



# Poyen Schools Celebrate Student Success, Service, and Innovation

Poyen School District continues to demonstrate excellence across academics, extracurricular activities, and student-led initiatives, highlighting a year filled with achievement, service, and growth.

One of the newest additions to student programs, the Garden and Grit 4-H Club, launched its first season this year with a successful fall garden. Students gained hands-on experience growing zucchini, tomatoes, lettuce, and green beans while learning the value of healthy eating. The club also emphasized giving back. Students shared their zucchini harvest with teachers and prepared homemade zucchini bread, which was served as a snack for Poyen staff.

More recently, members harvested green beans and participated in a cooking

lesson, preparing green bean casserole using produce they grew themselves. The club's mission is to teach students where their food comes from while promoting healthier habits through experiential learning. Plans are already underway to expand the garden for the 2026 growing season.

The district's academic accomplishments are equally noteworthy. Poyen Elementary School has earned an "A" report card grade for two consecutive years, while Poyen High School also received an "A" this year. Notably, this marked the first year Arkansas issued overall district grades, and Poyen School District was one of just 23 districts statewide to receive an "A."

Athletics have also seen tremendous success. All fall and winter sports teams qual-

ified for state playoffs, and multiple programs achieved combined 4.0 GPAs during the first semester. The girls basketball team captured conference, district, and regional titles, and Coach Mickey Shaffer was named 2A-8 Girls Coach of the Year.

Students in Beta Club programs at both junior and senior levels earned numerous honors. Junior Beta winners included Klein Moore (Champion Soloist and Premier Performer), Kennedy Moore (1st Place Digital Art), and Anny Lester (3rd Place Language Arts), along with a 2nd Place finish in Campaign Skit. Senior Beta members also excelled, with Maddi Jewett earning Premier Performer honors and Grace McCoy placing 2nd in Math, among several other top finishes.

At the elementary level, the Poyen Elementary Beta Club

continues to make a meaningful impact through leadership and service. The 34-member club completed 105 service hours this year, including a highly successful food drive that collected 2,952 items to support the school's backpack program for families in need.

The group also achieved outstanding results at the state convention. Team accomplishments included 1st Place championships in Apparel Design and Technology, along with top finishes in Marketing, Scrapbook, Songfest, and more. Individual students also brought home multiple awards, including Hannah Edwards (1st Place Onsite Painting), Alli Hurst (1st Place Soloist), and River Morrison (1st Place Mixed Media).

Poyen's music programs also earned high marks. The junior high choir received

Division II at Concert Performance Assessment (CPA) and Division I in sightreading. The high school choir achieved Division I ratings at CPA and state competition, earning sweepstakes honors for their performance.

Innovation remains a strong focus through the district's EAST (Environmental and Spatial Technology) program. Students presented nine projects at the 2026 EAST Conference in Hot Springs, themed "Our Greatest Hits." The conference celebrated 30 years of EAST, highlighting student-driven solutions to real-world challenges through technology, creativity, and collaboration.

"These students are more than learners. They are changemakers," the program emphasizes, as participants continue to develop impactful solutions and build skills for



the future.

The success of these programs is made possible through the ongoing support of Poyen School District staff and administration. Their commitment ensures that students have opportunities to grow academically, creatively, and as leaders within their community.

## Glen Rose School District

At Glen Rose School District, a mix of academic progress, career-focused learning and student achievement is shaping students' futures in a positive way.

The district most recently earned a "B" letter grade from the Arkansas Department of Education (DESE), reflecting steady performance in key academic benchmarks. That momentum extends beyond the classroom, where

students and staff are gaining recognition across a range of programs.

This year, Educator Kendra Tallent was selected for DESE recognition through her participation in the Jewish Foundation for the Righteous Summer Institute, a professional development opportunity that highlights excellence in teaching and historical education.

Career and technical path-

ways are also expanding. Through a DESE grant, the district recently introduced a new "Medical Detectives" course, giving students hands-on exposure to basic medical concepts and potential healthcare careers.

Clubs continue to play a central role in campus life, as the junior and senior high Future Business Leaders of America students recently competed at district and state

levels, with several earning bids to the national competition in San Antonio this summer. Meanwhile, the district's Future Farmers of America chapter has earned statewide distinction as a National Chapter Award recipient, and one student placed in the top three of the Southern District Job Interview Leadership Development Event.

Active campus involvement remains a focus of

student development, as junior high FBLA and Student Council members partnered with WoodmenLife on a campus beautification project, while the FFA's annual plant sale showcased work the students carefully cultivated in their greenhouse for months.

Whether the Beavers are demonstrating measurable growth in academics, activities or character, their success is a reflection of Glen Rose



School District's commitment to investing in their future.

## Magnet Cove School District

Magnet Cove School District has demonstrated a remarkable commitment to both academic excellence and community engagement throughout the 2025-2026 school year, showcasing the extraordinary achievements of its students and staff.

One of the standout accomplishments at the Elementary School is the success of the High Impact Tutoring Program, where students are working directly with retired teachers and/or senior level teaching students from nearby colleges. Students work during their WIN (What I Need) time to address literacy and math skills they need to be successful. Student growth

has been evident on ATLAS Interims and we are excited to see this growth continue throughout the end of the school year.

The district's commitment to personalized learning is making a noticeable impact at the Middle School level. One key initiative is the WIN program, which provides students with tailored support based on their individual academic needs. Students are re-grouped on a biweekly basis, ensuring they receive focused instruction on the specific skills they need to master. In addition to the WIN program, the Middle School has introduced a creative Bingo incentive designed to motivate stu-

dents to achieve grade-level standards. This engaging approach encourages participation and celebrates progress, helping students stay motivated in their academic journey. These combined efforts are already yielding positive results. The Middle School has seen substantial growth in student performance on ATLAS interim assessments, reflecting the effectiveness of targeted instruction and meaningful incentives. To further support student success, teachers also offer morning tutoring sessions, providing additional opportunities for students to strengthen their understanding of challenging content. Together,

er, these initiatives highlight the school's dedication to meeting students where they are and helping every learner succeed.

Our campus extracurriculars have also seen great achievements this year. Under the leadership of athletic director Robert Webb, our field house was completed in January of 2026. This will benefit our students in strength and conditioning classes as well as instill a sense of pride in the new addition to the school facilities.

The Magnet Cove Archery Team continues to dominate by successfully defending our state championship titles and qualifying for the

national championship later this spring. The program continues to grow by allowing students from elementary, middle, and high school to compete across the state and nation.

The Fine Arts Program continues to expand under Mr. Andy Beck's leadership. We are happy to have partnered for another year with Poyen's Fine Arts Program and allowed both schools to perform in the musical Matilda this past spring.

Magnet Cove School District's achievements across various domains during the 2025-2026 school year reflect its unwavering commitment to not just academic



excellence, but to nurturing well-rounded individuals equipped to contribute positively to their communities. Our high school students have accumulated over 10,000 community service hours with an economic value of nearly \$300,000. Through innovative programs, community engagement, and a focus on individual growth, the district is truly preparing its students for success in all facets of life.

# Ouachita School District Hits Record Enrollment as Academic Excellence Soars

The Ouachita School District is officially entering its golden era. Administration confirmed this week that enrollment for the upcoming school year is projected to hit 587 students -- the highest in the school's history. This surge includes 53 students applying through school choice, a testament to the district's growing reputation for excellence.

**Academic Gold Standard**  
Ouachita High School was recently honored with the GreatSchools 2024-2025 College Success Award. This prestigious national recognition identifies OHS as a leader in preparing students to not only enroll in college but to persist and thrive once they get there.

The momentum continues in the classroom as students

wrap up ATLAS K-10 summative testing. Preliminary data suggests student growth across all core areas: Math, ELA, and Science. To support this growth, OHS is expanding its curriculum to include AP Biology and a new Computer Science pathway next year. High schoolers are also taking advantage of a partnership with Henderon State University to earn on-campus credits in College Algebra and Intro to Education.

**Beta Club & FFA Excellence**  
Ouachita's student organizations are making waves at the state level:

- **Senior Beta:** Tatum Smith took 1st place in Woodworking at the State Convention and is headed to Nationals in Nashville this summer.

- **Junior Beta:** Marlee Whitley (4th, Jewelry) and Autumn Moore (5th, Woodworking) also punched their tickets to the National Convention.
- **FFA:** The chapter received the National Chapter Award for excellence in leadership and community building. Twenty students attended the State Convention, with four receiving their State FFA Degrees.
- **New Horizons: Pre-Educator & Work-Based Learning**  
OHS is bridging the gap between the classroom and the career. The new Pre-Educator Program allows aspiring teachers to gain hands-on classroom experience, while the Work-Based Learning Program connects students with local businesses through

internships and apprenticeships. These programs are key components of the district's new "Diploma with Merit or Distinction" framework, which rewards students for earning industry credentials and college credits.

**Pies, Plays, and Prizes**  
It's been a busy season for campus life. The Elementary Duck Derby was a splash of success, selling over 300 ducks to benefit the Percy and Donna Malone Child Safety Center. The reward? Students cheered as Principal Mrs. McDade took a pie to the face for the cause.

Elementary students are also being rewarded for their "grit and attendance." Hard-working students in grades 3-6 received prizes and cash rewards this week, with the entire elementary school cel-

ebrating with a visit from Hobo Joe's this Friday. On the stage, the Theatre/Drama Club recently wowed audiences with their production of The Brothers Grimm Spectaculathon.

**Warrior Athletics Update**  
• **Golf:** In a heart-pounding finish, both the boys' and girls' teams finished as State Runners-Up, each missing the title by just a single stroke. Tynlee Eford (2nd overall), Morgan Neel, and Maddox Kyzer (3rd overall) all earned All-State honors.

- **Trap:** At Mack's Tournament, Cash Harper (Senior Squad) and Grayson Boyett (Junior Squad) took High Shot honors.
- **Diamond Sports:** It is a big week for Ouachita sports as both teams head into district tournament play.



The Baseball team enters the bracket tied for 3rd in the conference, while Softball heads into the tournament currently sitting 6th in the conference.

- **Track:** The track team placed 6th overall at their latest meet with only six events available.
- **Save the Date:** The Athletic Awards Banquet is set for May 5, 2026. Additionally, Jillian Martinez and Coach Hannah Newsom will represent Ouachita in the FCA Senior Showdown on May 28th.