

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Haywood County Schools – COVID-19 Update
Haywood County, North Carolina – March 13, 2020

Earlier today, Superintendent Nolte met with other superintendents in the region. They spoke with state officials and school attorneys to discuss a number of items related to the impact of COVID-19. No public schools in the Western Region have verified cases of COVID-19. This is an evolving situation. We will continue to provide updates and make adjustments based upon known factors. We will do this in consultation with public health officials and state administrative officials. The following are current updates for Haywood County Schools.

Schools Remain Open: operating on a regular schedule

There are no current plans to close any school in the Haywood County Schools System. Federal, State, and Local Public Health Officials consistently state that it is unnecessary to close schools prior to having verified COVID-19 cases in the school.

Field Trips Suspended: effective immediately

Numerous field trips have already been suspended. All remaining field trips are suspended, effective immediately. The school system will re-evaluate these suspensions on Monday, April 13, 2020, following the system's scheduled Spring Break. An update will be provided after the re-evaluation.

Before and After School Activities/Events Suspended: effective immediately

This includes, but is not limited to, extra-curricular, club, and performance activities. The school system will re-evaluate these suspensions on Monday, April 13, 2020, following the system's scheduled Spring Break. An update will be provided after the re-evaluation. This does not apply to school operated after school programs.

Facility Use by Third-Parties Suspended, effective immediately

This suspension includes activities for which there is a signed contract in place. The school system will re-evaluate these suspensions on Monday, April 13, 2020, following the system's scheduled Spring Break. An update will be provided after the re-evaluation.

Staff Members with Chronic Medical Conditions

Staff members with chronic medical conditions who are concerned, should notify their principal or direct supervisor. Principals or supervisors are asked to consult with Human Resources for guidance. Guidance will be on a case-by-case basis. Consideration will be given to verified COVID-19 cases as well as public health and physician recommendations.

Excused Medical Absences for Students

Excused absences will be granted for students with chronic medical conditions, personally or among family members, when appropriate medical documentation has been provided to the school.

Cleaning Protocols Established

Dr. Putnam and Support Services staff members have developed and implemented a two-level cleaning for schools, buses and cafeterias. Level one is designed for use prior to COVID-19 confirmation at the school level. Level-two is designed for use after COVID-19 confirmation at the school level. Protocol details are being shared with school principals and appropriate staff.

Supporting Learning for Students: should one or more schools close

Mrs. Barker and Curriculum and Instruction staff have developed protocols for supporting student learning should one or more schools close. In a school closing situation, no support will be as

effective as direct instruction from a qualified teacher. Protocols include digital and material support. Protocol details are being shared with school principals and appropriate staff.

Concerns are warranted. Responses should focus on reasonable steps designed to promote safety. Please encourage everyone to use universal precautions:

- Frequently wash your hands
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth
- Cover your cough or sneeze with tissue and throw the tissue in the trash
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces with an appropriate disinfectant.
- If you become ill, stay home and seek medical care

This link (<https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/public-health/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-response-north-carolina>) provides the latest state updates on COVID-19. It contains a wealth of information for people interested in COVID-19. You can also call 866-462-3821 for additional information.

Haywood County Schools
1230 North Main Street
Waynesville, NC 28786

www.haywood.k12.nc.us

Contact: Dr. Bill Nolte, Superintendent

END (587)