

THE BUNCOMBE COUNTY SCHOOLS

Asheville, North Carolina

# ADVANTAGE

Spring 2016

MAGAZINE

## CLARK

*The 'Super Kitty'*

Unmasking S.T.E.M. Education's  
**PAW-SIBILITIES!**

Spanish  
Immersion  
GLEN ARDEN  
ELEMENTARY

Perennial  
Powerhouse

ENKA MIDDLE  
WRESTLING

Erwin High's  
HOMETOWN HEROES



**BUNCOMBE  
COUNTY SCHOOLS**

PREPARING STUDENTS FOR THEIR TOMORROW

# Owen Middle School

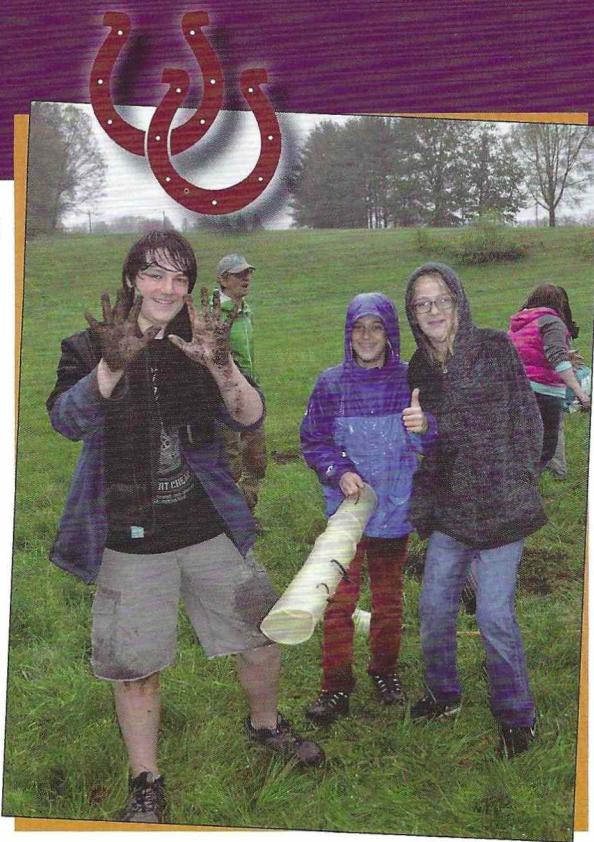
## *Nature's Classroom*

By Brittany Krasutsky, 7th Grade Science Teacher

Charles D. Owen Middle School (OMS) is creating a school landscape that promotes environmental stewardship, citizen science and exploratory learning through our Natural Impact Initiative (NII). Our goal is to connect the digital generation of students to their natural Appalachian heritage. We want our students invested in the future of our valley, their community, and globally... through hands-on learning experiences.

In the past year, OMS staff and students have actively worked towards this goal through a variety of team events which included hours of fundraising, hands-on installation, field trips, and coordination with a variety of community partners. Our current accomplishments include creating a Native Pollinator outdoor classroom, complete with raised pollinator beds; pond with waterfall; outdoor seating for 30 students; and a quilt garden.

Students worked with the American Chestnut Foundation to plant an American Chestnut Germplasm Conservation orchard, designed to assist in scientific efforts to save this species from the blight. In addition, students worked with HopNBlueberry farm to obtain and plant over 30 milkweed plants. They also planted wildflowers to create a Monarch Butterfly Waystation.



As OMS begins phase two of our NII, we've formed a partnership with The Asheville Design Center to map out other educational sites on our 40 plus acres. Some of these will include a platform and night vision cameras for daily observation of our Beaver lodge, one of the largest in Buncombe County; planting native river cane for use in cultural learning projects; and the addition of a low ropes course for fun team building!

