

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, emailed and texted to our school families, and e-mailed to the Athens Drive PTSA email group.

What a humbling and inspiring day! In a mere two days our school family showed their love and care in an amazing manner. I was moved to tears by the amount of donations and monetary contributions that we received to support the James Kenan High School families and the larger Duplin County community. Please know that you all made a tremendous difference! On Tuesday the plan was to take one bus. On Wednesday afternoon we decided we would have to take a large bus and a mini bus to carry the donations. By Thursday afternoon, we had to change the plan again and take two large buses, and we still almost couldn't fit the donations and students in the buses. When we arrived at the Fire Station in Wallace that is serving as the Disaster Relief Center and began taking the donations off the bus, the Principal of James Kenan High School commented that our buses seemed like Clown Cars, because donations just kept continuing to come out! In addition to the donations, we were able to provide the Principal with checks and cash totaling over \$5,000.00! Unbelievable for only two days. We had a great group of student leaders who traveled with us to deliver the donations and serve as needed. What an experience. We broke into four teams and one team stayed at the Fire Station that is serving as the Disaster Relief Center to help organize and sort donations and serve those families that came to get basic living supplies. The other three teams went to Volunteer Fire Fighters' homes to help clear out their entire house, as all had been flooded. They had not had time to work on their houses because they were serving others through their duty as Volunteer Fire Fighters. We met only good people, kind people, resilient people, and caring people who look after each other. In the face of so much division and animosity in our country and world today, it was a day of hope, love, and service that brought all of us together to take care of each other. I believe our students learned valuable lessons and I look forward to greater involvement by our students, staff, and families to continue this partnership and service learning experiences!

I received the following text message from Michael Holton, the Principal of James Kenan High School: "Athens Drive, I'll officially thank you in a much more formal way later, but I wanted to take a moment to tell you how appreciative we are and thankful to have friends like you, your staff, and students. It says so much about the people you are to have you take the time to travel here with supplies and money and to actually get your hands dirty assisting people you have never met. You embody the very spirit and compassion that make our nation so great. When our brothers and sisters are in need, people like you step up and it makes such a difference. You have no idea the impact you had on every person there today and to those who saw it on WRAL. It also says a lot about your school. Most people see what's happened here and they feel bad for us. But you decided to take action and it truly is heart warming. Thank you from the bottom of my heart and I promise to make sure every dime you raised goes to people that truly need help. Take care and it was great meeting you all! I can't wait to introduce you to our students and look forward to our partnership in the near future!"

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. It continues to be an inspiration, honor, and pleasure to be a part of the Athens Drive family.

Now back to the business of teaching and learning.... I have appreciated the efforts of our staff and students this week as we have implemented our new Athens Advantage Time Schedule! I know it is a big change, but I do believe that it has already provided opportunities for students to engage more deeply into their academic work and provides incentives for our students to achieve at their highest potential.

Please remember that Interims went home this week with our students. If a student is concerned about their grade(s) to date, please know that we still have half-a-quarter left to focus on bringing that grade(s) up! Please remember that PowerSchool is a great way to continue to monitor your student's academic achievement throughout the year. Please also remember that the First Quarter ends on Wednesday, October 31st, and Report Cards will be sent home on Friday, November 9th.

Beginning next week, students will receive information regarding their eligibility for our National Honor Society (NHS). Based on the updated Grade Point Averages (GPA), any Junior or Senior that has been a student at Athens Drive Magnet High School and has the required GPA, will receive a letter of eligibility. Upon receiving the letter, students will need to visit the Athens Drive NHS website (<https://admhnsnhs.weebly.com>)

found on the Athens Drive Magnet High School website to complete a Resume Form. The Faculty Council will then review the resumes for the official induction into Athens Drive NHS.

I want to wish our Band well as they travel to Ledford High School for their first Marching Band competition tomorrow, Saturday, September 29th. They have worked hard on their show and always represent The Drive with class and quality!

Every October, schools across the country join together to “STOMP out Bullying” in observing National Bullying Prevention Month. The goal of this month is to encourage communities to work together to stop bullying and cyberbullying by increasing awareness of the prevalence and impact of bullying on all children of all ages. Please know that we have a variety of events planned throughout the month to promote efforts to stop bullying. We will kick off the month’s activities on Monday, October 1st, by encouraging our students to GO BLUE! by wearing blue to “Stomp out Bullying. We want to provide a school climate and culture that puts an end to bullying and cyberbullying.

Next week we will be celebrating Military Appreciation Week and we will have a wide range of representatives from each branch of our Military on campus to provide information regarding a variety of career opportunities available. This past week it was an honor to have members of the Marine Corps Band visit our Band and work with our students for the day! It was inspiring to visit the Band Room and see our students jamming with these amazing musicians!

Monday, October 1st is the Kick-off for Choral Department’s Butter Braid & Cookie Dough fundraiser. You can place an order through any member of the Choral Department, or by visiting our Choral Director, Mr. Santangelo, in the Chorus room. Thanks for your support of our incredible Chorus!

If your student receives free or reduced-price lunch, please remember that beginning October 9th, all students who have not re-enrolled will need to pay full-price for meals. If you still need to renew your application, please use this link <https://www.wcpss.net/Page/23137> to apply. Paper copies are also available in the Cafeteria and Main Office.

Our Counselors have started meeting with our Seniors for their Senior Conferences. A schedule of conferences is available in front of the Student Services Office. We encourage all Seniors to attend their scheduled appointments because they will be receiving important information about Graduation and preparing to reach Post-Secondary goals.

There is a new date for the Wake County College Fair—Sunday, October 7th, from 2:00 p.m. until 4:30 p.m. at the McKimmon Center at N.C. State. Over 100 colleges will attend to discuss college admission with local high school Juniors and Seniors. There will also be information sessions on topics such as Financial Aid and Preparing for College. Admission and parking are free.

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>). This week, both Louisburg College and St. Andrews will be here on Wednesday, October 3rd, during “A” Lunch.

Please know that we will be celebrating College Application Week from Monday, October 15th through Friday, October 19th. College Application Week activities will include: College Trivia each day (questions presented on the daily announcements, winners will receive a small prize for participation); find the mascot scavenger hunt each day (a photo/print out of one of the NC college mascots will be placed in a common area of school- when students find the mascot they can take a picture or selfie that shows the mascot and its location in the building and then present their photo in student services-first three each day receive a prize); door decorating contest (teachers decorate their classroom door for a chance to win 1st, 2nd, 3rd place); and free/reduced price college

application to selected NC colleges (application stations will be set up in Ms. Carlton's office each day). If you have any questions regarding our College Application Week celebration, please speak with Mr. Wright in Student Services.

It is hard to believe that it is almost October and our athletic teams are moving deep into Conference Play and gearing up for playoff runs! For the most up-to-date schedule information, please check the Athens Drive Athletics website (<http://www.wakecountyathletics.com/athensdrivehs>) to stay aware of all changes, game dates, and game times of our Athletic competitions. I enjoy the opportunity to see our students shine on the court, course, and field!

Those are all the announcements for this week. Please continue to check the Athens Drive website (www.wcpss.net/athensdrivehs) for general information and to help you stay informed. I want to again thank you all for your incredible response to our donation drive for James Kenan High School! I hope each of you enjoys a wonderful weekend. Go JAGS and please take care.