



## NC reopening Phase 1 begins Friday

BY ANNA OAKES

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RALEIGH — Gov. Roy Cooper has signed an executive order to move North Carolina into Phase 1 of easing COVID-19-related restrictions beginning this Friday, May 8.

Under Phase 1, most businesses can open, retail stores can open at 50 percent capacity, parks and trails are encouraged to reopen, close-contact businesses (such as gyms, salons and movie theaters)

will remain closed, restaurants will continue to be open for takeout and delivery only, and gatherings are still limited to 10 people, but gathering outdoors with friends is allowed.

The order removes the distinction between essential and non-essential businesses. Retail businesses allowed to open at 50 percent capacity will be required to direct customers to stand six feet apart, perform frequent cleanings, provide hand sanitizer when available, screen workers for symptoms and more.

The order allows people to leave their homes for commercial activity at any business that is open.

All workers at retail and other businesses are recommended to wear cloth face coverings, and the order encourages cloth face coverings to be worn when outside the home and in contact with others, according to the governor's office. Teleworking is still encouraged for businesses that can practice it.

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# Teachers of the Year

Nine educators recognized by Watauga County Schools

STAFF REPORT

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Watauga County Schools on May 4 announced its 2020-21 Teachers of the Year from each of its nine schools.

Chosen by their peers, the group was selected from more than 300 teachers district-wide at all grade levels. This year's group includes Chelsie Eldreth from Bethel, Angela Watson from Blowing Rock, Leslie Hall from Cove Creek, Tara Watson from Green Valley, Elizabeth Hutelmyer from Hardin Park, Erin Ellington from Mabel, Sydney Sievic from Parkway, Leslie Howser from Valle Crucis and Hunter Lloyd from Watauga High School.

Each of the winners were awarded by groups of peers, family members and staff who surprised the award winner with the recognition in their classrooms in the days preceding the statewide stay-at-home order that closed schools.

Watauga County Schools Superintendent Scott Elliott offered his congratulations to the newly named Teachers of the Year, and thanked them for their dedication to their students.

"It is a high honor to be recognized by your peers as a



PHOTO SUBMITTED

Watauga County Schools announces the 2020-21 Teachers of the Year. From top left to right: Leslie Hall, Leslie Howser, Angela Watson, Chelsie Eldreth, Erin Ellington, Elizabeth Hutelmyer, Hunter Lloyd, Tara Watson and Sydney Sievic.

Teacher of the Year," Elliott said. "All nine of these outstanding teachers are highly respected leaders in their schools and within our school system. Watauga County Schools is fortunate to have so many skilled, professional and highly effective educators leading and teaching our children. Especially in this unprecedented year, I

remain grateful for all the many ways our teachers contribute to the success of our students and the quality of our community."

Each school's Teacher of the Year will receive an award of \$350 from the school system and is automatically a candidate for Watauga County Schools Teacher of the Year. The person chosen as WCS

Teacher of the Year will receive an additional \$350 from the school system. Local businesses are able to donate gift certificates or other prizes to help recognize Teachers of the Year.

Businesses or individuals interested in making a donation this year are encouraged to contact Human Resources

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## Board OKs phased plan for lifting Watauga restrictions

BY KAYLA LASURE

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BOONE — Watauga County has developed a plan with input from local leaders on a phased approach for the reopening of businesses and short-term rentals and easing of other restrictions that would follow similar

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## Boone man sentenced to 10 years as part of drug trafficking investigation

STAFF REPORT

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CHARLOTTE — A Boone man and a Lansing woman were each



OAKES



WALKER

Cody Ryan Oakes, 31, of Boone.

sentenced to 10 years in prison and five years of supervised release for trafficking methamphetamine, according to an April 30 announcement by U.S. Attorney Andrew Murray.

U.S. District Judge Kenneth D. Bell handed down the judgment to Ashley Dawn Walker, 33, of Lansing, and

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