Celebrating our Heroes, Saluting their Service

Ashe County Schools Honors Local Veterans

Ashe County Schools proudly honored local veterans during our annual Veterans Day celebration on Friday, November 6. The special program once again brought together veterans, students, school staff, and community members to recognize those who have served our country and to reflect on the freedoms made possible through their courage, commitment, and sacrifice.

Patriotism, Performances & Pride

The morning began with a drive-thru parade at Westwood Elementary, where staff and students demonstrated enthusiastic patriotism in thanking veterans. The celebration continued as veterans were escorted into the Ashe County High School gymnasium, where they were treated to pre-program music, including an Armed Forces Medley, thanks to Blue Ridge Elementary School fifth graders and the Mountain View Elementary School Student Leadership Team.



The JROTC Color Guard officially opened the ceremony with the Presentation of Colors, followed by the National Anthem performed by ACMS student Elizabeth Mosley.

After Superintendent Dr. Eisa Cox welcomed attendees, students from across the district helped make the occasion memorable through music and special tributes to those veterans in attendance and the generations who have served. Thank you to Westwood Elementary School fifth and sixth graders, the Ashe County Middle School Band, and the Ashe County High School Band, as well as the Ashe County Middle School Student Lighthouse Team.



The program featured **Dr. Lynn Gibbard**, a military veteran, the wife of a veteran who served in combat, and a Professor of Communication Studies at Appalachian State University, as its guest speaker.

Drawing on her personal experiences as both a veteran and an educator, Dr. Gibbard offered a meaningful perspective on the importance of military service, the sacrifices made by the men and women who serve our nation, and the freedoms Americans enjoy because of their dedication and commitment. She encouraged attendees to find meaningful ways to support local veterans and their families while also inspiring students to consider military service as an honorable and rewarding career path.



The program also included special messages from JROTC Cadet LTC Sam Hess and Cadet CSM William Griffith, followed by closing remarks from ACHS Principal Farmer.

Service, Sacrifice & Sincere Gratitude

The program's most important message was one of gratitude. This yearly event an opportunity to recognize the sacrifices made by those who have worn our nation's uniform and remind younger generations of the importance of honoring their service.

Superintendent Dr. Eisa Cox emphasized the importance of carrying forward the legacy of those who have served, reminding students that honoring veterans extends beyond a single day of recognition.

> *"One of the greatest ways we can honor our veterans is to be worthy stewards of the freedoms they have defended. As educators, we have an important responsibility to help our students understand the sacrifices behind those freedoms and the importance of honoring our nation's ideals through service, respect, and responsible citizenship."*

Ashe County Schools is incredibly grateful to the veterans who have served our country, as well as the families who have supported them along the way. We also extend our appreciation to the students, teachers, school staff, and JROTC members who helped make this year's celebration so meaningful.

To all our veterans: Thank you for your service, your sacrifice, and your dedication to our country. We are proud to honor you, today and every day!

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