



**Haywood County Schools
Press Release
June 17, 2020**

**Framework for Re-Opening, District-wide Registration, &
Calendar Adjustments**

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As any teacher, staff member, school principal or district superintendent can tell you, returning to school in periods of normalcy is hard. Doing so in the face of COVID-19, a public health pandemic with extreme uncertainties, will be monumentally difficult. The stakes could not be higher. An entire generation of students' academic, social-emotional, and mental health hangs in the balance. Public schools provide our children with hope and prepare them for productive work and fulfilling lives. They are a central source of community, a place to come together as a nation, to assemble openly, and to elect our public officials.

As the Haywood County Schools' leadership team has been preparing for re-entry in the 2020-2021 school year, we have been reading and reviewing multiple documents and tools. We have structured our leadership to plan in the following key areas: governance, wellness, instruction, facilities, school operations, and technology.

It is the CDC guidance for reopening schools that provides Haywood County Schools with the most important details. As we plan for next year, we are looking through a lens focused on the following:

- Promoting Behaviors that Reduce Spread
- Maintaining Healthy Environments
- Maintaining Healthy Operations
- Preparing for When Someone Gets Sick

Specifically, the Haywood County Schools' leadership team has sought to address the following questions as we have planned and prepared for re-entry and re-opening:

- Under what community public health conditions is it safe to reopen our schools?
- When it is safe to reopen our schools, what precautions do all schools need to take to mitigate the risk of the spread of COVID-19?

Below is the framework that Haywood County Schools (HCS) will use to help decision-making within our school district related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The framework assesses virus spread within our community against the readiness and preparedness of our system to address subsequent needs. This framework will be used to determine which pathway HCS selects for reopening, but can also be used for other decisions. For example, HCS may consider decisions related to transportation options through the use of this framework. The district would need to look at the virus spread in our community on the vertical axis and then consider the readiness and ability of HCS to accommodate any potential health needs on the horizontal axis. Based on that connection point, the district would have guidance on the starting point for local conversations. *Please note that these are not static*



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decisions. As health information in our community changes and as the district readiness changes, the decision-making may also adjust accordingly.

HCS Framework for Re-Opening: Decision-Making Starting-Point

Virus Spread Low		3 Blended learning may be necessary, but majority of delivery in person with additional distancing and cautionary steps	4 Schools may be fully operational and may return to normal
		2 Blended learning, partial days or other mixed models with social distancing procedures	
	1 School building closures and virtual learning		
	Haywood County Schools' Readiness		
	Low		High

**Low virus spread is defined as no reported increases in the number of cases over the last 14 days. High virus spread is defined as high levels of community transition, including outbreaks or increases in cases.*



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Movement from Phase 1 to Phase 4

- Moving from **1** to **2** requires consideration for district and school capacity to identify and address potential health concerns, as well as a clear plan in place for maintaining high standards for health and safety at school sites. At a level 2, if schools are physically open, strong measures will be put into place regarding social distancing, masks, etc.
- Moving from **2** to **3** would also include declining rates of identification and spread within a community. Health and safety guidelines should be closely followed, but there may be more flexibility available based on specific needs of the school system and local health policies and recommendations.
- Moving from **3** to **4** would indicate a clear decline in cases as well as significant capacity to address the virus within the broader community.
- A **4** would indicate that there has been a steady decline in cases (with a similar rate of testing) for two or more weeks, strong coordination related to address any surges, and support from state and local health officials.

Based on the information referenced above as well as the HCS framework for re-opening, please see below key dates and times for the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year.

Haywood County Schools
District-wide Registration Day for All Students in Pre-K - 12
Location: Haywood High School
Date: Wednesday, July 8, 2020
Time: 9:30a.m. – 7:30p.m.

Re-Entry Plan and Calendar Information for the Start of 2020-2021

- Monday, August 3 – Thursday, August 13
 - Teachers and Staff Report (Planning, Preparation, & Professional Development)
- Friday, August 14 - Student ½ Day
 - Grades PK-8 - (AECC, HES, ESE, SHIS, HMS) - *Parents/Guardians learn school assigned days & even/odd day placement assignments (Note: Even/Odd Placement will take effect if we move to 50% capacity due to uptick in COVID-19 in HCS)*
 - Grade Nine – (HHS) - Orientation
- Monday, August 17 – Thursday, August 27
 - Grades PK-2 - (AECC & HES) - School Assigned Days (Small Groups of 3-5)
- Monday, August 17 – Friday, September 4
 - Grades 3-8 - (ESE, SHI, & HMS) - Even/Odd Day Assignment (1/2 of class each day)
- Friday, August 28 – Friday, September 4
 - Grades PK-2 - (AECC & HES) - Even/Odd Day Assignment (1/2 of class each day)



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- Monday, August 17 –
 - Grades 9-12 - (HHS & SOA) - Tomcat 1 (MWF) & Tomcat 2 (TTH)
- Tuesday, September 8
 - Grades PK-8 - (AECC, HES, ESE, SHIS, HMS) - All Students Report
- Tuesday, September 8
 - Grades K-12 - (AECC, HES, ESE, SHIS, HMS, HHS, & SOA) - HCS Virtual School Begins

As you review the dates and times above, please note that we plan to operate our PK-8 campuses on a Phase 2 model during the month of August. Additionally, Haywood High School will begin their newly released schedule August 17. It is our plan to move to Phase 3 Tuesday, September 8 immediately following Labor Day holiday. Also, there have been no additional changes to the 2020-2021 academic calendar, so we do not plan to change any of our breaks.

Again, please note that these are not static decisions. As health information in our community changes and as the district readiness changes, the decision-making may also adjust accordingly. However, HCS wanted to share information with our families to assist in their planning for August.

With the announcement of the Haywood High School schedule earlier this week and today's plan for PK-8, HCS will have 450 or less students on each of our campuses daily beginning Tuesday, September 8. This will allow HCS to implement safety protocol accordingly.

Within each of our buildings, our academic focus will remain on high-quality grade level assignments, strong instruction from our professional staff, deep engagement for our students, and high expectations for all. As we have worked to define and develop the plans for 2020-2021, we remain committed to improving the quality and expectations for each of our students.

For additional information, Haywood County Schools will host a Facebook Live update on Monday, June 22 at 7:00p.m. HCS also anticipates releasing protocol related to health and wellness next week for various areas of operations within the school district.