



**WATAUGA COUNTY
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Margaret E. Gragg Education Center
175 Pioneer Trail Boone, NC 28607
(828) 264-7190

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING AGENDA
March 10, 2025

- | | | |
|-----------|---|--------------------------------------|
| 4:45 p.m. | 1. CALL TO ORDER | Board Chair |
| 4:48 p.m. | 2. CLOSED SESSION <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Approval of the Minutes for 2/10/2025B. Reportable Offenses – N.C.G.S.115C-288(g)C. Student Records - N.C.G.S.143-318.11(a)(1)D. Personnel – N.C.G.S.143-318.11(a)(6)E. Attorney-Client - N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3) | Board Chair |
| 6:00 p.m. | 3. OPEN SESSION CALL TO ORDER/
WELCOME/MOMENT OF SILENCE | Board Chair |
| 6:03 p.m. | 4. DISCUSSION AND ADJUSTMENT OF AGENDA | Board Chair |
| 6:05 p.m. | 5. SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT | Dr. Leslie Alexander |
| 6:10 p.m. | 6. VALLE CRUCIS SCHOOL UPDATE | Dr. Leslie Alexander |
| 6:15 p.m. | 7. STUDENTS’ REPORT & WHS CLUB SHOWCASE | Ms. Athena Elliott
Ms. Mia Llibre |
| 6:35 p.m. | 8. INCLEMENT WEATHER UPDATE/SURVEY RESULTS | Dr. Leslie Alexander |
| 6:45 p.m. | 9. PUBLIC COMMENT | Board Chair |
| 6:50 p.m. | 10. CONSENT AGENDA | Dr. Leslie Alexander |

- A. Approval of the Minutes for 2/10/2025
- B. Field Trip Requests
- C. Declaration of Surplus
- D. 2024-25 Budget Amendment #4
- E. Personnel Report

6:53 p.m.	11. CURRENT EXPENSE AND CAPITAL OUTLAY FUND REQUESTS FOR THE 2025-25 SCHOOL YEAR	Mr. Joseph Nash
7:10 p.m.	12. RESOLUTIONS ❖ Resolution Authorizing Increase in Micro-Purchase Threshold ❖ Resolution Delegating Authority to Exempt from the Qualifications-Based Selection Process of Certain Professional Services	Mr. Chris Campbell
7:20 p.m.	13. POLICIES: FOR APPROVAL ON FIRST READ (Legal Conformity) • 8305: Federal Grant Administration ◦ 8305-R: Federal Grant Administration: Procurement Procedures (<i>for information only</i>) • 9110: Use and Selection of Architects, Engineers, Surveyors, and Construction Managers At Risk	Mr. Chris Campbell
7:25 p.m.	14. POLICY: REVISED FOR SECOND READ • 6301: Classified Staff Bus Driving Requirements	Dr. Chris Blanton
7:30 p.m.	15. POLICIES: SUBSTANTIVE FOR FIRST READ • 3225/4312/7320: Technology Responsible Use • 3227/7322: Web Page Development • 3420: Student Promotion and Accountability • 3460: Graduation Requirements • 4200/7270: School Safety • 4334/5035/7345: Use of Unmanned Aircraft (Drones) • 9125: Participation by Minority Businesses • 1370: Board Committees • 1402: Remote Participation in Board Meetings	Dr. Wayne Eberle
7:50 p.m.	16. BOARD OPERATIONS	Board Chair
7:55 p.m.	17. BOARD COMMENTS	Board Chair
8:00 p.m.	18. ADJOURNMENT	Board Chair



WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Margaret E. Gragg Education Center
175 Pioneer Trail Boone, NC 28607
(828) 264-7190

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

DATE: February 10, 2025

TIME: 6:00 p.m.

PLACE: Margaret E. Gragg Education Center

PRESENT:

- Gary Childers, Jay Fenwick, Adam Hege, Alison Idol, Charlotte Lloyd, *BOE Members*
- Dr. Leslie Alexander, *Superintendent*
- Mr. Chris Campbell, *Board Attorney*
- Athena Elliott and Mia Llibre, *Student Board Representatives*

CALL TO ORDER

Board Chair Dr. Gary Childers called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

WELCOME/MOMENT OF SILENCE

Dr. Childers welcomed those attending the meeting. He acknowledged the passing of former WHS Assistant Principal/Coach Jack Groce, who had a tremendous impact on the community. Dr. Childers then requested to observe a moment of silence.

DISCUSSION AND ADJUSTMENT OF AGENDA

Recognition of the District Spelling Bee winner will be at next month's meeting.
A short break was added after "Public Comment" on the agenda.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

- Dr. Alexander acknowledged the amount of winter weather that has occurred since the last BOE meeting.
- Recognition Dates:
 - Career and Technical Education (CTE) Month
 - National School Counseling Week (February 3-7)
 - February 15: School Resource Officer Appreciation Day

- February 22: School Bus Driver Appreciation Day

VALLE CRUCIS SCHOOL UPDATE

Dr. Alexander reported that the storm drain system is complete, and the flood test for the green roof has been completed. The well tank is being excavated, and work on the septic system will begin this week. The elevator and wheelchair lift have been installed. A request for a proposal for the Bi-Directional Amplifier (BDA) system and Distributed Antenna System (DAS) has gone out. Signage installation is scheduled for the last week in April, and furniture is to be installed the first week of May. Certificate of Occupancy is slated for the beginning of June.

STUDENTS' REPORT

- On February 1st, the Swim team had several students compete at regionals. The WHS Women's 200 Free Relay Team finished 12th in the state and set a new school record. On February 1st, select runners on the Indoor Track team competed at the Moundo Elite High School Invitational. The WHS Men's 4 x 800 Relay Team came in second place, beating their qualifying time and own record by two seconds. Sadie Buchanan and Cali Townsend came in second in each of their events. Several WHS Indoor Track students will be competing in the state competition on February 15th.
- The Pacers, a varsity dance team at Watauga High School, will hold their annual clinic for girls in grades K-8 from February 18-20. The young dancers will perform during the Pacers end-of-year show on February 20th.
- Watauga High School will host the annual Love Run on February 22, which is a 5K that began in 2019 as a fundraiser for former teacher Elayne Bishop during her battle with breast cancer. Ms. Bishop unfortunately passed away, but the WHS Student Council continues to coordinate the event to honor her legacy. This year's funds will go directly to WHS teacher Mrs. Keri Hemrick, who is facing a recurrence of breast cancer. Mrs. Hemrick is very appreciative of the support for her and her family.
- A scholarship in memory of Coach Michael Neff (who was Watauga's head coach for Track and Field coach, a middle school football coach, and P.E. teacher at Hardin Park) is being established for WHS students planning to attend Appalachian State and pursue a major in Physical Education and minor in Sports Science. Fundraising for the scholarship will include the sale of 50/50 raffle tickets at home basketball games, and there will also be an online GoFundMe option.

SPECIAL/PUBLIC RECOGNITION

Watauga High School Playmakers

Dr. Alexander shared that in less than thirty days, the Watauga Playmakers wrote "SURGE" as a response to and as a way to process their experiences artistically during and after Hurricane Helene. Their account is powerful as it portrays devastation, yet resilience.

The play won multiple awards at the North Carolina Theatre Conference, including:

- *Superior Rating*
- *Best Original Song by Clara Lappan, Liliana Lemus, and Kyleigh Hogan*
- *Best Directing by Sarah Miller and Zach Walker*

- *Outstanding Achievement in Acting by Rowan Tait*
- *Outstanding Achievement in Ensemble Acting*
- *Distinguished Play, "Cast Your Vote" Audience Choice*

On January 8th, the Playmakers performed in front of the North Carolina State Board of Education, and they will represent North Carolina at the Southeastern Theatre Conference in Baltimore in March.

The Playmakers and Theatre teachers Sarah Miller and Zach Walker then provided a collective and powerful pre-written narrative at the meeting of their experiences up to this point.

Special Donation

Dr. Leslie Alexander introduced Mr. Harry Corpening, who is the Vice-President (and recent President) of the *RJ Reynolds High School Alumni and Friends* group. Dr. Alexander served as RJR's first female principal from 2015-2021, and Mr. Corpening talked about her lasting impact. Mr. Corpening shared with the alumni network how Hurricane Helene significantly impacted the area, and they wanted to donate money to the school system. He then presented Dr. Alexander with a \$1,000 check. She immediately handed the check to teachers Sarah Miller and Zach Walker for their fundraising efforts for the Southeastern Theatre Conference.

Board Vice-Chair Alison Idol said to Ms. Miller and Mr. Walker, "I am never surprised by what you do, but I am always amazed."

WCS INCLEMENT WEATHER PROTOCOLS

Dr. Alexander presented an overview of WCS inclement weather protocols to address questions and concerns that parents have expressed about the number of missed days and the effectiveness of remote learning. Watauga County Schools missed 17 days due to Hurricane Helene, but these do not have to be made up. As of the meeting (February 10th), there had been 13 inclement weather days, with ten of them being remote learning days.

She reviewed the North Carolina school calendar law which mandates that the start date be no earlier than the Monday closest to August 26, and end no later than the Friday closest to June 11 unless a weather-related calendar waiver has been approved. If a one-week waiver is approved, the start date can be no earlier than the Monday closest to August 19. Watauga County Schools currently has a one-week winter weather waiver. Schools must have a minimum of 185 days or 1,025 hours of instruction.

Dr. Alexander presented some historical data, and then she discussed current transportation options (regular routes, Limited A routes, and Limited A with exceptions). She plans to create a survey for parents and faculty/staff to ask questions about remote learning (to find out what is and is not working) and the school calendar (i.e., to assess preferences regarding starting a week earlier in August, having students go to school on Saturdays, losing some of spring break, and/or having year-round school).

After the report, parents in attendance were allowed to provide comments and ask questions related to the protocols. One parent said he appreciated the information and how seriously the school system is taking the concerns.

The Board is interested in getting a cost analysis to outfit classrooms for a hybrid instruction model.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no citizens who made public comments.

A 5-minute break was taken.

RESOLUTION (To Authorize a Two-Week Weather Waiver for the Calendar Start Date for the WCS District)

Dr. Alexander shared a resolution asking for a two-week winter weather waiver starting with the 2025-26 school year, which would allow for an earlier start date in August to give more flexibility during inclement weather. This would also help ensure a more effective and reliable academic schedule for students. Charlotte Lloyd made a motion to approve the resolution, Adam Hege seconded, and all Board members approved. In addition, the County Commissioners are in support of the resolution as well. The next step is for it to be reviewed by Representative Ray Pickett.

REDUCTION IN FORCE SELECTION CRITERIA

Dr. Alexander explained that due to budgetary constraints, Watauga County Schools must reduce personnel costs for the 2025-2026 school year. As stated in Policy 7920, “primary consideration in any reduction in force will be the maintenance of a sound and balanced educational program that is consistent with the functions and responsibilities of the school system.” She then reviewed the plan that will be implemented to reduce personnel costs. The reductions will be achieved through a combination of the non-renewal of contracts and a reduction in force.

Alison Idol made a motion to approve and implement the RIF selection criteria as recommended. Dr. Jay Fenwick seconded the motion, and it was approved by all Board members.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of the Minutes for 1/9/2025 and 1/13/2025
- B. Declaration of Surplus
- C. Approval of Second Administration Summer Plan
- D. Personnel Report

Dr. Jay Fenwick made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Charlotte Lloyd seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

POLICIES: SUBSTANTIVE FOR SECOND READ

- 4320: Tobacco Products ~ Students
- 4329/7311: Bullying and Harassing Behavior Prohibited
- 5022: Registered Sex Offenders

- 5026/7250: Smoking and Tobacco Products
- 5150 (New): Reporting to External Agencies
- 6120: Student Health Services
- 6140: Student Wellness

Dr. Wayne Eberle brought the policies before the Board for second read. Dr. Adam Hege moved to approve the policies, and Alison Idol seconded. The motion was approved by all Board members.

POLICIES TO RESCIND

- 1725/4035/7236: Interim Title IX Sex Discrimination - Prohibited Conduct and Reporting Process
- 1726/4036/7237: Interim Title IX Sex Discrimination - Grievance Process

Dr. Adam Hege made a motion to revert back to the policies that were in place prior to the interim policies. Dr. Jay Fenwick seconded, and all Board members approved.

POLICY: REVISED FOR FIRST READ

- 6301: Classified Staff Bus Driving Requirements

Dr. Chris Blanton gave the Board members a copy of an updated/adjusted policy, and he reviewed the revised changes. The policy will be brought to the March Board meeting for second read.

BOARD OPERATIONS

- Since the April BOE meeting will be on April 14th, the date for the Board agenda review (with Dr. Alexander, Dr. Childers, and Ms. Idol) was changed from April 1st to April 8th.

BOARD COMMENTS

- Dr. Childers enjoyed the time that the new Board had together in January at the CORE training in Asheville.
- Dr. Fenwick thought the parameters Dr. Childers used with parents during the Q&A time in discussing inclement weather protocols worked well, and he felt that the parents felt heard.
- Dr. Alexander thanked Board Attorney Chris Campbell for being such a great partner.

ADJOURNMENT

Charlotte Lloyd made a motion to adjourn, Dr. Jay Fenwick seconded, and it was unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

Dr. Gary L. Childers, *Board of Education Chair*

Dr. Leslie Alexander, *Superintendent*

WATAUGA COUNTY FIELD TRIP REQUEST FORM

This request is for a: ☐ day trip ☐ out of state day trip ☐ overnight trip ☒ overnight & out of state trip

Day trips must be submitted to the principal 15 days before the trip. Overnight trip requests must be submitted to the superintendent by the first day of each month. Overnight field trips require the prior approval of the principal, transportation director, superintendent, and Board of Education. All trips utilizing rental or charter vehicles require the prior approval of the transportation director. No employee will transport students in a personal vehicle and no employee or volunteer driver will transport students in a 12-15 passenger van. No more than five students will be transported by a school system employee or volunteer in any one vehicle other than a school bus or activity bus.

Sponsoring teacher: (Print) Terreyl Williams School: Watauga High School
Cell phone number: 919-624-4293 Grade(s): 9-12 Number of students: 7
Departure time/date: 3/27 9:00am Return time/date: 3/30 9:00pm

Educational purpose:

Trip destination including city, state, and all places to be visited: (attach detailed itinerary as needed)

Going to Virginia Beach Sports Center (one 045 19th St., Virginia Beach, VA 23451), Days Inn
by Wyndham Virginia Beach at the Beach (1000 Atlantic Ave., Virginia Beach, VA 23451)

Purpose of trip and how it relates to the curriculum: 3-day national wrestling tournament

Supervision and Safety:

Names of all school staff chaperones:

coach Terreyl Williams

Names of all non-school chaperones: Terreyl Williams

All chaperones have a background check completed: **Yes** Sponsoring teacher initials: _____

Are all site(s) accessible to students with disabilities? ☒ yes ☐ no How will students with disabilities be accommodated for site access and transportation? Ramp, Alternate entry ways, Chaperone assistance

Sponsoring Teacher Initials _____ (If applicable) A safety/supervision plan for high risk and/or water activities has been shared with the parents. Please attach a copy of the plan to this form if applicable.

Transportation plan:

Mode of transportation: _____ Yellow bus with wheelchair lift _____ Yellow bus without wheelchair lift
_____ Activity bus with wheelchair lift _____ Activity bus without wheelchair lift ☒ Rental car/mini-van
_____ Charter bus Other (Please explain) _____

Name of charter bus company (if checked above) _____

(If applicable, bus request form must be attached)

Driver/s: Terreyl Williams, Savva Kostis Round trip mileage: 740 # of buses needed: _____

Total cost per student \$ 100 (food) Source of funds: Students

The sponsoring teacher has reviewed Board policies 3320, 3320-R, and 6315: Teacher initials: TLW

Approval/Signatures:

Sponsoring teacher signature: _____ Date: 03 / 02 / 2025

Principal approval: _____ Date: 3 / 4 / 25

Required signatures if applicable:

Transportation Director approval: _____ Date: 3 / 6 / 25

Superintendent approval: _____ Date: 3 / 6 / 25

Board of Education approval: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____



Re: Field Trip Request Form

message

From: **Erreyll Williams** <williamste@wataugaschools.org>
To: Leigh Lyall <lyallkl@wataugaschools.org>
Cc: Dustin Kerley <kerleyd@wataugaschools.org>

Thu, Mar 6, 2025 at 11:43 AM

Thursday, March 27th

9:00am: Start Travel to Virginia Beach

3:30 - 4:00pm: Hotel Check in

6:00-7:30pm: Weigh-ins For All Boys & Girls High School Divisions

Friday March 28th

8:00am: Boys Freshman, Boys Sophomore, and High School Girls Divisions

Wrestle up to Quarterfinals
All consolation bracket competition will begin Saturday March 29th

1:00pm: Boys Junior and Boys Senior Divisions

Wrestle up to Quarterfinals
All consolation bracket competition will begin Saturday March 29th

7:00 - 8:30pm: Back to Hotel

Saturday March 29th:

8:00am: Boys Freshman, Boys Sophomore, and High School Girls Divisions Consolation Bracket Competition

All High School Divisions will wrestle up to the placement matches (1st, 3rd, 5th, 7th)
10-11:00 am: Middle School Early Weigh-ins at Virginia Beach Convention Center

1:00 pm: Boys Junior and Boys Senior Divisions Consolation Bracket Competition

All High School Divisions will wrestle up to the placement matches (1st, 3rd, 5th, 7th)
1-2:00 pm: Middle School Regular Weigh-ins at Virginia Beach Convention Center

3:00 pm: All High School Division Quarterfinals

5:00pm- All High School Division Semifinals

7:00-8:30pm: Free College Recruiting Fair for all attendees

8:30pm: Back to Hotel

Sunday March 30th:

8:00 am – All Boys & Girls High School Divisions Medal Matches – 3rd, 5th, and 7th

8:00 am – Middle School wrestling begins

10:00 am – All Boys & Girls High School Division Finals

3:30pm: Estimated Departure time

**Will leave to come home sooner depending on if everyone is still wrestling.*

WATAUGA COUNTY FIELD TRIP REQUEST FORM

This request is for a: ___ day trip ___ out of state day trip ___ overnight trip ☒ overnight & out of state trip

Day and overnight trips must be submitted to the principal 15 days before the trip. In-state overnight requests require the approval of the principal, Transportation Director, and Superintendent. Out-of-state field trip requests must be submitted to the Superintendent by the first day of each month, and require prior approval of the principal, Transportation Director, Superintendent, and Board of Education. All trips utilizing rental or charter vehicles require the prior approval of the transportation director. No employee will transport students in a personal vehicle and no employee or volunteer driver will transport students in a 12-15 passenger van. No more than five students will be transported by a school system employee or volunteer in any one vehicle other than a school bus or activity bus. The superintendent has the discretion to approve field trips on an emergency basis when the timing is between regular Board of Education meetings. The superintendent shall notify the board at the next regularly scheduled meeting of any trips approved on an emergency basis and the rationale.

Sponsoring teacher: (Print) Olivia Tarnowski School: WHS

Cell phone number: 828-903-0178 Grade(s): 12th Number of students: 4

Departure date: Friday, April 25, 2025 Return date: Wednesday, April 30, 2025

Departure time: 3pm Return time: 2pm

Educational purpose:

Trip destination including city, state, and all places ^{Hotel} to be visited: (attach detailed itinerary as needed)

Orlando, FL: Universal's Stella Nova Resort, Universal Studios, Disney Springs, Orange County Convention Center

Purpose of trip and how it relates to the curriculum: Our DECA International Career Development Conference (ICDC) is the highest level of competition in our organization. Students have to qualify to compete by winning at the NC DECA Career Development Conference. Students will compete, take tests, attend seminars, network, and learn more about various marketing related careers.

Supervision and Safety:

Names of all school staff chaperones: Olivia Tarnowski

Names of all non-school chaperones: _____

All chaperones have a background check completed: ☒ Sponsoring teacher initials: OT
Are all site(s) accessible to students with disabilities? ☒ yes ☐ no How will students with disabilities be
accommodated for site access and transportation? All sites meet ADA requirements.

A safety/supervision plan for high risk and/or water activities has been shared with the parents. Please attach a copy of
the plan to this form if applicable. Sponsoring Teacher Initials (If applicable) OT

Transportation plan:

Mode of transportation: ☐ Yellow bus with wheelchair lift ☐ Yellow bus without wheelchair lift
☐ Activity bus with wheelchair lift ☐ Activity bus without wheelchair lift ☐ Rental car/minivan
☐ Charter bus ☒ Other (Please explain) plane, DECA shuttle, taxi (from the airport to the hotel & back) Parents/Guardians will be responsible for transportation to and from the airport. All paperwork will be completed.

Name of charter bus company (if checked above) _____

(If applicable, bus request form must be attached)

Driver/s: _____ Round trip mileage: _____ # of buses needed: _____

Total cost per student \$ 1000 Source of funds: CTE & personal

The sponsoring teacher has reviewed Board policies 3320, 3320-R, and 6315: Teacher initials: OT

Approval/Signatures:

Sponsoring teacher signature: Quinn Tarnowski Date: 3 / 3 / 25

Principal approval: [Signature] Date: 3 / 3 / 25

Required signatures if applicable:

Transportation Director approval: [Signature] Date: 3 / 6 / 25

Superintendent approval: [Signature] Date: 3 / 6 / 25

Board of Education approval: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Safety Plan for Hotel Pool: DECA ICDC

If students wish to visit the Stella Nova Resort Pool during our predetermined, designated pool hours, Olivia Tarnowski will go with them and be stationed to monitor and supervise. Additionally, the Stella Nova Resort Pool has lifeguards on duty during operating hours and lifejackets will be available for students who choose to wear one.

Students will follow these additional guidelines:

1. Students will follow the directions posted around the Stella Nova Resort Pool to ensure their safety
2. Students will be respectful of the lifeguard on duty and will follow their directives
3. Students must adhere to our designated pool hours
4. Students will NOT visit the Stella Nova Resort Pool unless Olivia Tarnowski goes with them to monitor and supervise

This safety plan will be included in the contract that students and parents / guardians sign prior to departing for this trip.



INTERNATIONAL CAREER DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

ORLANDO | 2025

FRIDAY, APRIL 25

8:00 AM - 9:00 PM	Headquarters + Attraction Ticket Booth	W206
8:00 AM - 9:00 PM	Shop DECA + Blazer Shop	WB Lobby Reg Concourse
5:00 PM - 6:00 PM	Chartered Association Advisor Check-in <i>Chapter advisors register with their chartered association advisor at their assigned hotel</i>	W310A
6:30 PM	Chartered Association Advisor Dinner <i>by invitation only</i> <i>Sponsored by NRF Foundation Rise Up</i>	W309

SATURDAY, APRIL 26

7:00 AM - 9:30 PM	Headquarters + Attraction Ticket Booth	W206
7:00 AM - 9:30 PM	Shop DECA + Blazer Shop	WB Lobby Reg Concourse
8:00 AM - 5:00 PM	DECA Day in the Parks <i>Advance ticket purchase required</i>	
9:00 AM	Event Directors' Briefing <i>Sponsored by MBA Research</i>	W221A
9:30 AM	Executive Officer Candidate Orientation + Interviews	W310A
1:00 PM - 5:00 PM	Exhibit Booth Set-up	WD1
5:00 PM	Parade of Chartered Associations Rehearsal	WA1-WB1
6:00 PM	National Advisory Board + Executive Mentor Reception <i>by invitation only</i>	W309
8:30 PM	Grand Opening Session	WA1-WB1
12:30 AM	Curfew <i>Chapters and chartered associations may set earlier curfew times</i>	Assigned Hotel

SUNDAY, APRIL 27

7:00 AM - 5:00 PM	Headquarters + Attraction Ticket Booth	W206
7:00 AM - 5:00 PM	Shop DECA + Blazer Shop	WB Lobby Reg Concourse
7:30 AM	Judge Check-in	West C Lobby
8:00 AM - 11:30 AM	School-based Enterprise Academy Retail Operations <i>Sponsored by Nestle</i>	W312 + W314 + W315
8:00 AM - 3:30 PM	Emerging Leader Series	OSCC
8:00 AM - 4:00 PM	College + Career Exhibits <i>Advisors only from 8:00 AM - 9:00 AM</i>	WD1
8:00 AM - 5:00 PM	Competitive Event Testing <i>Principles of Business Administration Events, Personal Financial Literacy, Team Decision Making Events, Individual Series Events, Integrated Marketing Campaign Events, Professional Selling and Consulting Events</i>	WB2-WB3 + Valencia B-D
8:00 AM - 5:00 PM	Competitive Event Preliminary Competition <i>Business Operations Research Events, Project Management Events, Entrepreneurship Written Events, Stock Market Game</i>	WD2
9:00 AM	Virtual Business Challenge Participants' Briefing	Valencia A
9:00 AM - 4:00 PM	Advisor Professional Learning Series	W205
9:30 AM	Executive Mentor Check-in	W309
10:00 AM - 4:00 PM	Virtual Business Challenge Competition	WD1
12:00 PM	MDA Fundraising Recognition Luncheon <i>Sponsored by the Muscular Dystrophy Association by invitation only</i>	W309
12:30 PM - 4:00 PM	School-based Enterprise Academy Food Operations <i>Sponsored by Nestle</i>	W312 + W314 + W315
4:00 PM	Voting Delegates' Briefing + Candidate Campaign Sessions	W311
12:30 AM	Curfew <i>Chapters and chartered associations may set earlier curfew times</i>	Assigned Hotel

MONDAY, APRIL 28

7:00 AM – 5:00 PM	Headquarters + Attraction Ticket Booth	W206
7:00 AM – 5:00 PM	Shop DECA	WB Lobby Reg Concourse
7:30 AM	Judge Check-In	West C Lobby
8:00 AM – 4:00 PM	College + Career Exhibits	WD1
8:00 AM – 3:30 PM	Emerging Leader Series	OCCC
8:00 AM – 6:00 PM	Competitive Event Preliminary Competition <i>Principles of Business Administration Events, Personal Financial Literacy, Team Decision Making Events, Individual Series Events, Integrated Marketing Campaign Events, Professional Selling and Consulting Event</i>	WC + WD2
8:00 AM – 6:00 PM	School-based Enterprise Preliminary Competition	WD2
9:00 AM – 3:00 PM	Advisor Professional Learning Series	W205
10:00 AM – 4:00 PM	Virtual Business Challenge Competition	WD1
12:00 PM – 1:30 PM	Chartered Association Officer + Advisor Luncheon <i>Sponsored by the U.S. Army by invitation only</i>	W311
2:00 PM – 3:30 PM	Leadership Recognition Reception <i>by invitation only</i>	W309
2:00 PM – 4:00 PM	Meet the Candidates Session <i>Open to all members</i>	WA Lobby Reg Concourse
3:00 PM – 4:00 PM	Competitive Events Update <i>Advisors only</i>	W205
5:00 PM – 11:00 PM	DECA Night at Universal Orlando <i>Advance ticket purchase required</i>	Universal Orlando Resort
12:30 AM	Curfew <i>Chapters and chartered associations may set earlier curfew times</i>	Assigned Hotel

TUESDAY, APRIL 29

7:30 AM – 6:00 PM	Headquarters	W206
8:00 AM	Achievement Awards Session	WA1-WB1
8:30 AM – 11:30 AM	Judge Check-In	West C Lobby
8:30 AM – 6:00 PM	Shop DECA + Finalist T-Shirts + Recognition Items	WB Lobby Reg Concourse
8:30 AM – 6:00 PM	Competitive Event Final Competition	WD2
12:00 PM	Business + Election Session	W304
6:00 PM – 7:00 PM	Scholarship + National Advisory Board Reception <i>Sponsored by National Advisory Board Partners by invitation only</i>	W203
7:30 PM	Grand Awards Session	WA1-WB1
12:30 AM	Curfew <i>Chapters and chartered associations may set earlier curfew times</i>	Assigned Hotel

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30

9:00 AM – 11:00 AM	New Executive Officer Orientation	W310A
--------------------	-----------------------------------	-------

Declaration of Surplus Items - MARCH 2025

Date Approved: _____

Bethel

<u>Asset #</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Usable</u>	<u>Unusable</u>
	0		0	0

Blowing Rock

<u>Asset #</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Usable</u>	<u>Unusable</u>
	0		0	0

Cove Creek

<u>Asset #</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Usable</u>	<u>Unusable</u>
800780	1	CALCULATOR- TI-73		1
NONE	1	VOLLEYBALL REF STAND	1	
	2		1	1

Green Valley

<u>Asset #</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Usable</u>	<u>Unusable</u>
	0		0	0

Hardin Park

<u>Asset #</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Usable</u>	<u>Unusable</u>
500743	1	DVD/VHS PLAYER- SONY	1	
	1		1	0

Mabel

<u>Asset #</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Usable</u>	<u>Unusable</u>
	0		0	0

Parkway

<u>Asset #</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Usable</u>	<u>Unusable</u>
	0		0	0

Valle Crucis

<u>Asset #</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Usable</u>	<u>Unusable</u>
301499	1	MONITOR- HP		1
	1		0	1

Watauga High School

<u>Asset #</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Usable</u>	<u>Unusable</u>
NONE	1	MONITOR- ASUS		1
NONE	1	MONITOR- FLAT PNL- ASUS		1
NONE	1	PRINTER-VNB4K48411		1
903426	1	PROJECTOR- EPSON		1
NONE	1	Miscellaneous Cords		1
904366	1	Kindle		1
904363	1	Kindle		1
904365	1	Kindle		1
904390	1	Kindle		1
904367	1	Kindle		1
904364	1	Kindle		1
T0047112	1	Nook		1
T0047141	1	Nook		1
T0047115	1	Nook		1
T0047120	1	Nook		1
T0047138	1	NOOK		1
903018	1	Flip Camera		1

905947	1 Ready Animator	1	
905948	1 Ready Animator	1	
904292	1 DVD (Zenith)		1
904305	1 DVD (JVC)	1	
904303	1 DVD (JVC)	1	
904307	1 DVD (JVC)	1	
904355	1 DVD (Zenith)	1	
904298	1 DVD (AD Aspire Digital)	1	
904304	1 DVD (Samsung)	1	
904294	1 DVD (Zenith)	1	
903793	1 DVD (Samsung)	1	
904662	1 DVD (Samsung)	1	
903551	1 DVD (Samsung)	1	
0 50535	1 DVD (Samsung)	1	
903554	1 DVD (Samsung)	1	
NONE	1 Overhead Projector	1	
NONE	1 Overhead Projector	1	
NONE	1 Overhead Projector	1	

35

----------------------	----------------------

17

18

Central Office

Asset # Quantity Description

Usable Unusable

0

----------------------	----------------------

0

0

Technology Department

Asset # Quantity Description

Usable Unusable

34133	1 CHROMEBOOK 100e		1
35494	1 CHROMEBOOK 100e		1
35420	1 CHROMEBOOK 100e		1
36999	1 IFP- VIEWSONIC		1
35304	1 CHROMEBOOK 100e		1
36431	1 CHROMEBOOK CTL		1
NONE	1 LAPTOP- PROBOOK	1	
29393	1 LAPTOP- PROBOOK	1	
38067	1 CHROMEBOOK- G9		1
34902	1 CHROMEBOOK-100e		1
34824	1 LAPTOP- ELITEBOOK		1

100056	1	PROJECTOR- NEC		1
80555	1	LAPTOP- PROBOOK	1	
33281	1	CHROMEBOOK- 100e		1
VARIES	340	WIRELESS AP-	340	
29594	1	LAPTOP- PROBOOK	1	
33945	1	PROJECTOR- EPSON		1
28726	1	PROJECTOR- BRIGHTLINK		1
36540	1	CHROMEBOOK- G9		1
36610	1	CHROMEBOOK- G9		1

359

----------------------	----------------------

344

15

Transportation Department

<u>Asset #</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Usable</u>	<u>Unusable</u>
----------------	-----------------	--------------------	---------------	-----------------

0

----------------------	----------------------

0

0

Maintenance Department

<u>Asset #</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Usable</u>	<u>Unusable</u>
----------------	-----------------	--------------------	---------------	-----------------

0

----------------------	----------------------

0

0

Child Nutrition

<u>Asset #</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Usable</u>	<u>Unusable</u>
----------------	-----------------	--------------------	---------------	-----------------

0

----------------------	----------------------

0

0



WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Margaret E. Gragg Education Center
175 Pioneer Trail, Boone, NC 28607

MEMORANDUM

TO: Dr. Leslie Alexander, Superintendent
Members, Watauga County Board of Education

FROM: Joseph Nash, Finance Officer

DATE: March 10, 2025

RE: 2024-25 Budget Amendment #4

Attached is Budget Amendment #4 that changes totals in Watauga County Schools 2024-25 adopted budget.

After approval of this Budget Amendment, the budget for all funds will appear as follows:

<u>Fund</u>	<u>Adopted Budget</u>	<u>Amendments</u>	<u>Amended Budget</u>
Local Current Expense	\$ 18,065,022	\$ 0	\$ 18,065,022
State Public School	37,453,583	227,369	37,680,952
Federal Grants	2,590,174	40,521	2,630,695
School Nutrition	2,581,900	0	2,581,900
Extended Learning Centers	725,550	0	725,550
Capital Outlay	4,735,000	(402,500)	4,332,500
Special Revenue/Scholarship	1,861,041	100,000	1,961,041
Total	\$ 68,012,270	\$ 401,220	\$ 67,977,660

Watauga County Schools
BUDGET AMENDMENT #4
March 10, 2025

Be it resolved that the following amendments be made to the Budget Resolution for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025.

BA #4-1 Explanation:

This amendment is to budget additional appropriations received from the State. \$2,142 for reading/math bonuses, \$55,115 for summer reading camps, \$18,900 for children with disabilities special funds, \$1,549 for literacy intervention, and \$149,663 for school resource officers.

<u>Account Number</u>	<u>Account Title</u>	<u>Amount</u>
1.3100.000.000.000	State Revenues	227,369
1.5000.000.000.000	Instructional Services	227,369

BA #4-2 Explanation:

This amendment is to budget additional appropriations received from Federal. \$1,577 for Title III English Language, \$34,410 for Title I School Improvement, \$1,761 for CTE furniture & equipment, and \$2,773 for indirect costs.

<u>Account Number</u>	<u>Account Title</u>	<u>Amount</u>
3.3600.000.000.000	Federal Revenues	40,521
3.5000.000.000.000	Instructional Services	37,747
3.8000.000.000.000	Non-Programmed Charges	2,774

**Watauga County Schools
BUDGET AMENDMENT #4
March 10, 2025**

BA #4-3 Explanation:

This amendment is to reduce the capital outlay budget. It was determined the following projects would no longer be pursued in fiscal year 24/25, therefore they were not requested from the county. Bi-Directional amplifiers/radios for \$250,000, gym presentation equipment for \$25,000, aerial lift for \$55,000, and a vehicle lift which was determined to only cost \$75,000, instead of the originally budgeted \$175,000. Additionally, this amendment adds \$27,500 to the budget for the design of Green Valley Elementary roof repairs, a lottery project that was approved by the county in 23/24, but not paid for until 24/25.

<u>Account Number</u>	<u>Account Title</u>	<u>Amount</u>
4.3400.000.000.000	Repair & Renovation Lottery Funds	27,500
4.4000.000.000.000	County Appropriation	(430,000)
Category I Projects		(402,500)
(Acquisition of land and acquisition, construction, or renovation of buildings and other structures)		

BA #4-4 Explanation:

This amendment is to budget anticipated additional appropriations from Medicaid. Also, to reduce the budget for Medicaid funded contracted services, and to set aside anticipated access special revenue funds for special projects which may include curriculum resources, upfront costs that we expect FEMA or insurance to reimburse, or other unanticipated costs.

<u>Account Number</u>	<u>Account Title</u>	<u>Amount</u>
8.3000.000.000.000	Special Revenue Fund	100,000
8.5000.000.000.000	Instructional Services	(51,934)
8.6000.000.000.000	Support Services	151,934

Fund	1 digit Purp	1 digit Purp Desc	Current	Year-to-Date	PO's & Encumbrances		
			Budget/Balance	Exp/Rev	Outstanding	Remaining Balance	Percent Spent
1	5XXX	Instructional Services	\$33,323,830.55	\$22,323,058.41	\$64,846.60	\$10,935,925.54	67.18%
	6XXX	System-Wide Support Services	\$4,225,534.00	\$2,783,859.55	\$84,024.16	\$1,357,650.29	67.87%
	7XXX	Ancillary Services	\$131,588.00	\$131,537.16	\$0.00	\$50.84	99.96%
STATE TOTAL			\$37,680,952.55	\$25,238,455.12	\$148,870.76	\$12,293,626.67	67.37%
2	5XXX	Instructional Services	\$9,704,608.40	\$6,231,454.29	\$25,375.13	\$3,447,778.98	64.47%
	6XXX	System-Wide Support Services	\$7,880,413.60	\$5,248,016.80	\$370,013.72	\$2,262,383.08	71.29%
	8XXX	Non-Programmed Charges	\$480,000.00	\$262,628.61	\$0.00	\$217,371.39	54.71%
LOCAL TOTAL			\$18,065,022.00	\$11,742,099.70	\$395,388.85	\$5,927,533.45	67.19%
3	5XXX	Instructional Services	\$2,045,232.53	\$1,314,810.92	\$4,709.44	\$725,712.17	64.52%
	6XXX	System-Wide Support Services	\$98,175.90	\$59,913.06	\$0.00	\$38,262.84	61.03%
	8XXX	Non-Programmed Charges	\$487,286.58	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$487,286.58	0.00%
FEDERAL TOTAL			\$2,630,695.01	\$1,374,723.98	\$4,709.44	\$1,251,261.59	52.44%
4	5XXX	Instructional Services	\$3,868,930.00	\$2,442,024.21	\$41,019.38	\$1,385,886.41	64.18%
	6XXX	System-Wide Support Services	\$463,570.00	\$65,352.26	\$197,460.60	\$200,757.14	56.69%
CAPITAL TOTAL			\$4,332,500.00	\$2,507,376.47	\$238,479.98	\$1,586,643.55	63.38%
5	7XXX	Ancillary Services	\$2,581,900.00	\$1,373,241.28	\$39,340.61	\$1,169,318.11	54.71%
NUTRITION TOTAL			\$2,581,900.00	\$1,373,241.28	\$39,340.61	\$1,169,318.11	54.71%
6	7XXX	Ancillary Services	\$725,550.00	\$362,360.76	\$0.00	\$363,189.24	49.94%
AFTERSCHOOL TOTAL			\$725,550.00	\$362,360.76	\$0.00	\$363,189.24	49.94%
8	5XXX	Instructional Services	\$1,704,825.55	\$1,069,922.59	\$8,496.48	\$626,406.48	63.26%
	6XXX	System-Wide Support Services	\$253,465.13	\$81,927.68	\$25,068.99	\$146,468.46	42.21%
	7XXX*	Ancillary Services	\$2,750.00	\$44,335.16	\$2,093.38	(\$43,678.54)	1688.31%
SPECIAL REVENUE TOTAL			\$1,961,040.68	\$1,196,185.43	\$35,658.85	\$729,196.40	62.82%
9	8XXX**	Non-Programmed Charges	\$0.00	\$4,050.00	\$0.00	(\$4,050.00)	0.00%
SCHOLARSHIP TOTAL			\$0.00	\$4,050.00	\$0.00	(\$4,050.00)	0.00%
Grand Total			\$67,977,660.24	\$43,798,492.74	\$862,448.49	\$23,316,719.01	65.70%
*Fund 8.7XXX			Hurricane expenses not budgeted				
**Fund 9.8XXX			Donations cover the scholarships				



WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Margaret E. Gragg Education Center
175 Pioneer Trail Boone, NC 28607
(828) 264-7190

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING INCREASE IN MICRO-PURCHASE THRESHOLD

WHEREAS, from time to time, the Watauga County Board of Education (the "*Unit*") purchases goods and services using federal funding subject to the procurement standards in 2 C.F.R. Part 200, Subpart D; and

WHEREAS, the *Unit's* procurement of such goods and services is subject to the *Unit's* purchasing policies, and

WHEREAS, the *Unit* is a non-Federal entity under the definition set forth in 2 C.F.R. § 200.1; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to 2 C.F.R. 200.320(a)(1)(ii), a non-Federal entity may award micro-purchases without soliciting competitive price or rate quotations if the non-Federal entity considers the price to be reasonable based on research, experience, purchase history or other information and documents that the non-Federal entity files accordingly; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to 2 C.F.R. 200.320(a)(1)(iii), a non-Federal entity is responsible for determining and documenting an appropriate micro-purchase threshold based on internal controls, an evaluation of risk, and its documented procurement procedures; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 200.320(a)(1)(iv), a non-Federal entity may self-certify on an annual basis a micro-purchase threshold not to exceed \$50,000 and maintain documentation to be made available to a Federal awarding agency and auditors in accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.334; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 200.320(a)(1)(iv), such self-certification must include (1) a justification for the threshold, (2) a clear identification of the threshold, and (3) supporting documentation, which, for public institutions, may be a "higher threshold consistent with State law"; and

WHEREAS, G.S. 143-129(a) and G.S. 143-131(a) require the *Unit* to conduct a competitive bidding process for the purchase of (1) "apparatus, supplies, materials, or equipment" where the cost of such purchase is equal to or greater than \$30,000, and (2) "construction or repair work" where the cost of such purchase is greater than or equal to \$30,000; and

WHEREAS, North Carolina law does not require a unit of local government to competitively bid for purchase of services other than services subject to the qualifications-based selection process set forth in Article 3D of Chapter 143 of the North Carolina General Statutes (the "Mini-Brooks Act"); and

WHEREAS, G.S. 143-64.32 permits units of local government to exercise, in writing, an exemption to the qualifications-based selection process for services subject to the Mini-Brooks Act for particular projects where the aggregate cost of such services do not exceed \$50,000; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to 2 C.F.R. 200.320(a)(1)(iv), the Unit now desires to adopt higher micro-purchase thresholds than those identified in 48 C.F.R. § 2.101.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION AS FOLLOWS:

1. In accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.320(a)(1)(iv) and the applicable provisions of North Carolina law, the *Unit* hereby self-certifies the following micro-purchase thresholds, each of which is a “higher threshold consistent with State law” under 2 C.F.R. § 200.320(a)(1)(iv)(C) for the reasons set forth in the recitals to this resolution:
 - A. \$30,000, for the purchase of “apparatus, supplies, materials, or equipment”; and
 - B. \$30,000, for the purchase of “construction or repair work”; and
 - C. \$50,000, for the purchase of services not subject to competitive bidding under North Carolina law; and
 - D. \$50,000, for the purchase of services subject to the qualifications-based selection process in the Mini-Brooks Act; provided that such threshold shall apply to a contract only if the *Unit* has exercised an exemption to the Mini-Brooks Act, in writing, for a particular project pursuant to G.S. 143-64.32.
2. The self-certification made herein shall be effective as of the date hereof and shall be applicable until the end of the current fiscal year of the *Unit*, but shall not be applicable to Federal financial assistance awards issued prior to November 12, 2020, including financial assistance awards issued prior to that date under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Support (CARES) Act of 2020.
3. In the event that the *Unit* receives funding from a federal grantor agency that adopts a threshold more restrictive than those contained herein, the *Unit* shall comply with the more restrictive threshold when expending such funds.
4. The *Unit* shall maintain documentation to be made available to a Federal awarding agency, any pass-through entity, and auditors in accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.334.
5. The Finance Officer of the *Unit* is hereby authorized to revise the Purchasing Policy of the *Unit* to reflect the increased micro-purchase thresholds specified herein, and to take all such actions, individually and collectively, to carry into effect the purpose and intent of the foregoing resolution.
6. On an annual basis, the finance officer is authorized to conduct the self-certification process for the school system and provide to federal agencies documentation raising the micro-purchasing threshold to \$50,000. The self-certification shall be based on the district’s internal controls, an evaluation of risk, and documented procurement procedures, including this resolution.

Adopted this the ____ day of _____, 2025.

Dr. Gary Childers, *Chair*
Watauga County Board of Education

ATTEST:

Dr. Leslie Alexander
Superintendent and Ex Officio Secretary to the Board



**WATAUGA COUNTY
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Margaret E. Gragg Education Center
175 Pioneer Trail Boone, NC 28607
(828) 264-7190

**RESOLUTION DELEGATING AUTHORITY TO EXEMPT FROM THE
QUALIFICATIONS-BASED SELECTION PROCESS
OF CERTAIN PROFESSIONAL SERVICES**

WHEREAS G.S. 143-64.31 requires the initial solicitation and evaluation of firms to perform architectural, engineering, surveying, construction management-at-risk services, and design-build services (collectively “design services”) to be based on qualifications and without regard to fee; and

WHEREAS G.S. 143-64.32 authorizes units of local government to exempt, in writing, contracts for design services from the qualifications-based selection requirements of G.S. 143-64.31 if the estimated fee is less than \$50,000.00 (hereinafter, “the exemption”); and

WHEREAS the Board desires to delegate to the Superintendent and/or the Finance Officer the authority to make the exemption and to further ratify any such exemption heretofore made on behalf of the Board.

NOW THEREFORE, be it hereby **RESOLVED** by the Watauga County Board of Education that:

1. The Board hereby delegates the authority to make the exemption to the Superintendent and/or the Finance Officer.
2. The Superintendent or Finance Officer shall exempt eligible contracts by project in writing. A model certification is included herewith as Attachment A.
3. This resolution shall be effective upon adoption.

Adopted this the ____ day of _____, 2025.

Dr. Gary Childers, *Chair*
Watauga County Board of Education

ATTEST:

Dr. Leslie Alexander
Superintendent and Ex Officio Secretary to the Board

The Watauga County Board of Education (the "board") intends to administer federal grant awards efficiently, effectively, and in compliance with all requirements imposed by law, the awarding agency, and the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction or other applicable pass-through entity.

A. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS AND INTERNAL CONTROLS

The finance officer shall be responsible to the superintendent to develop, monitor, and enforce effective financial management systems and other internal controls over federal awards that provide reasonable assurance that the school system is managing the awards in compliance with all requirements for federal grants and awards. Systems and controls must meet all terms and conditions of the awards as well as all requirements of the U.S. Constitution and federal law and regulation, including the *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards* ("Uniform Guidance") issued by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (except to the extent that an exception to the Uniform Guidance has been authorized by the relevant federal agency), and any applicable state requirements, and shall be based on best practices.

The financial management and internal controls must provide for (1) identification of all federal funds received and expended and their program source; (2) accurate, current, and complete disclosure of financial data in accordance with federal requirements; (3) records sufficient to track the receipt and use of funds; (4) effective control and accountability over assets to assure they are used only for authorized purposes; and (5) comparison of expenditures against budget. In addition, written procedures must be established for cash management and for determining the allowability of costs, as required by the Uniform Guidance.

At a minimum, the systems and controls shall address the following areas.

1. Allowability

Costs charged by the school system to a federal grant must be allowed under the individual program and be in accordance with the cost principles established in the Uniform Guidance, including how charges made to the grant for personnel are to be determined. Costs will be charged to a federal grant only when the cost is incurred during the approved budget period and is (1) reasonable and necessary for the program; (2) in compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and grant terms; (3) allocable to the grant; (4) adequately documented; and (5) consistent with school system policies and administrative regulations that apply to both federally-funded and non-federally funded activities. Internal controls shall be sufficient to provide reasonable assurance that charges to federal awards for personnel expenses are accurate, allowable, and properly allocated and documented. Prior written

approval for certain cost charges must be obtained as required by the awarding agency in order to avoid subsequent disallowances.

2. Cash Management and Fund Control

Payment methods must be established in writing that minimize the time elapsed between the draw of federal funds and the disbursement of those funds. Standards for funds control and accountability must be met as required by the Uniform Guidance for advance payments.

3. Procurement

All purchases for property and services made using federal funds must be conducted in a manner providing full and open competition and in accordance with the Uniform Guidance, all other applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations, and the school system's written policies and procedures. The district shall avoid situations that unnecessarily restrict competition, as defined in 2 C.F.R. 200.319, and shall avoid acquisition of unnecessary or duplicative items. Noncompetitive procurement will be used only in the circumstances allowed by 2 C.F.R. 200.320(c). School officials are encouraged to maximize the purchase and use of goods, products, and materials produced in the United States to the extent consistent with law.

Individuals or organizations that develop or draft specifications, requirements, statements of work, and/or invitations for bids, ~~requests for proposals, or invitations to negotiate,~~ must be excluded from competing ~~for such on those~~ purchases.

Contracts are to be awarded only to responsible contractors possessing the ability to perform successfully under the terms and conditions of a proposed procurement. Consideration will be given to such matters as contractor integrity, compliance with public policy, record of past performance, and financial and technical resources. No contract shall be awarded to a contractor who is suspended or debarred from eligibility for participation in federal assistance programs or activities. Contracts shall contain all provisions required by 2 C.F.R. Part 200.

Purchasing records must be sufficiently maintained to detail the history of all procurements and must include at least the rationale for the method of procurement, selection of contract type, and contractor selection or rejection; the basis for the contract price; and when applicable, verification that the contractor is not suspended or debarred.

The requirements for conflicts of interest established below in subsection A.4 are applicable to all procurements.

The Uniform Guidance currently sets a "micro-purchase" threshold of \$10,000, below which less-formal methods of procurement may be applied pursuant to 2 CFR 200.320(a)(1). On an annual basis, the finance officer is authorized to conduct the self-

certification process for the school system and provide to federal agencies documentation raising the micro-purchasing threshold to \$50,000. The self-certification shall be based on the district's internal controls, an evaluation of risk, and documented procurement procedures, including this policy.

4.—Conflict of Interest

In addition to the prohibitions against self-benefitting from a public contract under G.S. 14-234 and accepting gifts and favors from vendors under G.S. 133-32 (see policies 2121, Board Member Conflict of Interest; 6401/9100, Ethics and the Purchasing Function; and 7730, Employee Conflict of Interest), the following standards of conduct apply when an employee, board member, or agent of the school system engages in the procurement of goods, services, or construction or repair projects funded in whole or part with federal financial assistance.

- a. No employee, board member, or agent of the school system may participate directly or indirectly in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by a federal grant or award if he or she has a real or apparent conflict of interest.

A real or apparent conflict of interest exists when (1) the employee, board member, or agent of the school system, (2) any member of his or her immediate family, (3) his or her partner, or (4) an organization which employs or is about to employ any of those parties has a financial or other interest in or receives a tangible personal benefit from a firm considered for a contract. For purposes of this paragraph, "financial interest" means a financial interest which comprises more than five percent of the equity of the firm or business or more than five percent of the assets of the economic interest in indebtedness. "Financial interest" does not include an ownership interest held through a fiduciary, such as a mutual fund or blind trust, where the individual or individual's employer has no control over the selection of holdings.

Any employee, board member, or agent of the school system who has a potential conflict of interest shall disclose that conflict in writing to the superintendent. The superintendent shall disclose in writing the potential conflict of interest to the federal awarding agency in accordance with 2 C.F.R. 200.112.

- b. No employee, board member, or agent of the school system may solicit or accept any trips, meals, gratuities, favors, gifts, or other items of monetary value from a contractor, supplier, or a party to a subcontract except that (1) a single unsolicited item with a nominal value (\$50 or less) or (2) multiple unsolicited items from a single contractor or subcontractor having an aggregate monetary value of \$100 or less in a 12-month period may be accepted. Violations of this ~~rule~~ subsection are subject to disciplinary action.

5.4. Mandatory Disclosures

The superintendent shall promptly disclose in writing to the federal awarding agency ~~in a timely manner all credible evidence of the commission of a~~ violations of federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuities potentially affecting any federal award. The superintendent shall fully

address any such violations promptly and shall notify the board accordingly. The board may request the superintendent to develop a plan of correction for board approval in appropriate situations as determined by the board.

6.5. Equipment and Supplies Purchased with Federal Funds

Equipment and supplies acquired with federal funds will be used, managed, and disposed of in accordance with applicable state and federal requirements. Property records and inventory systems shall be sufficiently maintained to account for and track equipment that has been acquired with federal funds.

7.6. Accountability and Certifications

All fiscal transactions must be approved by the finance officer and by the program manager or other person who can attest that the expenditure is allowable and approved under the federal program.

The finance officer shall submit all required certifications and is authorized to sign them on behalf of the board.

8.7. Monitoring and Reporting Performance

The superintendent shall establish sufficient oversight of the operations of federally supported activities to assure compliance with applicable federal requirements and to ensure that program objectives established by the awarding agency are being achieved. Financial and performance reports, including reports of significant developments that arise between scheduled performance reporting dates, and final closeout reports, must be submitted as required by federal or state authorities.

B. AUDITS AND CORRECTIVE ACTION

1. An annual independent audit will be conducted as provided in policy 8310, Annual Independent Audit. The finance officer will prepare all financial statements, schedules of expenditures, and other documents required for the audit.
2. At the completion of the audit, the superintendent or designee shall prepare a summary schedule of prior audit findings and a corrective action plan to address prior any audit findings. The corrective action plan must identify the responsible party and the anticipated completion date for each corrective action to be taken. The superintendent shall present the plan to the board for approval.
3. Compliance deficiencies discovered internally through administrative supervision must be addressed promptly with the goal of improving processes to encourage future compliance and reduce audit findings.

C. TRAINING

All individuals responsible for the administration of a federal grant or award shall be provided sufficient training to carry out their duties in accordance with all applicable requirements for the federal grant or award.

D. OTHER APPLICABLE BOARD POLICIES

Other board policies provide additional controls over the administration of federal grants. These include, but are not necessarily limited to:

1. Educational programs policies (policies in the 3000 series)
2. School nutrition services policies (policies in the 6200 series)
3. Purchasing policies (policies in the 6400 series)
4. Equipment, materials, and supplies policies (policies in the 6500 series)
5. Personnel policies (policies in the 7000 series)
6. Fiscal management policies (policies in the 8000 series)
7. Policies protecting the confidentiality of personally identifiable information and other sensitive information (policies in the 4000, 6000, and 7000 series)

The board intends to comply with all requirements applicable to the use of federal funds. To the extent that any provision of a board policy is contrary to a federal law, regulation, term, or condition applicable to a federal award, employees must follow the applicable federal requirement.

E. REPORTING MISMANAGEMENT OF FEDERAL FUNDS

Any employee who reasonably believes that federal funds have been misused or that the school system is otherwise in violation of any requirement applicable to the receipt and use of federal funds should report the matter as provided in policy 7280, Prohibition Against Retaliation. No employee will be discharged, demoted, or otherwise discriminated against as a reprisal for disclosing to a person or body described in 41 U.S.C. 4712(a)(2) information that the employee reasonably believes is evidence of gross mismanagement of a federal contract or grant, a gross waste of federal funds, an abuse of authority relating to a federal contract or grant, a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety, or a violation of law, rule, or regulations related to a federal contract or grant.

Legal References: 41 U.S.C. 4712; 2 C.F.R. Part 180; 2. C.F.R. Part 200; G.S. 14-234; 133-32

Cross References: Prohibition Against Retaliation (policy 7280), Board Member Conflict of Interest (policy 2121), Ethics and the Purchasing Function (policy 6401/9100), Employee Conflict

of Interest (policy 7730), Fiscal Management Standards (policy 8300)

Other Resources: *Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government ("The Green Book")* (U.S. Government Accountability Office), available at—<http://www.gao.gov/greenbook>; <http://www.gao.gov/greenbook/overview>; *Internal Control Framework* (Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission (COSO)), executive summary, available at <https://www.coso.org/pages/ic.aspx> <https://www.coso.org/pages/ic.aspx> <https://www.coso.org/guidance-on-ic>; *Compliance Supplement, Part 6, Internal Control* (Office of Management and Budget), available at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/office-federal-financial-management/>

Adopted: July 11, 2016

Revised: February 11, 2019; January 10, 2022

FEDERAL GRANT ADMINISTRATION: PROCUREMENT PROCEDURES

Policy Code: 8305-R

This regulation applies to contracts for purchases of goods (apparatus, supplies, materials, and equipment), services, and construction or repair projects when federal funds are used, in whole or in part, to pay for the cost of the contract. Contracts funded with federal grant or loan funds will be procured in a manner that conforms with all applicable federal laws, policies, and standards, including those under the Uniform Guidance (2 C.F.R. Part 200), unless otherwise directed in writing by the federal agency or state pass-through agency that awarded the funds. In accordance with federal requirements, the school system will comply with the most restrictive procurement requirements of both federal and state law as well as local policies.

I. GENERAL PROCUREMENT STANDARDS

A. Decision to Procure

1. Necessity

The school system must avoid acquisition of unnecessary or duplicative items. The finance officer or designee should check with the federal surplus property agency prior to buying new items when feasible and less expensive. Consideration should be given to consolidating or breaking out procurements to obtain a more economical purchase. Where appropriate and allowed by law, the finance officer or designee shall perform an analysis of lease versus purchase alternatives, and any other appropriate analysis to determine the most economical approach.

2. Cost or Price Analysis

A cost analysis or price analysis will be performed in connection with every procurement action in excess of the current simplified acquisition threshold (\$250,000) including contract modifications. The school system will make an independent estimate before receiving bids or proposals, but the method and degree of analysis is dependent on the facts surrounding the particular procurement situation.

The finance officer or designee shall conduct the analysis. Analyses should include a review of prior contract costs, online reviews of similar products or services, and other market research. The analysis should include potential workforce impacts if the transaction will displace public sector employees.

For each contract in which there is no price competition, profit may be negotiated as a separate element of the price, if the finance officer or designee determines such negotiation to be in the best interest of the school system. To establish a fair and reasonable profit, consideration will

FEDERAL GRANT ADMINISTRATION: PROCUREMENT PROCEDURES

Policy Code: 8305-R

be given to the complexity of the work to be performed, the risk borne by the contractor, the contractor's investment, the amount of subcontracting, the quality of its record of past performance, and industry profit rates in the surrounding geographical area for similar work.

3. **Evasion Prohibited**

Procurements may not be divided to bring the cost under bid thresholds or to evade any requirements under this regulation or state or federal law.

4. **Recovered Materials**

School system personnel participating in development of specifications should, to the greatest extent practicable and consistent with law, specify products and services that can be reused, refurbished, or recycled; contain recycled content, are biobased, or are energy or water efficient; and are sustainable. This may include compostable items and other products and services that reduce the use of single-use plastics.

B. Competition

1. **Open Competition**

All procurement transactions will be conducted in a manner providing full and open competition. Some of the situations considered to be restrictive of competition, and thus prohibited, include but are not limited to: (1) placing unreasonable requirements on firms in order for them to qualify to do business; (2) requiring unnecessary experience and excessive bonding; (3) noncompetitive pricing practices between firms or between affiliated companies; (4) noncompetitive contracts to consultants that are on retainer contracts; (5) organizational conflicts of interest; (6) specifying only a "brand name" product instead of allowing "an equal" product to be offered and describing the performance or other relevant requirements of the procurement; and (7) any arbitrary action in the procurement process.

In addition, to ensure objective contractor performance and eliminate unfair competitive advantage, contractors that develop or draft specifications, requirements, statements of work, or invitations for bids or requests for proposals (RFPs) are excluded from competing for such procurements.

The finance officer or designee is responsible for reviewing documentation for each procurement transaction to ensure the school system is in compliance with these requirements.

FEDERAL GRANT ADMINISTRATION: PROCUREMENT PROCEDURES

Policy Code: 8305-R

2. Geographic Preference

Except as otherwise permitted by applicable bidding laws, geographic preferences will not be granted in the evaluation of bids or proposals, unless applicable federal statutes expressly mandate or encourage geographic preference.

When contracting for architectural and engineering services, however, a North Carolina resident firm will be granted a preference over a nonresident firm if (1) the home state of the nonresident firm has a practice of granting a preference to its resident firms over North Carolina resident firms and (2) granting the preference still allows for an appropriate number of qualified firms, given the nature and size of the project, to compete for the contract. Any preference granted to a resident firm will be in the same manner, on the same basis, and to the same extent as the preference granted by the nonresident firm's home state.

3. Historically Underutilized Businesses

The school system affirms the state's commitment to encourage the participation of historically underutilized businesses in purchasing functions. The school system will abide by all applicable local and state requirements regarding historically underutilized businesses as described in policies 6402, Participation by Historically Underutilized Businesses, and 9125, Participation by Minority Businesses. In addition, in accordance with the requirements of 2 CFR 200.321, the school system shall ensure that the school system considers the use of minority businesses, women's business enterprises, and labor surplus area firms. Federal regulation requires that veteran-owned businesses receive the same consideration. Such consideration consists of:

- placing qualified small and minority businesses and women's business enterprises on solicitation lists;
- assuring that small and minority businesses and women's business enterprises are solicited whenever they are potential sources;
- dividing total requirements, when economically feasible, into smaller tasks or quantities to permit maximum participation by small and minority businesses and women's business enterprises (however, the procurement may not be divided to bring the cost under bid thresholds or to evade any requirements under this regulation or state or federal law);
- establishing delivery schedules, where the requirement permits, which encourage participation by small and minority businesses and women's business enterprises;

FEDERAL GRANT ADMINISTRATION: PROCUREMENT PROCEDURES

Policy Code: 8305-R

- using the services and assistance, as appropriate, of such organizations as the Small Business Administration and the Minority Business Development Agency of the Department of Commerce; and
- requiring the prime contractor, if subcontracts are to be let, to take the affirmative steps listed in this subsection.

4. Prequalified Lists

Construction or repair projects may be subject to prequalification in accordance with policy 9115, Prequalification of Bidders for Construction Projects, only if there are enough qualified sources to ensure maximum open and free competition. Potential bidders will be permitted to prequalify during the solicitation period.

C. Bid Solicitations

1. Clear Specifications

The finance officer or designee is responsible for ensuring that the solicitation incorporates a clear and accurate description of the technical requirements for the materials, products, or services to be procured. The description must not contain features that unduly restrict competition. The description may include a statement of the qualitative nature of the material, product, or service to be procured and, when necessary, must set forth those minimum essential characteristics and standards to which it must conform if it is to satisfy its intended use. Detailed product specifications should be avoided if at all possible. When it is impractical or uneconomical to make a clear and accurate description of the technical requirements, a "brand name or equivalent" description may be used as a means to define the performance or other salient requirements of procurement. The specific features of the named brand which must be met by offers must be clearly stated.

Solicitations must also include all other requirements which bidders must fulfill and all other factors to be used in evaluating bids or proposals.

2. Fixed Price

Solicitations will state that bidders must submit bids on a fixed price basis and that the contract will be awarded on this basis, unless otherwise provided for in this regulation. Cost plus percentage of cost contracts are prohibited. Time and materials contracts are prohibited in most circumstances. Time and materials contracts will not be used unless no

FEDERAL GRANT ADMINISTRATION: PROCUREMENT PROCEDURES

Policy Code: 8305-R

other form of contract is suitable and the contract includes a "Not to Exceed" amount. A time and materials contract will not be awarded without express written permission of the federal agency or state pass-through agency that awarded the funds.

3. Notice of Federal Funding

All solicitations will acknowledge the use of federal funding for the contract and will inform prospective contractors that they must comply with all applicable federal laws, regulations, executive orders, and terms and conditions of the funding award. All prospective bidders or offerors must acknowledge that funding is contingent upon compliance with all terms and conditions of the funding award.

D. Contract Award

1. Responsible Contractors

All contracts will be awarded only to responsible contractors possessing the ability to perform successfully under the terms and conditions of the contract. Consideration will be given to such matters as contractor integrity, compliance with public policy, proper classification of employees under the Fair Labor Standards Act, record of past performance, and financial and technical resources.

No contract shall be awarded to a contractor who is suspended or debarred from eligibility for participation in federal assistance programs or activities or who is ineligible to contract under state law. The finance officer or designee shall require appropriate certifications from the contractor and conditions in the contract to ensure compliance with suspension/non-debarment requirements.

2. Authorization to Enter into Contracts

Unless otherwise prohibited by law, board policy, or this regulation, the superintendent or designee is authorized to (1) enter into contracts or approve amendments to contracts for materials, equipment, supplies, or services involving amounts up to \$90,000, (2) enter into construction or repair contracts involving amounts up to \$90,000, and (3) approve change orders involving additive or deductive sums up to \$30,000 so long as funding for the change order is available within the established project budget. All other contracts must be reviewed by the board attorney and approved in advance by the board. Pursuant to Policy 6420, the superintendent may establish circumstances under which principals may

FEDERAL GRANT ADMINISTRATION: PROCUREMENT PROCEDURES

Policy Code: 8305-R

enter into contracts involving amounts up to \$5,000.

3. Contract Requirements

All contracts paid for in whole or in part with federal funds must be in writing. The written contract must include or incorporate by reference the provisions required under 2 CFR 200.327 and as provided for under 2 CFR Part 200, Appendix II.

E. Contractor Oversight

The finance officer or designee shall maintain oversight to ensure that the contractor is performing in accordance with the contract terms, conditions, and specifications of the contract or purchase order.

F. Records

Records must be maintained by the finance officer or designee detailing the history of all procurements. The records must include the rationale for the method of procurement, selection of contract type, contractor selection or rejection, the basis for the contract price, financial records, supporting documentation, and statistical records. All documentation relating to the award of any contract must be made available to the granting agency upon request. Federal regulations require retention of these records for three years after date of submission of the final financial report to the federal agency; depending on the type of contract document, a longer retention period may be specified by state law.

II. SPECIFIC PROCUREMENT PROCEDURES

The finance officer or designee shall solicit bids in accordance with the requirements listed in this Section based on the type and cost of the contract. Prior to initiating any procurement activities, the finance officer or designee shall first thoroughly review all terms and conditions of the federal grant award and shall proceed only in accordance with such terms and conditions. If the finance officer or designee has any questions or concerns about the procurement process, he/she shall consult with the federal grantor agency and secure written confirmation of the applicability of the processes to be used.

A. Micro-Purchase Threshold

The Uniform Guidance currently sets a “micro-purchase” threshold of \$10,000, below which less-formal methods of procurement may be applied pursuant to 2 CFR 200.320(a)(1). On an annual basis, the finance officer is authorized to conduct the self-certification process for the

FEDERAL GRANT ADMINISTRATION: PROCUREMENT PROCEDURES

Policy Code: 8305-R

school system and provide to federal agencies documentation raising the micro-purchasing threshold to \$50,000. The self-certification shall be based on the district's internal controls, an evaluation of risk, and documented procurement procedures, including this regulation.

B. Contracts for the Purchase of Goods (Supplies, Apparatus & Materials)

1. Contracts Costing Less Than \$30,000

Contracts for purchases of goods (apparatus, supplies, materials, and equipment) that do not exceed the school system's current micro-purchase threshold will be procured using the Uniform Guidance "micro-purchase" procedure (2 CFR 200.320(a)(1)) and local standards as follows:

The contract may be awarded without soliciting bids if the price of the goods is considered to be fair and reasonable; however, the board encourages that at least three bids or quotes be obtained, when feasible. Price, quality, suitability for specified need, and timeliness of delivery and performance should all be considered. Contracts should be made under conditions that foster competition among potential vendors. To the extent practicable, purchases must be distributed equitably among qualified vendors.

2. Contracts Costing \$30,000 or More but Less Than \$90,000

Contracts for purchases of goods (apparatus, supplies, materials, and equipment) that cost \$30,000 or more but less than \$90,000 will be procured using the following minimum standards:

- a. Unless an exception listed in Article III of this regulation applies, written price or rate quotes will be obtained from at least three qualified bidders. (A federal grantor agency may issue guidance interpreting "adequate number," so the terms and conditions of the grant award documents must be checked to determine whether specific guidance has been issued.
- b. Quotes may be accepted via fax, e-mail, or the North Carolina E-Procurement system. Telephone quotes must be placed in writing before a final contract will be awarded. Written quotations must be on the vendor's letterhead or an official quotation form.
- c. Contracts will be awarded to the lowest responsive, responsible bidder on a fixed-price basis.

In lieu of the process described in this subsection, the school system may use competitive sealed bids as allowed for under informal bidding in policy 6430, Purchasing Requirements for Equipment, Materials, and

FEDERAL GRANT ADMINISTRATION: PROCUREMENT PROCEDURES

Policy Code: 8305-R

Supplies.

3. Contracts Costing \$90,000 or More

Unless an exception listed in Article III of this regulation applies, contracts for purchases of goods (apparatus, supplies, materials, and equipment) costing \$90,000 or more will be procured using a combination of the Uniform Guidance “sealed bid” procedure (2 CFR 200.320(b)(1)) and state formal bidding procedures (N.C. G.S. 143-129) as follows:

The invitation to bid must be formally advertised in a newspaper that has general circulation in the area and may also be advertised by electronic means. The advertisement must be posted at least seven full days before the date of the opening of bids, unless the board of education has specified a longer period. The advertisement must designate the date, time, and location of the public bid opening, indicate where specifications may be obtained, and reserve to the board the right to reject any or all bids if there is a sound documented reason. Complete specifications or purchase description must be made available to all bidders.

All bids must be submitted sealed. Bids will be opened at the public bid opening on the date and time and at the location noticed in the public advertisement. A minimum of three bids must be received in order to open the bids; if three bids are not received, readvertise the invitation to bid for seven (7) additional days, after which time fewer than three bids are acceptable to open.

The contract will be awarded to the lowest responsive, responsible bidder on a fixed-price basis. Any or all bids may be rejected if there is a sound documented reason.

4. Certain Information Technology Contracts

When the “sealed bid” procedure is not appropriate, contracts for information technology goods and services that would qualify for use of the RFP procedure pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-129.8 may be procured using a combination of the most restrictive requirements of the Uniform Guidance “competitive proposal” procedure (2 CFR 200.320(b)(2)) and N.C.G.S. 143-129.8. The finance officer or designee shall secure prior approval from the federal grantor agency before using this type of procedure.

A request for proposals (RFP) will be formally advertised in a newspaper that has general circulation in the area and may also be advertised by

FEDERAL GRANT ADMINISTRATION: PROCUREMENT PROCEDURES

Policy Code: 8305-R

electronic means. The advertisement must be posted at least seven full days, unless the board of education has specified a longer period. Proposals from an adequate number of qualified firms (a federal grantor agency may issue guidance interpreting “adequate number”) must be solicited. The RFP will identify the scope of work, general terms and conditions, specifications of the product needed by the school system, the application process, evaluation criteria, and the relative importance of each criteria (criteria weight).

All responses to the RFP will be considered to the maximum extent practical. The evaluation process will be described in the RFP; the process will typically include a list of factors to be evaluated by a committee of school administrators and other local officials as appropriate. Factors may include but need not be limited to compatibility with currently owned systems, ease of use, training and maintenance offered by the proposer, and quality of written proposal and presentation, if any. The finance officer or designee shall ensure that each RFP adequately describes the evaluation process. The winning firm will be the responsible firm with most advantageous proposal taking into account price and other factors identified in the RFP. The contract will be awarded on a fixed-price or cost-reimbursement basis.

5. **Contracts for Supplies and Food for the School Nutrition Program**

Contracts for supplies and food for the school nutrition program will be made in accordance with the school system’s procurement plan for the school nutrition program.

C. Service Contracts (other than contracts for architectural and engineering professional services)

1. **Contracts Costing Less Than \$50,000**

Service contracts (other than contracts for architectural and engineering professional services) costing less than \$50,000 will be procured using the Uniform Guidance “micro-purchase” procedure (2 CFR 200.320(a)(1)) and local standards as follows:

The contract may be awarded without soliciting pricing or bids if the price of the service is considered to be fair and reasonable. However, contracts must be made under conditions that foster competition among potential providers, when feasible. To the extent practicable, contracts must be distributed equitably among qualified providers.

FEDERAL GRANT ADMINISTRATION: PROCUREMENT PROCEDURES

Policy Code: 8305-R

2. Contracts Costing \$50,000 or More but No More Than \$250,000

Service contracts (other than contracts for architectural and engineering professional services) that cost more than \$50,000 but do not exceed the current simplified acquisition threshold (\$250,000) will be procured using the Uniform Guidance "small purchase" procedure (2 CFR 200.320(a)(2)) as follows:

The finance officer or designee shall obtain written price or rate quotes from an adequate number of qualified sources (at least 3 is recommended). A federal grantor agency might issue guidance interpreting "adequate number," so the finance officer or designee should review the terms and conditions of the grant award documents to confirm whether specific guidance has been issued.

Contracts will be awarded to the lowest responsive, responsible bidder on a fixed-price basis or not-to-exceed basis.

3. Contracts Costing More Than \$250,000

Service contracts (other than contracts for architectural and engineering professional services) that cost more than the current simplified acquisition threshold (\$250,000) will be procured using the Uniform Guidance "sealed bid" procedure (2 CFR 200.320(b)(1)), unless the "competitive proposal" process as described in subsection II.B.4, below, is followed.

The bid solicitation must be publicly advertised for a period of time sufficient to give bidders notice of the opportunity to submit bids. Formal advertisement in a newspaper is not required so long as other means of advertising will provide sufficient notice of the opportunity to bid. The advertisement must state the date, time, and location of the public bid opening, and indicate where specifications may be obtained. Complete specifications must be made available to all bidders.

All bids must be submitted sealed. Bids will be opened at the public bid opening on the date and time and at the location noticed in the public advertisement. A minimum of two bids must be received in order to open the bids. If two bids are not received, the contract should be readvertised after which at least one bid shall be sufficient to open.

The contract will be awarded to the lowest responsive, responsible bidder on a fixed-price basis. Any and all bids may be rejected only for sound documented reasons.

FEDERAL GRANT ADMINISTRATION: PROCUREMENT PROCEDURES

Policy Code: 8305-R

4. Certain Contracts

Certain service contracts (other than contracts for architectural and engineering professional services) may be procured using the Uniform Guidance “competitive proposal” procedure (2 CFR 200.320(b)(2)) when the “sealed bid” procedure is not appropriate for the particular type of service being sought. The finance officer or designee shall secure prior approval from the federal grantor agency before using the competitive proposal procedure.

Under the competitive proposal procedure, the request for proposals (RFP) will be publicly advertised. The RFP will identify evaluation criteria and the relative importance of each criteria (criteria weight). Formal advertisement in a newspaper is not required so long as the method of advertisement will solicit proposals from an adequate number of qualified firms (a federal grantor agency may issue guidance interpreting “adequate number”).

All responses to the RFP will be considered to the maximum extent practical. The winning firm will be the responsible firm with most advantageous proposal taking into account price and other factors identified in the RFP. The evaluation process will be described in the RFP; the process will typically include a list of factors to be evaluated by a committee of school administrators and other local officials as appropriate. Factors may include but need not be limited to compatibility with currently owned systems, ease of use, training and maintenance offered by the proposer, and quality of written proposal and presentation, if any. The Finance Officer or designee shall ensure that each RFP adequately describes the evaluation process. The contract will be awarded on a fixed-price or cost-reimbursement basis.

D. Construction and Repair Contracts

1. Contracts Costing Less Than \$30,000

Construction and repair contracts that do not exceed the school system’s current micro-purchase threshold will be procured using the Uniform Guidance “micro-purchase” procedure (2 CFR 200.320(a)(1)) and local standards, as follows:

Soliciting bids is recommended, but not required, if the price of the goods or services is considered to be fair and reasonable. To the extent practicable, purchases must be distributed equitably among qualified

FEDERAL GRANT ADMINISTRATION: PROCUREMENT PROCEDURES

Policy Code: 8305-R

suppliers.

2. Contracts Costing \$30,000 or More but Less Than \$250,000

Construction and repair contracts that cost more than \$30,000 but do not exceed the current simplified acquisition threshold (\$250,000) will be procured using the Uniform Guidance "small purchase" procedure (2 CFR 200.320(a)(2)) as follows:

The finance officer or designee shall obtain written price or rate quotes from an adequate number of qualified sources. A federal grantor agency might issue guidance interpreting "adequate number," so the finance officer or designee should review the terms and conditions of the grant award documents to confirm whether specific guidance has been issued. The quotes may be solicited and submitted via telephone, fax, or email. Telephone quotes must immediately be placed in writing. Written quotations must be on the contractor's letterhead or an official quotation form.

Contracts will be awarded to the lowest responsive, responsible bidder on a fixed-price basis or not-to-exceed basis.

3. Contracts Costing More Than \$250,000

Construction and repair contracts that cost more than the current simplified acquisition threshold (\$250,000) will be procured using the Uniform Guidance "sealed bid" procedure (2 CFR 200.320(b)(1)) and state formal bidding procedures (N.C.G.S. 143-129) as follows:

The invitation to bid must be formally advertised in a newspaper that has general circulation in the area and may also be advertised by electronic means. The advertisement must be posted at least seven full days, unless the board of education has specified a longer period. The advertisement must state the date, time, and location of the public bid opening, and indicate where specifications may be obtained. Complete specifications must be made available to all bidders.

All bids must be submitted sealed. A 5% bid bond is required of all bidders. Bids will be opened at the public bid opening on the date and time and at the location noticed in the public advertisement. A minimum of three bids must be received in order to open the bids.

The contract will be awarded to the lowest responsive, responsible bidder on a fixed-price basis. Any and all bids may be rejected only for sound

FEDERAL GRANT ADMINISTRATION: PROCUREMENT PROCEDURES

Policy Code: 8305-R

documented reasons. Performance and payment bonds of 100% of the contract price are required of the winning bidder.

4. **Additional Requirements for Contracts Costing \$300,000 or More**

For construction or repair contracts involving a building costing \$300,000 or more, separate specifications will be drawn for the HVAC, electrical, plumbing, and general construction work as required under N.C. G.S. 143-128(a). In addition, the project will be bid using a statutorily authorized bidding method as required under N.C. G.S. 143-128(a1).

E. Contracts for Architectural and Engineering Services

1. **Contracts Costing No More Than \$250,000**

All contracts for architectural and engineering services that do not exceed the current simplified acquisition threshold (\$250,000), including those under \$50,000, will be procured using the selection process described in subsection B.1 of policy 9110, Use and Selection of Architects, Engineers, Surveyors, and Construction Managers At Risk. Approval should be secured from the grantor agency before using this process. The Construction Manager at Risk and Design-Build delivery methods are generally not permitted for federally funded projects. The contract must be in writing and include applicable Uniform Guidance contract provisions.

2. **Contracts Costing Over \$250,000**

Contracts for architectural and engineering services that cost more than the current simplified acquisition threshold (\$250,000) will be procured using the Uniform Guidance "competitive proposal" procedure (2 CFR 200.320(b)(2)).

A request for qualifications (RFQ) will be publicly advertised to solicit qualifications from qualified firms. Formal advertisement in a newspaper is not required. Price will not be solicited in the RFQ. The RFQ will identify the evaluation criteria and relative importance of each criteria (criteria weight). Proposals must be solicited from an adequate number of qualified sources (a federal grantor agency may issue guidance interpreting "adequate number").

All responses to the RFQ will be considered to the maximum extent practical. Qualifications of respondents will be evaluated to rank

FEDERAL GRANT ADMINISTRATION: PROCUREMENT PROCEDURES

Policy Code: 8305-R

respondents and select the best qualified firm. The evaluation process will be described in the RFQ; the process will typically include a list of factors to be evaluated by a committee of school administrators and other local officials as appropriate. Factors may include but need not be limited to similar projects successfully completed, school design experience, and quality of written proposal and presentation, if any. The finance officer or designee shall ensure that each RFQ adequately describes the evaluation process. Price will not be a factor in the selection of the most qualified firm.

Once the most qualified firm is selected, fair and reasonable compensation will be negotiated. If negotiations with the most qualified firm are not successful, negotiations will be repeated with the second-best qualified firm. The contract will be awarded to the best qualified firm with whom fair and reasonable compensation is successfully negotiated.

III. EXCEPTIONS

Non-competitive contracts are allowed only under the following conditions and with the written approval of the federal agency or state pass-through agency that awarded the federal funds.

A. Sole Source

A contract may be awarded without competitive bidding when the item is available from only one source. The finance officer or designee shall document the justification for and lack of available competition for the item. A sole source contract must be approved by the board.

B. Public Exigency

A contract may be awarded without competitive bidding when there is a public exigency. A public exigency exists when there is an imminent or actual threat to public health, safety, and welfare, and the need for the item will not permit the delay resulting from competitive bidding.

C. Inadequate Competition

A contract may be awarded without competitive bidding when competition is determined to be inadequate after attempts to solicit bids from a number of sources as required under this regulation does not result in a qualified winning bidder.

D. Federal Contract

**FEDERAL GRANT ADMINISTRATION:
PROCUREMENT PROCEDURES**

Policy Code: 8305-R

A contract may be awarded without competitive bidding when the purchase is made from a federal contract available on the U.S. General Services Administration schedules of contracts.

E. Awarding Agency Approval

A contract may be awarded without competitive bidding with the express written authorization of the federal agency or state pass-through agency that awarded the federal funds so long as awarding the contract without competition is consistent with state law.

Issued by NCSBA: June 29, 2018

Issued by the Superintendent:

Reviewed:

Revised:

USE AND SELECTION OF ARCHITECTS, ENGINEERS, SURVEYORS, AND CONSTRUCTION MANAGERS AT RISK

Policy Code:

9110

A. USE OF ARCHITECTS AND/OR ENGINEERS

To the extent required by North Carolina General Statute 133-1.1, a registered architect or registered engineer, or both, will be used to design and inspect school system buildings being repaired or constructed. In addition, architects and/or engineers may be used for services, such as:

1. preparing feasibility studies for additions, alterations, or renovations of existing facilities;
2. providing consulting services on technical matters;
3. providing services related to long-range planning or facility design; and
4. assisting in the preparation and submission of any documents requested by other governmental agencies.

B. SELECTION PROCESS FOR ARCHITECTURAL, ENGINEERING, SURVEYING, AND CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT AT RISK SERVICES

Except as otherwise permitted under G.S. 115C-521(g), the procurement of architectural, engineering, surveying, or construction management at risk services for facility design, construction, and related services will be accomplished in accordance with the following requirements. Any purchase of services using federal funds must also be made in accordance with the terms and conditions of the federal award and all applicable requirements of federal law and regulation, including the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards ("Uniform Guidance") issued by the U.S. Office of Budget and Management. (See also policy 8305, Federal Grant Administration.)

1. Projects with an Estimated Professional Fee of \$50,000 or More
 - a. The superintendent shall solicit proposals from service providers for selection based upon qualifications using the following or similar criteria:
 - 1) training and experience of the service provider, especially in school-related projects;
 - 2) planning ability and promptness;
 - 3) experience in specification writing, including reputation for

-
-
- accuracy and sufficiency of detail;
 - 4) experience in the construction of K-12 buildings;
 - 5) reputation for quality of design and construction in appearance and utility;
 - 6) history of thorough inspections and follow-through with jobs;
 - 7) timely completion of projects within the established budgets;
 - 8) relationships with contractors and designers; and
 - 9) any other factors the superintendent deems relevant.
- b. The superintendent shall provide a list of qualified service providers to the board for consideration and selection unless the estimated professional fee for the project is within the superintendent's authority to contract as provided in policy 6420, Contracts with the Board. The list shall not include any company whose name appears on the state treasurer's lists of restricted companies, developed in accordance with G.S. 147, art. 6E or art. 6G.
 - c. A North Carolina resident firm will be granted a preference over a nonresident firm if the home state of the nonresident firm has a practice of granting a preference to its resident firms over North Carolina resident firms. Any preference granted to a resident firm will be in the same manner, on the same basis, and to the same extent as the preference granted by the nonresident firm's home state. The solicitation documents must require that nonresident firms disclose and describe any construction contract preferences granted by the firm's home state.
 - d. Fees will be negotiated with the selected firm. If a fair and reasonable fee cannot be agreed upon, the board or superintendent will select the next best qualified firm and negotiate fees. The contract with the firm must be reviewed by the board attorney and meet all applicable laws and board policies. The contract must have board approval unless the board has delegated this authority to the superintendent in policy 6420.
2. Projects with an Estimated Professional Fee of Less than \$50,000
- a. After certifying in writing that the project is exempt from the formal procedures in this policy, the superintendent shall proceed pursuant to this subsection. The process established in subsection B.1 is not required unless otherwise directed by the board or superintendent for a specific project.
 - b. When the estimated professional fee for a project is estimated to be **within**

the superintendent's authority to contract on behalf of the board as provided in policy 6420, Contracts with the Board, the superintendent shall have authority to select the firm. Board approval of the firm is not required. The contract with the firm must meet all applicable laws and board policies and must be consistent with G.S. 147, art. 6E and art. 6G.

- c. When the professional fee is estimated to **exceed** the superintendent's authority to contract on behalf of the board as provided in policy 6420, Contracts with the Board, the superintendent shall recommend one or more firms to the board for consideration. The board will approve the selection of the firm. The contract with the firm must be reviewed by the board attorney, be approved by the board, meet all applicable laws and board policies, and be consistent with G.S. 147, art. 6E and art. 6G.

Legal References: 2 C.F.R. 200.317-200.327; G.S. 115C-521(g); 133, arts. 1 and 3; 143-64.31, - 64.32; 147 art. 6E, art. 6G

Cross References: Contracts with the Board (policy 6420), Federal Grant Administration (policy 8305), Site Selection (policy 9010), Facility Design (policy 9020)

Adopted:

CLASSIFIED STAFF

BUS DRIVING REQUIREMENTS

Policy Code:

6301

The board recognizes that providing school bus services for students is a fundamental responsibility of a public school system. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the Watauga County Schools system is able to meet this responsibility even in the absence of sufficient personnel hired solely as bus drivers. Furthermore, the Board recognizes that requiring licensed, certified staff to drive buses on a routine basis negatively impacts the ability of the system to address educational and administration requirements critical to providing students with a sound basic education.-

Consistent with that purpose, all full-time school-based classified staff medically qualified to drive a school bus will have the obligation to do so, as specified in this policy. ~~for the first fifteen years of employment with the Watauga County Schools.~~ However, the Board recognizes that, as of the 2024-25 school year, School-based classified personnel that have fulfilled this obligation will for the first fifteen years of employment with Watauga County Schools currently have the option to continue driving or be excused from these responsibilities. Therefore, any such employee who fulfills their driving obligation as of June 30, 2025 is hereby grandfathered and retains the option to choose whether to drive a bus.-

All school-based classified staff with the exception of 1) school secretaries, 2) tutors, 3) cafeteria managers, 4)and extended learning center staff, 5) positions designated as hard to fill by the Superintendent or designee and 6) those age 65 or over, and those employed on or before August 1, 1994, are required to obtain and maintain a CDL Driver's License and any local certification requirementsSchool Bus Driver pocket card as a condition of employment. In order to continue employment, required school site-based classified employees who are employed without the required CDL must enroll in the next available bus driver training class and complete all requirements to obtain the required license. The employment of school-based classified staff that do not enroll in the next available class and or do not complete all the requirements for the CDL license will be immediately terminated. ~~unless there is a valid reason approved by the principal.~~

Required school-based classified staff that have their CDL License or their School Bus Drivers pocket card revoked or fail to have it renewed after the school year begins will be given sixty (60) calendar days until the beginning of the next school year to obtain a clear the license or agree to a plan to obtain a clear license with the Director of Human Resources, and or have the pocket card renewed. Required school-based classified staff who fail to re-obtain the license and or have the pocket card renewed by the

~~beginning of the next school year will not be employed for that school year. shall be terminated unless they qualify for another exception under this policy.~~

Required school site-based classified staff with a temporary medical condition diagnosed by a licensed physician which medically prevents the employee from driving a school bus with reasonable accommodation will be given until the beginning of the next school year to resolve their medical condition. In the event that a required school-based classified employee becomes incapable of driving a school bus with reasonable accommodation due to a permanent medical condition diagnosed by a licensed physician, the employee will be excused from driving responsibilities unless such action would pose an undue burden to the Watauga County Schools. "Reasonable accommodation" under this policy does not include providing a substitute bus driver for an indefinite period of time. "Undue burden" under this policy includes the existence of a bus driver shortage by which the system is unable to hire a sufficient number of full-time bus drivers, and as a result, licensed school staff are required to drive buses in order to meet the system's transportation obligations to students. The Board recognizes that routine bus driving is not an appropriate duty for licensed staff who have other significant job responsibilities pursuant to law and policy.-

The "Physician Certification of Disability" form is to be submitted to the Human Resources Director ~~no later than July 1 of each year~~ by any employee who believes that they are unable to drive a school bus due to a temporary or permanent medical condition. The Human Resources Director reserves the right to request a second physician evaluation at the Board of Education's expense. All claims of disability will be reviewed on an annual basis or more frequently at the discretion of the Human Resources Director with regards to both reasonable accommodation and undue burden.

The board intends that students and employees benefit from technology resources while remaining within the bounds of safe, legal, and responsible use. Accordingly, the board establishes this policy to govern student and employee use of any school system technological resources owned, leased, maintained, or otherwise controlled by the school system. This policy applies regardless of whether such use occurs on or off school system property, and it applies to all school system technological resources, including but not limited to computer networks and connections, the resources, tools, and learning environments made available by or on the networks, and all devices that connect to those networks.

A. EXPECTATIONS FOR USE OF SCHOOL TECHNOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The use of school system technological resources, including access to the Internet, is expected to be exercised in an appropriate and responsible manner. Individual users of the school system's technological resources are responsible for their behavior and communications when using those resources. Responsible use of school system technological resources is use that is ethical, respectful, academically honest, and supportive of student learning. Each user has the responsibility to respect others in the school community and on the Internet. Users are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette.

General student and employee behavior standards, including those prescribed in applicable board policies, the Code of Student Conduct, and other regulations and school rules, apply to use of school technological resources, including access to the Internet.

In addition, anyone who uses school system computers or electronic devices, accesses the school's electronic storage or network, or connects to the Internet using school system-provided access must comply with the additional rules for responsible use listed in Section B below. These rules are intended to clarify expectations for conduct but should not be construed as all-inclusive.

All students must be trained about appropriate online behavior as provided in policy 3226/4205, Internet Safety.

~~Failure to adhere to the requirements of this policy will result in disciplinary action, including revocation of user privileges. Willful misuse may result in criminal prosecution under applicable state and federal law, disciplinary action for students, and/or adverse personnel action for employees.~~

B. RULES FOR USE OF SCHOOL TECHNOLOGICAL RESOURCES

1. School system technological resources are provided for school-related purposes only. Acceptable uses of such technological resources are limited to responsible, efficient, and legal activities that support the educational objectives of the Watauga

County Schools. Use of school system technological resources for any non-educational purposes is prohibited, including but not limited to use for commercial gain or profit, for charitable purposes other than school fund-raising, or for amusement or entertainment. Student personal use of school system technological resources for amusement or entertainment is also prohibited unless approved for special situations by the teacher or school administrator. Because some incidental and occasional personal use by employees is inevitable, the board permits infrequent and brief personal use by employees so long as it does not interfere with school system business and is not otherwise prohibited by board policy or procedure.

2. Unless authorized by law to do so, users may not make copies of software purchased by the school system. Software purchased by the school system may be copied for personal use only when expressly permitted by the terms of a specific software licensing agreement.
3. Users must comply with all applicable laws, board policies, administrative regulations, and school standards and rules, including those relating to copyrights and trademarks, confidential information, and public records. Plagiarism of Internet resources will be treated in the same manner as any other incidents of plagiarism, as stated in the Code of Student Conduct.
4. Users must follow any software, application, or subscription services terms and conditions of use.
5. No user of technological resources, including a person sending or receiving electronic communications, may engage in creating, intentionally viewing, accessing, downloading, storing, printing, or transmitting images, graphics (including still or moving pictures), sound files, text files, documents, messages, or other material that is obscene, defamatory, profane, pornographic, harassing, abusive, or considered to be harmful to minors.
6. Users must not circumvent fire walls. The use of anonymous proxies to circumvent content filtering is prohibited.
7. Users may not install or use any Internet-based file sharing program designed to facilitate sharing of copyrighted material.
8. Users of technological resources may not send electronic communications fraudulently (i.e., by misrepresenting the identity of the sender).
9. Users must respect the privacy of others.
 - a. Students must not reveal any personally identifying, private, or confidential information about themselves or fellow students when using email, chat rooms, blogs, or other forms of electronic communication. Such

information includes, for example, a person's home address or telephone number, credit or checking account information, or social security number. For further information regarding what constitutes personal identifying information, see policy 4705/7825, Confidentiality of Personal Identifying Information.

- b. School employees may disclose student directory information (such as name, photograph, or digital image) on school system websites and web pages unless parents/guardians/eligible students have opted out of the release of directory information pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and in accordance with Policy 4700, Student Records.
 - c. Users may not forward or post personal communications without the author's prior consent.
 - d. Students may not use school system technological resources to capture audio, video, or still pictures of other students and/or employees in which such individuals can be personally identified, nor share such media in any way, without consent of the students and/or employees and the principal or designee. An exception will be made for settings where students and staff cannot be identified beyond the context of a sports performance or other public event or when otherwise approved by the principal.
- 10. Users may not intentionally or negligently damage computers, computer systems, electronic devices, software, computer networks, or data of any user connected to school system technological resources. Users may not knowingly or negligently transmit computer viruses or self-replicating messages or deliberately try to degrade or disrupt system performance, including by streaming audio or video for non-instructional purposes. Users may not disable antivirus programs installed on school system-owned or issued devices.
 - 11. Users may not create or introduce games, network communications programs, or any foreign program, executable program, or software onto any school system computer, electronic device, or network without the express written permission of the technology director or designee. All school purchases of games and other software addressed by this provision, regardless of the funding source, must be approved in advance by the technology director or designee.
 - 12. Users are prohibited from engaging in unauthorized or unlawful activities, such as "hacking" or using the computer network to gain or attempt to gain unauthorized or unlawful access to other computers, computer systems, or accounts.
 - 13. Users are prohibited from using another individual's ID or password for any technological resource or account without permission from the individual and from the teacher or other school official. Sharing of an individual's ID or password is

strongly discouraged.

14. Users may not read, alter, change, block, execute, or delete files or communications belonging to another user without the owner's express prior permission.
15. Employees shall not use passwords or user IDs for any data system (e.g., the state student information and instructional improvement system applications, time-keeping software, etc.) for an unauthorized or improper purpose.
16. If a user identifies or encounters an instance of unauthorized access or another security concern, he or she must immediately notify a teacher, school system administrator, or the technology director or designee. Users must not share the problem with other users. Any user identified as a security risk will be denied access.
17. It is the user's responsibility to back up data and other important files.
18. Employees shall make reasonable efforts to supervise students' use of the Internet during instructional time.
19. Views may be expressed on the Internet or other technological resources as representing the view of the school system or part of the school system only with prior approval by the superintendent or designee.
20. Use of social media during instructional hours, and at any time using school technology, is prohibited except when approved and monitored by a teacher or other school official. All school personnel will comply with policy 7335 Employee Use of Social Media.
21. Users who are issued school system-owned and -maintained devices for home use (such as laptops, Chromebooks, etc.) must adhere to any other reasonable rules or guidelines issued by the superintendent or technology director for the use of such devices.

Exceptions to these rules may be made for employees whose activities are necessary to carry out their job responsibilities and are authorized by law.

C. RESTRICTED MATERIAL ON THE INTERNET

The Internet and electronic communications offer fluid environments in which students may access or be exposed to materials and information from diverse and rapidly changing sources, including some that may be harmful to students. The board recognizes that it is impossible to predict with certainty what information on the Internet students may access or obtain. Nevertheless school system personnel shall take reasonable precautions to prevent students from accessing material and information that is obscene, pornographic, or

otherwise harmful to minors, including violence, nudity, or graphic language that does not serve a legitimate pedagogical purpose. The superintendent shall ensure that technology protection measures are used as provided in policy 3226/4205, Internet Safety, and are disabled or minimized only when permitted by law and board policy. The board is not responsible for the content accessed by using a cellular network to connect a personal device to the Internet.

D. PRIVACY

Students, employees, visitors, and other users have no expectation or right of privacy in anything they create, store, send, delete, receive, or display when using the school system's network, devices, Internet access, email system, or other technological resources owned or issued by the school system, whether the resources are used at school or elsewhere, and even if the use is for personal purposes. Users should not assume that files or communications created, transmitted, or displayed using school system technological resources or stored on servers the storage mediums of individual devices, or on school managed cloud services will be private. Under certain circumstances, school officials may be required to disclose such electronic information to law enforcement or other third parties, for example, as a response to a document production request in a lawsuit against the board, in response to a public records request, or as evidence of illegal activity in a criminal investigation.

School system personnel shall monitor online activities of individuals who access the Internet via a school-owned device. The school system may, without notice, (1) monitor, track, and/or log network access, communications, and use; (2) monitor and allocate files server space; and (3) access, review, copy, store, delete, or disclose the content of all user files, regardless of medium, the content of electronic mailboxes issued by the school system, and system outputs, such as printouts, at any time for any lawful purpose. Such purposes may include, but are not limited to, maintaining system integrity, security, or functionality, ensuring compliance with board policy and applicable laws and regulations, protecting the school system from liability, and complying with public records requests.

By using the school system's network, Internet access, electronic devices, email system, devices, or other technological resources, individuals consent to have that use monitored by authorized school system personnel as described in this policy.

E. USE OF PERSONAL TECHNOLOGY ON SCHOOL SYSTEM PROPERTY

Users may not use private WiFi hotspots or other personal technology on campus to access the Internet outside the school system's wireless network. Personal technology devices (including, but not limited to smart phones, tablets, laptops, etc.) may be used on campus only in accordance with written guidelines approved by the superintendent or designee. Students shall not use such devices to take and/or send pictures of other students, faculty or staff by email or other electronic means unless instructed to do so by a Watauga County Schools employee. Personal technology devices may be used in classrooms only for instructional purposes under the direction of Watauga County Schools faculty. If these

devices are used for cheating, the responsible student(s) will be dealt with in accordance to Board policies on student behavior (4300 series). Students' personal devices are also governed by policy 4318, Use of Wireless Communication Devices. Use of personal technology devices is also subject to any rules established by the superintendent under a bring your own device plan authorized by Section C of policy 3220, Technology in the Educational Program, and for employees, policy 3228/7323, Use of Personal Technology to Conduct School Business. The school system assumes no responsibility for personal technology devices brought to school.

F. PERSONAL WEBSITES

The superintendent may use any means available to request the removal of personal websites that substantially disrupt the school environment or that utilize school system or individual school names, logos, or trademarks without permission.

1. Students

Though school personnel generally do not monitor students' Internet activity conducted on non-school system devices during non-school hours, when the student's online behavior has a direct and immediate effect on school safety or maintaining order and discipline in the schools, the student may be disciplined in accordance with board policy to the extent consistent with law (see the student behavior policies in the 4300 series and policy 4021/7230).

2. Employees

Employees' personal websites are subject to policy 7335, Employee Use of Social Media. Employees may not use their personal websites to communicate with students, as prohibited by policy 7335 and policy 4040/7310, Staff-Student Relations.

3. Volunteers

Volunteers are to maintain appropriate relationships with students at all times. Volunteers are encouraged to block students from viewing personal information on volunteer personal websites or online networking profiles in order to prevent the possibility that students could view materials that are not age-appropriate. An individual volunteer's relationship with the school system may be terminated if the volunteer engages in inappropriate online interaction with students.

G. USE AGREEMENTS

All students, parents, and employees will be informed annually of the information in this policy and in any applicable generative artificial intelligence (AI) guidelines developed in accordance with policy 3220, Technology in the Educational Program. Prior to using school system technological resources, students and employees must agree to comply with the requirements of this policy and the generative AI guidelines and consent to the school

system's use of monitoring systems to monitor and detect inappropriate use of technological resources. In addition, the student's parent must consent to the student accessing the Internet and to the school system monitoring the student's Internet activity and electronic mailbox issued by the school system and must sign a copy of the generative AI guidelines as part of the district's Responsible Use Agreement.

H. CONSEQUENCES

Based on the nature and severity of the offense and the circumstances surrounding the incident, violations of this policy will result in appropriate remedial actions or discipline up to and including long-term suspension for students and dismissal for employees and may result in revocation of user privileges. Willful misuse may also result in criminal prosecution under applicable state and federal law.

Legal References: U.S. Const. amend. I; Children's Internet Protection Act, 47 U.S.C. 254(h)(5); Electronic Communications Privacy Act, 18 U.S.C. 2510-2522; Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. 1232g; 17 U.S.C. 101 *et seq.*; 20 U.S.C. 7131; G.S. 115C-325(e) (applicable to career status teachers), -325.4 (applicable to non-career status teachers); 143-805

Cross References: Curriculum and Instructional Guides (policy 3115), Technology in the Educational Program (policy 3220), Internet Safety (policy 3226/4205), Web Page Development (policy 3227/7322), Use of Personal Technology to Conduct School Business (policy 3228/7323), Copyright Compliance (policy 3230/7330), Student Behavior Policies (all policies in the 4300 series), Student Records (policy 4700), Confidentiality of Personal Identifying Information (policy 4705/7825), Public Records – Retention, Release, and Disposition (policy 5070/7350), Use of Equipment, Materials, and Supplies (policy 6520), Network Security (policy 6524), Staff Responsibilities (policy 7300), Employee Use of Social Media (policy 7335)

Other Resources: North Carolina Generative AI Implementation Recommendations and Considerations for PK-13 Public Schools, available at https://go.ncdpi.gov/AI_Guidelines

Adopted: June 8, 2015

Revised: November 14, 2016; January 13, 2020; January 10, 2022; July 11, 2024; DATE

Replaces: Policy 4.02.50, Responsible Use for Access to Networked Information Resources

Consistent with policy 3225/4312/7320, Technology Responsible Use, and in an effort to further the school system's objectives, the Watauga County Board of Education (the "board") encourages the use of the Internet as a means of providing accessible, accurate, and timely information for employees, students, parents, and others in the larger community. The Internet affords the school system the opportunity to communicate with its communities by posting pertinent system and school information online. The school system has established its system website online at www.wataugaschools.org and this is the only official website of the school system. In addition to this website, individual schools and departments may create system-related school websites. This policy provides the standards that must be followed for development of all system-related websites. Failure to comply with this policy may result in the removal of a web page or website from the Internet.

A. SYSTEM-RELATED WEBSITE

A "system-related website" is any Internet website that is established in one of the following ways:

1. by school system employees or students on behalf of the system;
2. by any school within the system;
3. by any school-sponsored club or organization within the system; or
4. by students as part of an educational assignment.

Only those websites that are created pursuant to this policy are considered system-related websites. The board does not endorse and is not responsible for websites created by employees, students, or others outside of the standards and guidelines of this policy. Students or employees who create personal websites that result in a substantial and material disruption to the school environment may be subject to disciplinary action.

B. STANDARDS FOR WEB PAGE DEVELOPMENT

1. Non-Public or Closed Forums for Expression

All system-related websites are "non-public" or "closed" forums for expression. This means that the system has control over information on such websites and is not required to allow students, teachers, or others to place material on system-related websites. The purpose of system-related websites is to disseminate curriculum-related information; to present the public with information about the system, its schools, and its programs; and to provide the community with each school or department's mission, contact information, activities, organizational format, and instructional program. System-related websites are analogous to

newsletters from the administration or the individual school. System-related websites are not analogous to a student newspaper or a non-school publication.

2. Administration and Editorial Control

All employees responsible for creating, developing, maintaining, editing, or approving a system-related website shall act legally, responsibly, and ethically in providing educational resources and information to support the mission and curriculum of the school system. Such persons shall abide by the generally accepted rules of website etiquette, board policy, and regulations established by the superintendent.

a. Superintendent Final Authority

The superintendent or designee may delegate authority to place information on a system-related website; however, the superintendent has the final authority to approve or disapprove any information in whatever form on any such system-related websites.

b. School System Official Website

The superintendent or designee has editorial control and responsibility for the content of the school system official website. The superintendent shall appoint a staff member to serve as the web manager/editor of the system website.

c. Individual School Websites

Each school will be provided with the resources and support to publish its own website. All system-related websites will be housed on the system web server or designated external host. Each principal has editorial control and responsibility for the content of his or her individual school's official website, subject to review of the superintendent or designee. The principal may appoint a staff member to serve as the web manager of the school's website and a website committee to advise the web manager and principal regarding the content of the school's website. Individual school websites must comply with the additional guidelines provided below.

d. Teacher and Student Websites

Each teacher has editorial control over and responsibility for the content of his or her official website and for the content of his or her students' authorized websites, subject to review by the principal, the superintendent, and the board. With the knowledge and written consent of a student's parent or guardian, a teacher may allow a student to create a website within or linked from a school's or teacher's website only for the following

instructional purposes: (1) to teach a student how to create or maintain a website or (2) to facilitate a student's work on school assignments or research projects. No student pages may be posted or made accessible to the general public until approved by the principal or designee.

e. Personal Websites

The school system is not responsible for personal websites or web pages created or maintained by students, employees, parents, groups, or organizations. Personal websites or web pages are not considered system-related websites or web pages and are not covered by the provisions of this policy. (For further information regarding personal websites, see policy 7335, Employee Use of Social Media, and policy 3225/4312/7320, Technology Responsible Use.)

The superintendent may use any means available to request the removal of personal websites or web pages that substantially disrupt the school environment or that utilize school system or individual school names, logos, or trademarks without permission.

3. Website Appearance and Evaluation

Web page content must be kept current and be maintained regularly. All system-related websites must include the name of the web page author, the date produced or revised, and the e-mail address of the author. The superintendent or designee (for the official system website) and the principal or designee (for individual school websites) must review, proof, and evaluate all system-related websites on at least a quarterly basis.

4. Copyright Laws

No information or graphics may be posted on websites in violation of any copyright laws or policy 3230/7330, Copyright Compliance. Copyright permission must be obtained for the use of any copyrighted material unless use is permitted as "fair use" under federal law. The superintendent or designee and each principal or designee is responsible for maintaining copies of permission granted for the use of copyrighted material.

5. Links

a. Internal Links

Each page of a system-related website must include a reference and hyperlink to the school system official website home page. In addition, all system-related websites must include a link to this policy and to policy 3225/4312/7320, Technology Responsible Use.

b. External Links

The superintendent and designee have editorial control over and responsibility for the linking of a system-related website to other sites on the Internet that are appropriate to the mission of the school system. Links to external sites (including externally hosted teacher classroom sites) must be approved by the principal or designee and are subject to written guidelines approved by the superintendent or designee. If required, web managers must obtain permission from external websites before links are established from any system-related website to external websites. To the extent possible, school personnel shall determine the extent to which a secondary site is linked to other sites on the Internet and whether such sites are appropriate for access through the school system websites. Web managers shall periodically check external links for accuracy and appropriateness of content. School employees must report any inappropriate links to the web manager.

Since the school system cannot control the content of other sites on the Internet and their linkages, the following disclaimer statement must be inserted in a prominent position on the official system website, on each school's web page and on other system-related websites that contain links to other websites or web pages that are not system-related websites:

The school system retains control over what links will be placed on system-related websites; however, the linked sites themselves are not under the control of the school system, its agents, or its employees. The school system is not responsible for the contents of any linked site, any link contained in a linked site, or any changes or updates to such sites. The school system provides links as a convenience, and the inclusion of any link does not imply endorsement of the site by the school system. The school system reserves the right to remove or restrict any links.

c. Links to Personal Pages

School websites or web pages may contain links to personal web pages of students or employees or lists of personal web pages only when such pages are purely for instructional use, and subject to written guidelines approved by the principal and/or the superintendent or designee.

6. Behavior Standards

When using the Internet, employees and students are responsible for understanding and complying with board policies and administrative regulations, including policy 3225/4312/7320, Technology Responsible Use; student behavior policies in the

4300 series; and policy 7300, Staff Responsibilities.

7. Accessibility of Website and Web Content

The web manager/editor, in consultation with the technology director, shall ensure that the school system website and web content meets required standards to ensure accessibility for persons with disabilities.

C. GUIDELINES FOR INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL WEBSITES

Each school may promote itself by publishing an official school web page on the Internet only via the official school system website. In addition to the standards above, the following standards apply to individual school websites.

1. The content of school web pages must be approved by the school principal prior to uploading.
2. The safety of students and employees must be considered when constructing school web pages. To protect the safety of students and employees, the following precautions must be taken:
 - a. home addresses or telephone numbers will not be listed;
 - b. student e-mail addresses will not be listed;
 - c. photographs of students and student work will be used only with appropriate parental permission and/or as approved for release as directory information under policy 4700, Student Records, and will include only the student's name, class or grade level, and information directly related to the photograph or student work, such as awards given or the activity or project depicted.

The principal or designee is responsible for maintaining records of permission granted for the release of information. The principal should implement other safety precautions, as necessary, to be followed when constructing web pages.

3. To protect a student's rights in his or her intellectual property, if a school or teacher publishes a student's work, a disclaimer should be provided indicating the terms of redistribution or reuse.
4. Schools must provide contact information and other general information about the school on the school website, including the school's name, phone number, fax number, grade levels, and address, the principal's name, and the e-mail addresses of the school administrative team.
5. Graphics used on school websites must be appropriate to the school and should be

of a size that will download quickly into a web browser.

6. Schools must keep information presented on their school's web page current, accurate, and grammatically correct.
7. The principal or designee must approve all revisions and additions to the school website.
8. Failure to comply with these guidelines or the standards of this policy, as determined by the superintendent or designee, may result in the removal of a school's web page from the Internet.

D. DISTRICT DISCLAIMER

The disclaimer below shall appear on all system and school web sites. The disclaimer should be listed as a link on the district web site and on all school sites. The text of the link shall say "Terms of Use."

Terms of Use

Acceptance of terms

The following are terms of a legal agreement between you and Watauga County School System ("WCS"). By accessing, browsing, and/or using this site ("Site"), you acknowledge that you have read, understood, and agree to be bound by these terms and to comply with all applicable laws and regulations. If you do not agree to these terms, do not use this site.

Limitation of Liability

While WCS uses reasonable efforts to include accurate and up-to-date information on this web site, WCS makes no warranties or representations as to its accuracy. WCS assumes no liability or responsibility for any typographical or other errors or omissions in any content on this site. Because of the unpredictable nature of the Internet, WCS cannot be responsible for the content of pages not directly connected to this web site.

Copyright

All materials published on district and school web sites are the property of WCS, or the author, and are protected by copyright. WCS cannot act as an agent for the authors of specific materials. Mirroring, or duplicating, any content on WCS web pages or sites on other servers is not permitted.

Privacy

Watauga County Schools adheres to all local, state, and federal laws and guidelines pertaining to students' right to privacy. No personally identifiable student or employee information will be shared with any outside persons, groups, or organizations without specific written permission from the person(s) involved.

Legal References: U.S. Const. Amend. I; Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. 12131 *et seq.*, 28 C.F.R. pt. 35; Electronic Communications Privacy Act, 18 U.S.C. 2510-2522; Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. 1232g; Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. 705(20), 794, 34 C.F.R. pt. 104; 17 U.S.C. 101 *et seq.*; G.S. 115C-325(e) (applicable to career status teachers), -325.4 (applicable to non-career status teachers); 168A-7

Cross References: Curriculum and Instructional Guides (policy 3115), Technology in the Educational Program (policy 3220), Technology Responsible Use (policy 3225/4312/7320), Copyright Compliance (policy 3230/7330), Student Behavior Policies (4300 series), Student Records (policy 4700), Public Records – Retention, Release, and Disposition (policy 5070/7350), Staff Responsibilities (policy 7300), Employee Use of Social Media (policy 7335), Personnel Files (policy 7820)

Other Resources: Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1, Level AA, available at <https://perma.cc/UB8A-GG2F>

Adopted: June 8, 2015

Replaces: Policy 4.02.60, Publication of Materials on the Internet

Revised: January 15, 2018; August 12, 2020 (Legal references only); DATE

A. PURPOSE

The Watauga County Board of Education (the “board”) maintains high academic expectations for all students and believes that all students are capable of academic growth. Students should be afforded as many opportunities as possible to demonstrate academic achievement prior to progressing to the next level of study. Students will be promoted to the next level of study as described in this policy.

B. STUDENT PROMOTION STANDARDS

The superintendent shall develop (1) proposed promotion standards and (2) a process to be used in determining a student’s readiness to progress to the next level of study and shall submit the standards and process to the board for approval. The standards will be based, in part, upon proficiency in reading. The standards and process must provide multiple criteria for assessing a student’s readiness to progress to the next level of study, such as standardized test scores, formative and diagnostic assessments, grades, a portfolio or anthology of the student’s work, research-based standards for assessing developmental growth and, when appropriate, any other factors deemed relevant. The standards and process will incorporate all state law and State Board of Education policy requirements, including those for the assessment and promotion of third grade students as described in G.S. 115C-83.6 *et seq.* and State Board of Education Policies KNEC-002 and -003.

The promotion standards also will require that students not be promoted from eighth grade until a career development plan is completed in accordance with the requirements of G.S. 115C-158.10 and State Board of Education rules and not be promoted from tenth grade until the career development plan is revised. Any high school student who does not already have a career development plan must complete the plan within 90 days of enrollment in school. Career development plans must be easily accessible to students and parents.

Principals shall ensure that the promotion standards are used by teachers and school administrators in assessing each student’s readiness to progress to the next level of study. Principals have the authority to promote or retain students based upon the standards approved by the board and any applicable standards set by the State Board of Education.

To reduce the number of students who do not meet promotion standards, the board directs school administrators and teachers to address the needs of students who are not making adequate academic progress as required by policy 3405, Students at Risk of Academic Failure.

C. DIPLOMA STANDARDS

To receive a North Carolina high school diploma, a student must complete the requirements

set forth in policy 3460, Graduation Requirements.

D. APPEALS OF PROMOTION DECISIONS

1. Appeal to the Superintendent

Within five workdays of receiving the principal's written decision to promote or retain a student, the student's parents may appeal the decision to the superintendent. The superintendent may overturn the principal's decision only upon a finding that the principal's decision was arbitrary and capricious (i.e., without a rational basis) or was otherwise an abuse of discretion.

The superintendent must render a decision within 10 workdays of receiving the appeal. The superintendent may support the principal's decision, remand it back to the principal for consideration of additional issues, or reverse the decision.

The superintendent's findings must be in writing and must be provided to the parents.

2. Appeal to the Board of Education

The superintendent's decision to promote or retain a student may be appealed to the board in accordance with the procedures set forth in subsection E.5 of policy 4010, Student and Parent Grievance Procedure.

E. LITERACY INTERVENTIONS

1. Reading Camps

The board will provide reading camp opportunities as required by law at no fee for students who are entitled to this intervention under state law. The superintendent or designee shall encourage parents of eligible students to enroll their students in a reading camp. To the extent resources permit, the board will offer fee-based reading camp opportunities for students in eligible grades who are not entitled to attend at no cost. Annually, the board will establish criteria for priority enrollment in its fee-based reading camps and will set the attendance fee at an amount not to exceed the statutory limit. The superintendent or designee shall notify interested parents of the application procedure for the fee-based reading camps.

2. Individual Reading Plans

~~Beginning in the 2022-2023 school year, a~~An Individual Reading Plan (IRP) will be developed in accordance with state law for any student in kindergarten through third grade demonstrating difficulty with reading development based on the results of either (1) the first diagnostic or formative assessment of the school year or (2) the first diagnostic or formative assessment of the second semester of the school

year. The student's teacher shall notify the parent or guardian that the student has demonstrated difficulty with reading development and that an IRP has been developed for the student. The notice provided must include all other information required under G.S. 115C-83.6B(b) and should be in the parents' native language when appropriate foreign language resources are readily available.

3. Digital Children's Reading Initiative

The school system will provide access through the school system website to available resources from the Department of Public Instruction's Digital Children's Reading Initiative as required by law. Printable activities from those resources will be provided in hard copy to students who do not have digital access at home.

4. Approval of Literacy Intervention Plan

By the established deadline each year, the superintendent or designee shall submit to the Department of Public Instruction for approval a plan for the literacy interventions the school system will offer in the following school year, as required by G.S. 115C-83.6A.

F. PROMOTION STANDARDS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

To the extent possible, students with disabilities must be held to the same promotion standards as all other students. However, for students who take alternative assessments in lieu of the end-of-grade (EOG) or end-of-course (EOC) tests, promotion decisions must be based on criteria recommended by the IEP team. The IEP Team shall make a recommendation to the principal for special placement. The principal shall determine the student's placement. The superintendent/designee shall review the recommendation before special placement is made. The school principal has the ultimate responsibility for placement and grading of students in accordance with federal, state, and local regulations.

All intervention strategies and other opportunities, benefits, and resources that are made available to students without disabilities must be made available to those students with disabilities who are subject to the student promotion standards. Such opportunities must be in addition to the special education services provided to the student.

G. CREDIT BY DEMONSTRATED MASTERY

The superintendent shall provide opportunities for students in grades 9 through 12 to earn course credit by demonstrating mastery of course material without first completing the regular period of classroom instruction in the course. Students in grades 6 through 8 may earn credit by demonstrated mastery for high school courses offered in middle school. To earn credit by demonstrated mastery, students must demonstrate a deep understanding of the content standards and application of knowledge through a multi-phase assessment, in accordance with standards established by the State Board of Education and any additional standards established by the superintendent.

H. CREDIT RECOVERY

Students who fail a high school course may retake parts of the course through credit recovery to earn credit for the course. Credit recovery delivers a subset of the blueprint of the original course in order to specifically address deficiencies in a student's mastery of the course and target specific components of a course necessary for completion. A pre-assessment of the student's understanding of the course material will be administered at the beginning of the course and the credit recovery will be tailored to meet the needs of the individual student. The length of a credit recovery course is dictated by the skills and knowledge the student needs to recover and not a fixed length of seat time.

~~Any EOC exam associated with~~ If the credit recovery course has an associated EOC exam and the student is going to retake it, the exam will be administered no later than 30 days upon completion of the credit recovery course. The credit recovery will be graded as pass or fail and will not impact the student's grade point average. The original grade for the course will remain on the student's transcript.

The superintendent shall develop procedures addressing the implementation of credit recovery opportunities across the school system.

I. REPEATING A COURSE FOR CREDIT

1. Repeating a Previously Failed Course

As provided in State Board of Education policy CCRE-001, high school students who fail a course for credit may repeat that course. To take advantage of this option, the student must repeat the entire course. When a student initially fails a high school course or college level course taken for high school credit and successfully repeats the course for credit, the new course grade will replace the original failing grade for the course on the student's transcript and in calculations of the student's GPA, class rank, and honor roll eligibility. The superintendent may develop procedures for students to indicate their intent to repeat a course for credit under this paragraph and may establish any other rules as necessary and consistent with State Board policy.

2. Repeating a Course for which Credit was Earned (Grade Replacement)

The board recognizes that high school students may need to repeat a course for which they have earned credit in order to increase their understanding of the course content, to improve skill mastery, or to meet postsecondary goals. Students may repeat a course for which they have previously earned credit, subject to the following preconditions and any other reasonable rules established by the superintendent:

- a. the student must have earned a letter grade of C or lower in the course on

- the first attempt;
- b. the student must make a written request to repeat the course;
 - c. the principal or designee must approve the request;
 - d. there must be space available after seats have been assigned to students who are taking the course for the first time or repeating a previously failed course;
 - e. the course to be repeated must be a duplicate of the original class and must be taken during the regular school day;
 - f. upon completion of the repeated course, the new course grade will replace the student's original grade on the student's transcript and in calculations of the student's GPA, class rank, and honor roll eligibility, regardless of whether the later grade is higher or lower than the student's original mark;
 - g. credit towards graduation for the same course will be given only once;
 - h. a course may be repeated only one time; and
 - i. students may repeat a maximum of four previously passed courses during their high school careers.

The superintendent shall require notice to students and parents of these preconditions and of any other relevant information deemed advisable by the superintendent.

J. CREDIT FROM STUDYING ABROAD

The board encourages students to participate in foreign exchange student programs to enhance their high school academic experience and heighten their awareness and knowledge of global cultures. With careful planning, students may receive credit for courses taken abroad that have substantial equivalency to school system high school courses in content and in hours.

Students who wish to receive high school credit for courses taken during the school year in a foreign country should file a request for study abroad credit with the principal or designee by July 1 of the year preceding the proposed study. To receive credit, the student must submit a copy of the syllabus of the course with the hours of study and grading system described. The student should promptly notify the principal or designee of any course changes.

K. ACCELERATION

Some students may need less time to learn the curriculum. Teachers are encouraged to challenge these students by expanding the curriculum, providing opportunities to explore subjects in greater detail or providing different types of educational experiences. To challenge a student sufficiently, the principal may reassign the student to a different class or level of study and/or may identify concurrent enrollment or other curriculum expansion options (see policy 3101, Dual Enrollment).

The principal, after consulting with the professional staff and the student's parents, may determine that skipping a grade level is appropriate.

Students also have the option of using an accelerated pathway to complete high school in three years rather than four (see policy 3460, Graduation Requirements).

L. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

1. Superintendent's Report to the Board

At least on an annual basis, the superintendent shall provide the board with the following information for each school:

- a. aggregate student performance scores on state-mandated tests and any other standardized tests used by a school or the school system;
- b. the number and percentage of students retained and/or not meeting the standards for their grade level;
- c. the number and percentage of third grade students exempt from mandatory third grade retention by category of exemption as listed in state law; and
- d. remedial or additional educational opportunities provided by the school system and the success of these efforts in helping students meet promotion standards.

2. Report to the North Carolina State Board of Education and Department of Public Instruction

Pursuant to statutory requirements and standards established by the Department of Public Instruction, all required information regarding student performance will be provided annually to the State Board of Education and the Department of Public Instruction.

3. Publication on the School System Website

Information about the reading performance of first, second, and third grade students will be posted on the school system website in accordance with state law.

M. RESOURCES

Consistent with the objective of improving student performance, the board will provide schools with maximum flexibility in the allocation of state funds. School personnel are expected to budget financial resources in a manner that will meet the standards established in this policy. The board will consider requests to transfer funds from other funding allotment categories to intervention strategies as part of the school improvement plan submitted by school officials. All funds will be used in a fiscally sound manner in accordance with policy 8300, Fiscal Management Standards.

N. NOTIFICATION TO PARENTS

The superintendent or designee shall provide information regarding promotion standards to all students and parents. In addition, if a kindergarten, first grade, second grade, or third grade student (1) is demonstrating difficulty with reading development or (2) is not reading at grade level, the student's teacher shall provide the student's parents timely written notice advising that if the student is not demonstrating reading proficiency by the end of third grade, the student will be retained, unless exempt from mandatory retention for good cause. Parents are encouraged to help their children meet the promotion standards and will have opportunities to discuss the promotion standards and procedures with teachers and the principal. Information provided to parents should be in the parents' native language when appropriate foreign language resources are readily available.

The teacher of a student who does not meet promotion standards must notify the student's parents that the student has failed to meet the standards for progression to the next level of study and must provide the parents with information concerning retesting, intervention, review, and appeal opportunities. When a student is to be retained, the principal shall provide the student's parents written notice of the retention and, if the student will be retained in accordance with G.S. 115C-83.7(a) for failure to demonstrate reading proficiency, (1) written notice of the reason the student is not eligible for a good cause exemption as provided in G.S. 115C-83.7(b) and (2) a description of proposed literacy interventions that will be provided to the student to remediate areas where the student has not demonstrated reading proficiency. Teachers shall provide parents of students retained under G.S. 115C-83.7(a) at least monthly written reports on student progress toward reading proficiency. The evaluation of a student's progress will be based upon the student's classroom work, observations, tests, assessments, and other relevant information.

O. CHILDREN OF MILITARY FAMILIES

As required by the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children (G.S. 115C-407.5), G.S. 115C-407.12, and policy 4155, Assignment to Classes, school administrators have the authority to exercise flexibility in waiving course or program prerequisites or other preconditions for the placement of children of military families, as defined in policy 4050, Children of Military Families, in courses or programs offered by the school system.

Legal References: G.S. 115C-36, -45(c), -47, -81.5, -83.2, -83.3, -83.6, -83.6A, -83.6B, -83.7, -83.7A, -83.8, -83.9, -83.10, -83.11, -83.31, -105.21, -158.10, -174.11, -288(a), -407.5, -407.12;

S.L. 2021-8; 16 N.C.A.C. 6D .0508, .0510; State Board of Education Policies CCRE-001, GRAD-001, GRAD-006, KNEC-002, KNEC-003

Cross References: Student and Parent Grievance Procedure (policy 4010), Goals and Objectives of the Educational Program (policy 3000), Dual Enrollment (policy 3101), Students at Risk of Academic Failure (policy 3405), School Improvement Plan (policy 3430), Graduation Requirements (policy 3460), Extracurricular Activities and Student Organizations (policy 3620), Children of Military Families (policy 4050), Assignment to Classes (policy 4155), Fiscal Management Standards (policy 8300)

Other Resources: *Guidelines for Testing Students Identified as English Learners*, (N.C. Department of Public Instruction), available at <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/testing-and-school-accountability/testing-policy-and-operations/testing-students-identified-english-learners>; *Comprehensive Reading Plan for Achievement* ~~Read to Achieve Implementation Guide~~, available at <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/classroom-resources/early-learning-read-achieve/k-3-literacy>

Adopted: July 11, 2016

Revised: July 10, 2017; March 15, 2018 (Legal references only); February 11, 2019; August 12, 2020 (Legal references only); July 26, 2021; January 10, 2022; March 13, 2023; July 11, 2024;
DATE

The Watauga County Board of Education (the “board”) recognizes the importance of setting rigorous graduation requirements to help ensure that students are receiving an education that will prepare them to be career and college ready and productive members of society.

In order to graduate from high school, students must meet the following requirements:

1. successful completion of all State Board of Education course unit requirements as described in Section A;
2. successful completion of cardiopulmonary resuscitation instruction and pass a skills test; and
3. successful completion of all other requirements mandated by the board, as provided in this policy.

Principals shall ensure that students and parents are aware of the number and nature of credits required for high school graduation, the potential to complete high school graduation requirements in three years, and the availability of early graduate college scholarships.

A. COURSE UNITS REQUIRED

As described in State Board of Education Policy GRAD-004, all students must fulfill the course unit requirements of the Future-Ready Core Course of Study, unless they are approved for the Future-Ready Occupational Course of Study. The table in subsection A.1 below lists the course unit requirements for the Future-Ready Core Course of Study applicable to students who entered ninth grade for the first time before 2020-21. Students should consult their school counselor to determine applicable course unit requirements for graduation.

In accordance with policy 3101, Dual Enrollment, and State Board of Education requirements, students may earn high school credit for college courses completed. In addition, students may earn credit for certain high school courses in the Future-Ready Core Course of Study completed prior to grade 9, as authorized by the State Board of Education. Students also have the opportunity to meet course unit requirements without completing the regular period of classroom instruction by demonstrating mastery of the course material in accordance with policy 3420, Student Promotion and Accountability, and State Board of Education requirements. Watauga High School students may earn one or two units of credit upon successful completion of a course, depending on how the course is offered.

School counseling program staff shall assist students in selecting high school courses to ensure that students are taking all required units and selecting electives consistent with their postgraduation plans.

For students who have transferred to the school system during high school or who, for other reasons, have completed course work outside of the school system, the principal shall determine what course work will be applied as credit toward graduation. See policy 3420 for information regarding receiving credit toward graduation for courses taken abroad.

All awards of high school course credit must be consistent with State Board of Education requirements. Any inconsistency between board policy and State Board graduation requirements will be resolved by following the State Board requirements. While the board endeavors to keep its policy up to date with current State Board of Education graduation requirements, students should verify current requirements with their school counselors when planning course schedules or making other decisions based on graduation requirements. Watauga High School students may graduate and receive a high school diploma when a combination of the following state and local requirements are met:

1. Future-Ready Core Course of Study Credits Required for Students Entering Ninth Grade for the First Time before 2020-2021

Types of Courses	State Requirements/ Local Recommendations
English	4 sequential (English I, II, III, and IV)
Mathematics	4 (NC Math 1, 2, and 3 and a fourth math course aligned with the student's post-high school plans.)** (A principal may exempt a student from this math sequence. Exempt students will be required to pass NC Math 1 and 2 ~~and plus two other additional application-based math courses or selected CTE courses, as identified on the NC DPI math options chart.~~ ***)
Science	3 (a physical science course, Biology, and <u>an</u> earth/environmental science <u>course</u>)
Social Studies	4 (including American History: Founding Principles, Civics and Economics; American History Parts I and II; and World History)****
Health/P.E.	1 beginning for the Class of 2025/ 2- one in Health; one in P.E. for Class of 2021-Class of 2024
Electives	6 (2 electives must be any combination of Career and Technical Education, Arts Education, or World Language; 4 must be from one of the following: Career and Technical Education, J.R.O.T.C., Arts Education, or any other subject area or cross-disciplinary course. A four-course concentration is recommended.)*****
Total Credits	22***** beginning with the Class of 2025 23 for Class of 2021- Class of 2024

* Certain International Baccalaureate (IB), Advanced Placement (AP), and Cambridge International Examination (CIE) courses will satisfy specific graduation requirements. See SBE Policy GRAD-008.

** Students entering ninth grade for the first time prior to the 2014-15 school year have alternate math course options. See SBE Policy GRAD-004.

*** Students seeking to complete minimum course requirements for UNC universities must complete four mathematics courses, including a fourth math course with Math 3 as a

prerequisite. The math options chart is available at <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/classroom-resources/academic-standards/standard-course-study/mathematics/standard-course-study-supporting-resources>

**** American History: Founding Principles, Civics and Economics must follow the North Carolina Standard Course of Study (NCSCOS) in its entirety and may not be satisfied by an AP/IB/CIE course, dual enrollment, or any other course that does not fully address the NCSCOS, except as provided in SBE Policy GRAD-008. See also SBE Policies CCRE-001 and GRAD-004.

***** ~~Students seeking to complete minimum course requirements for UNC universities must complete two credits of a single world language.~~

***** Students may earn course credit for the successful completion of courses through a university, community college, or distance learning. (See Watauga County Board of Education Policy 3101: Dual Enrollment and Policy 3102: Online Instruction)

2. Future-Ready Occupational Course of Study Credits Required (only available to certain students with disabilities who have an IEP)

Types of Courses	State Requirements/ Local Recommendations
English	4 (including English I, II, III, and IV)
Mathematics	3 (including Introduction to Math, NC Math I, and Financial Management)
Science	2 (including Applied Science and Biology)
Social Studies	2 (including American History: Founding Principles, Civics and Economics; and American History I or American History II)
Health/P.E.	1 beginning for the Class of 2025/ 2- one in Health; one in P.E. for Class of 2021-Class of 2024
Career/Technical	4 (Career/Technical Education electives)
Occupational Preparation	6 (including Occupational Preparation I, II, III, and IV, which require 150 hours of school-based training, 225 hours of community-based training, and 225 hours of paid employment*)
Electives	0
Other Requirements	- Completion of IEP objectives - Career Portfolio
Total Credits	22** beginning with the Class of 2025 23 for Class of 2021- Class of 2024

* Paid employment is the expectation; however, when paid employment is not available, 225 hours of unpaid vocational training, unpaid internship experience, paid employment at community rehabilitation facilities, and volunteer and/or community service hours may substitute for 225 hours of paid employment.

** Students may earn course credit for the successful completion of courses through a university, community college, or distance learning. (See Watauga County Board of Education Policy 3101: Dual Enrollment and Policy 3102: Online Instruction)

B. HIGH SCHOOL FINAL EXAMS AND END-OF-COURSE TESTING

High school students must take all end-of-course (EOC) tests and Career and Technical Education (CTE) State Assessments required by the State Board of Education and pursuant to policy 3410, Testing and Assessment Program. Students shall attain passing scores on exit standards adopted by the North Carolina State Board of Education and administered by Watauga County Schools.

C. SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

1. Honor Graduates

Honor graduates may be designated by principals on the basis of criteria established by the superintendent. Recognition of honor graduates may be included in graduation programs.

2. Students with Disabilities

Graduation requirements must be applied to students with disabilities to the extent required by state and federal law and State Board policy.

3. Children of Military Families

In order to facilitate the on-time graduation of children of military families, as defined in policy 4050, Children of Military Families, school officials shall comply with the requirements of the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children (G.S. 115C-407.5), G.S. 115C-407.12, and the following requirements.

a. Waiver Requirements

Specific course work required for graduation will be waived for children of military families if similar course work has been satisfactorily completed in another school system. If a waiver is not granted, school administrators shall provide the student with reasonable justification for the denial. If a waiver is not granted to a student who would qualify to graduate from the sending school, the superintendent or designee shall provide the student with an alternative means of acquiring the required course work so that the student may graduate on time.

b. Testing Requirements for Graduation

The superintendent shall accept from children of military families the following in lieu of any local testing requirements for graduation: (1) the end-of-course exams required for graduation from the sending state; (2) national norm-referenced achievement tests; or (3) alternative testing. If these alternatives are not feasible for a student who has transferred in his or

her senior year, subsection c below will apply.

c. Transfers During Senior Year

If a child of a military family who has transferred at the beginning of or during his or her senior year is ineligible to graduate from the school system after all of the alternatives listed above have been considered and the student meets the graduation requirements at his or her sending school, then school officials from the school system shall collaborate with the sending school system to ensure that the student will receive a diploma from the sending board of education.

4. Early Graduation

Students have the option of graduating early by completing the State Board of Education minimum graduation requirements on an accelerated three-year pathway. Students choosing to use an accelerated pathway must follow the process required for early graduation as described in State Board Policies GRAD-001 and GRAD-006.

5. Graduation Certificates, Transcripts, and Participation

Graduation certificates will be awarded to eligible students in accordance with the standards set forth in State Board policy.

Transcripts may be issued to all students receiving a diploma or certificate. The transcript shall provide all information required by State Board of Education policy GRAD-009 and/or other State Board policies as appropriate.

Participation in graduation and baccalaureate ceremonies is optional. Students who have completed all graduation requirements, have paid all fees, and have the approved graduation attire and diploma may participate in graduation exercises.

Exceptional Children who have satisfactorily completed the course of study prescribed in their Individual Education Plans are eligible to participate in graduation exercises.

6. Diploma Endorsements

Students have the opportunity to earn diploma endorsements as described in State Board Policy GRAD-007. No endorsement is required to receive a diploma.

7. Grade Replacement

Students are permitted to repeat a course for credit when they have failed a course. Students are permitted to repeat a passed course for grade replacement. The

repeated course must be a seated class taken during the normal school day and must be taken within one year of initial completion of the course in question.

Legal References: G.S. 115C- 47, -81.25(c)(10)(c), -81.45(d), -81.65, -81.90(c), -83.31, - 83.32, -174.11, -276, -288, -407.5, -407.12; GS 116-11(10a); 16 N.C.A.C. 6D .0309, .0503, .0506, -0510; State Board of Education Policies CCRE-001, GRAD-004, GRAD-006, GRAD-007, GRAD-008, GRAD-009, GRAD-010, TEST-003

Cross References: Goals and Objectives of the Educational Program (policy 3000), Dual Enrollment (policy 3101), Online Instruction (policy 3102), Testing and Assessment Program (policy 3410), Student Promotion and Accountability (policy 3420), Citizenship and Character Education (policy 3530), Children of Military Families (policy 4050)

Adopted: September 14, 2015

Revised: November 9, 2015; October 10, 2016; August 14, 2017; June 11, 2018; September 10, 2018; October 5, 2020; March 8, 2021; July 26, 2021; December 13, 2021; June 30, 2022; March 13, 2023; July 11, 2024

Replaces: Policy 4.04.50, Exit Documents at Graduation; policy 4.04.70, Graduation Requirements; policy 4.03.35 Accountability Standards (in part)

Safe schools are critical to creating a learning environment in which students can succeed. Staff and students share the responsibility for taking reasonable precautions and following established safety measures to create and maintain safe schools. The following safety measures must be implemented at each school.

A. SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS

Students must be reasonably supervised while in the care and custody of the school system. This supervision must occur throughout school hours, including during class, between classes, on the playground, and during recess or lunch periods; during authorized school field trips; and on school buses. Reasonable precautions should be taken to protect the safety of students on school grounds and on buses before, during and after school.

Students who are subject to policy 4260, Student Sex Offenders, and are receiving educational services on school property must be supervised by school personnel at all times.

B. SUPERVISION OF VISITORS

School administrators shall strictly enforce policies 5015, School Volunteers, and 5020, Visitors to the Schools.

C. SAFETY OF SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

The board recognizes its duty to provide each of its employees with a workplace free from recognized hazards that are causing or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm.

The superintendent and each building principal shall comply with all duties set out for their respective positions in G.S. 115C-288(d) and G.S. 115C-525 to minimize fire hazards. The principal is required to inspect school buildings, playgrounds, and equipment for health, fire, and safety hazards on a regular basis, as required by law, and to notify the superintendent immediately of unsanitary conditions or repairs needed to meet safety standards.

Any employee who observes any potential hazards must notify the principal or the employee's supervisor immediately.

All warning systems must meet building and equipment codes required by law and must be properly maintained. When necessary, proper signs indicating potential hazards or recommended safety precautions must be posted.

D. ESTABLISHING PROCESSES TO ADDRESS POTENTIAL SAFETY CONCERNS AND EMERGENCIES

1. Responding to Student Altercations and Other Threats to Safety

All school system employees have a duty to be alert at all times to situations that may pose a threat to the safety of students, employees, or visitors on school property, at school events, or in other situations in which the students are under the authority of school employees. Even an employee who does not have responsibility for supervising students is expected to make an immediate report if the employee observes or has reason to suspect that a situation poses a threat to safety and no administrator, teacher, or other supervisory employee is present and aware of the potential threat.

Teachers, teacher assistants, coaches, and other employees with responsibility for supervising students will use appropriate student behavior management techniques to maintain order and discipline on school property, at school events, and anywhere that students are under the employees' authority. Such employees must enforce the Code of Student Conduct and address student behavior in accordance with the school plan for management of student behavior (see policy 4302, School Plan for Management of Student Behavior).

When employees with responsibility for supervising students have personal knowledge or actual notice of a student altercation or other situation that poses an immediate threat to safety, they shall use their professional judgment to determine how best to address the situation to protect the safety of everyone in the vicinity. Emergency procedures identified in a student's Behavior Intervention Plan shall be followed to the maximum extent possible under the circumstances. For minor threats or altercations or altercations involving young children, the employee shall intervene directly to end the fight or address the safety threat if the employee can do so safely. An employee who encounters a situation that cannot be managed safely and effectively by that employee immediately shall request assistance from other employees or administrative staff and shall take steps to remove bystanders from the area. Only the degree of force or physical control reasonably necessary shall be used to re-establish a safe environment.

Employees should take further action as appropriate in accordance with any response protocols established by the principal or superintendent. All employees are responsible for knowing and following such protocols to the fullest extent reasonable under the circumstances at the time.

2. School Rules

The principal or designee shall develop rules to help prevent accidents in school buildings, on school buses, and on school grounds.

3. Training for Staff and Students

Staff training must include detailed instruction on how to respond to a variety of

emergency situations. Staff should also be able to recognize and respond to behavior, information, and related indicators that warn of impending problems. In addition, middle and high school employees must receive adequate training on the operation of the school's anonymous safety tip line.

School personnel must teach and review with students (1) safety procedures, including fire safety procedures; (2) precautions for handling chemicals or potentially dangerous equipment; and (3) appropriate responses to threats to school safety. Middle and high school students must also be informed of the anonymous safety tip line and its purpose and function.

Training must be provided annually for all school system stakeholders (including staff, students, parents, coaches, volunteers, and community members) on how to recognize, and how and when to report, threats to the school population or community.

4. Safety Equipment

School employees shall provide students and visitors with safety equipment as required by law and shall enforce school rules pertaining to wearing safety equipment. School employees shall wear and use appropriate safety equipment as required for the safe performance of their specific job assignments.

5. Planning for Emergencies and Conducting Fire Drills and Other Emergency Drills

The board, in coordination with local law enforcement and emergency management agencies, will adopt a school risk management plan relating to incidents of school violence for each school in the school system. The superintendent must provide the Department of Public Safety's Division of Emergency Management (Division) with emergency response information it requests for the school risk management plan and updated emergency response information when such updates are made. The superintendent must also provide the Division and local law enforcement with schematic diagrams, including digital schematic diagrams, of all school facilities and updates of the schematic diagrams when the school system makes substantial facility modifications, such as the addition of new facilities or modifications to doors or windows. Schematic diagrams must meet any standards established by the Department of Public Instruction for the preparation and content of the diagrams. In addition, the superintendent shall provide local law enforcement with (1) either keys to the main entrance of all school buildings or emergency access to key storage devices for all school buildings and (2) updated access to school buildings when changes are made to the locks of the main entrances or to the key storage devices.

At least one school-wide tabletop exercise and drill that meets the requirements of state law and is based on the procedures documented in the school risk management plan will be held annually at each school. Principals shall also conduct fire drills

as required by law.

6. Reporting Risks to the School Population

Students should notify any staff member of any acts of violence, harassment, or bullying or any other unusual or suspicious behavior that may endanger safety. Middle and high school students may also use the anonymous safety tip line to report any risks to the school population or buildings. Ongoing student education efforts will aim at minimizing any fear, peer pressure, embarrassment, or other impediments to students reporting potential problems.

Maintaining a safe school environment that is conducive to learning requires staff to be proactive in dealing with violence, harassment, and bullying. Staff members must report immediately to the principal any information regarding unusual or suspicious behavior or acts of violence, harassment, or bullying.

School officials shall investigate and act upon any report of such behavior, including, when appropriate, referring reports to the school threat assessment team and reporting criminal activities to law enforcement, the State Board, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the superintendent or designee (see policies 4020/7230, Discrimination and Harassment Prohibited by Federal Law, 4035/7236, Title IX Sexual Discrimination Harassment – Prohibited Conduct and Reporting Process Grievance Procedures, 4036/7237, Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Process, 4040/7310, Staff-Student Relations, 4040/7310, Bullying and Harassing Behavior Prohibited, and 4335, Criminal Behavior, and 7232, Discrimination and Harassment in the Workplace).

7. Potential Threats of Registered Sex Offenders

The principal of each school shall register with the North Carolina Sex Offender and Public Protection Registry to receive e-mail notification when a registered sex offender moves within a one-mile radius of the school.

8. Student Behavior Standards

Students are expected to meet behavior standards set forth in Watauga County Board of Education policies.

E. THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAMS

In accordance with G.S. 115C-105.65, the superintendent shall establish a multidisciplinary threat assessment team for each school within the school system to identify, assess, and manage behavior of students or others who may pose a risk of violence or harm to self or others. The threat assessment teams will include, but are not limited to, individuals with expertise in counseling, instruction, school administration, and law enforcement. When practicable, at least one school psychologist, one staff member

knowledgeable about and experienced in working with students with special needs, and one staff member knowledgeable about and experienced in working with students with disabilities will be assigned to each threat assessment team. If a school psychologist is not available, a licensed mental health professional may be assigned instead. A member of each threat assessment team will operate as team leader with the responsibility to ensure adherence to the threat assessment process, ensure proper documentation of reports of threats and threat assessment activities, and facilitate collaborative team discussions to ensure various perspectives are considered.

The superintendent shall designate a school system administrator to oversee the school system's threat assessment program and to serve as liaison between the school system and the North Carolina Center for Safer Schools (CSS). The superintendent or designee shall also establish a committee composed of individuals with expertise in human resources, education, school administration, mental health, and law enforcement that will coordinate and monitor the threat assessment teams operating within the school system.

1. Training

All team members will receive behavioral threat assessment and management training annually prior to the start of the school year. Individuals who join the team in the middle of the school year must receive training within 60 calendar days of joining the team.

2. Assessment and Intervention

Unless the superintendent establishes a different classification system in the threat assessment protocols developed pursuant to subsection E.4 of this policy, threat assessment teams will use the levels of concern table listed in the behavioral threat assessment and management guidance issued by CSS in assessing the level of threat posed and forming a response to threats.

Upon determining that a student poses a threat, the threat assessment team will develop a written student support, intervention, and monitoring management plan that establishes interventions and specifies required monitoring times of the student based on the level of concern the student presents. To effectively manage and mitigate potential risk, interventions must focus on building resilience and protective factors for the student while also addressing safety concerns.

3. Information Sharing

Parents of a student or minor will be notified as soon as practicable that a threat assessment will be or is being conducted on their child. The threat assessment team will contact the parents and provide them the opportunity to participate in the threat assessment. The team is not required to extend the invitation to participate if the student or minor discloses abuse or neglect from the parent. Once a threat assessment is completed, the team will provide its findings and conclusions to the

parents, including any interventions the team is recommending be put in place for the well-being of their child and the school community and any school system or community resources that may be useful for the parents in seeking help for their child.

When the threat assessment team learns that an individual has threatened specific harm to an identifiable potential victim, the team will provide notice of the threat to the potential victim and, if the potential victim is a student or minor, provide notice to the parents.

Any information sharing by, with, or between members of the threat assessment teams will be done in accordance with the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and any other applicable state or federal law. (See policy 2125/7315, Confidential Information). Members of a threat assessment team who are not school system employees must sign a written agreement to adhere to the responsibilities and requirements of FERPA before having access to student records.

4. Threat Assessment Protocols

In consultation with CSS guidance and with established threat assessment teams within the school system, the superintendent shall develop, implement, and update threat assessment protocols and procedures that comply with the requirements of G.S. 115C-105.65. At a minimum, these protocols and procedures will delineate the roles and duties to be performed by designated threat assessment team members, the expertise and training of professionals who will serve on threat assessment teams, the steps to be followed in the threat assessment process, including the implementation of interventions, supports, and community services, the timeframe required to responsibly act upon reported concerns, and the engagement of school resource officers and/or law enforcement in the threat assessment process, and the process of documenting reports of threats and threat assessment activities. The protocols and procedures will differentiate between assessment and intervention at the elementary, middle, and high school levels, as appropriate.

The superintendent or designee shall send a copy of this policy and the threat assessment protocols and procedures to CSS when approved or revised. In addition, the superintendent shall ensure that quantitative data on the activities of all threat assessment teams is reported to CSS as required by G.S. 115C-105.65(g) and CSS guidance.

Legal References: 29 C.F.R. part 1904; G.S. 14-208.18; 95-129(1); 115C-36, -47, -105.49, -105.51, -105.53, -105.54, -105.65, -166, -167, -288, -289.1, -307, -390.3, -391.1, -521, -524, -525; § 13 N.C.A.C. 7A .0301; 16 N.C.A.C. 6E .0107; State Board of Education Policy SCFC-005

Cross References: Discrimination and Harassment Prohibited by Federal Law (policy 4020/7230), Title IX Sexual Harassment Discrimination – Prohibited Conduct and Reporting Process Grievance

Procedures (policy 4035/7236), ~~Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Process~~ (policy 4036/7237), ~~Confidential Information~~ (policy 2125/7315), School Improvement Plan (policy 3430), Staff -Student Relations (policy 4040/7310), Student Sex Offenders (policy 4260), Student Behavior Policies (4300 series), Bullying and Harassing Behavior Prohibited (policy 4329/7311), School Volunteers (policy 5015), Visitors to the Schools (policy 5020), Registered Sex Offenders (policy 5022), Weapons and Explosives Prohibited (policy 5027/7275), Public Records – Retention, Release, and Disposition (policy 5070/7350), Relationship with Law Enforcement (policy 5120), ~~Discrimination and Harassment in the Workplace~~ (policy 7232), Occupational Exposure to Hazardous Chemicals in Science Laboratories (policy 7265), Staff Responsibilities (policy 7300), Security of Facilities (policy 9220)

Other Resources: *Practical Information on Crisis Planning: A Guide for Schools and Communities*, U.S. Department of Education Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools (January 2007), available at <http://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/crisisplanning.html>; *Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management: Best Practice Guidance for North Carolina Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management Teams for Harm Prevention*, N.C. Department of Public Instruction Center for Safer Schools (March 2024), available at <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/best-practice-guidance-north-carolina-behavioral-threat-assessment-and-management-teams-harm>

Adopted: February 9, 2015

Replaces: Policy 5.05.60, Fire Drills and 5.07.80, Threat Against the General Population

Revised: January 28, 2016; August 14, 2017 (Legal references only); February 12, 2018; April 8, 2019; August 9, 2021; {DATE}

USE OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT (DRONES)

Policy Code: 4334/5036/7345

The Watauga County Board of Education (the "Board") supports and encourages the use of innovative and emerging technologies, including unmanned aircraft or drones, to further the goals and objectives of the educational program. However, the Board also must consider how the use of such technologies may impact the safety, security, and privacy of people and property. Therefore, the Board authorizes some use of unmanned aircraft on school property and at school-sponsored events in accordance with the requirements of this policy and to the extent that such use is not otherwise prohibited by federal, state, or local law or regulation.

This policy applies to all students, school system employees, contractors and vendors, school visitors, and other members of the general public on school property and at school-sponsored events.

A. DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply.

1. An "unmanned aircraft" or "drone" is an aircraft weighing less than 55 pounds that is operated without the possibility of direct human intervention from within or on the aircraft. The Board strictly prohibits the use of an unmanned aircraft weighing more than 55 pounds on school property or at a school-sponsored event. A "toy unmanned aircraft" is an aircraft weighing less than 0.55 pounds that is operated without the possibility of direct human intervention from within or on the aircraft.
2. The "use" of an unmanned aircraft includes the launch, operation, and/or recovery of the unmanned aircraft.
3. "School property" includes any property that is owned, leased, or otherwise controlled by the Board.
4. Use of an unmanned aircraft is for a "recreational" purpose if the use is solely for personal interests or enjoyment. Use for work or business purposes or for compensation or hire is not considered to be recreational.

B. AUTHORIZED USE OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT

The use of an unmanned aircraft on school property or at a school-sponsored event for any purpose must be approved in writing by the superintendent or designee and must comply with the requirements of this policy and all other applicable board policies, including the public use requirements of policy 5030, Community Use of Facilities, when applicable. The use of a toy unmanned aircraft does not require FAA registration and does not require the approval of the Superintendent. Such use also must comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations, including ~~the most~~any current registration,

certification, permit, safety, and other requirements established by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) ~~and the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT).~~

The superintendent or designee may grant approval for use on a case-by-case basis with any additional requirements or restrictions deemed appropriate, including, for example, to protect the safety, security, and privacy of people and property. However, the superintendent or designee shall not approve the use of unmanned aircraft for recreational purposes on school property or at school-sponsored events during the school day or at any other time when groups of students or employees may be present outdoors.

Prior to obtaining approval from the superintendent or designee, the operator of any unmanned aircraft may be required to provide proof of insurance, including adequate liability coverage for any claims arising out of the use of an unmanned aircraft, and proof of ~~the~~any registration, certification, permit, and/or waiver required by the FAA ~~and/or~~ NCDOT to operate the unmanned aircraft for the intended purpose(s).

An unmanned aircraft used on school property or at a school-sponsored event must be operated either by or under the direct supervision of an FAA-certified drone pilot in accordance with subsection B.1, below, or by a recreational flyer in accordance with subsection B.2, below.

1. Use by or under the Direct Supervision of an FAA-Certified Drone Pilot

An FAA-certified drone pilot, or an individual under the direct supervision of an FAA-certified drone pilot, may operate an unmanned aircraft for any commercial, educational, recreational, or other school system-related purpose as approved by the superintendent or designee. To qualify as an FAA-certified drone pilot, an individual must obtain a Remote Pilot Certificate from the FAA and have the certificate easily accessible during all use.

An FAA-certified drone pilot and any individual under the direct supervision of an FAA-certified drone pilot must comply with all federal, state, and local laws and regulations, including all applicable requirements under 14 C.F.R. Part 107 ("Part 107"). ~~In addition, if the use of an unmanned aircraft is not solely for hobby or recreational purposes, an FAA-certified drone pilot and any individual under the direct supervision of an FAA-certified drone pilot also must comply with the training and permit requirements of G.S. 63, art. 10, as applicable.~~

2. Use by a Recreational Flyer

A recreational flyer may operate an unmanned aircraft strictly for recreational purposes as approved by the superintendent or designee. A recreational flyer is not required to be an FAA-certified drone pilot or under the direct supervision of an FAA-certified drone pilot. However, a recreational flyer must comply with all federal, state, and local laws and regulations, including all applicable federal

requirements under the *Exception for Limited Recreational Operations of Unmanned Aircraft* (49 U.S.C. 44809).

C. UNAUTHORIZED USE OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT

School system employees shall reasonably attempt to monitor school property and school-sponsored events for the unauthorized use of unmanned aircraft. Employees must report any known or suspected unauthorized use of an unmanned aircraft as soon as practicable to the principal or other school official responsible for supervising the school property or school-sponsored event. If the unauthorized use poses a threat to the safety, security, or privacy of people or property, the employee should attempt to intervene directly if it is possible to do so safely and effectively and ask the operator to discontinue the use. If the employee is unable to identify the individual operating the unmanned aircraft, or if the unmanned aircraft is grounded and unattended, the employee should immediately notify the principal or other school official responsible for supervising the school property or school-sponsored event.

A student or school system employee who uses an unmanned aircraft in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension or expulsion for students and termination for employees. A contractor or vendor, school visitor, or other member of the general public who uses an unmanned aircraft in violation of this policy will be asked to discontinue the unauthorized use and/or asked to leave school property or the school-sponsored event in accordance with policy 5020, Visitors to the Schools.

School officials may also report the unauthorized use of an unmanned aircraft to local law enforcement and/or the FAA, as appropriate.

D. GUIDELINES FOR ALL USE OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT

1. FAA Safety Guidelines

A student, school system employee, contractor or vendor, school visitor, or other member of the general public who is authorized by the superintendent or designee to operate an unmanned aircraft on school property or at a school-sponsored event must comply with all applicable FAA safety guidelines, including, but not limited to, the following.

- a. The operator must follow FAA guidelines for registration. The unmanned aircraft, if registered, must be marked with the registration number.
- b. No later than September 16, 2023, the unmanned aircraft must be equipped with remote identification unless flying within an FAA-recognized identification area.
- c. The unmanned aircraft must have a maximum groundspeed of 100 mph or less.

- d. The operator must keep the unmanned aircraft within his or her visual line of sight at all times.
- e. The operator must not fly the unmanned aircraft above 400 feet in uncontrolled airspace and must not fly the unmanned aircraft in controlled airspace (e.g., near airports) without FAA authorization. The operator must comply with all other FAA airspace restrictions (e.g., near military bases).
- f. The operator must not fly the unmanned aircraft near other aircraft and must always yield the right of way to all other aircraft, especially manned aircraft.
- g. The operator must not fly the unmanned aircraft near emergency response activities.
- h. The operator must not fly the unmanned aircraft under the influence of drugs or alcohol. In addition, the operator must not fly the unmanned aircraft if he or she knows or has reason to know of any other physical or mental condition that would interfere with the safe operation of the unmanned aircraft.
- i. The operator must not otherwise fly the unmanned aircraft in a careless or reckless manner.

2. Other Guidelines

A student, school system employee, contractor or vendor, school visitor, or other member of the general public who is authorized by the superintendent or designee to operate an unmanned aircraft on school property or at a school-sponsored event also must comply with the following guidelines established by the Board.

- a. The operator of any unmanned aircraft on school property or at a school-sponsored event must provide appropriate documentation of approval from the superintendent or designee immediately upon request by any school system employee.
- b. Students are prohibited from operating an unmanned aircraft on school property or at a school-sponsored event without appropriate faculty or other adult supervision whether or not such supervision is required under federal regulations.
- c. The superintendent or designee, as well as the principal or other school official responsible for supervising school property or a school-sponsored event, may require the operator of an unmanned aircraft to temporarily or permanently suspend further use of the unmanned aircraft on school property or at a school-sponsored event at any time for any reason.

- d. The use of an unmanned aircraft to photograph or to record audio and/or video of the following is prohibited without the express written approval of the superintendent: (a) students, employees, visitors, or other individuals, (b) school- or school system-sponsored activities and other events, or (c) school buildings or other school system facilities. Any such photographs or other audio and/or video recordings obtained through the use of an unmanned aircraft may not be used for any marketing or other commercial purpose or otherwise distributed to a third party without the express written approval of the superintendent.
- e. Unmanned aircraft may not be flown over people or moving vehicles without the express written approval of the superintendent. As a pre-condition of receiving approval, the operator must provide the superintendent information sufficient to determine that the flight will be conducted in compliance with applicable FAA regulations.
- f. Any data or other information collected through the use of an unmanned aircraft may not be sold for profit.
- g. The use of an unmanned aircraft inside any enclosed school or other building on school property (including any school or other building under construction) or indoors at a school-sponsored event off school property is prohibited without the express written approval of the superintendent or designee.
- h. The use of unmanned aircraft within the physical confines of any stadium, field, arena, or other structure, including the playing area of the venue, during a North Carolina High School Athletic Association contest, including pre- and post-game activities, is prohibited.
- i. Any incident resulting in an injury to a person or damage to property caused by the use of an unmanned aircraft must be reported immediately or as soon as practicable thereafter to the principal or other school official responsible for supervising the school property or school-sponsored event where the incident occurred. This requirement applies whether or not the incident is also subject to the mandatory reporting requirements under federal regulations.
- j. Any unmanned aircraft owned by a school or the school system must be properly insured and must be scheduled (i.e., listed on the policy) and operated as required by the school system's liability coverage agreement.

The superintendent or designee may develop any additional administrative procedures or other regulations necessary to implement the requirements of this policy or to further protect the safety, security, and privacy of people and property.

Legal References: FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018, P.L. 115-254; 49 U.S.C. 44801 *et seq.*; 14 C.F.R. Part 89, Part 107; Federal Aviation Administration, Advisory Circular 91-57C (October 20, 2022), available at https://www.faa.gov/documentLibrary/media/Advisory_Circular/AC_91-57C_FAA_Revised.pdf; Federal Aviation Administration, Advisory Circular 107-2A (February 1, 2021), available at https://www.faa.gov/documentLibrary/media/Advisory_Circular/Editorial_Update_AC_107-2A.pdf; G.S. 14-7.45, -280.3, -401.24, -401.25; 15A art. 16B; ~~63 art. 10~~; 113-295; North Carolina High School Athletic Association Handbook, available at <https://www.nchsaa.org/handbook>

Cross References: Student Behavior Policies (4300 series), Visitors to the Schools (policy 5020), Community Use of Facilities (policy 5030)

Other Resources: Federal Aviation Administration, Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) website, available at <https://www.faa.gov/uas/>; North Carolina Department of Transportation, Division of Aviation, Unmanned Aircraft Systems website, available at <https://www.ncdot.gov/divisions/aviation/uas/Pages/default.aspx>

Adopted: August 12, 2020

Revised: May 8, 2023; December 11, 2023 (Legal references only); DATE

The Watauga County Board of Education (the "board") affirms the State's commitment to encouraging the participation of minority businesses in the school system's building construction contracts. A minority business is defined in accordance with G.S. 143-128.2 and is either (1) one in which at least 51 percent of the business is owned by minority persons or socially and economically disadvantaged individuals and the management and daily business operations are controlled by one or more of the minority persons or socially and economically disadvantaged individuals who own it, or (2) an employee stock ownership plan company in which at least 51 percent of the ~~plan participants are stock is owned by one or more~~ minority persons or socially and economically disadvantaged individuals.. Minority persons include African-Americans, those of Hispanic descent, Asian Americans, American Indians, and females.

A. GOALS

After notice and public hearing, the board hereby adopts an aspirational verifiable percentage goal of 10 percent for participation by minority businesses in the total value of work for each building project costing \$300,000 or more paid entirely from local or other non-state funds. In addition, the board adopts the state's aspirational verifiable goal of 10 percent participation by minority businesses in the total value of work for each building project costing \$100,000 or more funded in whole or in part with state funds.

Only businesses holding current certification as a historically underutilized business will be considered eligible for inclusion in meeting the board's participation percentage goals. Lack of certification, however, will not be considered in making a contract award decision.

B. SCHOOL SYSTEM GOOD FAITH EFFORTS

The board establishes the following guidelines for contracts subject to Section A to ensure that the school system will make good faith efforts to reach diverse contractors and to encourage participation in the school system's construction contracts by such contractors. Before awarding a contract, the superintendent or designee shall:

1. make information about the school system's formal and informal bidding process readily available;
2. develop and implement a minority business participation outreach plan to identify minority businesses that can perform building projects and to implement outreach efforts to encourage minority business participation in such projects;
3. advertise for bids in media that reach minority businesses;
4. designate a school official to attend the scheduled pre-bid conference to explain the school system's minority goals and objectives;

5. at least 10 days prior to the scheduled day of bid opening, notify minority businesses of the following:
 - a. a description of the work for which the bid is being solicited;
 - b. the date, time, and location where bids are to be submitted;
 - c. the name of the individual within the public entity who will be available to answer questions about the project;
 - d. where bid documents may be reviewed; and
 - e. any special requirements that may exist.

For purposes of this provision, the minority businesses to be notified are those (1) that have requested notices from the school system for construction or repair work, and (2) those that otherwise indicated to the Office of Historically Underutilized Businesses an interest in the type of work being bid or the potential contracting opportunities listed in the proposal;

6. ensure that everyone who requests it has access to bid documents needed for making bids on projects;
7. maintain documentation of any contacts, correspondence, or conversation with minority business firms made in an attempt to meet the goals;
8. review, jointly with the designer, the lowest responsible bidder's bid for compliance with all requirements of G.S. 143-128.2(c) and -128.2(f) prior to recommendation of the contract award;
9. encourage businesses experiencing difficulty in meeting the bonding, licensing, and bid deposits required by state law in larger construction projects to utilize resources and assistance offered by local, state, and federal agencies; and
10. provide information to bidders about the statewide uniform certification program for historically underutilized businesses.

C. GOOD FAITH EFFORTS REQUIRED BY CONTRACTORS

All bidders on school construction and renovation projects subject to Section A of this policy who intend to subcontract any part of the project must (1) identify the minority businesses to be used on the project and (2) provide affidavits indicating that a good faith effort has been made in preparing the bid to meet the board's verifiable goal for participation by minority businesses. Upon being named the apparent lowest responsible,

responsive bidder, a bidder shall provide additional evidence of its good faith efforts as required by law.

The level of minority participation in bidders' bids will not affect the contract award decision; however, the failure to provide documentation of a good faith effort to meet the board's goal may result in the bid being rejected as non-responsive.

Before recommending the award of a contract, the superintendent shall direct designated school officials to evaluate bidders' documents in accordance with applicable law and regulations to determine whether bidder good faith requirements are satisfied.

D. MONITORING

The superintendent or designee shall monitor payments made to minority businesses on each project subject to Section A to verify that the minority businesses actually working on the project and their level of participation is consistent with the representations made in the contractor's bid.

E. OTHER MINORITY BUSINESS RECRUITMENT EFFORTS

For building contracts that (1) are not subject to Section A and (2) cost at least \$30,000 but less than \$300,000, the board will solicit participation by minority business enterprises and maintain a record of contractors solicited and efforts to recruit minority participation.

F. REPORTING

The superintendent shall ensure that all required reports and other documentation are filed with the Department of Administration in accordance with legal requirements.

G. NONDISCRIMINATION

The board will award public building contracts without regard to race, religion, color, creed, national origin, sex, age, or disability. Nothing in this policy should be construed to require the board or contractors to award contracts or subcontracts to minority business contractors or minority business subcontractors who do not submit the lowest responsible, responsive bid or bids.

Legal References: *City of Richmond v. J.A. Croson Co.*, 488 U.S. 469 (1989); G.S. 143-128, -128.2, -128.3, -131(b); 01 N.C.A.C. 30I .0101-0310

Adopted: February 8, 2016; September 10, 2018

Revised: January 16, 2024; DATE

A. STANDING COMMITTEES

The Watauga Board of Education (the “board”) will organize standing committees for the purpose of conducting thorough deliberations and investigations of issues and informing and recommending action to the board as appropriate.

Standing committees of the board are: Calendar Committee, Elementary Curriculum, Finance, High School Curriculum, Personnel Advisory, Media and Technology Advisory Committee and Student Services.

The board representative on each standing committee will be named by the chairperson of the board on an annual basis at the December or January meeting. Members of standing committees shall be approved by the board annually. The number of members of each committee and constituency of each committee shall be determined by the operational procedure of the committee. The assignment of individual board members to these committees will be published each year.

Standing committees shall have a procedure of operation approved by the board. The committee chairperson will preside at all committee meetings and be responsible for reporting to the board on the activities of the committee. The committee chairperson will call meetings and establish an agenda for each committee meeting that includes any item suggested by the superintendent, committee member or board member. An adequate record of committee meetings shall be provided to the board.

The board chairperson and the superintendent will be an ex-officio member of each committee. The standing committee chairs are responsible for submitting agenda items for regular meetings to the superintendent. The superintendent or designee shall assist the chairperson of each standing committee in the preparation of the agenda and in ensuring that information is available to the committee during its deliberation of issues.

A standing committee may only make recommendations to the board and has no authority to act on behalf of the board unless specifically authorized by law, board policy or the board. Committee reports shall be submitted to the board. They shall be in writing and shall be included in the materials for board action.

B. AD HOC COMMITTEES

As time and situations demand, ad hoc committees may be appointed by the chairperson with the approval of the board for special assignments. Ad hoc committees have no final authority and are subordinate and advisory to the board. They shall terminate upon completion of the assignment, or at any time by a vote of the board. The board chairperson or designee shall serve as an ex-officio member of ad hoc committees.

C. OPEN MEETINGS LAW

All committees of the board are public bodies within the meaning of the North Carolina Open Meetings Law and are subject to all requirements of that law pertaining to notice, closed sessions, minutes, voting and penalties (see policy 1420, Compliance with the Open Meetings Law). The chairperson of each committee shall notify the *superintendent* or designee of the time and date of all committee meetings within sufficient time to notify the public of the meetings as required by law.

Legal References: G.S. 115C-36; 143-318.9 *et seq.*

Cross References: Compliance with the Open Meetings Law (policy 1420), Closed Sessions (policy 1421)

Adopted: October 12, 2015

Replaces: Policy 1.06, Board Committees

Revised: May 9, 2016; May 6, 2019

REMOTE PARTICIPATION IN BOARD MEETINGS

Policy Code:

1402

The Watauga County Board of Education (the “board”) acknowledges that attendance at board meetings is essential for its members to perform their official duties and to add to the diversity of thought and opinion in the board’s deliberations. The board strongly encourages its members to be physically present for all board meetings. The board recognizes, however, that extenuating circumstances may occasionally prevent one or more members from being physically present at a meeting. It further recognizes that advances in technology, such as audio and video conferencing, have made it possible for members to communicate and deliberate with each other from remote locations. Therefore, to promote full participation of board members while ensuring access and transparency for the public as required by the Open Meetings Law, G.S. 143-318.9 *et seq.*, the board authorizes remote participation in board meetings subject to existing board operational policies, state law, and the following procedures and requirements.

A. DEFINITIONS

The following definitions apply in this policy:

1. Official Meeting of the Board

An official meeting of the board is an official meeting as defined by G.S. 143-318.10 and policy 1300, Board Meetings, and includes a board meeting, board committee meeting, public hearing, quasi-judicial hearing, or any other gathering that constitutes an official meeting subject to the open meetings law. References to “meeting” in this policy mean an official meeting of the board.

2. Remote Participation

Remote participation occurs when a member participates in an official meeting of the board or any part thereof via electronic means from a place other than the physical location of the meeting designated in the public notice for the meeting.

3. Wholly Remote Meeting

A wholly remote meeting is an official meeting of the board or any part thereof in which all members participate remotely by simultaneous communication via conference telephone, conference video, or other electronic means. A wholly remote meeting has no physical location.

4. State-Declared Emergency

A state-declared emergency exists when there has been a declaration of a state of emergency by the Governor or resolution of the General Assembly pursuant to G.S. 166A-19.20 that is applicable to the area under the board’s jurisdiction.

5. ~~Locally Declared Emergency~~

~~A locally declared emergency exists when there has been a declaration of a local state of emergency by the governing body of a municipality or county in accordance with G.S. 166A-19.22 that is applicable to area under the board's jurisdiction.~~

B. AUTHORIZED CIRCUMSTANCES FOR REMOTE PARTICIPATION

1. Meetings During a State-Declared Emergency

The board acknowledges that in-person meetings are strongly preferred and that a quorum of the board should be physically present for the meeting when reasonably possible. However, ~~in times of~~ during a state-declared emergency, ~~including natural disasters and health emergencies,~~ the board may find it necessary to have some or all of its members participate in meetings remotely.

a. ~~State Declared Emergency~~

During a state-declared emergency, wholly remote meetings or meetings with remote participation by individual member(s) will comply with G.S. 166A-19.24 and the requirements of this policy, including the special rules for meetings held during state-declared emergencies described in Section E, below.

b. ~~Locally Declared Emergency~~

~~During a locally declared emergency, wholly remote meetings and meetings with remote participation by individual member(s) will comply with the requirements of the open meetings law, Sections C and D below, and to the extent not inconsistent with G.S. 143-318.13, the procedures established by G.S. 166A-19.24 as described in Section E, below.~~

2. Meetings Not During a State-Declared Emergency

a. ~~Wholly Remote Meetings~~

The board will not hold wholly remote meetings in the absence of a state- ~~or locally-declared~~ emergency.

b. ~~Remote Participation by Individual Members~~

The board authorizes remote participation by individual members consistent with the requirements of this policy in any meeting of the board that is not a hearing as described in policy 1600, Hearings Before the Board, or other quasi-judicial proceeding.

C. CONDITIONS AND REQUIREMENTS FOR REMOTE PARTICIPATION

1. A member may attend a meeting ~~and participate in board deliberations and decisions by remote participation~~ remotely if the member is prevented from physically attending the meeting due to:
 - a. personal illness, disability, an order of quarantine or isolation, a government-issued “stay-at-home” mandate, or the recommendation of a medical provider or public health officials to limit public interaction;
 - b. out-of-town travel;
 - c. an unexpected lack of child-care;
 - d. family member illness or a family emergency;
 - e. weather conditions;
 - f. military service;
 - g. employment obligations;
 - h. a scheduling conflict; or
 - i. a state or local declaration of a state of emergency that makes in-person attendance at a meeting a violation of an order to reduce social contact or to stay at home for reasons of public health.
2. Remote participation is not to be used solely for a board member’s convenience or to avoid attending a particular meeting in person.
3. No board member may participate remotely more than three times during a calendar year for a reason other than an order of quarantine or isolation, a “stay-at-home” mandate, or a recommendation to limit public interaction, as described in subsection C.1, above; however, in other justifiable circumstances, the board may, by two-thirds vote, agree to waive this limitation.
4. Acceptable means of remote participation include telephone-, Internet-, or satellite-enabled audio or video conferencing, or any other technology that enables the remote participant and all persons present at the meeting location to be clearly audible to one another. Text messaging, instant messaging, email, and web chat without audio are not acceptable means of remote participation.
5. A board member participating in a meeting remotely shall use his or her best efforts to participate in all or as much of the meeting as circumstances permit and

not merely for the closed session portion of the meeting or a limited number of agenda items.

6. A board member participating remotely will not be considered present at the meeting for purposes of establishing and maintaining a meeting quorum except as described in Section E, below.~~and~~

~~6-7.~~ A board member participating remotely will be entitled to participate in open session deliberations at the meeting if, and while:

- a. the member is able to hear other members of the board and any individuals addressing the board, including members of the public who are recognized by the board during public comment; and
- b. all persons present at the meeting location are able to hear the board member who is participating remotely; and

~~w~~When video technology is used, it is preferred that the remote participant is visible to all persons present at the meeting location.

8. A board member who is entitled to participate in open session deliberations may also participate in a closed session of the meeting if the member provides assurance to the board that no other person is able to hear, see, or otherwise participate in the closed session from the member's remote location.

~~7.~~ 9. A board member considered present through remote participation will not be permitted to vote on any action item at the meeting except as described in Section E, below.~~;~~

~~any item for which the member was not participating remotely during the entire discussion and deliberation of the matter preceding the vote; and~~

~~any item that was being discussed when an interruption to the electronic communication occurred, if the board's discussion was not suspended during the interruption. A brief loss of simultaneous communication, such as a few seconds, will not disqualify the member from voting on the matter under discussion.~~

D. PROCEDURE FOR REMOTE PARTICIPATION

1. A member of the board who desires to participate in a meeting remotely shall notify the board chair and the superintendent at least four hours in advance of the meeting so that necessary arrangements can be made. If the member has not already received all documents to be considered at the meeting, the superintendent shall arrange for delivery of the materials in a manner that is practicable under the circumstances.

2. The chair or designee at the meeting location shall initiate contact with the member prior to the start of the meeting to secure participation.
3. The chair shall announce the remote participant and the means of remote participation at the beginning of the meeting.
4. The chair shall remind all members that all chats, instant messages, texts, or other written communications between members of the board regarding the transaction of board business during the meeting, including such communications between or among members participating remotely, are a public record.
5. If the remote participant cannot be physically seen by other members of the board and members of the public present at the meeting, the remote participant must identify himself or herself in each of the following situations:
 - a. when the meeting begins or the roll is taken;
 - b. prior to participating in the deliberations, including making motions, proposing amendments, and raising points of order; and
 - c. prior to voting, if voting is permitted as described in Section E, below.
6. The meeting chair may decide how to address technical difficulties that arise when utilizing remote participation, but whenever possible, the chair should suspend discussion while reasonable efforts are made to correct any problem that interferes with a remote participant's ability to hear or be heard clearly by all persons present at the meeting location. If, however, the technical difficulties distract from or impede the orderly progress of the meeting, a majority of the members physically present may vote to end the remote participation.
7. A member participating remotely shall notify the chair if leaving the meeting before it is adjourned or rejoining the meeting after a period of absence.
8. All votes taken will be by voice vote (rather than by a show of hands).
9. The minutes of the meeting will reflect that the meeting was conducted by use of simultaneous electronic communication, which members were in attendance by simultaneous communication, and when such member(s) joined or left the meeting. Any interruption to or discontinuation of a member's participation will also be noted in the minutes.
10. The member participating remotely will bear the cost of his or her personal telephone or computer usage, and telephone or internet connection, and as well as any other personal costs incurred while the member participates from a remote location.

E. SPECIAL RULES FOR REMOTE MEETINGS DURING A STATE-DECLARED EMERGENCY

The following modifications and additions to the requirements of this policy apply to meetings held during a state-declared emergency.

1. Quasi-judicial hearings may be held remotely with consent of the parties and in conformance with the requirements of G.S. 166A-19.24(f) and this section.
2. Notice of meetings will be provided as required by G.S. 143-318.12 (and 166A-19.24(b1), if the original meeting notice did not specify a remote meeting), and will specify (1) the means by which the public can access the simultaneous live stream of the meeting and (2) any other means by which the public can access the meeting as it occurs.
3. The board need not provide a location for members of the public to listen to the meeting; ~~however, in accordance with G.S. 143-318.13(d), this provision applies only to meetings conducted in accordance with G.S. 166A-19.24 when a state-declared emergency exists.~~
4. All documents to be considered during the meeting shall be provided to each member.
5. The means for simultaneous communication specified in subsection C.4 of the policy must allow for any member to do all of the following:
 - a. hear what is said by the other members;
 - b. hear what is said by any individual addressing the board; and
 - c. to be heard by the other members when speaking to the public body.
6. A member participating by simultaneous communication will be counted as present for quorum purposes, but only during the period that simultaneous communication is maintained for that member ~~in accordance with subsection C.5, above.~~
7. The board will refrain from acting by reference to a document or other materials so as to conceal from public understanding what is being deliberated, voted, or acted upon at the meeting.
8. A board member considered present through remote participation will be permitted to vote on any action item at the meeting except:
 - a. any item for which the member was not participating remotely during the entire discussion and deliberation of the matter preceding the vote; and

b. any item that was being discussed when an interruption to the electronic communication occurred, if the board's discussion was not suspended during the interruption. A brief loss of simultaneous communication, such as a few seconds, will not disqualify the member from voting on the matter under discussion.

8.9. Except when the board is meeting in closed session, the meeting will be simultaneously streamed live online to the public, or if the meeting is conducted by conference call, the public will be provided an opportunity to dial in or stream the audio live and listen to the meeting.

9.10. If the meeting is a public hearing, the board will allow for written comments on the subject of the hearing to be submitted up to 24 hours prior to the scheduled time for the beginning of the public hearing; ~~however, in accordance with G.S. 143-318.13(d), this flexibility applies only to meetings conducted in accordance with G.S. 166A-19.24 when a state-declared emergency exists.~~

10.11. Subsection C.3 of this policy will not apply to remote meetings held during a state-declared or local emergency.

The superintendent is directed to provide the technology sufficient to implement this policy in accordance with all applicable laws.

Legal References: G.S. 166A-19.20, -19.22, -19.24; G.S. ch. 143, art. 33C; *State ex rel. Cannon v. Anson Cnty.*, N.C. App. (2024) N.C. Attorney General Advisory Letter to McCleod, (March 26, 2020), copy available at <https://www.ncsba.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Open-Meetings-advisory-letter.pdf>

Cross References: Board Meetings (policy 1300), Compliance with the Open Meetings Law (policy 1420), Closed Sessions (policy 1421), Board Meeting News Coverage (policy 1425), Quorum (policy 1441), Hearings Before the Board (policy 1600), Public Records – Retention, Release, and Disposition (policy 5070/7350)

Adopted: June 8, 2020

Revised: December 13, 2021; DATE