

Good afternoon, this is Steve Mares, principal of Athens Drive Magnet High School, with a special announcement for Wednesday, April 8<sup>th</sup>. A copy of this special message will be posted on our school website (<https://www.wcpss.net/athensdrivehs>), emailed and texted to our school families, and linked to the PTSA Athens Alert newsletter (<https://athensdriveptsa.com>).

Happy Spring Break.... I know this is certainly NOT the Spring Break we all thought it would be a mere 4 weeks ago. It is hard to believe that at the end of this week, we will have been out of school for four weeks. I believe that school plays such a central, integral part of the fabric of our families, community, and society, and to think that we have been away from each other for a month is so hard to conceive. We are still the Athens Drive Nation (ADN!) and I know that we will all remain Athens Strong! Thank you, as always, for your incredible support and understanding of our efforts to move to our [Remote Learning Schedule](#) beginning Monday, April 13<sup>th</sup>. In order to keep you informed, here is the information I would like to share with you today:

**GRADING:** I realize that you all received information directly from Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) last Friday regarding [Expectations and Guidelines for Students and Families in Remote Learning](#) and Remote Learning Feedback Practices for students in [Grades Ninth through Eleventh](#) and for our [Seniors](#). I have heard from several students, staff, and families about what this information means. In summary, here is what this means for our students:

The overall message from the State Board of Education is this:

- "It is paramount to remember the unprecedented condition students are learning in and to focus on engagement more than evaluation." **The lesson for our students is: Don't worry about grading. If you are focusing on the learning, if (and I do mean "if") we end up receiving grades, you will be well positioned.**
- We (WCPSS and Athens Drive Magnet High School) need to make learning "accessible by all students for which the learning is intended" **The lesson for our students: We are trying to get technology to those students who at this point cannot access Remote Learning without that support. I know it is taking time, but we are working on this.**
- We "will focus on supporting student progress and communicating feedback to students and families rather than on assigning grades." **The lesson for our students is: Don't worry about grading.**

Thus, all of us (e.g., administrators, teachers, students, families) need to shift our things from "grading" to expecting "meaningful feedback" from your teacher. I am asking our school family to please just focus on something our students have heard me say every afternoon of every day—teaching and learning. That is what it is about. Let's make every one of these days a great day of teaching and learning! What a great opportunity to just focus on teaching and learning and preparing our students for their "next," whatever that "next" is for each individual student. Having said that, here are the parameters we are working under for our students:

- **SENIORS:** Here is where we stand with regards to our Seniors:
  - If the student was passing the course as of content delivered through March 13, the student will receive a PASS for the course. While this means that if our Seniors were passing their class at that point that they have "Passed" the course, we do want to encourage ALL our Seniors to take advantage of our Remote Learning and continue with their learning.
  - If the student was **NOT** passing the course and the course **IS** needed for graduation, we will be working with the student to provide a path toward passing the course based on material presented up through March 13<sup>th</sup>.
  - If the student was **NOT** passing the course and the course is **NOT** needed for graduation, the student has two options: (1) to improve their grade on course material presented up through March 13<sup>th</sup> in order to earn a "Pass," or (2) be withdrawn from the course with a grade of "WC19"

(Withdraw COVID 19) appearing on the transcript (no awarding of credit; will not impact GPA or class rank). For Option 1, we will approach it just like in the previous bullet--we will work with the student to provide a path toward passing the course based on material presented through March 13<sup>th</sup>. For Option 2, if a student wants to withdraw from the course that they were failing but did not need for Graduation requirements, they will have to communicate directly with me and I will need written notice from the student and their parent to withdraw them from the course. Based on guidance from the State, we are not allowed to withdraw students at this time. However, if this is an option that you and your student are interested in, you can begin to inform me of your decision, and we will keep track of your request.

- **Senior Exams:** Seniors have been universally exempted from all Final Exams. Seniors will not have any Final Exams.
  - **Senior Honors** (cum laude, magna cum laude, and summa cum laude) will all be based on cumulative grades through the end of the Fall Semester of this year. Seniors will be receiving their appropriate stoles for Graduation based on their Senior Honors.
  - **Senior GPA:** Nothing from the Spring Semester will either improve or hurt a Senior's Grade Point Average. Seniors will only receive a PC19 (Pass COVID-19) or a WC19 (Withdraw COVID-19) and neither will impact a student's Grade Point Average.
- **GRADES NINTH THROUGH ELEVENTH:** Things are a little different for students in Grades 9th through 11th. Here are the highlights:
    - Please note that no decision has yet been made on how Final Grades will be recorded this Spring Semester for students in grades 9 through 11. That is the most important information to know regarding students in Grades Ninth through Eleventh. A Third Quarter grade of Pass (P) or Incomplete (I) is being used as a placeholder since school was abruptly closed beginning Monday, March 16<sup>th</sup>. Once WCPSS has clear direction from the Department of Public Instruction, student progress between now and the end of school and teacher monitoring of student achievement will determine final marks for the school year. Please know that all of us acknowledge and value the hard work that students are putting into rigorous coursework and we are working to find opportunities to honor our student's efforts.
    - **Third Quarter:** The Third Quarter has ended. A placeholder grade will be given of one of the following two grades for Third Quarter:
      - If the student's average for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter is 60 or above, they will receive a "P" (Pass) for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter marking period.
      - If the student's average for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter is below 60, they will receive an "I" (Incomplete) for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter.
    - **Fourth Quarter:** For now, as I stated above, we are focusing on engagement and learning and not on grades. WCPSS has not provided any determination on how we are going to be recording grades for 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter yet. So, we continue with teaching and learning through our Remote Learning, providing meaningful feedback to students on their progress while not focusing on a grade. Please know that the following expectations are in place for teachers and students:
      - Teachers will make learning activities and provide feedback on those learning activities.
      - Students will be given ample opportunity to complete learning activities. Acknowledging that students will have different access to resources, there will be no penalty for delayed learning activities.
      - Students will be provided feedback on the work they are able to complete.
      - Student understanding will be supported using methods appropriate for remote learning. Teachers will keep a record of student work and their performance. What does "keeping a record of student work and their performance" look like? This will look different for each subject area and course taught and your teachers will be working with you.

- **Final Exams for Students in Grades Ninth Through Eleventh:** The State has indicated that there be no State Exams (e.g., End-Of-Course, North Carolina Final Exams, etc.) this Semester. I have not heard directly about CTE Post Assessments, so I cannot say officially one way or another. WCPSS has still not determined whether teacher-made Final Exams will be given.
- **Concerns About “Falling Behind On GPA” Due to the Number of Advanced Level Courses A Student is Taking This Semester:** I have heard from a number of students (including my own son who is taking four Honors level courses this Semester!) who are concerned about this. Please remember that, at this time, no decision has been made regarding how final grades will be determined for the Spring Semester. So, I would ask all our students to continue to work hard and learn and not worry about their GPA at this time. I will say that the State and WCPSS do recognize this inequity and that is part of the discussions that are being had as they work to decide how to grade for this Semester. In addition, please understand that EVERY University and College not only in North Carolina or the United States, but in the World, understands what is happening this Semester. Please do not worry about this at this time until we know what the final decision on grading will be.

I hope this helps summarize the important information regarding Grading and the many implications related to Grading. As you can imagine this is an ever-evolving topic, and as things progress both the State and WCPSS will be providing additional guidance.

**UNC-TV PARTNERSHIP:** You have also received information from WCPSS regarding the relationship established between UNC-TV and the NC Department of Public Instruction that will support [Remote Learning](#) with content that will be accessible to students—especially those with limited or no internet access—at no charge. Each weekday, two blocks of programming on UNC-TV's North Carolina Channel will serve 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup>-grade students, from 1:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. (actual times may vary, please check the weekly schedule online [here](#)). These educational program blocks are available on the North Carolina Channel, available statewide for free over-the-air, through cable providers and streamed online. I am thankful for the support of UNC-TV with efforts to help our students to continue to learn and grow.

**STUDENT DEVICE DISTRIBUTION:** Please understand that we are still waiting on WCPSS to provide us with Chromebooks to distribute to the families who have informed us they need this support. As soon as I hear any information, I will send a message to our school families informing you all of the day and times for distribution. Please be ready to respond quickly, as I want to get these devices in our students' hands as soon as possible. Please remember that the first step will be to provide a Chromebook for those students who only need a device to support their learning. The next step will be to provide "hotspots" to those students who do not have internet access. Finally, we will then provide a Chromebook and a “hotspot” to those students who need both. Please know that this is a daunting task throughout the County to move devices among schools and provide these resources to our students. Thank you for your continued support as we work with WCPSS to roll out this support!

**VIDEO MEETINGS: BEST PRACTICES FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS:** WCPSS has shared information to students and teachers to ensure that as we transition to Remote Learning, we are upholding high standards and ideals for the learning environment. Please refer to this [document](#) to be sure that in all of the teaching and learning that takes place we represent ourselves, our teachers, our families, The Drive, and WCPSS in only the highest of manners! Thank you for your support in this!

**GROCERIES DISTRIBUTION:** A school family of ours informed me that if there are families in need of groceries this week, Colonial Baptist Church in Cary is distributing groceries today, Thursday, and Friday, between 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. If you do travel to this distribution opportunity, please look for the East Entrance and volunteers will bring groceries to your car.

**CLOSING THOUGHTS AND TAKE CARE:** Please know that our staff continues to work hard to prepare for Monday, April 13<sup>th</sup> and the start of our Remote Learning Schedule. I hope your student is excited about this opportunity and challenge! Thank you for your continued understanding of our efforts during this pandemic! Please know that I do not want to be trite, but despite the circumstances we all find ourselves in, I believe there is a lot for each of us to be grateful for. I know there are many of our school family members who are struggling due to the ramifications of COVID-19 and that is heart-wrenching, but we will be back. There are some difficult and challenging roads we are on now and that are ahead of us, but we will traverse them together. Please continue to help others, both inside and outside of our school family, who need assistance. Please continue to remain sheltered-in-place and do what we are required to do to save lives and flatten this COVID-19 curve. And, please know that all of us at The Drive care passionately about our students and families and want to give you all our best! We are in this together, and we will get through this! Please know that I continue to keep our entire Athens Drive school family close to my heart and in my thoughts! Please continue to be safe and take care of yourselves, your loved ones, and each other. Go JAGS!

**REMINDER ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM MY LAST SPECIAL MESSAGE THAT I HAVE NOT UPDATED:**

**HELPFUL LINKS TO KEEP UP WITH EVER-CHANGING INFORMATION:** Please utilize the following links to help you stay informed:

- [WCPSS COVID-19 Updates](#)
- [Food Distribution Sites](#)
- [Community Resources](#)
- [Advanced Placement \(AP\) Resources](#)
- [Remote Learning Information](#)
- [Learning Resources for all grade levels](#)
- [WCPSS Update to Families on April 1, 2020](#)
- [WCPSS Update to Families on March 31, 2020](#)
- [WCPSS Update to Families on March 24, 2020](#)
- [WCPSS Update to Families on March 20, 2020](#)
- [WCPSS Update to Families on March 17, 2020](#)
- [Technology Support for Remote Learning](#)
- [Digital Citizenship](#)

I hope this information helps you all.

**IMPORTANT ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP) EXAM UPDATES:** We have been receiving information from College Board regarding AP Exams and want to bring you these updates:

- The AP Exam dates will be Monday, May 11<sup>th</sup> through Friday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>, and no AP Exam will conflict with another one. If a student has a valid conflict with the new date then they need to request the makeup day, the student must contact our AP Coordinator Ms. Boothe ([kboothe@wcpss.net](mailto:kboothe@wcpss.net)) so that she can make the change through the system. Please know that College Board has informed us that it must be an actual, valid conflict in order to take the AP Exam on the makeup day. The makeup dates will be the first week of June.

- Since we have already registered all our students who are taking the AP Exams, there is nothing further we need to do to give students access to their AP Exams. Each student will be sent access to take the test with the information the student already provided.
- If a student needs a device to take their AP Exam, he/she must contact Ms. Boothe by Friday, April 24<sup>th</sup> and there is a process that we must complete in order to request one. Students can also take the AP Exam on a smartphone and will be able to upload handwritten work.
- It is imperative that students DO NOT CHEAT on these AP Exams. Please remember that this year the AP Exam will be an unsupervised test administration. However, College Board will be sending AP Test responses/scores to teachers at the end of the 2-week period for them to look for any irregularities in student responses. Also, other techniques and software will be used to detect chat room use, and plagiarism. College Board reminded us that if a student is caught cheating on an AP Exam, every college they have ever sent a test score to (SAT and AP) will be notified of the cheating and the student may miss out on taking any additional SAT or AP Exams in the future. We need to remind our students to do the right thing!
- Students who have already been approved for accommodations (e.g., extended time, etc.) will still get these accommodations. This information automatically transfers into the student portal so, for example, extended time will already be added into their total time.
- Any AP Calculus student who originally signed up to take Calculus BC, but now feels more comfortable taking the AP Calculus AB exam, can do so. The student must contact Ms. Boothe ([kboothe@wcpss.net](mailto:kboothe@wcpss.net)) by Monday, April 20<sup>th</sup>.
- As usual, students' work will be scored by College Board's network of college faculty and AP teachers, and will be reported on a 1–5 scale. They have informed us that they anticipate releasing scores as close to the usual July timeframe as possible.

Thank you for your attention to these important updates regarding Advanced Placement Exams.

**COURSE REGISTRATION FOR THE 2020 – 2021 SCHOOL YEAR:** Please know that it is imperative that we continue to have all Ninth through Eleventh Grade students register for classes for the 2020 – 2021 school year! In order to ensure that we get Registration information for every student, we need to ask students and their families to assist us in getting every student registered for classes. For any student who has not completed their registration for classes for next year, a [Course Registration form](#) has been created. Please complete the form accurately and correctly because our Counselors will utilize the information provided on this form to input Course Registration into PowerSchool. All registration information, course listings, timelines, High School Planning Guide, and Course Descriptions are located [here](#) on the Athens Drive website (click on the “Students” tab and then “Course Registration”). If students have questions regarding Course Registration, please email your Counselor directly.

<u>Student Last Name</u>	<u>Counselor</u>	<u>Counselor Email Address</u>
A-Di	Ms. Telfair	stelfair@wcpss.net
Do-La	Ms. Boothe	kboothe@wcpss.net
Le-Ri	Mr. Wright	jwright@wcpss.net
Ro-Z	Ms. Hegarty	chegarty@wcpss.net



## Helpful Hints for registration:

- Students should register for the 8 primary courses and 3 alternate courses that they wish to take and make sure that there are 3 alternates. **ALTERNATE COURSES SHOULD BE COURSES STUDENTS ARE WILLING TO TAKE. STUDENT SERVICES WILL NOT CHANGE A COURSE IF THE STUDENT HAS REGISTERED FOR IT AS A PRIMARY OR AN ALTERNATE.**
- Students in the STEM Academy should register for the STEM section for English I-V, Math (II & III only), Social Studies, & Science (Biology & Chemistry Only). These courses will be denoted with a W at the end of the course code. This information will be shared in the STEM meetings that will be scheduled.
- Students in the HSCA Academy (beginning with the Class of 2022) will be cohorted in their English and Social Study courses. These students should register for:
  - Class of 2023
    - 10225X0C-English II (H) and 43045X0C- American History (H) or AP Human Geography or AP US History.
  - Class of 2022
    - 10235X0C-English III (H) and 43055X0C-American History II or AP US History.

Thank you for your assistance in having all our students register for classes for the 2020 – 2021 school year!

**TRANSCRIPT REQUEST:** I wanted to be sure to provide a reminder to everybody regarding Transcripts. As we move forward over the next couple of weeks (and possibly beyond), the District's Central Records Department will be supporting all transcript requests for students. Pick-up options are not available at Central Records, as all Crossroads buildings are closed to the public. However, we can manage requests electronically and via mail. Students who need a transcript sent to a College/University in the State of North Carolina should make a request via [CFNC.org](https://cfnc.org). All other request should be done via the WCPSS [ScribOrder portal](#) and WCPSS Central Records Department will handle the requests. Because this is a national emergency, most colleges/universities/scholarships will be pushing back their deadlines, so please do not stress about this. However, if a student should need a paper copy of their transcript, the following three options will be available:

- They can receive an unofficial transcript mailed directly to them.
- WCPSS can mail an official transcript to the scholarship committee or coordinator.
- WCPSS can mail an official transcript home for them to add to their scholarship packet. The envelope will be signed and sealed and WCPSS will put it in a second envelope for mailing. This is a temporary option available only while students are not able to pick up official transcripts here at Athens Drive Magnet High School.

Students will need to ask for Option #3 in the “special instructions” section. Again, this is a temporary option based on the present circumstances we are all dealing with.

**SENIOR SLIDE SHOW INFORMATION:** The Senior members of our Student Government are creating a Senior Slide Show. Seniors can submit up to 10 pictures or videos to be included in the Senior Slide Show at the following link: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/xwd3xutPwFNjxuRF6>. Please keep the pictures or videos appropriate,

and Mr. Remaley and his team of Seniors will put it together and will share the final Slide Show with everyone once completed. I can't wait to view it!

**SENIOR SPIRIT WEEK:** As another way to honor our Seniors and continue to bring them together virtually, the Student Government is also sponsoring a Senior Spirit Week after Spring Break! Monday, April 13<sup>th</sup> through Friday, April 17<sup>th</sup>, the Spirit Days are: "Movie and Chill Monday" and Seniors can post their favorite movie and pajamas to their *instagram* stories using the tag *@jagnationad* or post to *twitter #adnstayinghomeweek*. Tuesday is "Taste a Recipe Tuesday" and Seniors can share their favorite recipe. Then there is "Whatcha Working Wit Wednesday" and Seniors can post a Tik Tok. Then, "Throwback Thursday" where Seniors can post their favorite memory from The Drive. Finally, "For the Class of 2020 Friday" where Seniors can show off their college apparel.

**SENIOR CAP AND GOWN DISTRIBUTION:** Please know that we are in contact with WCPSS and Jostens (our Senior merchandising company) and we are working out plans to have our Seniors pick-up their Cap and Gowns. We are working on a curbside "drive-through" opportunity and are waiting on WCPSS to approve our plans. We certainly want our Seniors to have their Cap and Gowns!

**SENIOR GIFT:** One way we want to honor our Seniors is with a special gift. When we finalize our plans to distribute Caps and Gowns, we will also be giving EVERY Senior a yard sign to let the world know that the ADN Class of 2020 is ready to make their mark on the world! Here is what it looks like:



I am fired up that we can make this possible for all our Graduating Seniors! Congratulations Seniors, again, on your outstanding achievements!

**SENIOR REMIND MESSAGE FROM MR. REMALEY:** Please know that it is not too late to join the Senior Remind message that Mr. Remaley sends out. Students, and their families, can join this Message Group. With ever-evolving changes, this is critical that our Seniors and their families have joined this Message Group. Please use the class code: *@remaley-5* on the Remind app. If you are not using the app, then you can text the class code to the number: **81010**. Thank you!

**SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR SENIORS:** What a great time for our Seniors to be searching for Scholarships and completing Scholarship applications! Please remember that our PTSA is still offering their three annual \$500.00 Scholarships to Seniors who are PTSA members. The three Scholarship categories are: Civic Minded; Overcoming Adversity; and All Around. Seniors can get more information about eligibility and find the online application on the PTSA website [here](#). Applications will be accepted through Thursday, April 30<sup>th</sup>. Scholarships will be awarded in May (the exact date is still to be determined). Please also remember that our Student Services keeps a long list of Scholarships for our students to apply for. Please visit our Student Services Scholarship [website](#) to see that list.

**FOOD DISTRIBUTION:** I want to remind our school family that we continue to provide our Food Distribution services to our school families and local community Monday through Friday, from 11:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. Please also know that we have received communication that we can continue with our Food Distribution next week during Spring Break. Thus, we will be open from Monday through Friday (yes, even on the Good Friday Holiday on Friday, April 10<sup>th</sup>) from 11:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. of next week. Please know that an updated list of all Food Distribution sites can be found at this [link](#). Please continue to share this information with anybody in our community, whether they are students of ours or not, who need this resource during these challenging times. Thank you for your help in taking care of our school families and our community!