

The Watauga County Board of Education (the “board”) is committed to providing a safe school environment that is free from violence, to the maximum extent possible. Except as otherwise specified in this policy, employees, visitors, and other persons are prohibited from possessing, carrying, using, or threatening to use, or encouraging another person to possess, carry, use, or threaten to use, weapons or explosives on school property or while attending curricular or extracurricular activities sponsored by the school system. This policy applies to weapons or explosives carried openly or concealed. This policy does not apply to students. Student conduct related to weapons and explosives is governed by policy 4333, Weapons, Bomb Threats, Terrorist Threats, and Clear Threats to Safety.

Any employee who violates this policy will be subject to immediate termination. Any visitor or other person who violates this policy will be escorted from the premises and/or school activity immediately. The superintendent or principal shall immediately report any violation of this policy to law enforcement officials. Any employee who is aware that a weapon or explosive is present on school property or at a school event in violation of this policy must immediately report this information to the principal or designee or the school resource officer as appropriate.

A. WEAPONS AND EXPLOSIVES DEFINED

For purposes of this policy, a weapon includes, but is not limited to, any gun, rifle, pistol, or other firearm of any kind; any BB gun, stun gun, air rifle, air pistol, bowie knife, dirk, dagger, slingshot, leaded cane, switchblade knife, blackjack, metallic knuckles, razors, and razor blades (except solely for personal shaving), or fireworks; ~~and~~ any sharp-pointed or -edged instrument, except instructional supplies, unaltered nail files, and clips and tools used solely for the preparation of food, instruction, and/or maintenance on educational property; and mace, pepper spray, and other personal defense sprays. For purposes of this policy, an explosive includes, but is not limited to, any dynamite cartridge, bomb, grenade, mine, or powerful explosive as defined in G.S. 14-284.1.

B. SCHOOL PROPERTY

For purposes of this policy, school property is any school building or bus, school campus, grounds, recreational area, athletic field, or other property owned, used, or operated by the board of education.

C. EXCLUSIONS

This policy does not apply to:

1. a weapon or explosive used solely for educational or school-sanctioned ceremonial purposes, or used in a school-approved program conducted under the

supervision of an adult whose supervision has been approved by the school authority;

2. a person who has a concealed handgun permit that is valid under state law or who is exempted by state law from needing a permit to carry a concealed handgun, if any of the following conditions are met:
 - a. the person has a handgun in a closed compartment or container within the person's locked vehicle or in a locked container securely affixed to the person's vehicle (the person may unlock the vehicle to enter or exit the vehicle provided the handgun remains in the closed compartment at all times and the vehicle is locked immediately following the entrance or exit);
 - b. the person has a handgun concealed on the person and the person remains in a locked vehicle (the person may unlock the vehicle to allow another person to enter or exit); or
 - c. the person is within a locked vehicle and removes the handgun from concealment only for the amount of time reasonably necessary to move it to a closed compartment or container within the vehicle or to move it from the closed compartment or container to concealment on the person.
3. firefighters, emergency service personnel, North Carolina Forest Service personnel, and any private police employed by the board of education, when acting in the discharge of their official duties;
4. law enforcement officers or other persons as provided in G.S. 14-269.2(g)(1a); or
5. a volunteer school safety resource officer providing security at a school pursuant to an agreement as provided in G.S. 115C-47(61), provided that the volunteer school safety resource officer is acting in the discharge of his or her official duties and is on the educational property of the school that the officer was assigned to by the head of the local law enforcement agency.

Legal References: G.S. 14-69.2, -269, -269.2, -284.1; 20-17; 115C-47(61), -288(g)

Cross References: Weapons, Bomb Threats, Terrorist Threats, and Clear Threats to Safety (policy 4333)

Adopted: February 9, 2015

Revised: January 11, 2016; June 13, 2016; November 13, 2017

Replaces: Policy 5.07.85, Weapons Prohibited On School Property