



NORTH CAROLINA SCHOOLS TO WATCH

MODEL SCHOOL—VISITOR'S GUIDE

Ashe County Middle School



Designated in 2003;

Re-Designated 2006, 2009, 2012, 2015

Ashe County Middle School • Ashe County Schools
Ashe County • North Carolina • Earl Pennington, Principal
255 Northwest Lane, PO Box 259,
Warrensville, NC 28693 • Phone (336) 384-3591

2013-14 School Statistics

(Source: 2013 NC School Report Card.)

Community: Rural
Enrollment: 483
Grade Levels: 7-8
School Schedule: Traditional

Student Demographics

91% White
6% Hispanic
3% Other

63% Free/Reduced Lunch
1.7% English Learners

2014 DNM Exceeded Growth
Met 30 of 31 Annual Measurable Objectives
2013 DNM Expected Growth
Met 20 of 21 Annual Measurable Objectives
2012 AYP: High Growth, School of Distinction
Met 16 of 17 performance targets
2011 AYP: High Growth, School of Distinction
Met 20 of 21 performance targets

(Visit <http://www.ncreportcards.org> to view this school's data for prior years.)

School Characteristics and Replicable Practices

Ashe County Middle School is located in the northwest corner of NC--high in the Blue Ridge Mountains. The school of about 500 students is located in a very rural area and is the center of the community--and is of great pride and importance to the county. A rich school environment has been created through numerous resources, community involvement, and a caring school community. Ashe County Middle School is committed and passionate to make a positive difference in the life of every young adolescent they teach. We continue our efforts to ensure that ALL students feel a sense of belonging and value.

Academic Excellence

- ACMS continues to be a "No Excuses" learning agent.
- Rigorous academic standards demonstrate that staff believes all students can succeed in reaching their full potential.
- Teachers adapt curriculum to the specific needs of each student and scaffold lessons so that each one, no matter the academic ability, are challenged beyond what he/she believes is attainable.
- Students are provided a variety of methods to demonstrate their learning.
- Students are involved in their own assessment process as they work with peers to compare

- Teachers offer choice in reading materials and independent studies, small group work, special interest enrichment activities, and presentations that integrate reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills.
- Teachers work together to ensure that all students progress in a developmentally and appropriate manner.
- Weekly staff meetings and biweekly teacher led content area meetings further allow staff to share and examine best practices.
- Academic enrichment is fostered through various clubs and activities.

Developmental Responsiveness

- Staff instills in students a sense of belonging and develops a growth mentality so they recognize the need to improve and appreciate improvement in others.
- Learning communities within the school are an integral part of the solid academic and social foundation created for students.
- Students are encouraged to become involved and give back to help those in need through participation in fundraising and recognition of significant events.
- Emphasis is placed on health and wellness school-wide among students and staff.
- Students have several occasions to experience new learning environments before moving to and from the middle grades.
- Students are a voice within the school system as they are involved in supporting and representing the school.
- ACMS connects to family and community via multiple avenues of communication.
- Reflective faculty continually assesses and re-evaluates students' needs.
- Students are expected to exhibit good character, experience new knowledge, work to attain goals, and engage in quality time with others through several programs within the school.
- Effective relationships are formed with businesses, industries, community colleges, and universities in promoting college and career readiness.

Social Equity

- The school provides equal access to valued knowledge in all classes and activities.
- High achievement is expected of ALL students.
- While placing value on interdependence, diversity is celebrated; believing that each one has something of great value to offer
- Programs and activities are designed to ensure that all students have a sense of belonging and connection to the school.
- The school implements a variety of structures, supports, and practices that are effective in meeting the needs of students.
- Proactive intervention ensures that students remain engaged in learning.
- Teachers adapt curriculum and differentiate instruction in order to meet learner needs and support all students.
- World Culture Day, Pakistan Project, Communities in Schools, Inclusion classes, AIG, Advisory Time, Bulldog Pals, and Band promote positive relationships and global awareness.
- We take pride in acknowledging the successes, accomplishments, and efforts of all students.
- Hosting of annual events and programs ensure equity among students.
- Ashe County Middle builds positive relationships with parents, family, and community.
- The Communities in Schools program provides mentors and supplies for some at-risk children.
- The Bulldog Pals program offers free weekend food for students who are in need.

- Cross-curricular interdisciplinary units provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of content, as well as participate in activities and projects with students of varying needs.
- Successes, accomplishments, and efforts of ALL students are celebrated through recognition, activities, and awards.

Organizational Support

- A shared vision is present and all staff feels empowered.
- School culture is reflected in the mutual respect and positive interaction among staff, students, and peers.
- Positive partnerships are developed with the community, arts council, health organizations, and others.
- Families are a critical part of all areas of the school and participate regularly in conversations about increasing achievement and promoting improvement.
- In supporting both the emotional and physical development of students, varying resources are in place.
- The on-site Bulldog Health Clinic supports the emotional and physical development of students and meets their immediate physical, immunizations, and dental needs.
- Teachers serve as mentors to guide novice teachers and demonstrate best practices in the classroom.
- School leadership team consists of administration, School Improvement Team, and a team leader from each of the six teacher teams.
- Leadership team works collaboratively to ensure best practices and teacher support to contribute to effective school advancement.
- School day consists of a five-block schedule, which allows for 65-minute core subjects.
- Seventh grade students rotate within Encore classes each nine weeks, while eighth grade students rotate each semester.
- Students select their Encore classes, with the exception of physical education requirements.
- Transitioning opportunities are incorporated throughout the school year.
- Resource staff, such as literacy specialist, IT technician, CTE coordinator/technology facilitator and Model Reading 180 coordinator further increases teacher and student support.

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Rev. 2015