

The Watauga County Board of Education (the “board”) encourages all students to develop an understanding of citizenship, including the importance of a citizen’s rights and responsibilities.

At a minimum, the curriculum will incorporate all statutory and State Board of Education requirements concerning civics, citizenship, and character education. In addition to meeting any state requirements, citizenship education also should be designed to reinforce the student behavior management plan and shall include addressing character education instruction as required by G.S. 115C-81.60. Such instruction should address character traits including, but not limited to, courage, good judgment, integrity, kindness, perseverance, respect responsibility, and, self-discipline, as well as responsibilities such as respect for school personnel, responsibility for school safety, service to others and good citizenship.

Citizenship education also must require that appropriate instruction be provided on the meaning and historical origins of the North Carolina and United States flags and the Pledge of Allegiance and may include guidelines for the use and display of the North Carolina and United States flags. Any North Carolina or United States flags donated or otherwise made available will be displayed in each classroom, and recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance will be scheduled on a daily basis.

The principal shall ensure that no student is compelled to salute the flag, recite the Pledge of Allegiance, stand to acknowledge the flag, stand to participate in the Pledge of Allegiance, or otherwise feel coerced to participate. Teachers may use the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance as an opportunity to teach students about the history concerning coercion and the importance of the First Amendment to the Bill of Rights.

All schools will commemorate Constitution Day and Citizenship Day and also Memorial Day. If students are in attendance on September 17, which is Constitution Day and Citizenship Day, an educational program about the United States Constitution will be held. If students are not in attendance on September 17, the program will be held during the week preceding or following September 17. Likewise, if students are in attendance on Memorial Day, they will receive instruction on the significance of Memorial Day. If students are not in attendance on Memorial Day, instruction on the significance of Memorial Day will be provided at another time.

The citizenship education for middle school and high school students may include a community volunteer service requirement in order to demonstrate the value and effectiveness of volunteer contributions to the community. Students shall receive sufficient notice of any community volunteer service requirement approved by the board.

Legal References: P.L. 108-447, div. J, title I, sec. 111 (codified as a statutory note to 36 U.S.C. 106(d); G.S. 115C-12(33), -47(29a), -81.45, -81.60

Cross References: Goals and Objectives of the Educational Program (policy 3000), Curriculum Development (policy 3100)

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