

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Request for Support Regarding HB2

Haywood County, North Carolina – May 25, 2016

We want to take this opportunity to ask students, parents, staff and the community in helping us maintain a safe learning environment at Pisgah High School and all schools in Haywood County. We are in the process of preparing for end of year exams and want to maintain a safe and calm learning environment so our students can continue to demonstrate their ability to perform at a very high level.

On Friday, May 20, 2016 school officials at Pisgah High School were notified that a male student entered a female restroom and washed his hands. School officials promptly met with the student and reached out to the student's parent. On Friday, a plan was put in place that provided the student access to a single use restroom when uncomfortable with using the multi-use restroom of biological gender.

Haywood County Schools follows the North Carolina Law entitled HB2. The law states students shall use restrooms associated with the gender noted on their birth certificate. The Law goes on to also say, "Nothing in this section shall prohibit local boards of education from providing accommodations such as single occupancy bathrooms or changing facilities or controlled use of faculty facilities upon a request due to special circumstances." Haywood County Schools has used access to single use restrooms under special circumstances for years.

The matter at Pisgah High School was quickly and effectively resolved last Friday, five days ago. Unfortunately, social media postings, media coverage and emotionally charged proponents and opponents of HB2 have fueled unnecessary disruptions at school. These disruptions have been effectively managed by Principal Bailey and the school staff. They assured the entire student body that the multi-use restrooms are limited to the appropriate biological gender. They also asked any students with concerns about using the assigned restrooms to ask school administrators for assistance.

As school system administrators, we join Principal Bailey in asking for your support as we work to maintain safe learning environments for each and every student. This is a critical learning time for our students and we want them to have schools that are disruption free. If you are "called" to oppose or support HB2, we ask you to take up your fight with state and federal lawmakers. Our schools are for teaching and learning and should not be used as pawns in a political battle. Your assistance regarding this important request is deeply appreciated.

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