

AUGUST  
2023

# School District of Athens NEWSLETTER



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## Welcome to the 2023-2024 School Year!!

It is truly an honor and a privilege for me to serve as the School District of Athens Superintendent. My focus for this year is to create a safe and secure learning environment where strong partnerships and respectful relationships can prosper. It is only by working together that we can build the kind of momentum that will lead the school district into a new era of possibilities for staff, students, parents, and the entire Athens community.

Relationships between staff, students, parents, and the community are built upon open and honest communication. We received feedback in spring 2023 from our stakeholder groups which indicated communication is an area we can continue to grow in our efforts. Thank you, for sharing your thoughts and ideas with us. Throughout the year, we will be searching for opportunities to enhance our current communication systems, so our constituents receive the information they need to be informed about school district operations.

The 2022 - 2026 School District of Athens Strategic Plan remains as the foundation upon which we make decisions relevant to students, staff, families, and our community. Our vision serves as our compass, or north star, and our mission reminds us how we will reach our final destination. The goals and action steps included in the strategic plan help us identify the most urgent and important areas of operation we need to address now, and in the future.

**Vision:** Our Athens school community will cultivate and promote a positive, inclusive culture of respect with equity, integrity, and dignity. Students will be empowered to thrive emotionally, socially, and academically within a proactive, compassionate, and nurturing system of support.

**Mission:** Our mission is to promote a safe, inclusive, engaging learning environment to promote critical thinking, citizenship, and student empowerment through strong school and community relationships.

This year, I will be visiting community businesses and interacting with owners and employees to learn more about what they respect and admire about the School District of Athens, and the goals they may have for our children and the community. I will identify opportunities to engage in conversation with staff, students, and parents to learn about the positive relationships they have cultivated between home and school. The ability to listen during these conversations, explicitly listen to what others wish to share with me, will establish the foundation of trust necessary to develop cohesive teams of people with a common vision and purpose to lead us into the future. Engaging in these thoughtful conversations will offer me the opportunity to develop relationships with others who have an interest in the success of students and families who reside in the Athens community.

I look forward to engaging in gracious and kind conversations with each of you.

*One Town. One Team. One Dream.*

Sincerely,

Andrea Sheridan  
Superintendent of Schools

## **ANNUAL NOTICE - HOMELESS CHILDREN**

The McKinney-Vento Act defines children and youth who are homeless (twenty-one years of age and younger) as:

- Children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, and includes children and youth who are:
  - Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason (sometimes referred to as double-up);
  - Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
  - Living emergency or transitional shelters;
  - Abandoned in hospitals; or
  - Awaiting foster care placement.
- Children and youth who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designated for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.
- Children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings.
- Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above.

If you are personally aware of or are acquainted with any children who may qualify according to the above criteria, the School District of Athens provides the following assurances to parents of homeless children:

- There shall be immediate enrollment and school participation, even if educational and medical records and proof of residency are not available.
- All educational opportunities and related opportunities for homeless students (preschool to age 21), including unaccompanied youth, shall be the same as for the general student population.
- Enrollment and transportation rights, including transportation to the school of origin. "School of origin" is defined as the school the child or youth attended when permanently housed or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled.

- Written explanation of a child or youth's school placement, other than school of origin or the school requested by the parent, with the right to appeal within the local dispute resolution process.
- Meaningful opportunities for parents to participate in the education of their children. These shall include: special notices of events, parent-teacher conferences, newsletters and access to student records.
- DPI recommends that the Athens School District ensures children and families experiencing homelessness are given their educational rights under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act in a written and understandable format (including necessary languages for families and students). Options to fulfill this requirement could include a brochure containing educational rights or an annual notice posted on the school district website. The National Center for Homeless Education has free, downloadable resources available in multiple languages for this purpose

Please contact Andrea Sheridan, Superintendent of Schools and homeless liaison for the School District of Athens, for additional information. Ms. Sheridan can be reached at 715-257-7511 ext. 151 or [asheridan@athens1.org](mailto:asheridan@athens1.org)

## **RECRUITER ACCESS TO STUDENTS/RECORDS**

Districts receiving federal education funds are required to notify adult students and parents of secondary school (high school) students under the age of 18:

That the secondary (high school) student or parent of the student may submit a written request to the district that the student's name, address and telephone listing not be released to military recruiters or institutions of higher education without prior written parental consent.

## **NOTICES RELATED TO PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS OF TEACHERS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS**

The School District of Athens receives federal Title I program funds and is required by the ESSA (20 U.S.C. 6312(e) 1 A) to notify parents that they may request and obtain information regarding the professional qualifications of their child's classroom teacher.

**SCHOOL DISTRICT OF ATHENS**  
**ANNUAL NOTICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION**  
**REFERRAL AND EVALUATION**  
**PROCEDURES**

Upon request, the School District of Athens is required to evaluate a child for eligibility for special education services. A request for evaluation is known as a referral. When the district receives a referral, the district will appoint an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team to determine if the child has a disability, and if the child needs special education services. The district locates, identifies, and evaluates all children with disabilities who are enrolled by their parents in private (including religious) schools, elementary schools and secondary schools located in the school district.

A physician, nurse, psychologist, social worker, or administrator of a social agency, who reasonably believes a child brought to him or her for services is a child with a disability has a legal duty to refer the child, including a homeless child, to the school district in which the child resides. Before referring the child, the person making the referral must inform the child's parent that the referral will be made.

Others, including parents, who reasonably believe a child has a disability, may also refer the child, including a homeless child, to the school district in which the child resides. Referrals must be in writing and include the reason why the person believes the child has a disability.

Referrals must be in writing and include the reason why the person believes the child is a child with a disability. A referral may be made by contacting Samatha Boivin, School Psychologist, School District of Athens, at 715-257-7511, or by sending a letter to Samatha Boivin,, School District of Athens, P.O. Box F, Athens, WI 54411.

**SENIOR CITIZEN PASSES**

If you are at least 60 years old and a citizen of the School District of Athens, you are entitled to a FREE PASS for all regular season home athletic events. You may pick up or request your pass from the high school office. Thank you for your support!

**SCHOOL BOARD POLICIES**

*\*Policies can be viewed by clicking on the policy number listed below or visit:*

<https://go.boarddocs.com/wi/sdathen/Board.nsf/Public>

Regular Board Meetings [0164.1](#)

Nondiscrimination and Access to Equal Educational Opportunity [2260](#)

Early College Credit Program (ECCP) [2271](#)

Start College Now (SCN) Program [2271.01](#)

Student Privacy and Parental Access to Information [2416](#)

Student Assessment Program [2623](#)

Open Enrollment [5113](#)

Part-Time Open Enrollment [5113.01](#)

Compulsory Student Attendance [5200](#)

Student Code of Classroom Conduct [5500](#)

Student Anti Harassment [5517](#)

Bullying [5517.01](#)

Use of Seclusion and Physical Restraint w/ Students  
[5630.01](#)

Technology [7540](#)

Student Technology Acceptable Use and Safety  
[7540.03](#)

Search and Seizure [5771](#)

Student Records [8330](#)

Homeless Students [5111.01](#)

## **2023-2024 SCHOOL YEAR NOTIFICATION**

As a result of federal legislation (Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act - AHERA), each primary and secondary school in the nation is required to complete a stringent inspection for asbestos and to develop a plan of management for all asbestos-containing building materials. The School District of Athens has a goal to be in full compliance with this law and is following the spirit, as well as the letter of the law. As a matter of policy, the district shall continue to maintain a safe and healthful environment for our community's youth and employees.

In keeping with this legislation, all buildings (including portables and support buildings) owned or leased by the School District of Athens were inspected by an EPA accredited inspector, and samples were analyzed by an independent laboratory. Based on the inspection, the school prepared and the state approved a comprehensive management plan for handling the asbestos located within its buildings safely and responsibly.

Furthermore, the School District of Athens has completed the 3-Year re-inspections required by AHERA. Our district buildings, where asbestos-containing materials were found, are under repair, removal, and Operations and Maintenance.

This past year School District of Athens conducted the following with respect to its asbestos containing building materials:

*The School District of Athens has implemented our Operations and Maintenance Program to maintain asbestos building materials in good condition.*

Federal law requires a periodic walk-through (called "surveillance") every six months of each area containing asbestos. MacNeil Environmental, Inc will accomplish this under contract.

Short-term workers (outside contractors - i.e., telephone repair workers, electricians and exterminators) must be provided information regarding the location of asbestos in which they may come into contact. All short-term workers shall contact the lead maintenance person before commencing work to be given this information.

The School District of Athens has a list of the location(s); type(s) of asbestos containing materials found in that school building and a description and timetable for their proper management. A copy of the Asbestos Management Plan is available for review in the school office. Copies are available at 25 cents per page.

Questions related to the plan should be directed to MacNeil Environmental, Inc., at 1-800-642-6730, or by contacting Jamey Handschke, Building and Grounds Supervisor, at the School District of Athens.

## **FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM**

The School District of Athens offers healthy meals every school day. Meal prices are:

- Breakfast - \$1.50
- Lunch for grades PK-5 - \$2.65
- Lunch for grades 6-12 - \$3.05
- Reduced price is \$0.30 for breakfast and \$0.40 for lunch.

Any ala carte or extra entrée taken will be deducted from your child's positive account. Ala carte and extra entrees will have to be paid with cash at the point of sale or otherwise refused.

Returning students will use the same I.D. card that they had the previous year. All new and returning students will receive their cards at the Open House on Thursday, August 25th between 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. Note: It is essential for all students to have their ID cards in their possession every day. The cards are scanned in the lunch line, and students may be refused their meal without their card.

The Hot Lunch/Ala Carte permission form, included in this newsletter, must be on file in order to activate your account and for your child to receive his/her lunch card. Please notice that we have listed both the "AM Ala Carte and the "Lunch" Ala Carte on the form for you to fill out accordingly. NOTE: ANY and/or ALL ala carte items are NOT part of the "School Lunch" program and must be paid at full cost. REMINDER: Those students eligible for free and/or reduced lunches, will be charged the full cost for all ala carte items.

Food Service accounts must have a positive balance for students to participate in the hot lunch program. This is a prepaid system. For questions regarding the status of lunch accounts, please contact Mary Dlugopolski at the high school office at 257-7511, extension 101. Families will be notified via Campus Messenger (email, phone, text message) when the food service account balance drops below \$15.00.

Payments to food service accounts should be made in advance by:

- Cash or check brought to the student's respective school
- Online payment through the Campus Parent Portal
- Mail a check to:  
School District of Athens  
P.O. Box F  
Athens, WI 54411

We would like to encourage all families to fill out the free and reduced application form that is included in this newsletter. Even though free meals are being served this year, the application assists the School District with other grants. Please complete and return it to the elementary or high school office as soon as possible.

If you have any questions regarding the hot lunch program, please call Heather Krueger, Food Service Director, at 715-257-7511, extension 136.

## **Marathon County Crime Stoppers**

### **Campus Crime Stoppers Program**

#### **INTRODUCING THE NEW "P3 TIPS" MOBILE APP**

##### **School Safety Program**

Did you know that Crime Stoppers is also active in our area schools? Local school districts throughout the county participate in the **Campus Crime Stoppers Program**, which is an improved and expanded version of the very popular and highly successful Quick 50 Program. The program goal is to Stop, Solve and Prevent Crime, in an effort to promote school safety and maintain a safe learning environment for students and staff. Participating school districts include: Athens, DC Everest, Edgar, Marathon, Mosinee, Stratford and Wausau. The program exists in the middle school, junior and senior high levels.

##### **Students Step Up**

Students are encouraged to "step up and do the right thing" and take an active role in helping to keep their school safe. Students may report information about illegal or unsafe activity occurring at school, at school related events, or anywhere in the community. Students report feeling safe at their school knowing there is a secure way to report information while never having to reveal their identity. Students *can* make a difference!

##### **How It Works**

Students remain anonymous by reporting directly to Crime Stoppers via the P3 Tips App (which has been loaded onto the students Chromebook or iPad), calling the 24-hour Hotline, or sending a tip via web at our website. to speak to a trusted adult and remain confidential, students may report information directly to a school official or School Resource Officer. Once the tip is verified the student may be eligible for a cash reward.

##### **Improved School Safety**

Over the years student tips have resulted in the removal of a variety of contraband including knives, brass knuckles, firearms, alcohol, drugs and drug paraphernalia. Tips from students have solved crimes, prevented the sale of drugs, prevented suicides and, according to school authorities, thwarted a serious school incident where lives were threatened. School Administrators and Law Enforcement support and promote Campus Crime Stoppers, recognizing the program as an invaluable resource and effective means of helping to keep our schools and students safe.

**It's fast. It's safe. It's simple.**

**Students can remain completely anonymous.**

**TAP-TYPE-TALK. It's the student's choice.**

**TAP-** Download the *P3 Tips App* to submit secure & anonymous tips

**TYPE-** Go on-line to [marathoncountycrimestoppers.org](http://marathoncountycrimestoppers.org)

**TALK-** Call 1-877-409-8777 to talk to Crime Stoppers directly

*For more information about starting a Quick 50 Program in your school, contact the Crime Stoppers Law Enforcement Coordinator, Detective Kelly Hanousek, at Marathon County Sheriff's Department, 715-261-1423.*

## **PADLOCKS FOR LOCKER ROOMS**

In an effort to improve locker room security for students, the high school and middle school will issue padlocks for all students, grades 6-12, for physical education and athletics.

These district-owned padlocks will be loaned to students without a fee although the replacement cost will be \$5.00.

Mrs. Jessica Bingham, physical education teacher, will coordinate the distribution and assignment of school physical education lockers and padlocks. (Parents do not need to purchase padlocks.)