

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>).

I hope that you all received my special telephone announcement that I sent out earlier today regarding the Lockdown that we had today in school. While I am incredibly frustrated and angry with having to respond as we did to a hoax threat, I cannot say enough about how proud I am with the response of our students, our staff, Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) Security, and Raleigh Police. In addition to frustrating me, it saddens me that we live in a world where there are people who make these false threats. I know that Lockdowns and threats to our school family can take an emotional toll on our entire school family, and that hurts my heart. However, please know that we will **always** take every threat seriously and **always** respond in a way to ensure the safety and security of all our students. Thank you for your continued support of our school family!

Now on to my regular weekly message.... It appears that we will be having some inclement weather this weekend. I would ask that you please stay tuned to announcements from the WCPSS regarding any school delays or closings. Please remember that if we are delayed, our Bell Schedule can be found (<https://www.wcpss.net/Page/36946>) on our school website. Please also remember that any closing of school could change our Early Release Day that is scheduled for Friday, December 21st, and could impact our Final Exam Schedule, depending on when Make-Up Days are assigned. Please know that we will communicate with you and our students when we get final information from WCPSS regarding any changes to the Athens Drive schedule.

Please remember that as of now, our Final Exams will begin on Friday, January 11th. The Final Exam Schedule for the Fall Semester has been posted (<https://bit.ly/2L2TEgg>) on our school website. The Final Exam Period will end on Thursday, January 17th. Please read the schedule for details regarding your student's Final Exam schedule. Please know that we will be working with our students as the Final Exam Period gets closer in order to ensure that each student knows where and when each of their Final Exams are.

Again, as of now, if you are planning ahead, please remember that Friday, December 21st, is our final day of school for the 2018 calendar year. Friday, December 21st is also an Early Release Day, and our school day will end at 11:35 a.m. School will be closed beginning on Saturday, December 22nd and will start again after the Holidays on Thursday, January 3rd.

Our Band is continuing to represent us in outstanding ways this Holiday season. They will be marching in their final marching performance tomorrow, Saturday, December 8th, in the Cary Christmas Parade. I appreciate their amazing effort this Marching Band season!

Parents, if any of our students are interested in becoming a Teacher, they want to come and meet the N.C. State University Teaching Fellow Coordinator, Crystal Espey, of the N.C. State University Teaching Fellows Program, to learn more about the Teaching Fellows Scholarship. Students can earn up to \$33,000 for college if they want to be a Teacher. Ms. Espey will be on campus on Tuesday, December 11th, from 2:30 p.m. until 3:45 p.m. in the Library.

On Tuesday, December 11th, beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the Auditorium, our String Orchestra will be presenting their Holiday Concert. The concert is free, so please come out and enjoy the incredible talent of our students!

The Official Athens Drive Senior Class Shirts are now on sale through Friday, December 21st. Order forms can be found on the school's website by going to the Senior Information page (<https://www.wcpss.net/domain/7111>), or they can be picked up in the Main Office. All order forms and money are due to Mr. Remaley in Room 2618 by Friday, December 21st.

The Athens Drive Student Government is once again sponsoring the 3rd Annual Charity Dodgeball Tournament on Wednesday, December 19th at 6:30 p.m. in the Main Gym. Registration is now open and will end on Friday, December 14th. Teams can be formed from all grade levels and abilities and can have 6 to 10 players. EACH

player will need to complete the registration form which will be available in the Main Office and around the building on the posters advertising the event. Each player (and any spectators who want to come watch) can choose to either donate \$5.00, donate 5 cans of food, or donate a new, unwrapped \$5.00 toy. All the donations will go to benefit the Backpack Buddies Program here at Athens Drive. If your student has any questions, please have them speak with Mr. Remaley (in Room 2618) or Mr. Maxwell (in Room 2620).

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, December 10th; Monday, December 17th; Monday, January 7th; and Wednesday, January 23rd, please sign-up to assist (<https://bit.ly/2zSoBPg>) or contact Ms. Hinton at tchinton@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.

In our efforts to support grieving students, our Student Services Department is collaborating with Transitions GriefCare, a division of Transitions LifeCare, to extend its grief counseling services to support our students. Support groups and educational offerings are available to help students develop and strengthen their ability to cope with grief's impact. Topics include understanding normal thoughts and feelings in grief, expressing the pain and complex emotions of grief, identifying new coping strategies and adapting to change, learning ways to handle holidays and special days, and connecting with peers who can relate to similar experiences. Please contact Mr. Wright (jwright@wcpss.net) if you are interested in your student participating in this group.

Our Winter Sports are in full swing. Please check the Athens Drive Athletics website (www.wakecountyathletics.com/athensdrivehs) for game dates and times. 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. I hope you all have a safe, warm, weekend and I hope you all are not severely impacted by the weather system that is moving in. Go JAGS and please take care.