

Published: Jan 14, 2009 12:30 AM

Modified: Jan 14, 2009 05:18 AM

School security stops sex offender

From Staff Reports

[Comment on this story](#)

RALEIGH - A convicted sex offender tried to visit a Wake County high school last week but was stopped in the office by a security system that conducts criminal background checks on all visitors.

Marcus Jermaine Johnson, 30, of 1312 Arbor Greene Drive, Garner, went to Athens Drive High School on Jan. 7 to visit someone, said to Bill Poston, spokesman for Wake County schools. Poston did not know the reason for the visit. Johnson is a former Athens Drive student, Poston said.

When Johnson arrived, he checked in at the office, like all visitors. He was required to give his name and his reason for being there, and he had to swipe his driver's license through a LobbyGuard machine, which is linked to criminal databases across the nation, Poston said.

School officials were immediately alerted that Johnson had been convicted of a sex offense, Poston said. Johnson was escorted off campus, Poston said.

School officials contacted Raleigh police, and Johnson was arrested Jan. 10. He was charged with being a sex offender on child premises.

In 2005, Johnson was convicted of incest. In 1998, he was convicted of solicitation to commit statutory rape.

He also has been convicted of assault on a government official, robbery and misdemeanor larceny.

The school has since sent him a letter saying he could be convicted of trespassing if he returns to the campus, Poston said.

Poston said 19 of 156 Wake County schools have this security system in place. The school system's central office also has it, Poston said.

Athens Drive has had the system since 2006. The school worked with Raleigh police to get a grant to pay for the system, Poston said.

In addition to searching criminal databases, the system produces a photo ID for visitors, telling other school officials they have properly checked in.

All rights reserved. This copyrighted material may not be published, broadcast or redistributed in any manner.

[Get \\$150+ in coupons in every Sunday N&O. Click here for convenient home delivery.](#)

© Copyright 2009, The News & Observer Publishing Company

A subsidiary of [The McClatchy Company](#)