



Challenging young minds to soar.

Dr. Todd Holden, *Superintendent* • Charles L. King, *Chairman* • Charles B. Jones, Jr., *Vice-Chairman* • Dr. Lee Beckworth • Polly Jones • Terry Williams

March 2015

Dear Parents,

We are writing to let you know about an exciting new resource for middle-school students, families and schools. Ashe County was recently named a GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) school district. As a GEAR UP school district, our students will receive many resources and services over the next seven years to help them prepare for success in life after high school and in college.

My name is Karee Mackey and I will be coordinating GEAR-UP activities. I have worked in youth development the last 19 years with the 4-H program in Watauga County. I love working with young people and finding creative activities to interest them. With 4-H, we explored everything from plants and animals to science and technology with camps, workshops, summer and other programs. GEAR-UP is a college and career awareness and readiness program. We will be working with 6th and 7th graders this year and follow them through high school. The GEAR-UP program promotes the value of education and provides support for students, teachers and parents to help students succeed in middle school and beyond.

We look forward to offering many engaging activities and programs. Some of our plans include helping to provide tutors to assist with classwork, professional development for teachers, and college visit tours and field trips to explore career options. You will be hearing more about GEAR UP as it becomes a visible part of our school district.

We cannot wait to get started working with students in the classroom, outside of school and during the summer. Parents are a crucial part of the success of our students. We first want to know what ways we can connect with parents and students. As we formulate our programs, we would love your input. You can give us some initial feedback by completing this form by April 17:

<http://tinyurl.com/inputashegu>

Please give me a call if you would prefer a paper copy of the survey.

We are housed at the middle-school and available to provide resources and assistance. Please do not hesitate to give us a call or swing by. The school number is 336-384-3591. My email address is karee.mackey@ashe.k12.nc.us

We will be in contact with you again in the near future and look forward to working with students, staff and families.

Sincerely,

Karee Mackey, GEAR UP Coordinator



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