

CONFIDENTIALITY OF PERSONAL IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

Policy Code: **4705/7825**

The Watauga County Board of Education (the “board”) recognizes the need to protect students and employees from the improper release of social security numbers and other personal identifying information. To this end, the board requires that all school employees comply with the Identity Protection Act of 2005 and any other federal and state laws governing the collection, use and disclosure of personal identifying information. No person may knowingly disclose, transfer or unlawfully use the social security number or other personal identifying information of any employee, student or other individual.

For purposes of this policy, personal identifying information includes: social security numbers; employer taxpayer identification numbers; drivers license numbers; state identification card numbers; passport numbers; checking accounts; savings accounts; credit card and debit card numbers; personal identification (PIN) codes; digital signatures; any numbers or information that can be used to access an individual’s financial resources; biometric data; fingerprints; and passwords.

The superintendent shall establish rules and regulations to implement this policy. These rules and regulations will provide that:

1. the confidentiality of social security numbers and personal identifying information is maintained consistent with legal requirements;
2. the unlawful collection, disclosure and use of social security numbers and personal identifying information are prohibited;
3. access to and dissemination of information or documents containing social security numbers and personal identifying information is limited internally within the school system and externally with the general public;
4. documents containing social security numbers and personal identifying information are disposed of properly;
5. social security numbers and personal identifying information are redacted from public documents;
6. social security numbers and personal identifying information are collected only when specifically authorized by law or if collection is imperative for the performance of the school system’s duties and such need has been clearly documented;
7. board procedures governing the maintenance and destruction of records are followed for all documents containing social security numbers and other personal identifying information; and

8. in the event of a security breach, in which personal information is accessed and acquired without authorization, the notice requirements of G.S. 75-65 are followed.

This policy and its rules will be published on the Watauga County Schools website and made available in a paper copy on request.

Any individual who fails to comply with this policy and the superintendent's rules and regulations will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion for students and termination for employees. In addition, such person may be subject to criminal prosecution.

Legal References: Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. 1232g, h, 34 C.F.R. pt. 99; G.S. 14-113.20; ch. 75, art. 2A; 132-1.10; 143-64.60

Cross References: Confidential Information (policy 7315), Student Records (policy 4700), Personnel Files (policy 7820)

Adopted: November 10, 2014