

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Haywood County Schools – Update: Masks Made Optional Outside of School Buildings
Haywood County, North Carolina – May 13, 2021**

Haywood County Schools is providing this update on mask requirements and recommendations. This update is provided after reviewing recent state and federal announcements for schools, conferring with local health officials, and reviewing state written requirements and recommendations for schools. The requirements and recommendations are as follows:

- Masks are required inside school buildings at all times. Socially distanced eating and other previously authorized socially distanced exceptions still apply.
- Masks are required outside during the school day when people cannot socially distance.
- Masks are not required outside during the school day when people can socially distance. In these situations, masks are optional.
- Masks are recommended, but not required, at outside, after school activities.
- Parents should notify schools in writing if they want their children to wear masks outside when social distancing is possible.

While outside spread of COVID-19 is limited, there is not “zero risk” of transmission. This should be considered if one is opting not to wear a mask during outside school activities.

In a related matter, spectator rules for school events still apply. End-of-year programs and ceremonies may have spectators up to 50% of the venues’ capacity. Mask requirements for spectator events are determined by the size and type (inside buildings or outside) of venue. The descriptions listed above should be used in determining mask requirements and recommendations for spectator events.

We anticipate additional CDC announcements regarding masks. These may or may not allow us to provide additional options.

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