

Good Afternoon, this is Steve Mares, principal of Athens Drive Magnet High School with my final announcements for 2018. 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>).

Please remember that today was the last day of the classes for this calendar year. School will be closed beginning on Monday, December 24th through Wednesday, January 2nd. School will begin again after the Holidays on Thursday, January 3rd. Students need to be in class, on-time, and ready to learn by 7:25 a.m. on Thursday, January 3rd.

I hope you have seen our new Final Exam Schedule that we have posted to our website (<https://bit.ly/2L2TEgg>). Due to the lost instructional days last week, the Second Quarter has been extended one day. Our Final Exams will now begin on Monday, January 14th and end on Friday, January 18th. Friday, January 11th, originally our first day of Final Exams, is now a regular day of school. Please know that on Friday, January 4th, during Drive Time, all students will receive a schedule that they will complete to be sure that they are aware of when/where each of their Final Exams are going to held. The Second Quarter and First Semester end on Friday, January 18th, and the Third Quarter and Second Semester begin on Tuesday, January 22nd. Thank you for your attention to this important update of our Final Exam Schedule.

I hope you all received my Special Announcement on Wednesday afternoon regarding the K-9 Units that we had come to the school to search for illegal drugs. Please know that I requested this exercise as part of our on-going efforts to keep drugs out of our school. I appreciate the willingness of Raleigh Police and the Wake County Sheriff's Department to support this work. Thank you for your understanding of our efforts.

Schedule Change forms for the Spring Semester will be available in the Student Services office and on-line beginning January 11th. Only requests completed on the Schedule Change form will be reviewed (no email or phone request will be accepted). All completed Schedule Change forms must be submitted to the Student Services office by Friday, February 1st at 2:30 p.m.

The Athens Drive Student Government hosted the 3rd Annual Charity Dodgeball Tournament on Wednesday evening in the Upper Gym to benefit our own Backpack Buddies Program, and it was an incredible success! Six student teams and one teacher team battled it out in Dodgeball with the winning team being "The Potatoes" (all Seniors) coming out victorious! I must say the "T-Squad" (teachers) represented quite well and did not go down without a fight! In the end our own Athens Backpack Buddies Program truly won. We raised \$315.00 and more than 200 pounds of food! It was a great time for a great cause! I am proud of our Student Government for leading this fun, charitable event!

On Wednesday, January 9th we will have our Winter Chorus Concert in the Auditorium. Admission is free, and refreshments will be served afterwards. Join us for some fabulous singing by our talented students!

Our Winter Orchestra Concert will be held on Thursday, January 10th, in the Auditorium. The Concert highlights our outstanding musicians and admission is free.

The Third Quarter SAT Prep Course is now currently enrolling for any Juniors planning to take the SAT Test in March. Space is limited, so please contact Mr. Remaley (cremaley@wcpss.net) for additional information.

We are planning a 40th Anniversary Celebration at Athens Drive this Spring. As we celebrate 40 years of excellence at The Drive, we would like to offer all alumni, and families associated with Athens Drive, who are interested in being a part of our Celebration to please email Ms. Tonya Hinton (тчinton@wcpss.net). We would love for alumni, and/or families of alumni, to share photos, stories, and ideas for this upcoming special celebration! More details to come on this exciting event!

Friday, January 11th is the last day that our Student Services Department will be able to sign driver's eligibility forms. Forms will not be able to be signed again until all grades are final for the First

Semester. Please be sure to take care of this requirement prior to the last day of class on Friday, January 11th, or you will have to wait until the beginning of February before we can resume signing DMV forms.

Our Magnet Coordinator, Ms. Tonya Hinton, is coordinating our Magnet Tours for families interested in finding out additional information about Athens Drive Magnet High School. If you are interested in helping out with a Tour (they are held from 9:30 a.m. until 10:30 a.m.) on the following dates: Monday, January 7th; and Wednesday, January 23rd, please sign-up to assist (<https://bit.ly/2zSoBPg>) or contact Ms. Hinton at тчinton@wcpss.net. Thank you for your support of our efforts to attract families to The Drive!

Please know that we continue to have representatives from universities meeting with our students during the school day. University representatives are located in the area outside of the Attendance office during both lunch periods. This is a great opportunity for our students to learn about the various programs that are available, admission requirements, and financial aid. For more information on the colleges that are visiting, you can contact Ms. Carrillo in Student Services (919-233-4050 ext. 24893) or visit the Student Services website (<http://adhs-student-services.weebly.com>).

I am very proud that students in our Health Science Career Academy are planning Athens Drive's first Winter Charity Gala. Our students will be holding a dance for Athens Drive students on Saturday, January 26th, and all proceeds from the dance and fundraising efforts will go directly to St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital as a way for us to give back to kids battling cancer and unite our school. If you would like to donate to support this cause, please go to the website (<https://sites.google.com/wcpss.net/admhs-health-science-alliance/2019-athens-drive-winter-charity-gala>) that our students created for this event. I am excited that our students are creating this event to provide a fun evening for our students and to support a very worthy cause.

Today is the beginning of the WRAL Wrestling Tournament that we will host. The Tournament runs today and tomorrow, so please come out and support our student athletes and see some great wrestling! Please check the Athens Drive Athletics website (www.wakecountyathletics.com/athensdrivehs) for game dates and times of all our athletic events. Thank you for supporting our incredible student athletes!

Those are all the announcements for this week. Please continue to check the Athens Drive website (www.wcpss.net/athensdrivehs) for general information to help you stay informed. Please know that this is my final message for 2018. I would just like to take this opportunity to wish everybody much peace and love over our Holiday break. Those are things that I believe are most needed in our world right now—peace and love. I believe this is a wonderful time of the year to slow down, relax, cherish the time with our loved ones, and count our many blessings. Our children are truly the greatest blessings of all, and I thank you for sharing yours with us. It is our honor and pleasure to serve them and try to make a positive difference in their lives! I look forward to a New Year of renewed enthusiasm and commitment to our core values and moving each student forward to reach his/her ultimate potential! I wish each of you a very peaceful and joyous Holiday season, and a New Year filled with much promise and hope! If you are traveling over the Holidays, please be safe. Go JAGS and please take care!