

Good Afternoon, this is Steve Mares, principal of Athens Drive Magnet High School with a Special Announcement for our school families. A copy of this announcement will be posted on our school website, emailed and texted to our school families, and e-mailed to the Athens Drive PTSA email group.

In our efforts to support the students and school families of James Kenan High School in Warsaw, NC, we have been speaking with the Principal to identify their needs and how best we can serve. Please understand that they are still out of school and so many in the community are in survival mode as they are still dealing with flood waters, damage/destruction to homes, possible job loss, etc. It is really heart-wrenching to hear stories about their school family. The Principal has shared that they are dealing with the death of a student who passed away due to a generator that was brought into the house and used. He shared about roof collapses that destroyed homes, fires that destroyed homes, flood waters that engulfed houses, and on and on. The students are still not back in school, some roads are still closed, power is not completely restored, cell service and internet connections are spotty, and they are dealing with just basic life needs. In speaking with the Principal over the last few days, he stated, "Honestly, the needs are so great you can't go wrong no matter what you do."

So, as we considered what we can do to serve our neighbors to the East and help the school families of James Kenan High School, we have decided that our best first step is to help the community. The Principal shared that if we could provide supplies and volunteers, that would be the best thing we could do. So, today we announced our two-pronged immediate plans:

- **DONATIONS FOR THE NEXT TWO DAYS**

- We have been informed that current needs are for: Paper Towels; Toilet Paper; Feminine Hygiene Products; Personal Hygiene Products such as Toothpaste, Toothbrushes, Combs, Hairbrushes, Soap, and Shampoo; Towels; and Wash Rags. They need so much more, but if we can focus our collection efforts on these items, we can make a difference.
- Monetary Contributions. So many people are displaced/homeless, and they need monetary support to survive. We will be collecting cash contributions and checks made payable to James Kenan High School, and all monetary contributions will go to support James Kenan High School families.

- **VOLUNTEERING**

- On Friday, a group of approximately 30 students who will be representing The Drive, will be bringing our donations to the Kenansville Baptist Church Disaster Relief Center. While there, our students will have the opportunity to help organize donations and work with families who are coming in to get supplies and support. We will give them all the donations we collect over the next two days and our students will have a chance to serve while there.

I am thrilled that we have so many students and staff who are galvanized to help. This is a great first step in our efforts to build a partnership and relationship with the students, staff, and families of James Kenan High School. We have already discussed how, once they are back in school, our students can connect and plan ways to provide additional assistance and support directly to the school and their families. Right now, it seems the needs are so great for the entire community that it is important to meet those needs first. I would greatly support any kind of contribution that you or your family can make to help those still impacted by Hurricane Florence. Thank you for helping make the next two days a success for our collection!

Our students are excited about having the opportunity to make a difference and help other students and families at James Kenan High School. I am inspired by their generosity, compassion, and care. As we strive to develop students who are collaborative, creative, effective communicators, and critical thinkers, we also want to prepare compassionate students who are engaged and contributing members of our global community. I continue to be honored and proud to be a part of the Athens Drive family! Thank you in advance for your generosity and contributions. Go JAGS and please take care of yourselves and each other!