

Good afternoon, this is Steve Mares, principal of Athens Drive Magnet High School, with announcements for the upcoming week. A copy of these announcements 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>).

FRESHMAN CAMP THANK YOU: What a great day to be a JAG yesterday at our Freshman Camp! There was such a positive spirit, and it was outstanding to see our “house” come back to life with students and families as we look to start our new school year! We had over 400 new Jaguars in our school and many family members here to begin the transition to high school. I was thankful for the outstanding efforts of our staff, PTSA leaders, Student Government, Band, Athletic Booster Club leaders, club representatives, coaches, student athletes, and everyone who helped contribute to a fantastic kick-off for our students and families! Information from the Parent Session and the Administrative Session are located on the [Freshman Camp](#) page of our website. Another big welcome to the Class of 2023, and please know what an honor and pleasure it is for us to serve your family! We are excited to build on our tradition of excellence and have another great year of teaching and learning!

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL: Please remember that our First Day of School is on Monday, August 26th! Please know that we will start the first day of school in our Homeroom class, known as Drive Time, beginning at 7:25 a.m. I am looking forward to another great year of teaching and learning!

START TIME FOR SCHOOL: We will have the same start and end time for school again for the 2019 – 2020 school year. School will start at 7:25 a.m. every morning and end at 2:18 p.m. Please know that First Period begins promptly at 7:25 a.m. and students are expected to be in class, ready to learn at 7:25 a.m. each day. For the first 10 days of school, students will have a Drive Time Class (Homeroom) so that we can share important information and begin the year on a positive note. After those first 10 days, students will only attend their Drive Time Class once a week on Tuesday.

NEW BELL SCHEDULE AND ADVANTAGE TIME: We are adjusting our daily Bell Schedule for this school year. Our new [Bell Schedule](#) can be found on our website. Instead of having our Advantage Time Monday through Thursday as we did last year, we are going to have our Advantage Time for each period on one day, Wednesday. Advantage Time is a 24-minute portion of a class, during the school day, that allows our teachers to provide opportunities for students to make-up missed assignments, take assessments they may have missed, provide remediation, extension, small-group support, and re-teaching on curriculum that have been difficult for students. Students who have below a 75% average for the class must stay in the class and engage in the Advantage Time period. If a student has a 75% or higher in that class, students will have the opportunity to attend a Club meeting during that Advantage Time. If a student has a 75% or higher average in the class but does not participate in a Club during Advantage Time, the student will remain in the class for that period. We are hoping that this provides students the opportunity to achieve at their highest potential in every class and have access to their teachers during the day to assist with make-up work, extra support, etc., and to allow students time during the day to participate in clubs in order to better connect and engage in their high school experience. There may still be times when clubs will meet outside of the Club time during Advantage Time, but we hope this helps more students access club opportunities and find/follow their passions. Thank you for your understanding of our efforts to continue to find ways to support teaching and learning, help students connect to Athens Drive and each other, and help each of our students reach his/her ultimate potential!

STUDENT SCHEDULES: I am sure that everybody has now either seen or picked up a copy of their 2019 – 2020 schedule that was posted to PowerSchool. Please understand that while the vast majority of students’ schedule will not change, some schedules may see a change as we continue to enroll a large number of students. These are not major changes, but we do work to try to balance class size and try to meet the needs of our students and what they registered for. Students will receive their official schedule in their Drive Time Class on Monday, August 26th. If your student did submit a Schedule Change Request form, please know that we are working our way through those requests, and we will make the changes we can and need to make to support our students. Thank you for your continued support as we work to create a Master Schedule that serves our students’ needs.

CARPOOL INFORMATION: We have added [carpool maps](#) to our website to assist families in understanding where to drop students off in the morning and where to pick students up in the afternoon.

BUS TRANSPORTATION: If your student will be riding the bus to school, students and families that have transportation eligible bus riders can find our new bus routes for the 2019 – 2020 school year posted online at <http://www.wcpss.net/routes>. Look for Athens Drive High School on this page and click the link to find our bus routes. Please find the intersection nearest your residence and that will be your bus stop. Please be familiar with your bus route and plan to get to your bus stop at least 10 minutes early. Wake County Public School System will also share your student’s transportation route, stop, and estimated bus arrival time on-line in PowerSchool. Families can also check bus routes at school if they need too. Mr. Coats, our Assistant Principal who leads our Bus Transportation efforts, will be helping students during Lunch the first week of school to find bus information and provide Temporary Bus Passes for those eligible students who dependent on a yellow school bus to attend school while a transportation service request is being processed. There are many changes at the start of the new school year as new students begin riding the bus, new bus routes are created, and new drivers are trained. I would ask that you please be patient and understanding with transportation for the first few days of school. Thank you for your support.

HERE COMES THE BUS APP: For the 2019 – 2020 school year, the Here Comes the Bus app will be available to families on Friday, August 23rd. Existing app users will need to add students back, but should not need to reinstall the app. Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) will be sharing information about the Here Comes the Bus app with our families via a web article and message sent out to families from them.

BEING A GOOD NEIGHBOR: As we begin a new school year, I would like to remind all our students and families to be respectful of our Athens Drive neighbors. Please remind your students to park legally, drive in a safe manner, throw trash away properly in trash cans, and use appropriate language as they walk, drive, and move around our school campus. We want to be responsible and respectful neighbors, and I ask that we all represent The Drive in only the highest manner. Thanks for helping to carry on over 40-year tradition of excellence both inside and outside of the classroom!

DRESS CODE: Parents, I would like to enlist your support in helping us maintain appropriate dress at school. Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) has adopted a new [Dress Code Policy](#). Please be sure that students do not wear strapless shirts and dresses, tank-tops, short-shorts, clothing that reveals undergarments, and other clothing that violates the dress code. Hats, hoodies, do-rags, and bandanas will also not be allowed to be worn on school grounds. I would ask that we work together to be sure our students dress appropriately and focus on learning. I thank you for your support!

VOLUNTEERING AT ATHENS DRIVE: Please remember that if you would like to volunteer at Athens Drive, or in any Wake County Public School System school, you must register or reactivate prior to helping with any tutoring, office support, PTSA, sports, band, or club activity this school year. You can register to Volunteer at a computer in the Library during school hours. Thank you for helping us maintain a safe school climate conducive to learning.

GRADUATION: I am fired up to announce that our Graduation date and time for our Class of 2020 has been finalized! Our Seniors will be Graduating on Wednesday, June 10th, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. at Reynolds Coliseum! Please note the change in venue for this year—the Class of 2020 will be Graduating at Reynolds Coliseum instead of the Raleigh Convention Center. Please be sure to save this date and time to celebrate the accomplishments of the Class of 2020! In addition, Seniors need to also be sure they attend the mandatory Graduation Rehearsal on Monday, June 8th, 2020 from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. at Reynolds Coliseum.

SENIORS—MID-YEAR GRADUATION: If you are a Senior and are interested in Graduating Mid-Year, forms are available on the Athens website ([Mid-Year Graduation form](#)) and in our Student Services office. The Mid-Year Graduation form must be completed and returned to the Student Services office by 2:30 p.m. on Tuesday, August 20th.

SENIORS—EARLY DISMISSAL OR LATE ARRIVAL ON SCHEDULE: If you are interested in having a Late Arrival (No First Period) or Early Dismissal (No Fourth Period) for the 2019 – 2020 school year, that form is posted on the Athens website ([Early Dismissal/Late Arrival form](#)) and is available in our Student Services office. The Early Dismissal or Late Arrival form must be completed and returned to the Student Services office by 2:30 p.m. on Tuesday, August 20th.

PARKING PASS: Parking passes for Juniors and Seniors in good standing for the 2019 – 2020 school year are now available. Students interested in securing a Parking pass for the 2019 – 2020 school year should carefully read and follow the guidelines on the application. To complete the Parking Pass Application process, please complete the on-line parking registration. Then, please print & complete the two-page paper application. Please note Parent's signature must be notarized on the second page of the application. Please complete the On-Line Payment to pay for the Parking pass. You will then need to print your On-Line Receipt to include with your application. Please make a clear photocopy of your valid North Carolina Driver's License (permanent photo—a permit temporary license will not be accepted) and vehicle registration(s). Finally, please remember that students must have cleared all fees or fines they have, as a Parking Tag will not be issued if the student has any outstanding fees or fines owed. Parking tags may be picked up Monday through Friday, between 8:00 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Please know that Parking passes and Off Campus Lunch passes are two separate applications.

OFF-CAMPUS LUNCH PASS: Off-Campus Lunch passes for Juniors and Seniors in good standing for the 2019 – 2020 school year are also now available. A Junior or Senior student cannot leave campus during lunch without having an authorized Off-Campus Lunch pass. Freshmen and Sophomores are NEVER allowed to leave campus during the school day, unless on an approved school trip. To complete this process, please print and complete the one-page paper application. Please note that the parent's signature must be notarized on the application. Please complete the On-Line Payment to pay for the Off-Campus Lunch pass. You will then need to print your On-Line Receipt to include with your application. Finally, please remember that students must have cleared all fees or fines they have, as an Off-Campus Lunch pass will not be issued if the student has any outstanding fees or fines owed. Passes may be picked up Monday through Friday, between 8:00 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Please know that Parking passes and Off Campus Lunch passes are two separate applications.

FALL SEMESTER MEET THE TEACHER NIGHT: Please mark your calendar that our Fall Meet the Teacher Night will be held on Thursday, September 5th, beginning at 6:00 p.m. At 5:30 p.m., prior to our Meet the Teacher Night, we will be holding a Senior Parent Meeting and at 5:30 p.m., our PTSA will be providing information on how to support our school through volunteering and donating to our PTSA. Thank you for saving this night to engage with our faculty and connect to the school.

PTSA INVOLVEMENT: As I mentioned last week, if you are interested in supporting Athens Drive Magnet High School in a tangible manner, the PTSA could use your help. With the Graduation of many of our PTSA Board members' students, the PTSA has many opportunities for our new families to be a part of the PTSA and make a significant difference in the teaching and learning at The Drive. If you are interested in serving in any capacity, please email our PTSA President, Lysa Fulbright, at president@athensdriveptsa.com. Thank you for considering serving in this manner to support our students, families, and school!

PTSA—MEETING: The first PTSA Meeting of the Year will be held on Tuesday, August 27th, from 6:30 p.m. until 7:30 p.m., in the Library. Thank you for putting this on your calendar and connecting to the PTSA to support Athens Drive.

PTSA—STAFF WELCOME BACK BREAKFAST: The PTSA is kindly providing a Welcome Back! Breakfast for staff on Tuesday, August 20th. If you are willing to support this event, please follow this link (<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f0b4ba9ac2aa02-welcome>) to the Sign-Up Genius to volunteer. Thank you for your support!

ATHLETICS BEGIN NEXT WEEK: Our Fall athletic season begins next week! We have our first Varsity football game next Friday, August 23rd, at Holly Springs High School. Please come out to support our student athletes at these various competitions and be a part of the Athens Drive family! Please check out the [Athens](#)

[Drive Athletic website](#) for all our game dates and times of all our Fall sports. Attending these events is a great way to meet other students and support our school.

ATHLETICS—PAWS AND BRICKS: Our Athletic Booster Club, the JAG Club, will be selling customized bricks and paws at the entrance to JAG Stadium again this year. If you are interested in purchasing one for your student athlete, please visit this link ([Paws and Bricks](#)). If you have questions, contact Diane Huggins (dianeshuggins@yahoo.com).

ATHLETICS—JAG CLUB: Are you interested in helping with the JAG Club this year? Please email Lori Airee (my6blessings@yahoo.com) for more information on how to become involved.

ATHLETICS—SPORTS PASSES: Sports passes are now available for the 2019 – 2020 school year. Sports passes are good for admission to all Athens Drive Athletics home events, except for Endowment Games and Playoff Games. You can purchase Sports passes for the coming year at this link (<https://www.athensdrivejagclub.org/membership/>).

CLOSING: Those are all the announcements for this week. Please continue to check the Athens Drive website (www.wcpss.net/athensdrivehs) for general information and to help you stay informed. Please have a safe, enjoyable weekend, and I hope you have a fantastic last week of summer. Go JAGS and please take care.