 3 – Good Friday Holiday

April 6-10 – Spring Break for Students (6th-8th are optional teacher workdays)

April 16 – Special Olympics | ACHS

– AEC HINT Mystery Dinner Theatre | 6 PM

April 30 – 5th Grade Ag Expo | Ashe Agricultural Campus

– ACHS Hiring Fair

– WWES Art Night | 6-8 PM



SCHOOL HIGHLIGHTS



**MORE ON OUR
SOCIAL MEDIA**

