



TITAN

— MONTHLY —

Athlos Academy of St. Cloud | September 2019

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



Randy Vetsch

Dear Athlos families,

The 2019–2020 school year has begun. We are off to a great start and are excited about what lies ahead. We have hired some amazing staff to compliment our dedicated, extraordinary staff from the previous year. We welcomed students last week, and seeing their smiling, excited faces on that first day was the highlight of our week. We have added over 100 new students to our school and have added additional sections in many of our grade levels.

This year, we will continue our focus on the three pillars. Prepared Mind will continue to provide the academic program that will allow our students to flourish with an emphasis on differentiation to meet the needs of all of our students. Healthy Body will continue to give our students the movement they need to meet the challenges of each new opportunity. Performance Character will emphasize our 12 character traits throughout the school day and year. We will encourage and celebrate the accomplishments of our students and look forward to sharing this with all of you.

On the last page of this month's Titan Monthly is an article regarding last Spring's Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment results. As you will notice, Athlos Academy students shined. We know that this is just the start of the success that our students will achieve here at Athlos Academy.

The staff here at Athlos Academy looks forward to an outstanding school year and looks forward to working with each of you as we continue to provide the education that students deserve!

We look forward to seeing you all at our Parent Information Night on Thursday, September 26 (more details inside this newsletter).

Respectfully yours,

Randy Vetsch

Randy Vetsch

The mission of Athlos Academy of St. Cloud is to provide high quality educational opportunities for the whole child built on the three foundational pillars of Prepared Mind, Healthy Body, and Performance Character.



UPCOMING EVENTS

BACK TO SCHOOL PICNIC | SEP 17

PTA event for families and school staff
5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

SCHOOL BOARD MEETING | SEP 23

5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

PARENT INFORMATION NIGHT | SEP 26

5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

NO SCHOOL | SEP 27

Professional Development - no school for students

SCHOOL PICTURE DAY | SEP 30

Lifetouch will be taking student's pictures this day.

NO SCHOOL | OCT 11

Professional Development - no school for students

CONFERENCES | OCT 15

4 to 7:30 p.m.

CONFERENCES | OCT 16

8 to 11:30 - no school for students

FALL BREAK | OCT 17-18

No school for students or staff

School uniforms can be purchased in the school office on Fridays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

PARENT INFORMATION NIGHT

Join us for our first annual Parent Information Night on Thursday, September 26 from 5–7 p.m.

We will start in the school lunch room for dinner and a presentation from the administration from 5–6 p.m.

This will be followed by two 25-minute presentations by teachers. The first session will be from 6–6:25 p.m. and the second session will be from 6:30–7:00 p.m.

During these sessions, parents will visit their child's classroom and hear all about:

- What their child is going to learn
- How their child's teacher is going to communicate with them
- Homework expectations
- Rules and behavior expectations
- And much more

The school has some uniforms that we will be selling on this night that will be greatly discounted while supplies last.

Childcare will be provided for the night.

Please RSVP. Check your student's backpack for a flyer. The bottom of the flyer has a cut-off RSVP form. This should be returned to your student's homeroom teacher.

We look forward to seeing you for this informative night.



MIND+BODY+CHARACTER

Athlos Academy is a unique public charter school that prepares students for success in three ways.

PREPARED MIND

The Prepared Mind pillar at Athlos Academy of St. Cloud is centered on academic programs that will prime students with the knowledge and critical thinking skills they need to excel.

Academics—STAR Assessments

Students at Athlos (in grades 2–8) will take STAR assessments.

These are computer-adaptive tests that measure student achievement in reading and math skills. As a student takes the assessment, the assessment selects items based on the student's responses. If the student answers the item correctly, the assessment increases the difficulty level of the next item. If the student answers incorrectly, the assessment lowers the difficulty level of the next item. By continually adjusting the difficulty of an item to what the student has shown she can or cannot do, the assessment is tailored to accurately measure each student's level of achievement. Students will take STAR tests three times per year. These typically take 20 minutes to administer.

Teachers will receive instant results/feedback and create their teaching plans from the reports generated.

Parents can expect to receive a report with their child's data.

EL Update: ACCESS Testing

Welcome back to all students at AASC! The main goal of the EL department is to support student's language development until students can exit the EL program. We are excited to share that during the 2018–2019 school year, 18 students qualified to exit the EL program!

During the month of September, EL teachers will be busy screening new students and determining service levels for all of our exiting EL students. We are excited to start the new school year and helping our students further develop their language proficiency.



Title Program

Greetings from your Title I Team,

The month of September sure is a busy one. The Title I team is currently spending time with benchmark assessments using a new universal screen, DIBELS. We will provide assessments in the areas of letter name, sounds, word identification, reading fluency, and reading comprehension. This screen will help not only the teachers, but also parents to understand if students are on track or in need of extra support. Students who are identified as needing Title I support will be invited to participate starting in October.

HEALTHY BODY

The Healthy Body pillar allows students of all athletic abilities to participate in professionally developed, age-appropriate fitness curriculum.

Welcome back, Titans!

It's been awesome to see our students back in school and to jump right back into building healthy, strong bodies. The first few weeks in athletic movement class are all about getting reacquainted with coaches, students, and friends, combined with lots of movement! We take a lot of pride in our students getting a lot of physical activity to stay healthy, as well as to support and enhance all the learning that takes place in our amazing school!

Athlos Titans soccer kicked off Monday, September 9 for boys and girls in grades 6 through 8. The boys team is being coached by Zach Lambertson and the girls team by Kaila Lindsay. Practices run every day after school from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. The season runs from September 9 to October 15. Contact Aaron Schwenzfeier aschwenzfeier@athlosstcloud.org for more information if you have a student in grades 6, 7, or 8 who are still interested in joining our after school soccer program.

PERFORMANCE CHARACTER

The Performance Character pillar is the foundation of school culture and promotes 12 key character traits: Grit, Leadership, Social Intelligence, Creativity, Courage, Energy/Zest, Initiative, Curiosity, Integrity, Optimism, Humility, and Focus/Self Control.

Welcome back for a fun-filled year of Performance Character!

We have some pretty amazing things planned this year for students and staff! We started the year off with a video to get our students energized to learn and be their best selves. You can check it out on the [Athlos St. Cloud Facebook page](#).

The first two weeks of the month, we are focusing on getting back to our roots, Athlos roots. Every person in this building brings a unique experience with them and we want to make sure we celebrate those differences to bring our school closer together. Our differences are what we all have in common and that is fantastic! Once our students learn how our differences actually show how similar we are, we will build on that foundation by introducing the first of our 12 character traits:

Leadership, Humility, Initiative, and Focus/Self Control.

Building character in the early years of students' lives has a long-term positive impact.

Moral development and character formation extends at least as far back as Aristotle's Nichomachean Ethics and Socrates' Meno and continues through to modern times (Nucci, 1989). In the last several hundred years, character education has been seen as a primary function of educational institutions.

In recent decades, character development has taken a backseat in priorities on many different levels. For this reason, it is exciting Athlos makes such a priority on character development.

BUT, we cannot do it alone. Families, schools, communities are all part of one team to tackle this task. Attached are a few resources for families to use to assist the school in supporting character development.

<https://www.rootsofaction.com/developing-character-strengths-a-vital-goal-of-education-part-2/>

<https://www.methodschoools.org/blog/how-character-education-helps-kids-learn-and-develop>

Athlos Academy of St. Cloud Students See Increases in Math and Reading Scores

We are proud to share the news that our school has seen an increase in math and reading proficiency from 2018. For the second year in a row, students who were enrolled in Athlos Academy of St. Cloud for a longer period of time grew more academically than their peers in neighboring St. Cloud schools.

The recent release of Minnesota Department of Education's North Star accountability results show an increase in math and reading proficiency for Athlos Academy of St. Cloud students, while Minnesota State proficiency scores and St. Cloud proficiency scores, overall, saw decreases in math and reading proficiency.

Minnesota Department of Education's North Star accountability system uses five key indicators to assess a school's success. These indicators are: academic achievement based on MCA scores; progress to proficiency for English-learners; academic progress from one year to the next; graduation rates over four or seven years; and consistent attendance.

Athlos Academy of St. Cloud showed growth in all factors of the North Star accountability system, with highlights of student and school success including:

- Athlos Academy of St. Cloud was only one of two schools in St. Cloud to increase proficiency in math and reading from 2018 to 2019. While locally in St. Cloud, math and reading proficiency decreased by close to one percent, Athlos Academy of St. Cloud students saw an increase in math proficiency of six percent and an increase in reading proficiency of four percent from 2018 to 2019.
- More Athlos Academy of St. Cloud English-language-learners met their individual learning targets, from 124 in 2018 to 138 in 2019.
- Average attendance at Athlos Academy of St. Cloud increased two percent from 2018 to 2019.



More information on how Athlos Academy of St. Cloud performed based on neighboring St. Cloud schools and schools statewide can be found at: <http://rc.education.state.mn.us/#mySchool/p--3>

We are proud of our students and staff as they continue to work hard to achieve each and every day.

Thank you all for your dedication and hard work!