

November 16, 2020

Angela Dawson, Principal  
Raleigh Oak Charter School  
Via: email

Re: Student Mask Requirement

Dear Angela:

In reference to your inquiry regarding the student mask requirement, we contacted several people to give you the most complete answer possible. The unanimous decision was that you must comply with the Governor's executive order.

Rhonda Dillingham, the Executive Director of the NC Public Charter Schools stated, "You are a Public Charter School and as such, you must follow the state and Wake County requirements. A student can attend virtually or in-person. If they choose to attend in-person, they must wear a mask."

Lawrence Duke of the McDougal Law Firm, PLLC stated, "North Carolina statute mandates Raleigh Oak Charter School's compliance with the Wake County Public School System health and safety requirements. Because our Governor has ordered face coverings be worn to slow and control the community spread of COVID-19, particularly through our schools, Raleigh Oak Charter must follow the guidelines published by NC Dept. of Health and Human Services."

Lesley Bennett of Wilson & Ratledge, PLLC stated, "The school cannot deviate from the guidelines, particularly based on the personal opinions of the parents. There are specified exceptions to the mask requirements, and if the child does not fall within one or more those exceptions, then no exception should be made. Deviations from the requirements and guidelines will, according to the latest information, result in the school putting the public at risk, especially other students' family members who may be at increased risk for serious complications or death from Covid-19. Despite the parent's disagreement with the guidance, adherence is paramount to minimizing the risk of potential liability associated with Covid-19."

Since everyone is in agreement with your legal counsel, we agree that there is a need to follow the State/Wake County Public School System requirements to protect the public health. We agree that Raleigh Oaks Charter must require all students, teachers, workers and visitors follow the guidance of the County and State authorities and, as these authorities require, wear a mask.

Best regards,



Will Salisbury

Enclosures: (1) NCDHHS Interim Guidance on Face Coverings; (2) Strong Schools – NC Public Health Toolkit.