

A. PRINCIPLES

The Watauga County Board of Education (the “board”) strives to provide safe, orderly, and inviting schools for students and staff. The board also strives to provide other facilities needed to support the educational program. Long-range planning by the board and superintendent is essential for providing an educational environment that offers students the opportunity to receive a sound basic education and that supports student success.

B. LONG-RANGE PLAN

The board will adopt a long-range plan that identifies the facility needs of the school system and sets forth a plan for how to meet these needs. The plan will address the issue of whether to renovate existing facilities or build new facilities. The plan also will incorporate, where appropriate, creative options for meeting the needs of the educational program, such as expansion or reduction through modular construction, future alternative uses of space, the availability of community facilities, the use of temporary facilities or leasing arrangements, opportunities for capital lease financing of facilities through public/private partnerships and sharing facilities with other school systems.

It will be the goal of the Watauga County Board of Education to promote environmental stewardship and resource conservation as a top priority when planning to address facility needs. To the greatest extent possible and when financially feasible, facilities development and maintenance will promote environmental sustainability through resource conservation, ecologically-sound landscaping practices, sustainable building design and operation, and transportation that minimizes environmental impact.

C. PROCESS

The following sources of information will be considered in developing and adopting a long-range plan:

1. data that reflect the possibility of enrollment declines or increases as well as other demographic changes in the population of students that is or may be served;
2. a facilities inventory that includes the size of sites, building capacities, age of buildings, energy consumption, ability to utilize technology, the suitability of the space for its current or future purpose, and accessibility by the community; and
3. the availability or anticipated availability of innovations in construction or design that would allow existing buildings to be renovated or new facilities to be constructed at a lower cost, in a more energy-efficient manner, or in a way that would better meet the needs of the educational program.

4. School personnel, students, and parents should be involved in considering the needs for new and renovated facilities.

D. ROLE OF THE BOARD AND SUPERINTENDENT

The superintendent will provide regular updates to the Board of Education regarding the long range facility plan and any facility needs.

The superintendent may utilize the services of consultants to obtain information necessary for the long-range planning process.

The board will work with the board of county commissioners when possible in developing a capital outlay plan. The board and superintendent will endeavor to communicate with other governmental bodies and the public in a positive and persuasive manner about the need for school construction and, consequently, the need for necessary funding.

Legal References: G.S. 115C-47, -204, -276, -426.2, -521, -524, -530, -531, -532; 143-128.1C(l), -129; 153A-164; *Leandro v. State*, 346 N.C. 336 (1997)

Cross References: Board Authority and Duties (policy 1010)

Adopted: May 9, 2016

Replaces: Board policy 2.05.00, Facilities Committee Policy

Revised: February 14, 2022