

Good afternoon, this is Steve Mares, principal of Athens Drive Magnet High School, with a special message for Monday, July 13<sup>th</sup>. A copy of this special message will be posted on our school website ([www.wcpss.net/athensdrivehs](http://www.wcpss.net/athensdrivehs)) and emailed and texted to our school families.

**WELCOME:** First, I would like to give a warm **WELCOME TO THE ATHENS DRIVE MAGNET HIGH SCHOOL FAMILY** to our newest Jaguars! I would also like to give a shout-out to our rising Seniors who are moving into their final year of high school! I look forward to serving all of you this year and I am also looking forward to a fantastic school year!

**WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS EXPLANATION:** Throughout the school year, I will be providing weekly announcements on Friday afternoons through text and email messages to our school family members, posting the message on our website under the Principal Message icon, and the PTSA will provide a link to my message on their Athens Alert newsletter. I hope you find this an informative weekly update. However, during the Summer, I will most likely be sending out additional messages (like this one!) that do not come on Friday afternoon. Please know that I try to provide detailed information to all of you so that you can stay informed on what is happening at The Drive. There are so many changes happening that I will try my best to keep you informed and updated with the information for the 2020 – 2021 school year. If you hear about these messages from others but are not getting them through email and/or text, please contact our Student Services office (919-233-2050 then press 1) to update your contact information in PowerSchool. Please do not forget to check the Athens Website (<https://www.wcpss.net/athensdrivehs>) for continual updates and information regarding our school family.

**REOPENING OF SCHOOL:** As I am sure that you have heard, the Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) has announced its plan for reopening of schools. We now are expected to open the 2020 – 2021 school year using two options, a Blended Learning (both in-person and remote learning) and a Virtual Academy (remote learning only and no in-person learning at school) option. Please know that over the course of the next few weeks, both WCPSS and I will be communicating with you to inform you of updates, information, etc. regarding the start of the 2020 – 2021 school year. We have a fantastic school staff who is ready to meet this challenge and continue to serve our students! WCPSS has already shared several resources to provide information to families regarding this new reopening plan:

- [Information for Wake County families](#)
- [WCPSS Virtual Academy](#)
- [Return to Campus Information for Wake County families](#)
- [School Calendar](#)
- [Bus Transportation Information](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)

If you are interested in registering for the Virtual Academy, please visit this [link](#). Despite the many challenges we face because of COVID-19, please know that our focus remains on providing a plan for safe teaching and learning for all students to grow and meet their ultimate potential!

**SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS:** Athens Drive Magnet High School has a variety of Social Media Accounts that students, staff, school families, and the community can follow to stay abreast of what is happening at The Drive. Here are some of the more frequently visited sites:

- **Instagram:**
  - School Instagram: @AthensHSMagnet
  - Student Services: @ADHSSStudentServices
  - The Torch (Yearbook): @athens\_torch
  - The Oracle (Newspaper): @athensoracle

- ATV (Morning News Program): @atvjagnews
- Athens Athletics: @athensjags
- Athens Jag Club: @adhsjaguars
  
- **Twitter:**
  - School Twitter: @AthensHSMagnet
  - Student Services: @boothe\_ADHS
  - PTSA: @AthensDrivePTSA
  - The Torch (Yearbook): @athenstorch
  - The Oracle (Newspaper): @athensoracle
  - ATV (Morning News Program): @atvjagnews
  - Athens Athletics: @athensjags
  - Athens Drive Student Government: @ASHAExecBoard
  - STEM Academy: @AthensSTEM
  - Health Science Career Academy: @ADHS\_HSA
  
- **Facebook:**
  - School Facebook: Athens Drive Magnet High School
  
- **Remind:** text to 81010
  - Senior Class Messages from Mr. Remaley, Senior Class Advisor: @theremaley
  - Remind Class information from our Student Services Team:
    - Class of 2021 is @fae99c
    - Class of 2022 is @admhscl
    - Class of 2023 is @c44694k
    - Class of 2024 is @haghfb

Thank you for keeping up-to-speed with everything that happens at The Drive!

**FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL:** Please remember that the First Day of School for all students is Monday, August 17<sup>th</sup>. While the year will begin in a different manner than any opening of the any school year to date, I am still looking forward to another great year of teaching and learning!

**STUDENT SCHEDULES FOR THE 2020 – 2021 SCHOOL YEAR:** Please understand that we are continuing to finalize our Master Schedule for the 2020 – 2021 school year. With scheduling students for two options—Virtual Academy and Blended Learning—please understand that student schedules will change. As we get information about the choices that families make with regards to what option they choose, we will be changing our Master Schedule which will impact student schedules. Thus, any schedule that a student currently sees, or will see, in PowerSchool is not final. Please understand that based on these new changes to the reopening of school, we will continue to work on our Master Schedule almost until the first day of school in August. I would ask students and families not to email Counselors or Administrators to discuss schedule change requests. Please understand that a schedule change request process will be established and shared with families in August if there is a need for a student to change his/her schedule.

**CLASS OF 2021 VACCINATION REQUIREMENT INFORMATION:** In accordance with North Carolina State Law, all students attending public schools entering the 12<sup>th</sup> Grade are required to receive a booster dose of Meningococcal vaccine. Most medical providers in Wake County are seeing appointments for health assessments and immunizations. At this time, the NC Immunization Program has stated they will not be extending the immunization requirements due to COVID-19. **All required immunizations are due by the first day of**

**school.** If the parent/student has not provided immunization documentation after 30 calendar days from the start of school, the student **MUST** be excluded from school until documentation is provided. Thank you for your attention to this vital information.

**RISEING SENIOR PICTURES:** Congratulations to the Class of 2021!! You are now Seniors and I am counting on you for positive leadership in the coming year! No matter what the 2020 – 2021 school year will look like, it will be a fantastic year and I am proud that you have made it this far and are ready to prepare for life after The Drive! One of the first right of passages for the Class of 2021 is Senior Pictures! This year, Senior pictures will be taken through Evan Pike Photography. Evan Pike is a local photographer and is accommodating social distancing and CDC measures. Our Seniors will be photographed outside and on campus. All students will need to have 2 poses taken (both will be used in the Yearbook—one will be a headshot and one a 3/4 length). Please understand that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we will **NOT** have draped/tux pictures this year (see [ADMHS Senior Photography website](#) for more details). Scheduling for Senior pictures will be done online, and picture dates span from July 20<sup>th</sup> through August 7<sup>th</sup>. **Please note that sessions could be cancelled and adjusted based on our Governor’s orders, WCPSS Board of Education policies and procedures, and our own ability to open the school for this service as the summer progresses.** Once a student schedules their picture, please make sure you look for emails from Evan Pike if we do need to adjust Senior portrait dates. Please review this information for Senior Pictures:

- Seniors will need 2 portraits for the Yearbook, both of which will be taken in a single complimentary session.
- Please make sure the Senior wears outfit(s) appropriate for publication in the Yearbook. Please nothing strapless and avoid t-shirts with inappropriate messages.
- Please be aware that locations vary by date, so please wait for your photographer at the following outside locations:
  - July 20<sup>th</sup> through July 24<sup>th</sup>: Main Entrance, where our Flagpole and Globe are located.
  - July 27<sup>th</sup> through July 31<sup>st</sup>: Gym Entrance
  - August 3<sup>rd</sup> through August 7<sup>th</sup>: Library Entrance
  - When you arrive, the photographer might be in the middle of another session but should not be too far away.
- Use the site below to book your complimentary session and please add "[mail@evanpike.com](mailto:mail@evanpike.com)" to your email client's safe list or check your spam folder if you don't see a confirmation email after booking:
  - <http://admhsseniors.com/> - Senior Photo Scheduling Site
  - <http://menu.admhsseniors.com/> - Price menu and FAQ
- After your session, you will have the option to purchase set collections or build your own collection. By default, your proofing gallery will be set to prearranged collections. If you want to build your own collection, please contact Evan Pike to switch your gallery to custom collection pricing.
- Please remember that there is no sitting fee, the session is complimentary, and purchasing is optional.

If you have any concerns, please do not hesitate to visit the [ADMHS Senior Photography website](#), contact Ms. Luna ([eluna@wcpss.net](mailto:eluna@wcpss.net)), our Yearbook Advisor, or contact Evan Pike ([evanpike@gmail.com](mailto:evanpike@gmail.com)).

**CLASS OF 2021 MID-YEAR GRADUATION:** If you have a rising Senior who is interested in Graduating Mid-Year (in January 2021 after the end of the First Semester), forms are available on the Student Services website for you to let us know. You can access the Mid-Year Graduation form by following this link: [Mid-Year Graduation Form](#). Please complete the form, scan it, and email it to Ms. Brown, our Dean of Students, at [tbrown3@wcpss.net](mailto:tbrown3@wcpss.net).

**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 2020 – 2021 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 20<sup>th</sup>.

**JUNIORS AND SENIORS PARKING PASSES:** Please understand that we are waiting on direction from the Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) regarding Parking Passes for the 2020 – 2021 school year. As soon as we have that information, we will be disseminating applications, information, and directions for student parking. Thank you, again, for your patience with regards to this school process.

**OFF-CAMPUS LUNCH PASS:** At this time, we have not made a final decision if we will be allowing students to leave campus for lunch. Thus, we are not offering Off-Campus Lunch Passes for Juniors and Seniors. As soon as we make final decisions about this privilege, I will communicate information to our Juniors, Seniors, and school families.

**ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION INFORMATION:** Right now, there is a lot up in the air regarding athletic participation as we await decisions from Governor Cooper and the North Carolina High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA) on if we will be able to restart athletics for the 2020 – 2021 school year. Currently, all athletic activities are suspended until further notice. Please visit our Athletic website linked [here](#) and subscribe to our email list at the top of the page. Once we have definitive information, we will send out updates via our email list, on Twitter ([@athensjags](#)), and Instagram ([@athensjags](#)). Thank you for your patience as we wait on final decisions regarding athletic participation.

**NORTH CAROLINA HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION (NCHSAA) CHANGES TO PHYSICAL POLICY:** The NCHSAA has made quite a few changes for the coming year in response to the COVID-19 pandemic with regards to Physical forms. The updated policy regarding Physicals is outlined below in the table. We have been informed that all student athletes who had a valid Pre-Participation Examination (PPE) form dated anytime from March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019 through May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 (used for the 2019 – 2020 school year) will be granted an emergency one-year extension through the end of the 2020 – 2021 school year. I hope this table helps you understand the new interpretations for participating in Athletics for the 2020 – 2021 Athletic Seasons:

| Date of Current Physical                  | Requirement for 2020 – 2021 School Year   |
|---|---|
| Prior to 03/01/2019                       | Need valid, up-to-date physical prior to participating.   |
| On or after 03/01/2019 through 05/01/2020 | Granted a temporary extension to participate through the end of the 2020 – 2021 academic school year. |
| On or after 05/02/20                      | Will participate based on the current policy of being “valid for 395 days.”                           |

If allowed this summer, a student athlete can participate in 2020 Summer Workouts with a physical dated on-or-after March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019. Please also remember that a rising Ninth Grade student athlete is also subject to all the above. **Please understand that all student athletes will still need to submit new registration paperwork prior to participating in any Workouts/Practices even if their Physical has not expired.** Thank you for your understanding of the changing aspects of requirements for our student athletes.

**PTSA INFORMATION:** Here is information that Ms. Lysa Fulbright, our PTSA President, wanted me to share with you all: Welcome Freshmen Parents and Welcome Back Sophomore, Junior, and Senior Parents! Start the

new school year off right by joining the Athens Drive PTSA. Your membership dues and donations go to supporting our awesome PTSA Programs, such as Classroom Supply Grants, Senior Scholarships, Athens Achievers Student Recognition, and more! You will also receive The Athens Alert, a weekly email updating you on PTSA and other school events. There are two ways to join: [1] Join and pay online [HERE](#) using PayPal, or [2] Print and fill out the Membership Form [HERE](#) and mail it in with your payment. For more information about the PTSA, please visit our website at <https://athensdriveptsa.com/>. Thank you for your support of our school through your participation in the PTSA!

**FOOD DISTRIBUTION:** Please know that we are continuing 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 know that hot lunches for the day and breakfast for the next day will be provided. This service will continue through the summer. 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!

**SUMMER ORIENTATION SESSIONS FOR RISING NINTH, TENTH, ELEVENTH, AND TWELFTH GRADE STUDENTS:** Please know that we are working on hosting multiple virtual Orientation sessions for all grades in August. As we learn more about what teaching, learning, and school will look like in the 2020 – 2021 school year, we will share additional information about these sessions. Please keep an eye out for this information as we get closer to the start of the next school year. Thank you for your understanding of the need to change the way we provide an Orientation for our students prior to the start of the school year!

**DRIVERS EDUCATION UPDATE:** Jordan Driving School is not accepting any new registration forms at this time. Once the class schedule has been determined for the school year, it along with the 2020 - 2021 Driver Education Registration form will be posted at [www.jordandriving.com](http://www.jordandriving.com). Continue to monitor the Jordan Driving website for updates on the upcoming school year. Please see the [Drivers Education Update](#) from WCPSS for additional information.

**PROCESS FOR OBTAINING A DRIVER'S ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATE:** To meet the needs of our students and families, we will be implementing the following process to allow students to receive a Driver's Eligibility Certificate (DEC) while our school building is closed due to COVID-19. Please remember that DEC's are only valid for 30 days; therefore, students are only eligible to receive a DEC during this time if they have a **confirmed appointment with the NCDMV within 30 days of the date of the request**. You will start by sending an email request to Ms. Teresa Brown ([tbrown3@wcpss.net](mailto:tbrown3@wcpss.net)), Dean of Students, and include the email from NCDMV confirming the date/time of the appointment. You will receive an email confirming the date/time you can come to the high school to receive the DEC. Once your appointment is confirmed with us, the following steps will be taken:

- Step 1: Scan or take a photo of the following:
  - Student's birth certificate or passport
  - Completed Driver's Education Certificate (if it has not been emailed ahead of time)
  - Proof of address if the current address is different than the one listed on the Driver's Education Certificate or the address listed in PowerSchool. Address must be verified for the NC Real ID.
  - Email this information to Ms. Brown, our designated contact at the school. This will limit the amount of paper that has to be exchanged by staff and students. If you are unable to scan or take a photo of the document, then you will need to bring all these documents with you to the appointment.
- Step 2: Bring the following documents to the appointment:

- Student's birth certificate or passport
- Completed Driver's Education Certificate (if it has not been emailed ahead of time)
- Proof of address if the current address is different than the one listed on the Driver's Education Certificate or the address listed in PowerSchool. Address must be verified for the NC Real ID.
- Step 3: Receiving the DEC:
  - Once you arrive for your appointment, a staff member will meet you at the front door of the school (entrance by the flagpole) to receive the DEC. It is important that we limit the amount of direct contact and maintain at least 6 feet of social distance. For this reason, please limit the number of family members (preferably just the student and a parent or guardian) who attend the appointment. Please arrive at the school promptly for your scheduled appointment to ensure that we can follow the social distancing guidelines that have been established.
  - Staff will check the student's grades for adequate progress. The student must have passed 70% of the courses taken in the prior semester to receive a DEC.
  - Once grades have been verified and all other documents are in place, the DEC can be issued to the student.

Thank you for your understanding and support of this process to continue to provide DEC's to our students.

**SUMMER HOURS FOR SCHOOL OPENING:** Please know that we will have a few staff on campus each day from 8:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. Please understand that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the building is closed for visitors. However, for families who have important business, the building is open to take care of those student/family needs. Please know that to best protect our staff and visitors, anybody on campus must always wear a mask/face covering. Thank you for your understanding.

**DONATIONS OF HEALTH SUPPLIES TO OUR SCHOOL:** I am so thankful to serve in such a tremendous school family! I appreciate those families who have reached out to offer to donate Health supplies and Personal Protection Equipment to our school to use for the upcoming school year. While I do appreciate it, please understand that to best protect our staff and students, we can only accept face covering donations that have been purchased from WCPSS-approved vendors, to ensure they meet WCPSS standards. So, while I am thankful for the offers, I would ask that we wait until we get closer to the start of the school year to see what/how donations can be made to the school if you are so moved to do. Thank you, again, for thinking about our school family as you think about service to your community!

**CLOSING MESSAGE:** As we prepare to start this new year, I want to thank each one of you for allowing us the honor and pleasure of serving your student! Please know that I understand the great responsibility that you place on us, and please know that we are passionate about providing all our students a safe, inviting, and rigorous school climate where our students can build on their strengths and interests and reach their ultimate potential—whether that is in-person or virtually. I believe in our teachers, I believe in our students, and I believe that we have a school family that cares and supports students. Please know that we are committed to working hard this year to challenge each student, meet their individual needs, and help each student successfully Graduate and reach their full potential. I understand and am thankful for the privilege I have to serve you all, and I continue to be proud to be a part of the Athens Drive family. Again, I would like to welcome all our new students and families to the Athens Drive Magnet High School family! We have a great school family, and I am excited about this coming year of teaching and learning! Please continue to check the [Athens Drive website](#) for general information and to help you stay informed. I hope your summer is going well and I hope you all are staying cool in this heat. As always, please continue to be safe and take care of yourselves, your loved ones, and each other. **GO JAGS!**