

Good afternoon, this is Steve Mares, principal of Athens Drive Magnet High School, with a special message for Wednesday, July 22nd. A copy of this special message will be posted on our school website (www.wcpss.net/athensdrivehs), tweeted on our school Twitter account, and emailed and texted to our school families.

NEW OR UPDATED ANNOUNCEMENTS:

CHANGE TO THE START OF THE SCHOOL YEAR: I would imagine that you all have heard, seen, or received information from the Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) regarding the change that was approved by the WCPSS Board of Education yesterday afternoon for the start of the 2020 – 2021 school year. **ALL STUDENTS WILL BEGIN THE YEAR IN ONLINE INSTRUCTION.** Monday, August 17th will still be the first day of school for our students, but all students will begin the year in online learning. We have already shifted gears and are beginning to plan for this instructional delivery and please know that we will be communicating details over the course of the next few weeks.

NEW VIRTUAL ACADEMY REGISTRATION PERIOD—STUDENTS CAN STILL REGISTER FOR OUR VIRTUAL ACADEMY: Based on this new information regarding the changes to the start of the school year, if you want to register your student for our Virtual Academy and you have not yet done so, there is still time to do this. All students/families will have another opportunity to apply for our Virtual Academy from Monday, July 27th through Wednesday, July 29th. The application period for this registration will close at 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, July 29th, at 5:00 p.m. If you want your student to be enrolled in our Virtual Academy, and you have not registered your student yet, this is another chance to take care of it. If you have already registered your student, we have that information and you do NOT need to complete another application.

IF YOU HAVE REGISTERED FOR OUR VIRTUAL ACADEMY BUT NOW WANT TO BE IN OUR BLENDED LEARNING WHEN WE DO RETURN TO SCHOOL: If you registered for our Virtual Academy and now you believe that our Blended Learning will be the best option for your student/family when we can return to school, you can unenroll from the Virtual Academy. I would ask that a Parent/Guardian email me (smares@wcpss.net) with your wish to remove your student from the Virtual Academy and I will make that adjustment. I would ask that you please do this prior to Wednesday, July 29th at 5:00 p.m. It is critically important that we get this information as soon as possible so that we can finalize our Master Schedule that we are adjusting. Thank you for letting me know if this is the situation for your student/family.

NOW THAT WE KNOW WE ARE OPENING IN ONLINE LEARNING, DO I STILL NEED TO APPLY TO THE VIRTUAL ACADEMY IF I WANT A FULLY REMOTE LEARNING EXPERIENCE FOR MY STUDENT? I answered this question in my last message to families, but I wanted to revisit it again in this message now that we have a new plan for reopening school. The answer remains the same: Yes. Even though we are now opening the school year in a “Plan B Transition” plan where all students are beginning the school year in online instruction, if you want to ensure that your student only has a remote learning experience, then you need to register for our Virtual Academy. Please know that students who are not in our Virtual Academy could be switched to the Blended Learning model at any time WCPSS deems it safe to have students return to our school. Thus, any student/family who wants to ensure you have a 100% remote learning environment for your student, you need to enroll your student in the Virtual Academy and you will be set, at least for the Semester, but for the entire year of receiving remote instruction. As I mentioned earlier, if you have already registered, you are good-to-go and you do not need to do anything. If you have not registered, but want to, please be sure to register during the new window from Monday, July 27th through Wednesday, July 29th. And, if you have registered for our Virtual Academy and have changed your mind, you need to email me (smares@wcpss.net) and inform me of your decision. Thank you for keeping track of all of this!

COMPARISON CHART: WCPSS has created a comparison chart for the various options that we are offering and various plans that we could move to throughout the 2020 – 2021 school year. I think it is a great visual with important information regarding each scenario. Please find that chart at this [link](#). WCPSS has shared that this chart is not mobile friendly, so the optimal viewing is on a computer

EXTENDED CURRICULUM STUDENTS RETURNING TO SCHOOL: We are making plans for our students who receive instruction through our Regional Programs Extended Curriculum classes to return to Athens Drive for daily classroom instruction beginning on Tuesday, September 8th. We will all be getting additional information regarding this transition back to our school, but we are excited to plan for these students to return to The Drive each day for instruction on September 8th!

TRANSITION INFORMATION FOR OUR SPANISH-SPEAKING FAMILIES: WCPSS has made mini-videos for our Spanish speaking families explaining different topics with regards to the reopening of school. I hope this information is helpful:

- **Plan B de Instrucción Combinada para el Año Escolar 2020-2021.**
 - Los padres recibirán información sobre el Plan B de Instrucción Combinada para el Año Escolar 2020-2021. <https://youtu.be/PWnOgBUmlFY>
- **Información sobre la Academia Virtual de WCPSS**
 - Los padres de WCPSS se informarán sobre la Academia Virtual de WCPSS y cuál es el proceso para aplicar. <https://youtu.be/Vpg65ZuV1hQ>
- **Requisito de Revisión de Salud para Entrar la Escuela**
 - Los padres recibirán información sobre el proceso de la revisión de salud para que los estudiantes puedan entrar a la escuela todos los días. <https://youtu.be/Ze387GwqVVg>
- **Requisitos de Revisión de Salud para Abordar el Autobús**
 - Los padres recibirán información sobre el proceso que los estudiantes tienen que seguir para poder abordar el autobús escolar todos los días. <https://youtu.be/TfezbihTRIA>
- **Requisitos sobre el Protector Facial, Distanciamiento Social y Lavado de Manos**
 - Los padres recibirán información sobre los requisitos que los estudiantes tienen que seguir con el protector facial, distanciamiento social y lavado de manos. <https://youtu.be/GAbEVXldeag>
- **Resume del Guía de Regreso Escolar 2020-21**
 - Resume del Guía de Regreso Escolar 2020-21 <https://youtu.be/xvKlohNnog8>

2019 – 2020 YEARBOOK ORDERS—YEARBOOKS ARE COMING! The second order of Yearbooks that was placed in June have been shipped and should arrive at Athens Drive by this coming Friday, July 24th. With that in mind, they will be available for pick-up Monday, July 27th through Wednesday, July 29th, from 8:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. each day. When you come to pick-up your Yearbook, I would ask that you please use the Front Entrance of the school, ring the bell, and let our staff know you are picking up a Yearbook. A staff member will bring the book to the front door to give to you. Ms. Luna, our Yearbook Advisor, will be emailing everyone who purchased one of these books to inform them about pick-up details, etc. Please be on the lookout for this information in the next few days.

SENIOR INFORMATION: I wanted to be sure that our Seniors and their families have the information they need to start the year in a positive manner. Here is information for them:

- **SENIOR EVENTS:** I have had several Seniors and their families reach out to me and ask about our Senior events and if they will still happen. On a positive note, most of our Senior events happen later in the school year, so our hope is that our Senior events will be able to happen. In addition, we also are looking at adding additional events or changing some of our events based on our experiences last year and some of the fun, family-inspired events we were able to create and host during the pandemic. So, at this time (and yes, things could change...!), we have a place reserved for Prom, we have a Mid-Year Graduation scheduled, we are working with Jostens to plan for Cap and Gown ordering and distribution, we have calendar dates selected for our Senior Breakfast, Senior Picnic, Senior Awards Assembly, etc. Obviously, we will have to wait to see what transpires with the COVID-19 pandemic, in what capacity we are able to gather in large groups, what learning environment we are operating in, etc. However, please know that we are working to ensure that the incredible Class of 2021 have a memorable year and are appropriately honored for their accomplishments!
- **ACTION REQUIRED—CLASS OF 2021 VACCINATION REQUIREMENT INFORMATION:** In accordance with North Carolina State Law, all students attending public schools entering the 12th 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.
- **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 by Wednesday, July 29th. If you are unable to access this form, please come to school and ring the bell at the Front Door to get assistance with completing this form.
- **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, scanned, and emailed to Ms. Telfair (stelfair@wcpss.net) by Wednesday, July 29th. If you are unable to access this form, please come to school and ring the bell at the Front Door to get assistance with completing this form.
- **RISING SENIOR PICTURES HAVE BEGUN!** 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 20th through August 7th. **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 20th through July 24th: Main Entrance, where our Flagpole and Globe are located.
 - July 27th through July 31st: Gym Entrance
 - August 3rd through August 7th: 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" 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), our Yearbook Advisor, or contact Evan Pike (evanpike@gmail.com).

CLOSING MESSAGE: Even though the school year has not even started, it seems like “flexibility” is the key word for the start of the year and the reopening of school. Thank you for your patience, understanding, and flexibility as WCPSS announces changes to our instructional delivery plan and we adjust our plans to best meet the needs of our students. Because we are opening another registration period for our Virtual Academy, please know that we will be working on student schedules until just prior to the start of school. Please know that as we finalize plans for student schedules, bell schedules for classes, etc., I will communicate those plans to you. I know there are still many unknowns for you all, but please know that we are working diligently to prepare for a great year of teaching and learning. Please know that we have our students’ best interest in every plan we develop. Please understand that I will share information with all of you as we are able to finalize plans. On a personal note, I am moving my daughter to Atlanta this weekend where she will start as a pediatric oncology nurse (proud dad moment, sorry...!). Thus, this will be my only message for this week. I will send a message out early next week to communicate information again. I hope you all have a wonderful rest of the week and weekend and thank you for allowing us to serve your student! Please continue to check the [Athens Drive website](#) for general information

and to help you stay informed. As always, please continue to be safe and take care of yourselves, your loved ones, and each other. **GO JAGS!**

REMINDER ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM PREVIOUS WEEKLY MESSAGES:

DESCRIPTION OF THE TWO OPTIONS FOR REOPENING OF SCHOOL—VIRTUAL ACADEMY OR BLENDED LEARNING: I know there are still many questions regarding the difference between what our Virtual Academy program will look like versus our Blended Learning program. And, I know that many of you are still debating exactly which platform for learning will work best for your student and family. I understand your concern and want to provide my thoughts on what both learning platforms will look like. Please understand that we continue to work on our Master Schedule and what the Daily Schedule will look like for students who are attending either option. While we haven't finalized our plans, I did want to help answer many questions that I have been receiving.

VIRTUAL ACADEMY:

- Students will be Athens Drive students and will officially be attending Athens Drive.
- Students will be able to participate in co-curricular, athletics, and clubs for Athens Drive while participating in the Virtual Academy.
- Students will still be able to participate in our STEM Academy and our Health Science Career Academy.
- Students are making a commitment of remaining in our Virtual Academy for at least the first Semester, but the recommendation is that the student will remain in the Virtual Academy for the entire year.
- It will be different (e.g., more “live” instruction, grades, rigor, etc.) than the Remote Learning that students experienced in the Spring Semester.
- Our plan is to provide “live” instruction each day, for each class, a student takes.
- Instruction will be provided Monday through Friday.
- We expect learning to be engaging, rigorous, and aligned to the Standards for each course.
- Assessments (e.g., tests, quizzes, research papers, projects, etc.) will be provided to students and grades will be earned.
- Course Grades, course Credits, and course Grade Point Averages will all be calculated the same for both Virtual Academy and Blended Learning.
- There will be a set schedule for classes. Attendance in “live” instruction will be expected, course work outside of the “live” instruction will be required to be completed, and Attendance will be taken.
- Courses will be taught by Athens Drive Teachers. (There may be a time that for a specific course offering we may group our students with students from another high school to be able offer the course to our students. However, I do not foresee this happening often, if at all.)
- Virtual Academy instruction will be a combination of “live” instruction, video instruction, and coursework.
- For those rising Seniors who are eligible, and are interested in Graduating Early (Mid-Year, January 2021), this is still an option.
- It is our plan that students will have access to all Honors and AP course offerings. However, we are still evaluating how we can teach certain classes that need specific tools (e.g.,

Carpentry, etc.) or programs (e.g., Drafting, Programming, etc.) that students may not have access to on their computers or in their homes.

- We are still working on a plan for those courses only taught by one teacher (e.g., Band, Chorus, Theatre, some CTE Course offerings, etc.) to have them available to students in both the Virtual Academy and Blended Learning platforms.
- If you are interested in registering for the Virtual Academy, please visit this [link](#) and register by 5:00 p.m. on July 20th.

BLENDED LEARNING:

- Students will be Athens Drive students.
- If you do not register for the Virtual Academy, you will be in our Blended Learning program. This is the “default” for all students.
- Students will come to school for in-person learning for a week, and then receive remote learning for the two weeks they are not in school.
- Our plan is to provide “live” instruction each day, for each class. During the in-person learning week, students will receive instruction on campus, in a classroom, and with their teacher. While the student is engaged in remote learning off campus, our plan is to continue “live” instruction for a portion of day. In addition, while in students are engaged in remote learning, students will be expected to complete coursework as well for the course.
- Instruction will be provided Monday through Friday.
- We expect learning to be engaging, rigorous, and aligned to the Standards for each course.
- Assessments (e.g., tests, quizzes, research papers, projects, etc.) will be provided to students and grades will be earned.
- Course Grades, course Credits, and course Grade Point Averages will all be calculated the same for both Virtual Academy and Blended Learning.
- There will be a set schedule for classes. Attendance in “live” instruction will be expected, course work outside of the “live” instruction will be required to be completed, and Attendance will be taken—even when in remote learning.
- Courses will be taught by Athens Drive Teachers.
- We are planning for students to have access each day to their Teacher for “live” instruction and we are working on a plan to provide additional time to our students in remote learning to access other Teachers in a “live” format to get instructional support.
- Students who are in their remote learning from home will be expected to follow a schedule and attend “live” sessions with their teacher.
- For safety reasons, we are planning for the following while students are on campus:
 - Students will only be able to enter at specific entrances each morning with health screening at each entrance (e.g., temperature check, health screening questions, etc.).
 - Students will be required to socially distance throughout the entire day. This is going to be a MAJOR change for students, as we know they will want to gather in groups, talk, hangout, etc. This just cannot happen. Please be sure that you speak to your student to assist them in understanding that returning to school this year will be quite different than returning to school in previous years.
 - Students will eat Lunch in the Cafeteria or Courtyard, but there will be specific seats where students can sit on to ensure social distancing while eating.

- Breakfast and Lunch will be available for students while they are in-person, and while they are remote learning. We are working to provide a plan for a “drive-through” lunch pick-up for students who are not in school but need a meal.

I hope this information helps. However, as with almost everything now, these parameters may change depending on guidance from WCPSS, North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, and the Governor. Please know that since we haven't completed the Master Schedule and Daily Schedule for students and staff, it is hard to provide detailed information. We are also still waiting on detailed information/directives regarding instruction in both platforms from Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) to help us be able to finalize our plans. Please know that I will communicate with you more detailed plans as they are created. However, 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!

REOPENING OF SCHOOL: I wanted to continue to list these links to resources that WCPSS has already shared 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](#)

STAY CONNECTED THROUGHOUT THE YEAR: To stay connected to my messages and get other updates from WCPSS and Athens Drive Magnet High School, please make note of the following:

- **SchoolMessenger:** This is the system that we use to get messages to our school families. School families can set their contact preferences with their SchoolMessenger account. Please visit <https://www.wcpss.net/schoolmessenger> to update your preferences, read FAQ document, and read instructions on how to create a parent SchoolMessenger account.
- **Text messages:** You can also opt-in to receive text messages through our SchoolMessenger system. Please visit <https://www.wcpss.net/schoolmessenger> as well to get this information.
- **Emails:** We will automatically send you an email if we have your correct information on file. If you are not receiving this message via email, please email Ms. Gattens (emgattens@wcpss.net), our School Receptionist, with your correct email address.
- **Athens Drive Magnet High School Website:** My weekly (or more often...) Principal Messages are posted and archived on our [website](#). You can access these Principal Messages by clicking on the link in the banner towards the top of the website or scroll down our website for another banner across the webpage with icons and click on the Principal's Message link.
- **PowerSchool Accounts:** In High School, all students need an NCEdCloud account, and parents are encouraged to maintain their own parent PowerSchool account. If you need to open a student and/or parent PowerSchool account, please follow the directions on the WCPSS [website](#).

Thank you for your efforts to keep updated on all that is happening at The Drive!

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. This is an updated list from the list I sent out earlier in the week:

- **Instagram:**
 - School Instagram: @AthensHSMagnet
 - Student Services: @athensdrive_studentservices
 - 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: @ADHSStudentSvcs
 - PTSA: @AthensDrivePTSA
 - The Torch (Yearbook): @athenstorch
 - The Oracle (Newspaper): @athensoracle
 - ATV (Morning News Program): @atvjagnews
 - Athens Athletics: @athensjags
 - Athens Drive Student Government: @ADHSExecBoard
 - 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

Please know that you can find this information on our [website](#) with active links to these sites. Thank you for keeping up-to-speed with everything that happens at The Drive!

FREE OR REDUCED PRICE MEALS: Please be sure to go the [MySchoolApps](#) website to apply for Free or Reduced Price meals. Please know that this year any student who qualifies for Reduced Price meals will get meals Free. So, whether a student qualifies to receive either Free or Reduced Price meals, the meals will all be Free for those students. As I mentioned earlier in my message, we are planning to have a “drive-through” meal pick-up for our students who are learning remotely so that they can continue to receive meals. As soon as we have finalized those plans, I will communicate that with you. Thank you for taking care important process!

ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION UPDATE: The North Carolina High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA) has postponed the start of the Fall athletic season until at least September 1st. Between now and the end of August the NCHSAA will be evaluating when and how to return to athletics safely. You can read the full statement from the athletic association [here](#). Please make sure you subscribe to the Athens Drive Magnet High School Athletic Department email group and follow our Athletic Department on Twitter (@athensjags) and Instagram

(@athensjags) to get up-to-date information. If have not subscribed to the Athletic Department email group, you can do so by visiting the Athens Athletics [webpage](#) and entering your email address at the top of the page.

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.

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.

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 1st, 2019 through May 1st, 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 1st, 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. 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), 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!