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Serving Anson County and the Municipalities of Ansonville, Lilesville, McFarlan, Morven, Peachland, Polkton and Wadesboro.

Michael Freeman Named Acting Superintendent of Anson Schools

Dr. Brian Ratliff will conclude service as interim superintendent; leadership change effective Oct. 19

The Anson County Board of Education has announced a change in leadership for Anson County Schools, with former Superintendent Michael Freeman approved to serve as acting superintendent beginning October 19.

Dr. Brian Ratliff, who has been serving as interim superintendent, will conclude his service in that position. The Board did not provide additional details in its September 30 announcement concerning Ratliff's departure or the longer-term process for selecting a superintendent.

Ratliff has led the school system during a period that included improvements in student academic performance. Anson County Schools recently announced that the district remained off the state's Low-Performing District list for the second consecutive year, with several schools meeting or exceeding expected academic growth during the 2025-26 school year.

In announcing the leadership transition, the Board praised Ratliff for his relationships with students, employees, families and the community and said his decisions had remained focused on what was best for students.

"At the heart of Dr. Ratliff's leadership has always been his genuine love for students," the Board stated. "He has a remarkable ability to connect with them, celebrate their successes, and make sure they know they matter."

Freeman will assume the responsibilities of acting superintendent and work with the Board of Education, district leadership, employees, families and the community as the school system continues its operations and ongoing initiatives.

The Board said its priority during the transition will be maintaining stability and continuity while continuing to focus on serving Anson County's students, staff, families and community.

People Fest Returns this Saturday!

The wait is almost over! After years away, one of Wadesboro's favorite hometown traditions makes its long-awaited return this Saturday, October 10, as People Fest takes over uptown Wadesboro for a full day and night of food, music, fun and community celebration.

People Fest gets underway at 9 a.m. and continues until 5 p.m., giving everyone eight hours to eat, listen, play, wander around uptown, run into people they haven't seen lately and generally remember why a hometown festival can be so much fun. And it won't take long for things to start twirling because the MBM Twirly Girls School of Baton students are scheduled to perform at 9:30 a.m., bringing plenty of spinning batons, flying tosses and youthful energy to get People Fest off to a lively start.

Food trucks will be serving up plenty to eat, live music will keep things lively, and games and activities for children will make sure the younger festival-goers have plenty to do. It's the kind of day when the biggest decisions may be what to eat first and whether there's room for something else afterward.

And when 5 p.m. arrives, don't assume People Fest is finished!

The celebration picks up again after dark with fireworks at 9 p.m., putting a bright and appropriately noisy exclamation point on the return of a Wadesboro tradition.

The Town of Wadesboro describes the revived festival as a day of "community connection and celebration," and that may be exactly what makes its return so special. People Fest has always been about more than entertainment. It's an opportunity for Wadesboro and Anson County residents to get together, visit with friends and neighbors and simply enjoy their community.

There are plenty of memories attached to People Fest, which dates back to 1983. Longtime residents may remember attending the festival years ago, while children, younger residents and newcomers will have an opportunity Saturday to experience the tradition for themselves.

So there's no need to mark the calendar anymore...it's here!

People Fest returns to uptown Wadesboro this Saturday, October 10, beginning at 9 a.m. Come hungry, bring the family, stay awhile — and remember to come back for the fireworks at 9 p.m.

After years away, People Fest is back. And Wadesboro is ready!

Important Dates Ahead for NC Voters

Registration deadline is this Friday, October 9; early voting begins Oct. 15 for the Nov. 3 election

With the November 3 General Election less than a month away, Anson County voters have several important dates approaching, beginning with the regular voter registration deadline this Friday, October 9.

The deadline to register to vote for those planning to vote on Election Day is 5 p.m. Friday, October 9. Voters who miss that deadline may still register and vote using same-day registration during the early voting period. NCSBE

In-person early voting begins Thursday, October 15, and continues through Saturday, October 31. During early voting, voters may cast their ballots at any early voting location in their county rather than being limited to their assigned Election Day precinct. Early voting ends at 3 p.m. October 31. NCSBE

Voters planning to cast an absentee ballot by mail should also keep an eye on the calendar. The deadline to request an absentee ballot is 5 p.m. Tuesday, October 20. Completed absentee ballots must be received by the county board of elections no later than 7:30 p.m. on Election Day, November 3. NCSBE

Election Day is Tuesday, November 3. Polls will be open from 6:30 a.m. until 7:30 p.m. Voters casting ballots that day must vote at their assigned polling place. NCSBE

North Carolina voters will be asked to show an acceptable photo ID when voting. Voters can also check their registration information, polling place and sample ballot through the N.C. State Board of Elections Voter Search system. NCSBE

The important dates to remember are October 9, voter registration deadline; October 15, early voting begins; October 20, absentee ballot request deadline; October 31, early voting ends; and November 3, Election Day.

Additional voting information is available from the N.C. State Board of Elections at *www.ncsbe.gov*.

Anson County Schools Celebrates Principal Appreciation Month

Nine principals recognized for leadership and service to students, staff and families



Amanda Horton, AES



Arthur Jackson, AMS



Heather Gerald, WPS



Mary Beth Kiser, PPES



Becky Flake, LES



Kevin Adams, WES



Carrie Decker, ACEC



Chris Stinson, AHS



Sandra Harrell, MES

October is Principal Appreciation Month, and Anson County Schools is recognizing the nine principals who lead the district's schools and the work they do each day for students, employees, families and the community.

School principals have responsibilities that reach far beyond the principal's office. In addition to overseeing instruction and student achievement, they manage staff, help maintain safe and welcoming schools, work with families and respond to the countless situations, large and small, that come with operating a school each day.

Anson County Schools said its principals also play an important role in carrying out the ACS Strategic Plan 2026-2031, which focuses on four priorities: Student Learning & Success, Human Resources & Quality Staff, Safe & Supportive Environments, and Community Relations & Family Engagement.

The principals currently serving Anson County Schools are:

- Amanda Horton – Ansonville Elementary School
- Arthur Jackson – Anson Middle School
- Heather Gerald – Wadesboro Primary School
- Mary Beth Kiser – Peachland-Polkton Elementary School
- Becky Flake – Lilesville Elementary School
- Kevin Adams – Wadesboro Elementary School
- Carrie Decker – Anson County Early College
- Chris Stinson – Anson High School
- Sandra Harrell – Morven Elementary School

From supporting classroom instruction and developing strong staff teams to building relationships with parents and the community, the district said its principals help turn the goals of the strategic plan into everyday action.

"To our ACS principals: We see you. We appreciate you. And we thank you for leading the work that moves Anson County Schools forward," the school system stated.

More information about the ACS Strategic Plan 2026-2031 is available at: *linktr.ee/ansoncountyschools*.

Fifteen Anson County Roads Set for Improvements

More than $1 million in pavement work is scheduled to begin next spring

Drivers on 15 secondary roads across Anson County should see smoother pavement next year following the award of a more than $1 million N.C. Department of Transportation contract for road improvements.

Carolina Road Solutions LLC will perform the work using asphalt surface treatment, a preventive maintenance process designed to protect existing pavement and extend the useful life of a road. In other words, these roads aren't being completely rebuilt, but they will be getting some attention before ordinary wear and tear has a chance to become something considerably more expensive.

The contract includes improvements to portions of the following Anson County roads:

- Upper White Store Road – Lower White Store Road to Lanes Creek Road
- Poplar Hill Church Road – White Store Road to Lowery Road
- Horne Store Road – Upper White Store Road to the Union County line
- Union Church Road – White Store Road to N.C. 109
- Lowery Road – Poplar Hill Church Road to Mineral Springs Church Road
- Mineral Springs Church Road – White Store Road to Mills Road
- Pork Road – Traywick Road to Sub Station Road
- Bowers Road – Cappadocia Church Road to Hopewell Church Road
- Johnson Road – Kiker Road to Birmingham Road
- Carl Taylor Road – Kiker Road to Hopewell Church Road
- Rushing Road – New Home Church Road to Tucker Road
- McSwain Road – Johnson Road to Old N.C. 742
- Thanny Helms Road – N.C. 218 to the Union County line
- Phifer Road – West Deep Springs Road to Caudle-Kiker Road
- Race Track Road – N.C. 742 to Little Road

The contract allows construction to begin in spring 2027, with all of the work scheduled to be completed later that fall. Motorists should expect some temporary inconvenience once work begins, but that's generally the bargain with road improvements: put up with the paving equipment for a while in exchange for complaining about fewer bumps afterward.

Real-time information about road conditions, construction and closures is available at: *drivenc.gov*. Information from NCDOT on social media is available at: *ncdot.gov/news/social-media/Pages/default.aspx*.



Pictured, from left, are Alex Dillon, Zoe Martin, Zahria Nivens, Zaylen Nivens, Mianna DeBerry, TiKeya McCray, Laia Smith-Maxwell and Trinity Alderman.

Anson County 4-H Celebrates National 4-H Week

Annual social brings together more than 50 youth, parents and community members

More than 50 youth, parents and community members gathered Monday, October 5, as Anson County 4-H kicked off National 4-H Week with its annual 4-H Social.

The event introduced families to the many opportunities available through 4-H while giving young people a chance to participate in icebreakers, a community service project and other activities. The Anson County 4-H Teen Council held its business meeting, while volunteer leaders talked with families about local 4-H clubs and ways to become involved.

Guest speaker Mianna DeBerry, an Anson County native, mother, entrepreneur and content creator, shared her personal journey and her commitment to giving back to the community where she was raised. She encouraged young people to pursue their goals with determination, consistency and hard work.

The evening was supported by Anson County 4-H volunteer leaders, County Extension Director Ro, 4-H Youth Promise staff members Tracy and Shania, and DJ William, who provided music.

National 4-H Week recognizes the youth, families, volunteers and community partners who make 4-H programming possible. Anson County 4-H used the occasion to celebrate those who continue to invest their time and energy in local youth while carrying out the 4-H mission of "Making the Best Better."