

Good afternoon, this is Steve Mares, principal of Athens Drive Magnet High School, with a special announcement for Tuesday, March 31st. 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 are doing well, taking care of yourselves, your loved ones, each other, and are surviving the Shelter-In-Place order. These are challenging times for sure, but I do hope that all of us are doing what we need to in order to flatten the curve of this COVID-19 pandemic and get to the other side of this pandemic.

Thank you for your continued support and understanding of our efforts to implement Remote Learning and provide instruction for your students! Here is the information I would like to share with you all today regarding our efforts:

VIDEO FROM OUR STAFF TO OUR SCHOOL FAMILY: Please enjoy the [video message](#) our staff sends to you all to let you all know we care about and miss our students and families!

WAKE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL (WCPSS) CORONAVIRUS UPDATES: If you haven't checked out this [webpage](#), please be sure to keep it handy. This is the page that launches links for the information that WCPSS is sharing on its website for all of us to stay informed.

OPENING OF SCHOOL TOMORROW, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1ST FOR FAMILIES WHO WANT TO PICK-UP STUDENT MEDICATION OR RETRIEVE ANY PERSONAL ITEMS: We will be opening the school tomorrow from 12:00 p.m. until 3:00 p.m. to allow those families who want to pick up their student's medication or if a student needs to pick up personal items that are still in school. As I have mentioned previously, please know that we will continue to safely store that medication at school, not a problem. However, if you would like to pick up your student's medication(s), we will have medication administration staff members available to follow the required process for pick up tomorrow, Wednesday, April 1st, from 12:00 p.m. until 3:00 p.m. Please use only the Main School entrance to access the school, sign-in at the tables just inside the front entrance, and please utilize safe social distancing practices throughout this process. If you are sick or experiencing any symptoms of any illness, please do not come to school tomorrow. Please feel free to reach out to me (smares@wcpss.net) and we can work something out. Thank you for your support.

REMOTE LEARNING: Please know that we continue to work towards Monday, April 13th, when we begin our new Remote Learning Schedule and implement new learning for our students. Please remember that this is new territory for all of us—this is not traditional teaching and learning as we have been doing. I also realize that with the Shelter-In-Place Order, many of you have families to take care of throughout the day, work from home responsibilities, possibly multiple students at different schools who will all need academic assistance, and our students and you will be finding that delicate balance between learning responsibilities and their home/family responsibilities. I know this is a lot to undertake, and I appreciate the way you all have supported our efforts to move to this new learning platform! Please know that we will get there, and we will get there together! As I said in my last message, there will be bumps, but we will continue to make improvements to ensure that we are doing our best to engage all students in learning.

THE NEW ATHENS DRIVE MAGNET HIGH SCHOOL SCHEDULE BEGINNING ON MONDAY, APRIL 13TH: In order to implement our Remote Learning, we have developed a new Schedule for our students. Please use this [link](#) to find our schedule for Remote Learning. Again, this schedule will begin to be used on Monday, April 13th. You will notice that there are multiple parts to the schedule—some time for students to work outside of “live” classes; two “live” sessions of class meetings each week; a day set aside for Instructional Support

(Friday morning); and one hour of “Office Hours” each day for our teachers to be assessable to our students. Our teachers will be communicating with your students to inform them of their Office Hours once we have finalized those decisions. Please understand that in developing this schedule with support from WCPSS, the following criteria was considered:

- Instruction that teachers pre-record or post for individual student learning will be available at any time for students to access the information and that is where we will be presenting new information.
- “Real time” or “live” opportunities for continued learning (those “class periods”) will be places where teachers will be getting students to interact, where concepts are modeled/demonstrated, where there may be small group discussion/work, etc. Please know that “live” learning will not be recorded and new instructional material will not be presented.
- Our “live” learning opportunities between 8:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. have the following guidelines:
 - Individual class sessions will not exceed two per day.
 - An individual class session will not last longer than one hour to conform to best practices with online learning.

In general, our expectation is that students have approximately 5 hours of contact per week, per course (e.g., 2 hours of “live” or real time opportunities, and 3 hours of pre-recorded or posted options/assignments). Please understand that the 3 hours include learning activities, readings, assignments, etc. Please also understand that this time will look different for different courses depending on the content area, needs of the students, etc. Again, our plan is that during the "live" one-hour, twice a week time for learning, teachers will be leading demonstrations, modeling, having student discussions, etc. The pre-recorded or posted material portion of the learning will be recorded or posted and that is what the students will use to learn. The hour-long class session will then follow-up on the learning that was provided in the recorded/posted instruction.

Please note that we are working to protect time for students to be served by special education staff and include opportunities to provide support for intervention and acceleration based on student need. That is going to be a large part of what Friday will be used for. We can provide accommodations, modifications, support, individualized, and small group work to support our students on Friday.

Please know that our teachers will continue best practices for teaching and learning while providing Remote Learning. Please also understand that we cannot just do the same things that we did in the classroom. Much of that kind of instruction will not be appropriate, will be difficult to replicate, etc. Thus, we are thinking about the important Standards and Curriculum that we want our students to learn during this Remote Learning period. We are still working hard to finalize our plans and create lessons for our students. Please know that WCPSS will be providing additional information regarding student expectations, upgrades to the [WCPSS Remote Learning Resource Site](#), and other information to keep you informed regarding our efforts to provide engaging, new learning to your student. Please know that there may be changes to this plan as circumstances change regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. Again, this is new territory for all of us, but we are committed to supporting continued teaching and learning for our students. Please take time to digest this information and know that I will be providing updates as we get closer to April 13th. Please know that it is critical that your student communicates with his/her teacher electronically to continue to build relationships, get support for his/her student needs, and allow us to help identify any learning challenges your student may be facing. Thank you, again, for your understanding as we move forward with this schedule and implementation plan.

SENIOR GRADING, AND GRADUATION: As you can imagine, I have been getting a plethora of questions regarding where we are with regards to our Seniors after the State Board of Education decided on many issues last Friday, including Grading and Graduation requirements for our Seniors. Please understand that we are still waiting for final guidance from WCPSS regarding how we interpret these decisions and what it means for our

Seniors. As soon as we have definitive answers, please know that I will communicate with you all, and with all our Seniors, about what this means. Please understand that I have a Senior at my house who is just as anxious to find out about what all these decisions mean for her! However, as I have told her, even if it is decided that she is “done” with the class per Graduation requirements, there is still value and importance to finishing the class and continuing to learn. For those Seniors who were not passing a class needed for Graduation as of March 13th, please know that we will work with those Seniors to support their move to passing the Standards taught through March 13th. Please remember that one of our goals is to prepare our students for the “next” life—whether that is College, the world of work, Military service, etc. Thus, I feel like it is important to continue to support our Seniors and provide the teaching and learning necessary for them to be prepared for their “next.” We will get direction and guidance from WCPSS and we will align our efforts with those directions; but know that we care passionately about our Seniors and we want to continue to prepare them to reach their ultimate potential!

SCHEDULE FOR THE NEXT WEEK-AND-A-HALF: Please know that this is the schedule for the coming week-and-a-half:

- Week of March 30th through April 3rd
 - Students
 - Continue practice and review opportunities and continue communication with teachers
 - Beginning April 3rd, Advanced Placement (AP) students can begin registering for remotely-administered AP exams (45-minute online free response)
- Week of April 6th through April 10th
 - Traditional Schools—Spring Break for students and staff.
- Week of April 13th through April 17th
 - Traditional Schools—Launch new Athens Drive Magnet High School Remote Learning Schedule

STUDENT TECHNOLOGY AND INTERNET ACCESS INFORMATION: Thank you to all the families that responded to our survey to collect information regarding Technology access and Internet connectivity. We are in the process of contacting all our students and families who did not respond to get a complete picture of the capacity and needs of our entire school family. If you haven’t completed the survey or have not heard from us, please reach out to me (smares@wcpss.net) so that we can accurately capture your information. It is my hope that by the end of this week, WCPSS will share with us plans to try to support as many of our families as possible with Technology and Internet access. I will share additional information as I get it. Thank you for your support of our efforts to reach every student as we move to remote learning of new instructional material!

ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP) INFORMATION: Please remember that the College Board is providing students who are taking AP courses with resources to help them prepare for their AP Exams. You can find information from College Board regarding all AP Exams at this [site](#). As I mentioned earlier, beginning April 3rd, Advanced Placement (AP) students can begin registering for remotely-administered AP exams (45-minute online free response). This is a great resource for students to prepare for their AP Exams.

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR SENIORS: What a great time for our Seniors to be searching for Scholarships and completing Scholarship applications! Please remember that our PTSA is still offering their three annual \$500.00 Scholarships to Seniors who are PTSA members. The three Scholarship categories are: Civic Minded; Overcoming Adversity; and All Around. Seniors can get more information about eligibility and find the online application on the PTSA website [here](#). Applications will be accepted through Thursday, April 30th. Scholarships will be awarded in May (the exact date is still to be determined). Please also remember that our

Student Services keeps a long list of Scholarships for our students to apply for. Please visit our Student Services Scholarship [website](#) to see that list.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION: Please know that we continue 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 also know that we have received communication that we can continue with our Food Distribution next week during Spring Break. Thus, we will be open from Monday through Friday (yes, even on the Good Friday Holiday on Friday, April 10th) from 11:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. of next week. 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!

CLOSING THOUGHTS AND TAKE CARE: This message contained a lot of information relating to our plan to roll out Remote Learning beginning April 13th. Thank you for support of your student and our teachers as we enter this new learning environment! Despite the challenges, I am inspired by the opportunities this presents us to continue to learn and grow! Please know that all of us care passionately about our students and want to give them our best! We are in this together, and we will get through this! Please know that I continue to keep our entire Athens Drive school family close to my heart and in my thoughts! Please continue to be safe and take care of yourselves and each other. Go JAGS!