



**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
April 15, 2025

- | | | |
|------------------|--|--|
| 3:00 p.m. | 1. CALL TO ORDER | Board Chair |
| 3:03 p.m. | 2. WORK SESSION | |
| 4:30 p.m. | 3. CLOSED SESSION
A. Approval of the Minutes for 3/10/2025
B. 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. | 4. OPEN SESSION CALL TO ORDER/
WELCOME/MOMENT OF SILENCE | Board Chair |
| 6:03 p.m. | 5. DISCUSSION AND ADJUSTMENT OF AGENDA | Board Chair |
| 6:05 p.m. | 6. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT
➤ 2025 Raymond Sarbaugh Leadership Award | Dr. Leslie Alexander |
| 6:10 p.m. | 7. VALLE CRUCIS SCHOOL UPDATE | Dr. Leslie Alexander |
| 6:15 p.m. | 8. STUDENTS' REPORT | Ms. Athena Elliott
Ms. Mia Llibre |
| 6:20 p.m. | 9. SPECIAL/PUBLIC RECOGNITION
★ 2025 Dr. Samuel Houston Leadership Award
★ Athletic Director of Excellence
★ 2024-25 Servant's Heart Award | Mr. Jack Hoke
Dr. Chris Blanton
Dr. Leslie Alexander |

6:33 p.m.	10. PUBLIC COMMENT	Board Chair
6:40 p.m.	11. CONSENT AGENDA A. Approval of the Minutes for 3/10/2025 B. Declaration of Surplus C. 2024-25 Budget Amendment #5 D. 2025-26 Current Expense and Capital Outlay Fund Requests E. Amended EOG Second Administration Testing Plan for WCS F. Personnel Report	Board Chair
6:43 p.m.	12. MOLD REMEDIATION SERVICES: OLD VALLE CRUCIS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Dr. Leslie Alexander
6:48 p.m.	13. SCHNEIDER ELECTRIC	Mr. Graham Lewis
7:05 p.m.	14. POLICY: REVISED FOR THIRD READ • 6301: Classified Staff Bus Driving Requirements	Dr. Chris Blanton
7:15 p.m.	15. POLICIES: SUBSTANTIVE FOR SECOND 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 ◦ NCSBA Model Policy 2230 Board Committees	Dr. Wayne Eberle
7:30 p.m.	16. BOARD OPERATIONS ➤ Date for June BOE Meeting	Board Chair
7:40 p.m.	17. BOARD COMMENTS	Board Chair
7:45 p.m.	18. ADJOURNMENT	Board Chair



WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

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WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

DATE: March 10, 2025

TIME: 6:00 p.m.

PLACE: Margaret E. Gragg Education Center

PRESENT:

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

CALL TO ORDER

Board Chair Dr. Gary Childers called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

WELCOME/MOMENT OF SILENCE

Dr. Childers welcomed those in attendance, including Sondra Edwards (current President of the Retired School Personnel of Watauga County). He then requested to observe a moment of silence.

DISCUSSION AND ADJUSTMENT OF AGENDA

There was no discussion or adjustment to the agenda.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

- "Shooting Stars": Artwork will be on display at the Jones House. The Performing Arts Showcase will be on May 2nd at 6:30 p.m. at the Appalachian Theater.
- Student Celebrations
 - Haines Heistand and Mike Menchu-Yax received Goodnight Scholarships through NC State.
 - Hatherley Armfield is a recipient of the Morehead-Cain Scholarship through UNC-Chapel Hill.
 - Maggie Barnes was awarded a \$20,000 scholarship at the North Carolina DECA state competition to be used at the school of her choice.

Recognition Dates

- **Women's History Month**: Teachers will facilitate lessons and activities to celebrate the accomplishments of many influential women, both current and past.
- **Music in Our Schools Month**: Thank you to the music teachers in WCS who help students gain an appreciation for music.
- **National Nutrition Month**: Much gratitude goes to Monica Bolick (Director of Child Nutrition), the Cafeteria Managers, and cafeteria workers for ensuring that students in Watauga County have healthy and delicious meals each day.
- **3/2 ~ "Read Across America" Day**: Several C.O. Directors and BOE members read to classes.
- **3/7 ~ Maintenance Workers Appreciation Day**: Many thanks go to Eric Bolick (Director of Facilities and Maintenance) and his team for keeping schools running by taking care of ongoing projects and responding to maintenance requests and emergencies.
- **3/3 - 3/7 ~ National School Social Worker Week**: Thank you to the social workers who work diligently to keep schools connected to families who may need additional support. With the impact of Hurricane Helene this year, their partnership and support have been especially valuable.

VALLE CRUCIS SCHOOL UPDATE

The storm drain system is complete, and the well tank has been installed. Signage is scheduled to be placed the last week in April, and furniture is to be installed the first week of May. A Temporary Certificate of Occupancy is scheduled for June, which will allow teachers to come in and prepare their classrooms. To get the Final Certificate of Occupancy, the water and sewer must be completed and approved by the state.

STUDENTS' REPORT

- Watauga High School's Model UN participated in their conference competition on March 5th, and many students won honorary awards.
- All juniors will take the ACT and sophomores will take the Pre-ACT on March 11th. 9th and 12th grade students will complete asynchronous assignments off campus.
- Rising 9th-12th graders will soon start choosing their courses for the 2025-26 school year. The *WHS/WIA Course Registration Guide* has been slightly modified this year.

WHS CLUB SHOWCASE

Four WHS clubs were highlighted by club officers.

- ★ **Athletes for Good (AFG)**: Presenting club officers were John Thomas Cook, Maddox Greene, Margaret Greene, and Mary Riddle. The faculty advisor for AFG is Donna Wellborn. "Athletes for Good" is a service-based club designed for (but not limited to) athletes, and it currently has over 100 members. The focus is to serve the community together as student athletes, and participating members take part in service projects once a month.
- ★ **DECA**: Presenting club officers were Maggie Barnes (President) and Sheridan Brasier (Vice-President). The faculty advisor for DECA is Olivia Tarnowski. DECA is an association of marketing students that prepares emerging leaders and entrepreneurs for careers in marketing, finance, hospitality, and management.

- ★ **Sustainability Club:** Club officer Zeke Walker presented, and the faculty advisor is Courtney Capozzoli. The WHS Sustainability Club works to create positive environmental change, and they are divided into three committees: Act (which plans events such as fundraisers, cleanups, and composting), Learn (which manages the website and solar panel kiosk), and Inspire (which engages the community through projects).
- ★ **HOSA:** Presenting club officers were Solomon Triplett (President), Janie Beach-Verhey, and Anna Koontz. The faculty advisor for HOSA is Heather Miller. HOSA is a Career and Technical Education organization for students interested in the health professions, and the club at WHS has around 40 members. HOSA is also a service club, and they volunteer at two blood drives every year.

Dr. Childers commented on how impressive all of these students are with their involvement in the community. He also recognized Emily Greene (County Commissioner and mother of AFG Club Officer Margaret Greene) who was in attendance.

WCS INCLEMENT WEATHER UPDATE/SURVEY RESULTS

Dr. Leslie Alexander presented results from a survey about the school system's inclement weather policy. The survey had 2,117 parent/guardian responses. 63.5% of respondents think remote learning class time is used effectively, and 36.5% do not feel that it is. 56.8% of respondents believe remote learning instruction is effective for their child, and 43.2% do not.

The top concerns raised included:

- Effectiveness of Learning: Many parents believe that students are not learning effectively during remote days and are falling behind.
- Inconsistency in School Closure Decisions: Some parents feel that remote learning is being used too frequently (and on days when they believe in-person attendance would be possible).
- Equity Issues: Internet access, the need for parental supervision, and challenges for students with special needs were frequently mentioned.
- Impact on Working Families: Many families struggle with childcare and balancing work responsibilities on remote learning days.

Suggestions for improvement included:

- Refine Remote Learning Practices: Develop grade-specific remote learning plans that incorporate engaging, age-appropriate content while minimizing screen time and incorporating hands-on activities.
- Improve Communication: Provide advance notice regarding remote learning days to allow parents time to plan and communicate daily summaries of assignments and learning objectives to parents.
- Maximize Instructional Time: Reduce non-essential activities and focus on core subjects during remote days. Some suggest that teachers should be required to teach and keep kids for the entire class period. Start the remote learning day at 8:30 a.m. in the morning instead of later in the day.

427 faculty/staff members responded, and the key themes from their responses included:

- Student Engagement and Participation Challenges
- Need for Clearer Guidelines and Consistency
- Technology and Equity Concerns

- Curriculum and Instruction
- Parental Involvement
- Special Areas and Support Staff
- Length and Frequency of Remote Days

The board agreed by consensus that three working groups (consisting of Central Office personnel, principals, teachers, and parents) be established to study the issues further around 1) transportation; 2) remote learning expectations, 3) adding time to the instructional day. The timeline will be:

- March/April: Develop the teams and have initial meetings.
- May/June: Establish priorities and develop recommendations.
- July: Communicate with stakeholders and plan professional development.
- August: Conduct any necessary training/professional development for faculty/staff.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Jessica Johnson spoke about how she feels remote learning is ineffective for younger students and would like to see more options.

CONSENT AGENDA

- 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

Alison Idol made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Dr. Adam Hege seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

CURRENT EXPENSE AND CAPITAL OUTLAY FUND REQUESTS FOR THE 2025-26 SCHOOL YEAR

Chief Financial Officer Joseph Nash presented the current expense and capital outlay fund requests for the 2025-26 school year. He shared the percentages that come from federal/state/local funding sources, as well as special grants. Included in the information was a long-range plan for curriculum adoption (from 2024-25 to 2031-32) and a capital improvement plan (2025-26 to 2027-28).

RESOLUTIONS

Board Attorney John Henning presented two resolutions.

- ❖ Resolution Authorizing Increase in Micro-Purchase Threshold
Dr. Jay Fenwick made a motion to approve the resolution, Dr. Adam Hege seconded, and all Board members approved.
- ❖ Resolution Delegating Authority to Exempt from the Qualifications-Based Selection Process of Certain Professional Services

Dr. Jay Fenwick moved to approve the resolution, and Dr. Adam Hege seconded. The vote to approve was unanimous among the Board.

POLICIES: FOR APPROVAL ON FIRST READ (Legal Conformity)

- 8305: Federal Grant Administration
 - 8305-R: Federal Grant Administration: Procurement Procedures (*for information only*)
- 9110: Use and Selection of Architects, Engineers, Surveyors, and Construction Managers At Risk

Dr. Adam Hege made a motion to approve policies 8305 and 8305-R. Alison Idol seconded, and all Board members approved.

Alison Idol made a motion to approve policy 9110, and Dr. Adam Hege seconded. The motion was approved by all Board members.

A 5-minute recess was taken and the meeting reconvened at 7:55 p.m.

POLICY: REVISED FOR SECOND READ

- 6301: Classified Staff Bus Driving Requirements

Board members requested a few changes in wording with the policy, and it will be brought back to the April BOE meeting for third read.

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 brought the policies before the Board for first read.

The Board requested that information be presented at the April BOE meeting on threat assessments and the district's response to policy 4200.

BOARD OPERATIONS

- Starting with the April BOE meeting, dinner will be combined with the closed session to allow more time for discussions.
- Dr. Childers shared that the Winter Weather Waiver (submitted by Representative Ray Pickett) passed the first reading and is still in Committee. Dr. Fenwick mentioned the bill that addresses housing development, and he suggested that Dr. Alexander might ask Rep. Pickett his opinion about both.

BOARD COMMENTS

There were no additional comments.

ADJOURNMENT

Alison Idol made a motion to adjourn, Dr. Jay Fenwick seconded, and it was unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 10:04 p.m.

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

Dr. Leslie Alexander, *Superintendent*

Declaration of Surplus Items - APRIL

Date Approved:

Bethel

Asset #	Quantity	Description	Usable	Unusable
NONE		1 NURSE COT- BLUE LEATHER		1
NONE		2 CHAIRS - STUDENT		2
NONE		1 OFFICE CHAIR- TAN		1
		4	0	4

Blowing Rock

Asset #	Quantity	Description	Usable	Unusable
		0	0	0

Cove Creek

Asset #	Quantity	Description	Usable	Unusable
NONE		2 SPEAKERS- PYLEDRYER		2
NONE		1 AMPLIFIER- SOUNDTUBE		1
		3	3	0

Green Valley

Asset #	Quantity	Description	Usable	Unusable
400674		1 AIR CONDITIONER- WINDOW		1
NONE		1 REFRIGERATOR- MINI		1
		2	0	2

Hardin Park

Asset #	Quantity	Description	Usable	Unusable
903897		1 PRINTER- HP LASERJET		1
		1	0	1

Mabel

Asset #	Quantity	Description	Usable	Unusable
		0	0	0

Parkway

Asset #	Quantity	Description	Usable	Unusable
	0		0	0

Valle Crucis

Asset #	Quantity	Description	Usable	Unusable
	0		0	0

Watauga High School- CTE DEPT.

Asset #	Quantity	Description	Usable	Unusable
NONE		1 CHAIR- FACIAL	1	
NONE		1 CHAIR- FACIAL	1	
900420		1 CHAIR- HAIR DRYER		1
907378		1 2000 HONDA ACCORD		1
906504		1 1998 CIRRUS SEDAN		1
51164		1 2002 FORD F-350 XL		1
900502		1 CHAIR- SHAMPOO		1
	7		2	5

Central Office

Asset #	Quantity	Description	Usable	Unusable
	0		0	0

Technology Department

Asset #	Quantity	Description	Usable	Unusable
700159		1 SMARTBOARD		1
28428		1 PROJECTOR		1
28779		1 PROJECTOR		1
25168		1 PROJECTOR		1
700149		1 SMARTBOARD		1
33943		1 PROJECTOR		1
500224		1 SMARTBOARD		1
36658		1 CHROMEBOOK		1
501384		1 CHROMEBOOK		1
33155		1 CHROMEBOOK		1
NONE		1 MONITOR		1
33137		1 CHROMEBOOK		1

34161	1 CHROMEBOOK		1
33397	1 CHROMEBOOK		1
28475	1 DOC CAMERA		1
34632	1 CHROMEBOOK		1
39828	1 CHROMEBOOK		1
35283	1 CHROMEBOOK		1
35313	1 CHROMEBOOK		1
36393	1 TABLET		1
36999	1 IFP		1
36431	1 CHROMEBOX		1
700145	1 SMARTBOARD		1
500754	1 AMPLIFIER		1
500755	1 DVD/VHS PLAYER- SONY	1	
28947	1 PROJECTOR- 98H- EPSON		1
500221	1 SMARTBOARD		1
36899	1 CHROMEBOOK- 11MK		1
800138	1 SMARTBOARD		1
28973	1 PROJECTOR- EPSON		1
300102	1 SMARBOARD 680		1
300010	1 SMARBOARD 680		1
300095	1 SMARBOARD 680		1
300277	1 SMARBOARD 680		1
300124	1 SMARBOARD 680		1
300110	1 SMARBOARD 680		1
300125	1 SMARBOARD 680		1
300113	1 SMARBOARD 680		1
300108	1 SMARBOARD 680		1
300576	1 SMARBOARD 680		1
300123	1 SMARBOARD 680		1
300154	1 SMARBOARD 680		1
80280	1 SMARBOARD 680		1
80276	1 SMARBOARD 680		1
28787	1 DTA-120 Class T Digital Mini Amplifier		1
29864	1 DTA-120 CLASS T DIGITAL MINI AMPLIFIER		1
34586	1 Motorized Fixed Floor Stand - VB-STND-004		1
28456	1 EPSON Bright Link Pro 1420Wi Projector		1
28493	1 EPSON Bright Link Pro 575Wi Projector		1
28598	1 EPSON Bright Link Pro 595Wi Projector		1
28746	1 EPSON Bright Link Pro 595Wi Projector		1
300131	1 NEC NP410		1
300391	1 NEC NP310		1
300610	1 Smart Tech UF65		1
300274	1 HP LaserJet Pro 400 Printer		1

33918	1 EPSON PowerLite 680 Projector	1
32998	1 EPSON PowerLite 680 Projector	1
300583	1 HP DeskJet 5550 Printer	1
300638	1 HP LaserJet 1300 Printer	1
301260	1 HP Laser Jet Pro 402dn Printer	1
300582	1 HP Scanjet 3500c	1
301216	1 Samsung Galaxy Tab 2 7.0	1

62

161

Asset #	Quantity	Description	Usable	Unusable
	0		0	0

Asset #	Quantity	Description	Usable	Unusable
	0		0	0

Asset #	Quantity	Description	Usable	Unusable
	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: April 15, 2025

RE: 2024-25 Budget Amendment #5

Attached is Budget Amendment #5 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	37,680,952	455,395	38,136,347
Federal Grants	2,630,695	0	2,630,695
School Nutrition	2,581,900	0	2,581,900
Extended Learning Centers	725,550	0	725,550
Capital Outlay	4,332,500	749,517	5,082,017
Special Revenue/Scholarship	1,961,041	1,000,000	2,961,041
Total	\$ 67,977,660	\$ 2,204,912	\$ 70,182,572

Watauga County Schools
BUDGET AMENDMENT #5
April 15, 2025

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

BA #5-1 Explanation:

This amendment is to budget additional appropriations received from the State. \$133,397 for EC teachers and TA's. \$100,000 for school safety grants. \$84,914 for mental health services related to Hurricane Helene. \$85,000 for technology impacted by Hurricane Helene. \$901 for driver education training. \$51,183 for transportation budget.

<u>Account Number</u>	<u>Account Title</u>	<u>Amount</u>
1.3100.000.000.000	State Revenues	455,395
1.5000.000.000.000	Instructional Services	319,212
1.6000.000.000.000	Support Services	136,183

**Watauga County Schools
BUDGET AMENDMENT #5
April 15, 2025**

BA #5-2 Explanation:

This amendment is to increase the capital outlay budget for two 5-year leases we entered into. These leases are for transportation repeaters and radios. We are required to budget the total amount of the 5-year leases, per our auditors. Additionally, we are budgeting an amount to pay for 3 new yellow buses. The state pays for these buses, but we are still required to budget for them.

<u>Account Number</u>	<u>Account Title</u>	<u>Amount</u>
4.4850.120.000.000	Installment Purchases	749,517
4.6550.120.462.000	Transportation Leases	280,250
4.6550.120.551.000	School Bus Purchases	469,267

BA #5-3 Explanation:

This amendment is to budget an advance that we received from the State Public Education Property Insurance Fund. We received a \$1,000,000 advance on the claim we filed for Valle Crucis Elementary School. These funds are being used to pay for leases at our two temporary school sites. The remainder is being held for other needs related to Valle Crucis School.

<u>Account Number</u>	<u>Account Title</u>	<u>Amount</u>
8.4840.000.000.000	Insurance Settlement	1,000,000
8.7000.000.000.000	Ancillary Services	1,000,000

Fund	1 digit P	1 digit Purp Desc	Current Budget/Balance	Year-to-Date Exp/Rev	PO's & Encumbrances Outstanding	Remaining Balance	Percent Spent
1	5XXX	Instructional Services	\$33,643,042.55	\$25,385,391.52	\$472,963.66	\$7,784,687.37	76.86%
	6XXX	System-Wide Support Services	\$4,361,717.00	\$3,198,055.43	\$173,403.42	\$990,258.15	77.30%
	7XXX	Ancillary Services	\$131,588.00	\$131,537.16	\$0.00	\$50.84	99.96%
1 Total			\$38,136,347.55	\$28,714,984.11	\$646,367.08	\$8,774,996.36	76.99%
2	5XXX	Instructional Services	\$9,704,608.40	\$7,193,988.90	\$19,573.60	\$2,491,045.90	74.33%
	6XXX	System-Wide Support Services	\$7,880,413.60	\$5,711,842.22	\$267,459.34	\$1,901,112.04	75.88%
	7XXX	Ancillary Services	\$0.00	\$5,716.06	\$0.00	(\$5,716.06)	#VALUE!
	8XXX	Non-Programmed Charges	\$480,000.00	\$313,752.07	\$0.00	\$166,247.93	65.37%
2 Total			\$18,065,022.00	\$13,225,299.25	\$287,032.94	\$4,552,689.81	74.80%
3	5XXX	Instructional Services	\$2,045,232.53	\$1,501,929.35	\$31,943.73	\$511,359.45	75.00%
	6XXX	System-Wide Support Services	\$98,175.90	\$68,179.20	\$0.00	\$29,996.70	69.45%
	8XXX	Non-Programmed Charges	\$487,286.58	(\$2,405.01)	\$0.00	\$489,691.59	-0.49%
3 Total			\$2,630,695.01	\$1,567,703.54	\$31,943.73	\$1,031,047.74	60.81%
4	5XXX	Instructional Services	\$3,868,930.00	\$2,456,561.67	\$104,520.97	\$1,307,847.36	66.20%
	6XXX	System-Wide Support Services	\$1,213,087.00	\$79,931.92	\$693,410.29	\$439,744.79	63.75%
4 Total			\$5,082,017.00	\$2,536,493.59	\$797,931.26	\$1,747,592.15	65.61%
5	7XXX	Ancillary Services	\$2,581,900.00	\$1,588,952.41	\$67,196.84	\$925,750.75	64.14%
5 Total			\$2,581,900.00	\$1,588,952.41	\$67,196.84	\$925,750.75	64.14%
6	7XXX	Ancillary Services	\$725,550.00	\$409,372.02	\$10,710.20	\$305,467.78	57.90%
6 Total			\$725,550.00	\$409,372.02	\$10,710.20	\$305,467.78	57.90%
8	5XXX	Instructional Services	\$1,704,825.55	\$1,230,554.88	\$10,877.99	\$463,392.68	72.82%
	6XXX	System-Wide Support Services	\$253,465.13	\$81,851.22	\$472,081.48	(\$300,467.57)	218.54%
	7XXX	Ancillary Services	\$1,002,750.00	\$169,238.63	\$1,323.70	\$832,187.67	17.01%
8 Total			\$2,961,040.68	\$1,481,644.73	\$484,283.17	\$995,112.78	66.39%
9	8XXX	Non-Programmed Charges	\$0.00	\$8,325.00	\$0.00	(\$8,325.00)	#VALUE!
9 Total			\$0.00	\$8,325.00	\$0.00	(\$8,325.00)	#VALUE!
Grand Total			\$70,182,572.24	\$49,532,774.65	\$2,325,465.22	\$18,324,332.37	73.89%



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: April 15, 2025

RE: Request for Approval of '25-'26 County Budget Request

Consideration:

In a follow-up to the information that was presented in open session to the Board of Education on March 10, 2025, we ask the Board of Education to approve the '25-'26 budget request made to the Watauga County Board of Commissioners. The summary request is presented below.

Payroll	\$11,871,415
School Nurses	\$130,000
School Personnel Supplements	\$130,000
National Board Certifications	\$25,000
Non-Payroll	\$4,360,168
Curriculum Resources	\$170,000
Total	\$16,686,584



WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

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Amended End-Of-Grade (EOG) Second Administration Testing Plan for Watauga County Schools

Purpose: Provide additional remedial support for students in grades 3-8 who were not proficient on *End-Of-Grade* assessments.

Place: Students will participate in the second administration at their home school.

Time: The assessment may take place during the last ten days of the school year during the Testing Window or following the conclusion of the school year before the SY 24-25 accountability year ends on July 7, 2025. The ten day Testing Window for SY 24-25 will occur between May 23rd until June 6th.

Transportation and Snack: Transportation will be provided in the form of convenience or satellite stops **if the assessments will be offered following the conclusion of the school year.** Snacks will be provided before the assessment.

Courses for Remediation: Remediation will take place in Math in grades 3-8 and Reading (ELA) in grades 4-8. Science in grades 5 and 8 are not eligible this year due to NCCPI's Standard Setting Process for new assessments.

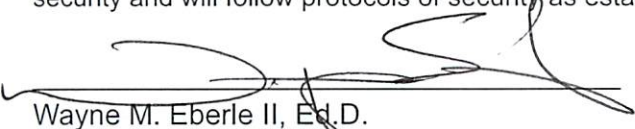
Eligible Students: Students not scoring levels 3, 4 or 5 on spring End-Of-Grade assessments, are strongly encouraged although not required to attend. Participation is optional.

Time: The assessment will take place beginning at or around 8:30A.

Mode: Online

Staffing: Each school will identify effective teachers to lead the remediation efforts in each grade and subject area. School Test Coordinators will be responsible for setting up test sessions and securing proctors.

Test Security: The Director of Accountability and Federal Programs will be responsible for training each schools' test coordinators in a train the trainer model. District and school level personnel will be responsible for maintaining test security and will follow protocols of security as established during regular test administrations.


Wayne M. Eberle II, Ed.D.
Director of Accountability and Federal Programs
Watauga County Schools

3 April 2025
Date

Leslie Alexander, Ed.D., Superintendent
Watauga County Schools

Date

Gary Childers, Ed.D., Chair
Watauga County Schools Board of Education

Date

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 site-based classified staff medically qualified to drive a school bus will have the obligation to do so, as specified in this policy. However, the Board recognizes that, as of the 2024-25 school year, school site-based classified personnel that fulfilled this driving obligation for fifteen years 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 site-based classified staff, with the exception of 1) school secretaries, 2) tutors, 3) cafeteria managers, 4) extended learning center staff, 5) positions designated as hard to fill by the Superintendent or designee and 6) those age 65 or over, are required to obtain and maintain a CDL Driver's License and any local certification requirements 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 site-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 terminated pursuant to policy 7940.

Required school site-based classified staff that have their CDL License revoked or fail to have it renewed after the school year begins will be given sixty (60) calendar days to obtain a clear license or agree to a plan to obtain a clear license with the Director of Human Resources. Required school site-based classified staff who fail to re-obtain the license shall be terminated unless they qualify for another exception under this policy.

In the event that a required school site-based classified employee becomes temporarily or permanently incapable of driving a school bus with reasonable accommodation due to a 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 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 AchievementRead 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 precondition 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 may form standing committees as it deems necessary on an annual basis.

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

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 committee assignments of the board are: Calendar, Elementary Curriculum, Facilities, Finance, High School Curriculum, Media and Technology Advisory, Safe Schools, School Health and Advisory, Teacher of the Year and Watauga Education Foundation.

The chairperson of each standing committee and the members of that committee will be named by the chairperson of the board on an annual basis. The assignment of individual board members to these committees will be published each year.

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.

The board chairperson will be an ex-officio member of each committee. 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.

B. AD HOC COMMITTEES

As time and situations demand, ad hoc committees may be appointed by the chairperson with the approval of the board. Ad hoc committees have no final authority and are subordinate and advisory to the board.

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 2320, Compliance with the Open Meetings Law).

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

Cross References: Compliance with the Open Meetings Law (policy 2320), Closed Sessions (policy 2321)

Replaces: 1370 Board Committees

Adopted: