



**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
August 11, 2025

- | | | |
|------------------|---|----------------------|
| 4:30 p.m. | 1. CALL TO ORDER | Dr. Gary Childers |
| 4:33 p.m. | 2. CLOSED SESSION <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Approval of the Minutes for 7/14/2025 and 7/24/2025B. Reportable Offenses – N.C.G.S.115C-288(g)C. Student Records - N.C.G.S.143-318.11(a)(1)D. Personnel – N.C.G.S.143-318.11(a)(6)E. Attorney-Client - N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3) | Dr. Gary Childers |
| 6:00 p.m. | 3. OPEN SESSION CALL TO ORDER/
WELCOME/MOMENT OF SILENCE | Dr. Gary Childers |
| 6:03 p.m. | 4. DISCUSSION AND ADJUSTMENT OF AGENDA | Dr. Gary Childers |
| 6:05 p.m. | 5. SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT | Dr. Leslie Alexander |
| 6:08 p.m. | 6. VALLE CRUCIS SCHOOL UPDATE | Dr. Leslie Alexander |
| 6:13 p.m. | 7. PUBLIC COMMENT | Dr. Gary Childers |
| 6:20 p.m. | 8. CONSENT AGENDA <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Approval of the Minutes for 7/8/2025 and 7/14/2025B. Field Trip RequestsC. Declaration of SurplusD. Personnel Report | Dr. Gary Childers |

6:23 p.m.	9. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM INCLEMENT WEATHER WORKING GROUPS → Length of Instructional Day → Remote Learning → Transportation	Dr. Leslie Alexander Mr. Phil Norman Dr. Brian Bettis Dr. Chris Blanton
6:40 p.m.	10. CELL PHONES IN SCHOOLS (House Bill 959)	Dr. Leslie Alexander
6:50 p.m.	11. POLICIES: SUBSTANTIVE FOR SECOND READ • 3225/4312/7320: Technology Responsible Use • 3400: Evaluation of Student Progress • 3420: Student Promotion and Accountability • 6220: Operation of School Nutrition Services • 6330: Insurance for Student Transportation Services	Dr. Wayne Eberle
6:55 p.m.	12. POLICIES: SUBSTANTIVE FOR FIRST READ • 1402: Remote Participation in Board Meetings • 1442: Voting Methods • 4002: Parental Involvement • 4200/7270: School Safety • 4329/7311: Bullying and Harassing Behavior Prohibited • 3620: Extracurricular Activities and Student Organizations • 4023/7233: Pregnant and Parenting Students and Employees • 4240/7312: Child Abuse and Related Threats to Child Safety • 8325: Daily Deposits	Dr. Wayne Eberle
7:10 p.m.	13. BOARD OPERATIONS	Dr. Gary Childers
7:15 p.m.	14. BOARD COMMENTS	Dr. Gary Childers
7:20 p.m.	15. ADJOURNMENT	Dr. Gary Childers



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WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

DATE: July 8, 2025

TIME: 1:00 p.m.

PLACE: Boone Chamber of Commerce

PRESENT:

- Gary Childers, Alison Idol, Jay Fenwick, Adam Hege, Charlotte Lloyd, *BOE Members*
- Dr. Leslie Alexander, *Superintendent*
- Dr. Chris Blanton, *Assistant Superintendent*
- Mr. Joseph Nash, *Chief Financial Officer*
- Mr. Chris Campbell, *Board Attorney*

CALL TO ORDER

A special work session was held for Board members to collaborate more in-depth on several pertinent topics. Board Chair Dr. Gary Childers called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m.

SCHNEIDER ELECTRIC

Watauga County Commissioners Braxton Eggers and Ronnie Marsh were in attendance for this portion of the meeting. Dr. Todd Martin (former Superintendent of Yadkin County Schools) was also present to answer any questions since the Yadkin County school district utilizes the services of Schneider Electric.

Mr. Graham Lewis recapped how the guaranteed energy savings contract would enable WCS to upgrade existing schools with energy conservation measures, which would improve facilities and reduce costs through utility savings. The contract would require a formal resolution from the County Commissioners authorizing the Board of Education to execute the agreement. After a Q & A time, Commissioner Chair Braxton Eggers said that he would be in touch with Mr. Lewis after gathering some additional information.

POLICY UPDATE

Board Attorney Chris Campbell shared about the recent legislation on cell phone use. House Bill 959 requires schools to create guidelines in which students would not be able to use, display, or have phones and other wireless communication devices turned on during instructional time. School Boards must also

make exemptions for when a teacher authorizes their use for instruction, or when a student's disability plan or health condition requires device access. The law officially goes into effect 1/1/2026, but WCS wants to start the school year with the expectations in place. An interim policy will be brought to the Board for consideration at the August BOE meeting.

VALLE CRUCIS PROPERTY & FACILITIES

Dr. Alexander, Dr. Blanton, and Chris Campbell provided information for Board members to gain an understanding of the FEMA repair vs. replace calculation, to have an understanding of three possible options for which insurance and FEMA funds could be used, and to make recommendations in a letter of intent to FEMA. Dr. Jay Fenwick made an advisory motion to prioritize that Parkway additions be made (to replace the two mobile units). Alison Idol seconded the advisory motion, and the Board was in agreement. Dr. Fenwick also made an advisory motion that renovation of the unflooded section of Valle Crucis School be included as the next option in the letter of intent to FEMA, and Dr. Adam Hege seconded. There was consensus among all Board members, and official action will be taken at the 7/14/2025 BOE meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:26 p.m.

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

Dr. Leslie Alexander, *Superintendent*



WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

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175 Pioneer Trail Boone, NC 28607
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WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

DATE: July 14, 2025

TIME: 6:00 p.m.

PLACE: Margaret E. Gragg Education Center

PRESENT:

- Gary Childers, Alison Idol, Jay Fenwick (remote/virtual), Adam Hege, Charlotte Lloyd, *BOE Members*
- Dr. Leslie Alexander, *Superintendent*
- Mr. John Henning, *Board Attorney*

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME/MOMENT OF SILENCE

Board Chair Dr. Gary Childers called the open session meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. He welcomed those in attendance and then requested to observe a moment of silence.

DISCUSSION AND ADJUSTMENT OF AGENDA

Dr. Alexander requested that "Action on FEMA Project Approval" be added to the agenda after the Valle Crucis update.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

- The Board of Education members recently had a work session that focused on priorities for the upcoming school year including the implementation of recent cell phone use legislation, budget priorities, and facilities needs. Dr. Alexander will work with principals to develop recommendations for cell phone use, and an update will be given at the August Board meeting.
- Dr. Alexander thanked Dr. Chris Blanton, Dr. Brian Bettis, and Mr. Phil Norman for facilitating inclement weather work groups. She is appreciative of the district employees and parents who have been participating in these discussions about transportation routes, remote learning practices, and the length of the instructional day. These groups have been meeting over the summer and are finalizing their recommendations.
- Dr. Alexander expressed her gratitude to Dr. Brian Bettis, school administrators, teachers, and employees who have been supporting the students participating in summer school camps.

- WCS has struggled over the past year to find a sufficient number of bus drivers. Dr. Alexander commended the HR team and the principals who have been working diligently to find placements for certain classified employees impacted by a recent change in the policy.
- Watauga County Schools and the Watauga Education Foundation will host a community event on August 5th at 5:30 p.m. at Watauga High School for Dr. Scott St. Clair to share research about the impacts of technology and social media on mental health.
- New Employee Orientation is August 5th-7th.
- The “Back-2-School Festival” will be at Watauga High School on Saturday, August 9th, from 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Parents should check school websites for designated times if they plan to attend.
- *Convocation* will be on Tuesday, August 12th at 9:00 a.m. at W.H.S. for all district employees.
- The first day of school for students is Monday, August 18th.

After her Superintendent’s Report, Dr. Alexander recognized Ms. Meredith Jones who will be leaving WCS after working in the district for 24 years, as she steps into a new role at the start of August. Ms. Jones began her career with Watauga County Schools in 2001 as a Social Studies teacher at Watauga High School. Near the end of 2006 until 2025, she served as a Curriculum Specialist and Director of Middle Grades Education focusing on middle grades, Arts, and P.E. Ms. Jones’ family was present to share in this acknowledgement and appreciation of her service to the school system.

VALLE CRUCIS SCHOOL UPDATE

The water supply has been run to the building. Additional large concrete pours will occur on July 14th and 16th. The remaining painting starts July 14-18, and the rest of the furniture is to be installed July 28-August 1. The TAB (Testing, Adjusting, and Balancing) report is ongoing, and safety and health inspections are being scheduled. The contractor has said final inspection is on schedule to occur before the start of school, but the architect is not sure this will happen.

ACTION ON FEMA PROJECT APPROVAL

Board Attorney John Henning explained repair value vs. rebuild value. Charlotte Lloyd made a motion to approve a letter of intent to FEMA outlining what the school system would plan to do if awarded funds equal to the full replacement value of the old Valle Crucis School. Alison Idol seconded, and it was unanimously approved by all Board members. One priority would be to add additional permanent classroom spaces at Parkway School, and another project would be to install HVAC systems in the schools. WCS is also exploring the possibility of renovating the unflooded portion of the old Valle Crucis School in order to expand program offerings and address ongoing community needs. Dr. Alexander explained that the letter is just the “next step” in the process. Scopes of work cannot be developed until the district knows the final allocation from FEMA to know which requested projects could be funded.

SPECIAL/PUBLIC RECOGNITION

Dave Harrison Athletic Director of the Year Award

Mr. Dustin Kerley was recognized as the Dave Harris Athletic Director of the Year Award winner for the 2024-25 school year during the North Carolina High School Athletic Association’s awards ceremony on June 18th. This is a statewide honor recognizing the best Athletic Director in the state.

According to the NCHSAA's website, this award seeks to recognize and honor an Athletic Director who has an impeccable reputation amongst his or her peers for championing good behavior and exemplifying integrity and fairness. This honor comes on the heels of Kerley being selected as the Athletic Director of Excellence by the North Carolina Athletic Directors Association back in late April.

Assistant Superintendent Dr. Chris Blanton said that Dustin Kerley, who lives by the motto that "best is the standard," is "very, very deserving of this award." Dr. Alexander commented that Dustin is positive and solution-oriented, and that he always works for the students. Coach Kerley described athletics as "the last class of the day," and commented that "it's a lot of help from a lot of people that makes our athletics very successful."

Servant's Heart Award

The Servant's Heart Award is the highest honor presented by the Superintendent and Watauga County Board of Education, and it is to recognize those who have gone above and beyond the call of duty with their service and their heart. On March 28th, Watauga High School student Chandler McGuire went into cardiac arrest while outside with his JROTC class. Several WHS employees provided quick-acting and life-saving measures through their assessment, CPR, and use of an AED (automated external defibrillator) until emergency personnel arrived. Chandler is doing amazingly well overall, and this is in large part due to the seamless collaboration and teamwork of several individuals in those first initial minutes.

Honored were Sgt. Major Derek Lisowski, 1st Sgt. Michael Maylum, SRO Seth Morrison, Cindy Lentz, and Assistant Principal Daniel Machon. Chandler and his family were present, which made the recognition extra special. Chandler's mother Cindy McGuire expressed her immense gratitude to these individuals, saying that "God put them in the right place at the right time."

PUBLIC COMMENT

Six individuals spoke and shared their feelings regarding Policy 6301: Classified Staff Bus Driving Requirements. Those making public comments included Ella Nelsen, Patty Nelsen, Stephanie Yates, Amber Kerley, Megan Turner, and Joni Horine.

The Board took a 10-minute recess.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of the Minutes for 5/12/2025
- B. Declaration of Surplus
- C. 2024-25 Budget Amendment #6
- D. 2025-26 Request for Adoption of Interim Continuing Budget Resolution
- E. 2025-26 Student/Parent Mobile Computing Device Handbook
- F. 2025-26 WCS Student Fees
- G. 2025-26 WCS After School Rates/Fees
- H. 2025-26 School Nutrition Contract Approvals
- I. 2025-26 Meal Price Increases
- J. 2025-26 Proposed Title I Budget
- K. NC Driving School Contract
- L. Personnel Report

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

CURRICULUM UPDATE

Chief Academic Officer Phil Norman shared updates about the following:

- Summer Learning Opportunities
- K-12 Facilitated Assessment of MTSS
- 2025 Student Achievement Summary (K-3 Literacy)
- 2025 District 3-8 EOG Student Achievement Summary
- 2025 EOG Second Administration
- 2025 WHS EOC Student Achievement Summary
- 2025 CTE Student Achievement Summary

A “glow” is that staff focused on priority standards and targeted their instruction and interventions to maximize the time they had in a hurricane-shortened year. This focus resulted in most of the student groups growing and actually increasing in proficiency from last year. A “grow” is that K-3 students will need additional support next year in literacy skills to show this same improvement.

The Curriculum Team will center their attention on overseeing the following during 2025-26:

- K-8:
 - Continue instructional focus on K-3 literacy;
 - Provide high-impact tutoring in K-3 literacy (to begin in the fall of 2025 at three of the K-8 schools through a Belk grant that was awarded);
 - Intensify core instruction;
 - Reinforce student support systems through the FAM-S (Facilitated Assessment of MTSS) at the school level with district support.
- WHS:
 - Increase focus on NC Check-In data analysis by Math I PLT's;
 - Strengthen staff knowledge of literacy instruction across all content areas.

POLICY: SUBSTANTIVE FOR THIRD READ

- 1370: Board Committees

Adam Hege made a motion to approve Policy 1370. Alison Idol seconded, and all Board members approved.

POLICIES: SUBSTANTIVE FOR FIRST READ

- 3225/4312/7320: Technology Responsible Use
- 3400: Evaluation of Student Progress
- 3420: Student Promotion and Accountability
- 6220: Operation of School Nutrition Services
- 6330: Insurance for Student Transportation Services

Dr. Tierra Stark presented the policies which will be brought back for second read at the August BOE Meeting.

BOARD OPERATIONS

Dr. Alexander, Dr. Childers, and Alison Idol have a meeting on July 15th regarding the status of the new Valle Crucis School, and they will provide the other Board members with an update after the meeting.

BOARD COMMENTS

There were no additional Board comments.

ADJOURNMENT

Charlotte Lloyd made a motion to adjourn, Alison Idol seconded, and it was unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

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

Dr. Leslie Alexander, *Superintendent*

WATAUGA COUNTY FIELD TRIP REQUEST FORM

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

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

Sponsoring teacher: (Print) Kim Pryor School: Watauga High School
Cell phone number: 828-773-3330 Grade(s): 10th-12th Number of students: 18
Departure date: 8-15-25 Return date: 8-17-25
Departure time: 6 AM Return time: 1 PM

Educational purpose:

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

Isle of Palms, SC ; Charleston, SC Itinerary attached

Purpose of trip and how it relates to the curriculum: Each season, we go on a Varsity weekend retreat. This season we would like to take our girls to Isle of Palms and train on the beach and use the time to bond as a team.

Supervision and Safety:

Names of all school staff chaperones: Kim Pryor, Susan Miller

Names of all non-school chaperones: Becca Bumgarner, Brelyn Sturgill, Hannah Masucci

All chaperones have a background check completed: ☒

Sponsoring teacher initials: KP

Are all site(s) accessible to students with disabilities? ☒ yes ☐ no How will students with disabilities be accommodated for site access and transportation? We are taking a small

activity bus

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

Transportation plan:

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

Name of charter bus company (if checked above) _____

(If applicable, bus request form must be attached)

Driver/s: Kim Pryor Round trip mileage: 630 # of buses needed: 1

Total cost per student \$ 100 Source of funds: Vball Acct.

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

Approval/Signatures:

Sponsoring teacher signature: Kim Pryor Date: 8/5/25

Principal approval: [Signature] Date: 8/5/2025

Required signatures if applicable:

Transportation Director approval: [Signature] Date: 8/5/25

Superintendent approval: [Signature] Date: 8/6/25

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



**Watauga Volleyball
2025 Varsity Retreat**

Friday, 8-15-25

6 am Travel to Isle of Palms in an activity bus
3 Check-in to AirBnB
4 Beach/Pool Time
6-7 Dinner at residence
7-9 Team Bonding
12 am Bedtime

Saturday, 8-16-25

9-10 Breakfast
11-1 Beach Volleyball Tournament
1-5 Beach/Time
5-6 Team Building
6-7 Dinner
7-9 Team Questions/Games
12 am Bedtime

Sunday, 8-17-25

9-10 Breakfast
10 Checkout
10 Travel home

Varsity Roster

- Emma Pastusic
- Kora Knight
- Lilli Combs
- Lainey Gragg
- Ashlyn Smith
- Ava Zaragoza
- Graycie Collins
- Julia Rowan
- Hannah Adams
- Rae Coffey
- Jillian Martin
- Caroline Childers
- Gracyn Phelps
- Addie Stough
- Kira Beasley
- Haileigh Peele
- Athena Elliott
- Alaina Portaro

****All coaches are CPR/AED certified (certification uploaded in Family ID)**

****All activities will be under the supervision of our staff, including all pool activities being supervised by an adult chaperone; water plan attached**



Water Activity Safety Plan

8/4/25

On Friday, August 15 - 17, 2025 the Watauga Volleyball team will travel to Isle of Palms for our annual varsity retreat. The team will stay in an Air BNB residence with a pool and hot tub and access to the beach. The following protocols will be followed:

- Kim Pryor, Becca Bumgarner, Hannah Masucci, Susan Miller, and Brelyn Sturgill will chaperone the trip and are CPR-certified and one of these chaperones will be near the pool anytime the team is outside in proximity to the pool or hot tub or beach.
- Clear rules for pool and hot tub use will be discussed with the team and no horseplay or diving will be permitted.
- The team will only be allowed on the beach and in the water if 1 adult chaperone is on the beach with them. Isle of Palms Park has certified lifeguards on duty.
- There will be a curfew for the team to ensure that the girls are inside the residence by midnight each night and no one on the team will be allowed outside the residence in the mornings until accompanied by a chaperone.

If more details need to be added to this plan or clarification is required, please contact Kim Pryor at pryor@wataugaschools.org or 828-773-3330.

WATAUGA COUNTY FIELD TRIP REQUEST FORM

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

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

Sponsoring teacher: (Print) Randy McDonough School: Watauga High

Cell phone number: 828-964-0099 Grade(s): 9-12 Number of students: 50

Departure date: 8/29/25 Return date: 8/30/25

Departure time: 4:00 pm Return time: 2:00 pm

Educational purpose:

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

Spartanburg, SC Roger Milliken Center
Hotel - Hampton Inn in Spartanburg (I-85)

Purpose of trip and how it relates to the curriculum: The cross country teams
will be competing in the Eye Opener 2025 Invitational
They will have a chance to compete against some
of the top teams in the South.

Supervision and Safety:

Names of all school staff chaperones: Randy McDonough, Scott Townsend,
Dan McAlary, Alyssia Ruggerio

Names of all non-school chaperones: Dolly Reaves, Alayna McLaughlin

All chaperones have a background check completed: ☒ Sponsoring teacher initials: RM

Are all site(s) accessible to students with disabilities? ☒ yes ☐ no How will students with disabilities be accommodated for site access and transportation? We will not have any students with disabilities on this trip

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

Transportation plan:

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

Name of charter bus company (if checked above) _____

(If applicable, bus request form must be attached)

Driver/s: R. McDonough, D. McAulay Round trip mileage: 225 # of buses needed: 2

Total cost per student \$ 40 Source of funds: Students, Athletics

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

Approval/Signatures:

Sponsoring teacher signature: RM Date: 7 / 9 / 2025

Principal approval: [Signature] Date: 7 / 21 / 2025

Required signatures if applicable:

Transportation Director approval: [Signature] Date: 7 / 25 / 25

Superintendent approval: [Signature] Date: 8 / 5 / 25

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

Declaration of Surplus Items - August 2025

Date Approved: _____

Bethel

<u>Asset #</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Usable</u>	<u>Unusable</u>
NONE	1	CD/TAPE PLAYER- RCA		1
	1		0	1

Blowing Rock

<u>Asset #</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Usable</u>	<u>Unusable</u>
42090	1	ACCESS POINT- MERAKI		1
200776	1	PROJECTOR- NEC		1
33942	1	PROJECTOR- EPSON		1
200781	1	PROJECTOR- NEC		1
33439	1	CHROMEBOOK		1
33444	1	CHROMEBOOK		1
33438	1	CHROMEBOOK		1
	7		0	7

Cove Creek

<u>Asset #</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Usable</u>	<u>Unusable</u>
NONE	2	TABLES- CAFETERIA	2	
NONE	1	WHITEBOARD	1	
NONE	3	TABLES- COMPUTER		3
	6		3	3

Green Valley

<u>Asset #</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Usable</u>	<u>Unusable</u>
400107	1	DOC CAMERA		1
401084	1	DOC CAMERA		1

2

0

2

Hardin Park

<u>Asset #</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Usable</u>	<u>Unusable</u>
33535	1	CHROMEBOOK		1
51712	1	CHROMEBOOK		1
33536	1	CHROMEBOOK		1
51646	1	CHROMEBOOK		1
33525	1	CHROMEBOOK- 300e		1
33562	1	CHROMEBOOK- 300e		1
33473	1	CHROMEBOOK- 300e		1
33505	1	CHROMEBOOK- 300e		1
33647	1	CHROMEBOOK- 300e		1
33541	1	CHROMEBOOK- 300e		1
51811	1	CHROMEBOOK- N23 YOGA		1
11			0	11

Mabel

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

Parkway

<u>Asset #</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Usable</u>	<u>Unusable</u>
51662	1	CHROMEBOOK- N23 YOGA		1
36239	1	CHROMEBOOK		1
NONE	3	SCIENCE KITS	3	
700529	1	AMPLIFIER		1
6			3	3

Valle Crucis

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

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Watauga High School

<u>Asset #</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Usable</u>	<u>Unusable</u>
51907	1	CHROMEBOOK- 300e		1
51721	1	CHROMEBOOK- N23 YOGA		1
51908	1	CHROMEBOOK- 300e		1
35557	1	CHROMEBOOK- 100e		1
33431	1	CHROMEBOOK- 300e		1
33423	1	CHROMEBOOK- 300e		1
33626	1	CHROMEBOOK- 300e		1
33629	1	CHROMEBOOK- 300e		1
33422	1	CHROMEBOOK- 300e		1
33658	1	CHROMEBOOK- 300e		1
37406	1	CHROMEBOOK- HP11		1

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11

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Central Office

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

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Technology Department

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

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Transportation Department

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

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Maintenance Department

<u>Asset #</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Usable</u>	<u>Unusable</u>
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Child Nutrition

<u>Asset #</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Usable</u>	<u>Unusable</u>
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REMOTE PARTICIPATION IN BOARD MEETINGS

Policy Code:

1402

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

A. DEFINITIONS

The following definitions apply in this policy:

1. Official Meeting of the Board

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

2. Remote Participation

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

3. Wholly Remote Meeting

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

4. State-Declared Emergency

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

5. ~~Locally Declared Emergency~~

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

B. AUTHORIZED CIRCUMSTANCES FOR REMOTE PARTICIPATION

1. Meetings During a State-Declared Emergency

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

a. ~~State-Declared Emergency~~

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

b. ~~Locally Declared Emergency~~

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

2. Meetings Not During a State-Declared Emergency

a. ~~Wholly Remote Meetings.~~

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

b. ~~Remote Participation by Individual Members~~

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

C. CONDITIONS AND REQUIREMENTS FOR REMOTE PARTICIPATION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

D. PROCEDURE FOR REMOTE PARTICIPATION

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

2. The chair or designee at the meeting location shall initiate contact with the member prior to the start of the meeting to secure participation.
3. The chair shall announce the remote participant and the means of remote participation at the beginning of the meeting.
4. The chair shall remind all members that all chats, instant messages, texts, or other written communications between members of the board regarding the transaction of board business during the meeting, including such communications between or among members participating remotely, are a public record.
5. If the remote participant cannot be physically seen by other members of the board and members of the public present at the meeting, the remote participant must identify himself or herself in each of the following situations:
 - a. when the meeting begins or the roll is taken;
 - b. prior to participating in the deliberations, including making motions, proposing amendments, and raising points of order; and
 - c. prior to voting, if voting is permitted as described in Section E, below.
6. The meeting chair may decide how to address technical difficulties that arise when utilizing remote participation, but whenever possible, the chair should suspend discussion while reasonable efforts are made to correct any problem that interferes with a remote participant's ability to hear or be heard clearly by all persons present at the meeting location. If, however, the technical difficulties distract from or impede the orderly progress of the meeting, a majority of the members physically present may vote to end the remote participation.
7. A member participating remotely shall notify the chair if leaving the meeting before it is adjourned or rejoining the meeting after a period of absence.
- ~~8. All votes taken will be by voice vote (rather than by a show of hands).~~
- ~~9.8.~~ The minutes of the meeting will reflect that the meeting was conducted by use of simultaneous electronic communication, which members were in attendance by simultaneous communication, and when such member(s) joined or left the meeting. Any interruption to or discontinuation of a member's participation will also be noted in the minutes.
- ~~10.9.~~ The member participating remotely will bear the cost of his or her personal telephone or computer usage, and telephone or internet connection, and as well as any other personal costs incurred while the member participates from a remote location.

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

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

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

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

9. All votes will be taken by roll call.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Adopted: June 8, 2020

Revised: December 13, 2021; DATE

Voting will normally be by show of hands on all matters coming before the Watauga County Board of Education (the “board”) for action. For remote meetings held during a state-declared emergency, however, all votes will be taken by roll call. Regardless of the method of voting, the minutes will reflect the vote of each member voting and the abstention of any member present but not voting, unless the vote is unanimous.

A board member must vote on all issues unless the member has a conflict of interest or is unable to remain impartial in a judicial matter before the board. If a board member recuses himself or herself from a vote, the member will state the reason before the vote is taken and the reason will be recorded in the minutes. A failure to vote by a member who is present and has not been excused as set forth herein shall be recorded as an affirmative vote. A vote to abstain is also an affirmative vote.

No secret ballots are permitted. If the board decides, by majority vote, to vote by written ballot, each member must sign his or her ballot, and the ballots must be available for public inspection in the superintendent’s office immediately following the meeting and until the minutes are approved. The minutes of the meeting must specify the vote of each member’s written ballot. The ballots may be destroyed after the minutes of the meeting have been approved. Written ballots may not be used for remote meetings held during a state-declared emergency.

Legal References: G.S. 143-318.13; 166A-19.24; *Crump v. Board of Education*, 93 N.C. App. 168, *aff’d*, 326 N.C. 603 (1990); N.C. Attorney General Advisory Opinion, 54 Op. Att’y. Gen. 86 (1985)

Cross References: Board Member Conflict of Interest (policy 1321), Remote Participation in Board Meetings (policy 2302)

Adopted: November 9, 2015

Replaces: Board policy 1.04, Procedures for Board Meetings (in part)

Revised: DATE

The Watauga County Board of Education (the “board”) recognizes the critical role of parents in the education of their children and in the schools. The board directs school administrators to develop programs that will promote and support parental involvement in student learning and achievement at school and at home and encourage successful progress toward graduation. Each parent is encouraged to learn about the educational program, the educational goals and objectives of the school system, and his or her own child’s progress. The board also encourages parents to participate in their children’s education and in activities designed by school personnel to involve them, such as parent conferences, in order to foster effective teacher and parent communication. Parents are responsible for cooperating with school employees to facilitate their children’s compliance with board policies concerning homework, school attendance, and behavior. As required by law, the board shall post a list of specific parent rights with regards to their child’s education with any corresponding policy numbers on the school district website.

For purposes of this policy, “parent” includes parents, legal guardians, and legal custodians of students who are under 18 years old and who have not been emancipated.

A. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT PLANS

1. Parental Involvement Plan as Part of the School Improvement Plan

The board directs each principal to ensure that the school improvement team develops a plan for the school’s parental involvement program as a part of the school improvement plan. The principal shall publicize drafts of the parental involvement plan prior to finalization and solicit input from parents of students in the school. This plan must include, at a minimum, efforts to enhance parental involvement by promoting the following priorities:

- a. regular, meaningful, two-way communication between home and school;
- b. responsible parenting;
- c. involvement of parents in student learning;
- d. parental volunteering in the school;
- e. involvement of parents in school decisions that affect children and families;
- f. parental training based on parents’ informational needs;
- g. collaboration with community agencies and other organizations to provide resources to strengthen school programs, families, and student learning; and
- h. student health awareness among parents by addressing the need for health

programs and student health services, which are linked to student learning.

2. Title I Parent and Family Engagement Plan

Each school participating in the Title I program must develop, with parents and family members, a school-level written parent and family engagement plan that involves parents in the planning and improvement of Title I activities and describes the means for carrying out school-level policy, sharing responsibility for student academic achievement, building the capacity of school staff and parents for involvement, and increasing accessibility for participation of all parents and family members of children participating in Title I programs. See policy 1320/3560, Title I Parent and Family Engagement.

3. Parental Involvement Component of a School Plan for Managing Student Behavior

Each school's plan for managing student behavior should include parental involvement strategies that address when parents will be notified or involved in issues related to their child's behavior. See policy 4302, School Plan for Management of Student Behavior.

B. PARENT COMMUNICATION, PARTICIPATION, AND CONFERENCES

1. Communication with Parents

The board encourages school personnel to have regular contact with parents for informational purposes as well as for commendation of students and notification of concerns. School personnel shall communicate with parents about student behavior issues in accordance with requirements of policy 4341, Parental Involvement in Student Behavior Issues, and about student attendance as described in policy 4400, Attendance. In addition, parents will be notified promptly if school personnel suspect that a criminal offense has been committed against the parent's child, unless notification would impede an investigation by law enforcement or the child welfare agency.

The principal must effectively communicate to parents the manner in which textbooks are used to implement the school's curricular objectives. Any parent interested in learning more about their child's course of study or the source of any supplementary instructional materials should contact the principal for more information. If a parent would like to inspect and review particular instructional materials, the parent should make such a request in accordance with policy 3210, Parental Request to Review Instructional Materials.

The principal also shall ensure that information about the nature and purpose of all clubs and activities, curricular and extracurricular, offered at the school is available at the school's main office. Any parent who would like information about such clubs or activities should contact the school's main office.

The principal or designee shall strive, through oral or written communication or other means, to include the parents of students identified as at-risk in the implementation and review of academic and/or behavioral interventions for their children, in accordance with policy 3405, Students at Risk of Academic Failure.

The principal or designee shall provide the parent of each student in kindergarten, first, or second grade with written notification of the student's reading progress. The notice will be provided three times a year, following each benchmark assessment and will include: (1) assessment results, (2) whether the child may not reach reading proficiency by the end of third grade, and (3) instructional support activities for use at home.

2. Parent Participation at Schools

The board encourages parents to engage in activities in their children's schools. Parents are welcome to visit schools in accordance with policy 5020, Visitors to the Schools, and, if interested, are urged to participate in school volunteer programs as described in policy 5015, School Volunteers. In addition, opportunities exist for parents to participate on school advisory councils, such as the school health advisory council (see policy 6140, Student Wellness), school improvement teams (see policy 3430, School Improvement Plan), school media and technology advisory committees (see policy 3200, Selection of Instructional Materials), and the business advisory council (see policy 1670, Business Advisory Council).

3. Conferences

Teachers are responsible for scheduling conferences or meetings with parents. The board encourages the superintendent to work with local business leaders, including the local chambers of commerce, to encourage employers to adopt, as part of their stated personnel policies, time for employees who are parents or guardians to attend conferences with their child's teachers.

C. PARENTAL NOTIFICATION

1. Title I Notifications

Each principal or designee of a Title I school shall effectively notify parents of all parental rights and other required information regarding Title I schools and programs, in accordance with federal law. Parents of students in Title I schools shall receive a copy of the system-wide Title I parent and family engagement policy (policy 3560) and the school-wide parent involvement plan.

2. Parent Guide for Student Achievement

Each year, the superintendent or designee shall create a parent guide for student

achievement that meets the requirements of state law and the State Board of Education. All parents will receive a written copy of the guide, and information in the guide will be discussed at the beginning of each school year in meetings of students, parents, and teachers.

At a minimum the guide will include the following:

- a. information for parents regarding the following as it pertains to their child:
(1) requirements for promotion to the next grade, including the requirements of the North Carolina Read to Achieve Program as set forth in Part 1A of Article 8 of Chapter 115C; (2) the course of study, textbooks, and other supplementary instructional materials and policy 3210, Parental Request to Review Instructional Materials, which provides for the inspection and review of those materials; (3) the child's progress toward achieving State and unit expectations for academic proficiency, including policies for student assessment, and the child's assessment results, report cards, and progress reports; (4) qualifications of the child's teachers, including licensure status; and (5) school entry requirements, including required immunizations and the recommended immunization schedule;
- b. parental actions that can do the following: (1) strengthen the child's academic progress, especially in the area of reading as provided in the North Carolina Read to Achieve Program; (2) strengthen the child's citizenship, especially social skills and respect for others; (3) strengthen the child's realization of high expectations and setting lifelong learning goals; and (4) place a strong emphasis on the communication between the school and the home;
- c. services available for parents and their children, such as family literacy services; mentoring, tutoring, and other academic reinforcement programs; after-school programs; and college planning, academic advisement, and student counseling services (see policy 3610, Counseling Program);
- d. opportunities for parental participation, such as parenting classes, adult education, school advisory councils, and school volunteer programs;
- e. opportunities for parents to learn about rigorous academic programs that may be available for their child, such as academically and/or intellectually gifted programming, honors programs, Career and College Promise and other dual enrollment opportunities, advanced placement, Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) courses, International Baccalaureate, North Carolina Virtual High School courses, and accelerated access to postsecondary education;
- f. educational choices available to parents, including each type of public school unit available to residents of the county in which the child lives and

nonpublic school options, educational choice options offered within the school system, and programs for scholarship grants for nonpublic schools (Part 2A of Article 39 of Chapter 115C) and for personal education student accounts for students with disabilities (Article 41 of Chapter 115C);

- g. rights of students who have been identified as students with disabilities, as provided in Article 9 of Chapter 115C;
- h. contact information for school and unit offices;
- i. resources for information on the importance of student health and other available resources for parents, including the following information on available immunizations and vaccinations: (1) a recommended immunization schedule in accordance with the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommendations; and (2) information about meningococcal meningitis and influenza, including the causes, symptoms, and vaccines, how the diseases are spread, and places where parents and guardians may obtain additional information and vaccinations for their children as required by G.S. 115C-375.4; and
- j. this policy (policy 4002, Parental Involvement); policy 3560, Title I Parent and Family Engagement; policy 1670, Business Advisory Council; policy 3210, Parental Request to Review Instructional Materials; policy 3430, School Improvement Plan; policy 3540, Comprehensive Health Education Program; policy 4400, Attendance; policy 5015, School Volunteers; policy 5020, Visitors to the Schools; and policy 6140, Student Wellness.

3. Additional Annual Notifications

The principal or designee shall annually notify parents of the following information to the extent that it has not already been provided to parents as part of the parent guide for student achievement:

- a. parental rights related to student records (see policy 4700, Student Records);
- b. parental rights related to student surveys (see policy 4720, Surveys of Students);
- c. the approximate dates of any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening that is: (a) required as a condition of attendance, (b) administered and scheduled in advance by the school administration, and (c) not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of students;
- d. the schedule of pesticide use on school property and their right to request notification of nonscheduled pesticide use (see policy 9205, Pest

Management);

- e. student behavior policies, the Code of Student Conduct, and school standards and rules (see policies in the 4300 series);
- f. the permissible use of seclusion and restraint in the schools (see regulation 4302-R, Rules for Use of Seclusion and Restraint in Schools);
- g. policy 1735/4329/7311, Bullying and Harassing Behavior Prohibited;
- h. policy 4010, Student and Parent Grievance Procedure;
- i. the dates of the system-wide and state-mandated tests that students will be required to take during that school year, how the results from the tests will be used, and whether each test is required by the State Board of Education or by the local board;
- j. grading practices that will be followed at the school and, for parents of high school students, the method of computing the grade point averages that will be used for determining class rank (see policies 3400, Evaluation of Student Progress, and 3450, Class Rankings);
- k. available opportunities and the enrollment process for students to take advanced courses and information explaining the value of taking advanced courses;
- l. if applicable, that their child will be provided advanced learning opportunities in mathematics or will be placed in an advanced mathematics course;
- ~~l-m.~~ when a student initially creates a career development plan, that the plan has been created and information on how to access the plan;
- ~~m-n.~~ a clear and concise explanation of the North Carolina testing and accountability system that includes all information required by federal law;
- ~~n-o.~~ a report containing information about the school system and each school, including, but not limited to:
 - i. the following information both in the aggregate and disaggregated by category: student achievement, graduation rates, performance on other school quality and/or student success indicators, the progress of students toward meeting long-term goals established by the state, student performance on measures of school climate and safety, and, as available, the rate of enrollment in post-secondary education;

- ii. the performance of the school system on academic assessments as compared to the state as a whole and the performance of each school on academic assessments as compared to the state and school system as a whole;
 - iii. the percentage and number of students who are:
 - 1. assessed,
 - 2. assessed using alternate assessments,
 - 3. involved in preschool and accelerated coursework programs, and
 - 4. English learners achieving proficiency;
 - iv. the per pupil expenditures of federal, state, and local funds; and
 - v. teacher qualifications;
- e-p. the grade earned by the school on the most recent annual report card issued for it by the State Board of Education if the grade was a D or F;
- p-q. if the school and/or the school system is identified by the State Board of Education as low-performing, the notifications required by G.S. 115C-105.37(b) and/or G.S. 115C-105.39A(c);
- q-r. supportive services available to students, including health services;
- r-s. for parents of students in grades 5 through 12, information about cervical cancer, cervical dysplasia, and human papillomavirus, including the causes and symptoms of these diseases, how they are transmitted, how they may be prevented by vaccination, including the benefits and possible side effects of vaccination, and places parents and guardians may obtain additional information and vaccinations for their children;
- s-t. how to reach school officials in emergency situations during non-school hours;
- t-u. information about and an application form for free and reduced price meals and/or free milk (see policy 6225, Free and Reduced Price ~~Food~~Meal Services);
- u-v. information about the school breakfast program;
- v-w. information about the availability and location of free summer food service program meals for students when school is not in session;
- w-x. for parents of children with disabilities, procedural safeguards (see also policy 1730/4022/7231, Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disabilities);

- ~~x-y.~~ information on the availability of the asbestos management plan and planned or in-progress inspections, re-inspections, response actions, and post-response actions, including periodic re-inspection and surveillance activities;
- ~~y-z.~~ education rights of homeless students (see policy 4125, Homeless Students);
- ~~z-aa.~~ the content and implementation of the local school wellness policy (see policy 6140, Student Wellness);
- ~~aa-bb.~~ their right to take four hours of unpaid leave from their jobs every year in order to volunteer in their child's school as stated in G.S. 95-28.3 (see policy 5015, School Volunteers);
- ~~bb-cc.~~ that the school system does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age, and that the school system s-provides processes for resolving discrimination and harassment complaints (see policies 4020/7230, Discrimination and Harassment Prohibited by Federal Law, 1720/4030/7235, Title IX Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex, 4035/7236, Title IX Sexual Harassment – Prohibited Conduct and Reporting Process, 4036/7237, Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Process, and 1730/4022/7231, Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disabilities);
- ~~ee-dd.~~ that the school system provides equal access to its facilities, programs, and activities to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups (see policy 1730/4020/7230, Discrimination and Harassment Prohibited by Federal Law); and
- ~~dd-ee.~~ the availability of and the process for requesting a waiver or reduction of student fees (see policy 4600, Student Fees).

4. Opportunities to Withhold Consent/Opt Out Notifications

As a part of the annual notification described above, parents will be effectively notified that they may opt out of any of the following:

- a. release of student directory information about their child for school purposes or to outside organizations (see policy 4700, Student Records);
- b. release of their child's name, address, and telephone listing to military recruiters or institutions of higher education (see policy 4700, Student Records);

- c. their child's participation in curricula related to (a) prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS; (b) avoidance of out-of-wedlock pregnancy; or (c) reproductive health and safety education, as provided in policy 3540, Comprehensive Health Education Program. A copy of the materials that will be used in these curricula will be available in the school media center during the school year and at other times that the media center is available to the public. To meet any review periods required by law, materials also may be made available for review in the central office;
- d. their child's participation in academic or career guidance or personal or social counseling services of a generic nature offered to groups of students (e.g., peer relations strategies offered to all sixth graders). However, parents do not have the right to opt out of: (a) short-duration academic, career, personal, or social guidance and counseling and crisis intervention that is needed to maintain order, discipline, or a productive learning environment; (b) student-initiated individual or group counseling targeted at a student's specific concerns or needs; and (c) counseling if child abuse or neglect is suspected (see policies 3610, Counseling Program, and 4240/7312, Child Abuse and Related Threats to Child Safety);
- e. their child's participation in any protected information survey given as part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System or National Youth Tobacco Survey or the North Carolina Youth Tobacco Survey (see policy 4720, Surveys of Students);
- f. their child's participation in any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening that is: (a) required as a condition of attendance; (b) administered and scheduled in advance by the school administration; and (c) not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of students;
- g. the collection, disclosure, or use of their child's personal information for marketing purposes (see policy 4720, Surveys of Students); and
- h. release of their child's free and reduced-price meal information to State Medicaid or State children's health insurance program (SCHIP).

Any parent or legal guardian who wishes to opt out/withhold consent must do so in writing after receiving notice. Otherwise, consent to the programs or activities is presumed. After the annual notification, the school is not required to provide further notice to the parent or legal guardian as to the manner in which student directory information is used, the curriculum is provided, or guidance programs are made available.

D. PARENTAL PERMISSION REQUIRED

Written parental permission is required prior to the following activities:

1. the administration of medications to students by employees of the school system (see policy 6125, Administering Medicines to Students);
2. the release of student records that are not considered directory information, unless the release is allowed or required by law (see policy 4700, Student Records);
3. off-campus trips;
4. students' participation in high-impact or high-risk sports or extracurricular activities, such as football or mountain climbing (see policy 4220, Student Insurance Program);
5. all decisions or actions as required by the IDEA with regard to providing special education or related services to students with disabilities (see policy 3520, Special Education Programs/Rights of Students with Disabilities);
6. certain health services, as required by law;
7. participation in a mental health assessment or mental health services under circumstances prescribed by federal law;
8. students' participation in programs or services that provide information about where to obtain contraceptives or abortion referral services;
9. students' participation in any protected information surveys other than those given as part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System or National Youth Tobacco Survey or the North Carolina Youth Tobacco Survey (see policy 4720, Surveys of Students);
10. disclosure of students' free and reduced price lunch eligibility information or eligibility status; and
11. students' access to school system technological resources, including the Internet, as described in policy 3225/4312/7320, Technology Responsible Use.

E. PROCEDURES FOR PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN STUDENT HEALTH

1. Parent Notifications Regarding Student Physical and Mental Health

At the beginning of each school year, the principal or designee shall notify parents of (1) each health care service offered at their children's schools and the means for parents to provide consent for any specific services; (2) acknowledgement that consenting to a health care service does not waive the parents' right to access their children's educational records or health records or to be notified of changes in their children's services or monitoring; and (3) the procedures to exercise the parental

remedies for concerns related to student health provided by G.S. 115C-76.60 and described below in subsection E.6.

Before any student well-being questionnaire or health screening form is administered to students in kindergarten through third grade, the principal or designee shall provide parents with a copy of the questionnaire or form and shall inform parents of the means for parents to consent to the use of the questionnaire or form for their children.

The principal or designee shall notify parents of changes in services or monitoring related to their children's mental, emotional, or physical health or well-being and the school's ability to provide a safe and supportive learning environment for their children prior to or contemporaneously with the changes being made. In addition, the principal or designee shall notify parents before any changes are made to the names or pronouns used for their children in school records or by school personnel.

No school system policy, procedure, or form will expressly or otherwise prohibit school employees from notifying parents about their children's mental, emotional, or physical health or well-being or a change in related services or monitoring, nor will any school system policy, procedure, or form intentionally encourage or be designed in a manner that is reasonably likely to have the effect of encouraging any children to withhold from their parents information about their mental, emotional, or physical health or well-being or a change in related services or monitoring. School personnel shall not discourage or prohibit parental notification of and involvement in critical decisions affecting a student's mental, emotional, or physical health or well-being.

2. Discussions Related to Student Well-Being

In accordance with the rights of parents provided in Chapter 114A of the General Statutes, when issues of a student's well-being arise, school personnel shall encourage the student to discuss the issues with his or her parent. As appropriate, school personnel may facilitate discussions of such issues with parents.

3. Parent Access to Student Records

Parents will not be prohibited from accessing any of their children's education and health records created, maintained, or used by the school system, except as permitted by law. See policy 4700, Student Records.

4. Student Support Services Training

Student support services training developed or provided by the school system to school personnel will adhere to student services guidelines, standards, and frameworks established by the Department of Public Instruction.

5. Instruction on Gender Identity, Sexual Activity, and Sexuality

Instruction on gender identity, sexual activity, or sexuality will not be included in the curriculum provided in kindergarten through fourth grade, regardless of whether the information is provided by school personnel or third parties. For purposes of this subsection, curriculum includes the standard course of study and support materials, locally developed curriculum, supplemental instruction, and textbooks and other supplementary materials, but does not include responses to student-initiated questions.

6. Remedies for Parental Concerns Related to Student Health

If a parent has a concern about the school or school system's procedure or practice under Part 4 of Article 7B of Chapter 115C, as described here in Section E of this policy, the parent should submit the concern in writing to the principal. The principal shall schedule and hold a meeting with the parent within five days after the concern was submitted. The principal shall conduct any necessary investigation. If possible, the principal should resolve the concern within seven days after the concern was submitted. If the principal cannot resolve the concern within seven days, the principal shall immediately notify the superintendent or designee. The superintendent or designee shall assist, as needed, in resolving the concern.

If the concern has not been resolved within 15 days after the parent initially submitted the concern, the superintendent or designee shall schedule a board hearing to be conducted pursuant to policy 1600, Hearings Before the Board, to occur within the next 15 days. If the concern is not resolved 30 days after the parent initially submitted the concern, the board will provide a statement of the reasons for not resolving the concern.

If the concern is not resolved within 30 days of initial submission, the parent has the right to pursue additional remedies as provided in G.S. 115C-76.60(b).

F. PARENT REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

A parent may request in writing from the principal any of the information the parent has the right to access under Part 3 of Article 7B of Chapter 115C. The principal, within 10 business days, shall either provide the requested information to the parent or provide an extension notice to the parent that, due to the volume or complexity of the request, the information will be provided no later than 20 business days from the date of the parental request.

If the principal (1) denies or fails to respond to the request for information within 10 business days or (2) fails to provide information within 20 business days following an extension notice, the parent may then submit the written request for information to the superintendent, along with a statement specifying the time frame of the denial or failure to

provide information by the principal.

If the superintendent denies or does not respond to the request for information within 10 business days, the parent may appeal the denial or lack of response to the board no later than 20 business days from the date of the request to the superintendent. The board will place the parent's appeal on the agenda for the next board meeting occurring more than three business days after submission of the appeal.

The information in this Section F will be posted on the school system's website along with the list of parents' legal rights for their child's education as described in G.S. 115C-76.25.

G. COMMUNITY SERVICES AVAILABLE

A variety of community services are available to provide parents and families of students in the school system with needed information, support, and resources. Parents are encouraged to utilize applicable community services such as the following:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1NAxshMNPjqmoD4hnknqHSujYOQk80dkDw8FWpQfbNuk/edit?usp=sharing>

H. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

By September 15 of each year, the superintendent or designee shall report to the State Board of Education parental involvement information as required by State Board of Education Policy PRNT-002 and G.S. 115C-76.70.

Legal References: Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. 12101 *et seq.*, 28 C.F.R. pt. 35; Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act, 15 U.S.C. 2641, *et seq.*; Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act, 20 U.S.C. 7905, 34 C.F.R. 108.9; Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended, 20 U.S.C. 6301 *et seq.*, 34 C.F.R. pt. 200; Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. 1232g, 34 C.F.R. pt. 99; Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. 1400, *et seq.*; McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. 11431, *et seq.*; National School Lunch Program, 42 U.S.C. 1751 *et seq.*, 7 C.F.R. 210.12, 7 C.F.R. pt. 245; Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment, 20 U.S.C. 1232h, 34 C.F.R. pt. 98; Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. 705(20), 794, 34 C.F.R. pt. 104; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000d *et seq.*, 34 C.F.R. pt. 100; Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972, 20 U.S.C. 1681 *et seq.*, 34 C.F.R. pt. 106; 20 U.S.C. 7908; G.S. 90-21.1, -21.10B; 95-28.3; 114A-10; 115C-47(47), -47(51), -47(54), -47(58), -76.1, -76.20, -76.25, -76.30, -76.35, -76.40, -76.45, -76.50, -76.55, -76.60, -76.65, -76.70, -81.25, -81.30, -81.36, -105.37(b), -105.39A(c), -105.41, -109.1, -158.10, -174.26(d), -307(c), -375.4, -390.2, -391.1, -402.15, -407.16; 16 N.C.A.C. 6D .0307, 6G .0701; State Board of Education Policies KNEC-002, PRNT-000 and -002, TEST-001

Cross References: Title I Parent and Family Engagement (policy 3560), Discrimination and Harassment Prohibited by Federal Law (policy 4020/7230), Title IX Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex (policy 1720/4030/7235), Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disabilities (policy

1730/4022/7231), Student and Parent Grievance Procedure (policy 4010), Hearings Before the Board (policy 1600), Business Advisory Council (policy 1670), Title IX Sexual Harassment – Prohibited Conduct and Reporting Process (policy 1725/4035/7236), Bullying and Harassing Behavior Prohibited (policy 1735/4329/7311), Selection of Instructional Materials (policy 3200), Parental Request to Review Instructional Materials (policy 3210), Technology Responsible Use (policy 3225/4312/7320), Evaluation of Student Progress (policy 3400), Students at Risk of Academic Failure (policy 3405), School Improvement Plan, (policy 3430), Class Rankings (policy 3450), Special Education Programs/Rights of Students with Disabilities (policy 3520), Comprehensive Health Education Program (policy 3540), Counseling Program (policy 3610), Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Process (policy 4036/7237), Homeless Students (policy 4125), Student Insurance Program (policy 4220), Child Abuse and Related Threats to Child Safety (policy 4240/7312), Student Behavior Policies (4300 series), Rules for Use of Seclusion and Restraint in Schools (regulation 4302-R), ~~Bullying and Harassing Behavior Prohibited (policy 4329/7311)~~, Parental Involvement in Student Behavior Issues (policy 4341), Attendance (policy 4400), Student Fees (policy 4600), Student Records (policy 4700), Surveys of Students (policy 4720), School Volunteers (policy 5015), Visitors to the Schools (policy 5020), Registered Sex Offenders (policy 5022), Student Health Services (policy 6120), Administering Medicines to Students (policy 6125), Student Wellness (policy 6140), Free and Reduced Price Meal Services (policy 6225), Pest Management (policy 9205)

Adopted: July 14, 2014

Replaces: Policy 2.04.60, Parental Involvement (in part)

Revised: January 11, 2016; February 13, 2017; February 12, 2018, November 13, 2018; February 10, 2020; August 12, 2020, January 11, 2021, December 13, 2021(Legal references only); November 6, 2023; January 16, 2024; July 11, 2024; DATE

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. As required by law, the principal is required to must 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. The principal or supervisor must notify the superintendent immediately of unsanitary conditions or repairs needed to meet safety standards

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 Center for Safer Schools~~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 Harassment – Prohibited Conduct and Reporting Process, 4036/7237, Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Process, 4040/7310, Staff-Student Relations, 4036/7237, Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Process, 1735/4329/7311, Bullying and Harassing Behavior Prohibited, 4040/7310, Staff-Student Relations, 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: Bullying and Harassing Behavior Prohibited (policy 1735/4329/7311), Discrimination and Harassment Prohibited by Federal Law (policy 4020/7230), Title IX Sexual Harassment – Prohibited Conduct and Reporting Process_ (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), 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>
<https://www.ed.gov/sites/ed/files/admins/lead/safety/emergencyplan/crisisplanning.pdf>;
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}

BULLYING AND HARASSING BEHAVIOR PROHIBITED

Policy Code: **4329/7311**

The board is committed to providing a safe, inviting, and civil educational environment for all students, employees, and other members of the school community. The board expects all students, employees, volunteers, and visitors to behave in a manner consistent with that goal. The board recognizes that bullying and harassing behavior creates an atmosphere of intimidation and fear, detracts from the safe environment necessary for student learning, and may lead to more serious misconduct or to violence. Accordingly, the board prohibits all forms of bullying and harassing behavior, including encouragement of such behavior, by students, employees, volunteers, and visitors. "Visitors" includes parents and other family members and individuals from the community, as well as vendors, contractors, and other persons doing business with or performing services for the school system.

This policy prohibits bullying and harassing behavior, or the encouragement of bullying or harassing behavior, that takes place (1) in any school building or on any school premises before, during or after school hours; (2) on any bus or other vehicle as part of any school activity; (3) at any bus stop; (4) during any school-sponsored activity or extracurricular activity; (5) through the use of school system technological resources; (6) at any time or place when the student, employee, or other person is subject to the authority of school personnel; or (7) at any time or place when the bullying has a direct and immediate effect on maintaining order and discipline in the schools.

This policy is not intended to prohibit expression of religious, philosophical, social, or political views, provided that the expression does not substantially disrupt the educational environment.

A. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER POLICIES

This policy applies to bullying and harassing behavior that is not otherwise prohibited by the following board policies that address discriminatory harassment in violation of federal law:

- Discrimination and Harassment Prohibited by Federal Law, policy 1710/4020/7230 (prohibiting harassment based on federally protected characteristics, such as race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age (40 or older), religion, military affiliation, or genetic information)
- Title IX Sexual Harassment—~~Discrimination~~ – Prohibited Conduct and Reporting~~Grievance Procedures~~, policy 1725/4035/7236 (prohibiting sexual-based harassment)

Individuals who wish to report bullying or harassing behavior that is based on sex, race, color, national origin, disability, religion, or other personal characteristic addressed by the policies above should refer to and follow the reporting processes provided in those policies.

Conduct that may constitute discriminatory harassment under federal law must be addressed first in accordance with the requirements of the applicable policy(ies) listed above. If subsequently, the conduct is determined not to rise to the level of discriminatory harassment prohibited by those policies, the conduct may be addressed under this policy. Conduct that does not rise to the level of bullying or harassing behavior as defined and prohibited in this policy may nevertheless violate other board policies or school rules.

B. CONDUCT THAT IS CONSIDERED BULLYING OR HARASSING BEHAVIOR

1. Bullying is deliberate conduct intended to harm another person or group of persons. It is characterized by repeated unwanted aggressive behavior that typically involves a real or perceived imbalance of power, such as a difference in physical size, strength, social standing, intellectual ability, or authority. It may consist of either physical, verbal, or nonverbal behavior. Cyberbullying is a form of bullying that is carried out using electronic communication media, such as words, action, or conduct conveyed through email, instant messages, text messages, tweets, blogs, photo or video sharing, chat rooms, or websites, and may exist in the absence of a power imbalance typical of other forms of bullying.
2. Harassing behavior is conduct that is intimidating, hostile, or abusive, or is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. Harassing behavior may violate this policy even if no harm is intended to the target and no power imbalance is evident.
3. Bullying or harassing behavior includes conduct that is, or reasonably appears to be, motivated by actual or perceived differentiating personal characteristics, or by a person's association with someone who has or is perceived to have a differentiating personal characteristic. Differentiating personal characteristics include, but are not limited to race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, socioeconomic status, academic status, gender identity, physical appearance, sexual orientation, or mental, physical, developmental, or sensory disability. Bullying and harassing behavior can violate this policy regardless of a student's motivation.
4. Examples of behavior that may constitute bullying or harassing behavior are repeated acts of disrespect, intimidation, or threats, such as verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs, epithets, derogatory or lewd comments, spreading rumors, extortion of money or possessions, implied or stated threats, assault, offensive touching, physical interference with normal work or movement, visual insults, such as derogatory posters or cartoons, and sharing intimate photos or video of a person or sharing photos or videos that may subject a person to ridicule or insult.
5. Other behaviors that may constitute bullying or harassing behavior under this policy are deliberate, unwelcome touching that has sexual connotations or is of a sexual nature, pressure for sexual activity, offensive sexual flirtations, advances or propositions, verbal remarks about an individual's body, sexually degrading words used toward an individual or to describe an individual, or the display of sexually suggestive drawings, objects, pictures, or written materials.

6. These examples are not exhaustive but are intended to illustrate the wide range of behavior that may constitute bullying and harassing behavior.
7. Conduct such as the following is not considered bullying or harassing behavior: legitimate pedagogical techniques, the exercise of legitimate authority, and academic or work performance monitoring and evaluation.

C. WHEN BULLYING OR HARASSING BEHAVIOR VIOLATES THIS POLICY

Not all conduct that may be described as bullying or harassing behavior violates this policy. Bullying or harassing behavior violates this policy when any pattern of repeated gestures or written, electronic, or verbal communications, or any physical act or threatening communication:

1. places a student, an employee, or other person in actual and reasonable fear of harm to their person or property; or
2. creates or is certain to create a hostile environment by substantially interfering with or impairing a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits.

"Hostile environment" means that the victim subjectively views the conduct as bullying or harassing behavior and the conduct is objectively severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that it is bullying or harassing behavior.

The definition of bullying and harassing behavior in this section is intended to be no less inclusive than the definition of bullying and harassing behavior in G.S. 115C-407.15.

Bullying or harassing behavior based on sex, race, color, national origin, disability, religion, age (40 or older), military affiliation, or genetic information may also constitute discriminatory harassment in violation of federal law and other board policies as described in Section A, above.

D. REPORTING BULLYING AND HARASSING BEHAVIOR

1. Reports by Students and/or Parents and Guardians
 - a. The board encourages students or parents/guardians of students who have been the victim of or who have witnessed bullying or harassing behavior in violation of this policy to immediately report such incidents to a teacher, counselor, coach, assistant principal, or the principal.
 - b. Reports may be made orally or in writing and may be made anonymously.
 - c. All reports of serious violations and complaints made under this policy will

be investigated expeditiously. Anonymous reports will be investigated to the extent reasonably possible under the circumstances.

- d. If, at any time, school officials determine that the alleged bullying or harassing behavior appears to be based on sex, race, color, national origin, disability, religion, age (40 or older), military affiliation, or genetic information, the matter will be investigated in accordance with the applicable policy listed in Section A above.

2. **Mandatory Reporting by School Employees**

An employee who witnesses or who has reliable information that a student or other individual has been bullied or harassed in violation of this policy must report the incident to his or her supervisor or to the building principal immediately. If sex-based harassment is suspected, the employee also must report the incident to the Title IX coordinator. An employee who does not promptly report possible bullying or harassing behavior will be subject to disciplinary action.

3. **Reporting by Other Third Parties**

Other members of the school community may report incidents of bullying or harassment to the school principal or the superintendent or designee.

4. **Reporting False Allegations**

It is a violation of board policy to knowingly report false allegations of bullying or harassing behavior. A student or employee found to knowingly report or corroborate false allegations will be subject to disciplinary action.

E. REPORTS OF BULLYING OR HARASSING BEHAVIOR BASED ON A FEDERALLY PROTECTED CHARACTERISTIC

Bullying or harassing behavior that is based on a federally protected characteristic, such as sex, race, color, national origin, disability, religion, age (40 or older), military affiliation, or genetic information, may constitute discriminatory harassment that is a violation of the individual's civil rights. A school employee who receives a report of bullying or harassing behavior that may constitute sex-based harassment must immediately contact the Title IX coordinator. If the reported behavior appears to be based on any other federally protected characteristic, the employee must immediately notify the appropriate civil rights coordinator designated in policy 1710/4020/7230, Discrimination and Harassment Prohibited by Federal Law. Uncertainty as to whether alleged bullying or harassing behavior is based on a federally protected characteristic should be resolved by notifying the Title IX Coordinator.

F. RESPONSE TO REPORTS OF BULLYING OR HARASSING BEHAVIOR

1. Reports of bullying and harassing behavior or the encouragement of such behavior under this policy will be investigated promptly by the principal or designee or site supervisor and addressed in accordance with this policy and policy 4340, School-Level Investigations, when appropriate. If the principal or site supervisor is the alleged perpetrator, the superintendent will designate an appropriate investigator.
2. If at any time before, during, or after the investigation under this policy, the investigator determines or suspects that the alleged bullying or harassing behavior is based on sex, race, color, national origin, disability, or religion, the investigator shall notify the appropriate civil rights coordinator and proceed in accordance with the applicable board policy as described in Section A, above. However, referral to the civil rights coordinator will not preclude appropriate disciplinary consequences for a violation of this policy if, following the designated investigation and resolution process under the appropriate board policy, the behavior is determined not to constitute discriminatory harassment in violation of federal law.
3. No reprisals or retaliation of any kind are permitted as a result of good faith reports of bullying or harassing behavior. An employee who engages in reprisal or retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. A student who does so is subject to disciplinary consequences as provided in Section G, below.

G. CONSEQUENCES

1. Students

The disciplinary consequences for violations of this policy should take into consideration the frequency of incidents, the developmental age of the student involved, and the severity of the conduct and must be consistent with the Code of Student Conduct. The superintendent or designee shall list in the Code of Student Conduct the specific range of consequences that may be imposed on a student for violations of this policy.

A student who is convicted under G.S. 14-458.2 of cyberbullying a school employee will be transferred to another school. If there is no other appropriate school within the school system, the student will be transferred to a different class or assigned to a teacher who was not involved as a victim of the cyberbullying. The superintendent may modify the required transfer of an individual student on a case-by-case basis and shall provide a written statement of this modification in the student's record.

2. Employees

Employees who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

3. Others

Volunteers and visitors who violate this policy will be directed to leave school property and/or reported to law enforcement, as appropriate, in accordance with policy 5020, Visitors to the Schools. A third party under the supervision and control of the school system will be subject to termination of contracts/agreements, restricted from school property, and/or subject to other consequences, as appropriate.

H. OTHER INTERVENTIONS

Interventions designed to remediate the impact of a violation of this policy and to restore a positive school climate will be provided as determined necessary by school officials.

I. NOTICE

This policy must be provided to employees, students, and parents, guardians, and caregivers at the beginning of each school year. Notice of this policy must be included in the Code of Student Conduct and in all student and employee handbooks. Principals are encouraged to post a copy or summary of this policy in each classroom and in a prominent location within the school building and to make an age-appropriate summary of the policy available to elementary students. Information about this policy must also be incorporated into employee training programs.

J. RECORDS

The superintendent or designee shall maintain confidential records of complaints or reports of bullying or harassing behavior under this policy. The records must identify the names of all individuals accused of such offenses and the resolution of such complaints or reports. The superintendent also shall maintain records of any remedial interventions or other steps taken by the school system to provide an environment free of bullying.

Legal References: G.S. 14-458.2; 115C-105.51, -366.4, -407.15 through -407.18

Cross References: Discrimination and Harassment Prohibited by Federal Law (policy 1710/4020/7230), Title IX Sexual Harassment ~~Discrimination~~ – Prohibited Conduct and Reporting Process ~~Grievance Procedures~~ (policy 1725/4035/7236), School-Level Investigations (policy 4340), Visitors to the Schools (policy 5020)

Adopted: August 12, 2020

Revised: November 8, 2021; February 10, 2025; DATE

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Policy Code:

3620

The Watauga County Board of Education (the “board”) recognizes the value of interscholastic athletics and extracurricular activities in promoting leadership and team skills, practicing democratic principles, and encouraging the lifelong learning process. Students are encouraged to participate in opportunities available at the school, including interscholastic athletics and student organizations. All activities are open to all students attending that school unless a restriction is justified and has been approved by the principal. The principal shall ensure that students and parents are notified of the various opportunities for participation in extracurricular activities and shall establish rules, as necessary, to govern such activities.

A. REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Participation in extracurricular activities, including student organizations and interscholastic athletics, is a privilege, not a right, and may be reserved for students in good academic standing who meet behavior standards established by the board and the school.

Participation in extracurricular activities may be restricted if a student (1) is not performing at grade level as provided in policy 3400, Evaluation of Student Progress; (2) has failed to meet any applicable attendance requirements~~exceeded the number of absences allowed by policy 4400, Attendance~~; (3) has violated the student conduct standards found in the 4300 series of policies; or (4) has violated school rules for conduct. School administrators choosing to exercise this authority to restrict participation shall provide this policy and any additional rules, including attendance requirements, developed by the superintendent or the principal to all parents, guardians, and students.

B. ADDITIONAL RULES FOR SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES

1. Interscholastic Athletics

a. General Rules

In addition to meeting the general requirements listed above, to be eligible for interscholastic athletics participation, students must meet all applicable eligibility standards of law and the State Board of Education, as well as any locally established requirements for interscholastic athletics participation.

b. Participation by Sixth Graders

Students in the sixth grade are eligible to participate in all interscholastic athletics except tackle football.

c. Students Who Transfer Schools Within the School System

It is the policy of the board that a student who transfers from one school in the school system to another school in the school system will be immediately eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics at the new school, if otherwise permitted under the rules of the State Board of Education.

d. Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL) Agreements

A student participating in interscholastic athletics may enter an agreement to use the student's name, image, or likeness subject to the requirements of 16 N.C.A.C. 6E .0211.

de. Home School Students

Any home school student whose primary residence (as defined in 16 N.C.A.C. 6E .0207) is in the school system and who is dually enrolled in accordance with the school system's enrollment and assignment policies and procedures is eligible to participate in high school interscholastic athletics if the student complies with the requirements of this subsection and meets all applicable eligibility standards of law and the State Board of Education as well as any applicable locally established requirements for interscholastic athletics participation.

The student must present a home school card from the Division of Non-Public Education for the previous and current years as well as a transcript, attendance record, and immunization records. Prior to the first date of practice, the student must provide the results of a nationally standardized achievement test, taken within the last year, that indicates the student was on grade level at the time the test was taken. The student must also present proof of catastrophic accident insurance coverage unless the student is covered under the board's catastrophic athletic accident insurance policy.

The student must have been enrolled in a registered home school for 365 days prior to participation in athletics. Once dually enrolled and deemed eligible to participate in athletics, the student must maintain continuous dual enrollment. Failure to maintain continuous dual enrollment would render the student ineligible for athletic participation for 365 days.

The student must participate in a class schedule at the assigned school that is at least one half of the assigned school's instructional day. At least two classes must be taken on campus each semester. The student must pass all classes in which the student is enrolled at the assigned school in order to maintain athletic eligibility.

The student must notify the principal of the assigned school in writing of the student's intent to try out for an athletic team at least 10 days prior to the first practice date of each sport season in which the student wishes to participate. Failure to comply with this requirement renders the student ineligible for that sport season.

2. Student-Initiated, Noncurriculum-Related Student Groups at the Secondary Level

Student-initiated, noncurriculum-related, secondary school student groups will be permitted to conduct voluntary meetings on school grounds during noninstructional time, regardless of the size of the group or the religious, political, philosophical, or other content of the speech at the meetings, provided that the meetings do not materially and substantially interfere with the orderly conduct of the educational activities of the school. The principal shall establish viewpoint neutral rules governing such meetings, including restrictions on when and where meetings may occur.

School employees may not promote, lead, or participate in student-initiated meetings but may be present at meetings to maintain order and discipline, to protect the well-being of the students and faculty, and to assure that attendance of students at the meetings is voluntary. School employees may not influence the form or content of any prayer or other religious activity or require any person to participate in prayer or other religious activity. In addition, non-school persons may not direct, conduct, control, or regularly attend the activities of the groups.

No public funds will be expended on behalf of the student-initiated, noncurriculum-related student groups except for the incidental cost of providing space for the group meetings.

Student-initiated, noncurriculum-related groups will have the same access to communication channels for publicizing their meetings as is allowed to all other noncurriculum-related student groups. However, school officials may indicate in such communications that the meetings are not sponsored by the school.

For purposes of this subsection, a noncurriculum-related student group is one that is not directly related to the curriculum. A student group will be considered curriculum-related only if (1) the group's subject matter is taught in a regularly offered course or relates to the curriculum as a whole; (2) participation in the group is required as part of a course; or (3) participation in the group results in course credit.

C. SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

1. Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities must be accorded the legal rights required by federal and state law.

2. Children of Military Families

School administrators shall facilitate the inclusion and participation in extracurricular activities of children of military families, as defined in policy 4050,

Children of Military Families, transferring into the school, to the extent they are otherwise qualified, by:

- a. providing information about extracurricular activities to incoming children of military families; and
- b. waiving application deadlines.

D. APPEALS PROCESS

The grievance procedure provided in policy 4010, Student and Parent Grievance Procedure, may be utilized by parents or students who believe that a student has been aggrieved by a decision made pursuant to this policy.

Legal References: Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. 12132, 28 C.F.R. pt. 35; Equal Access Act, 20 U.S.C. 4071-4074; Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. 1400 *et seq.*, 34 C.F.R. pt. 300; Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. 705(20), 794, 34 C.F.R. pt. 104; G.S. 115C art. 9, 115C-12(23), -47(4), -390.2, -407.5, -407.55, -407.59, -407.60, -407.65, -407.70, -407.75; 16 N.C.A.C. 6E .0207, .0208, .0211; State Board of Education Policies ATHL-001, -005, -008; *Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities*, State Board of Education Policy EXCP-000; N.C. High School Athletic Association Handbook available at <https://www.nchsaa.org/handbook>; Middle/Junior High School Athletic Manual (NCDPI), available at <http://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/classroom-resources/academic-standards/programs-and-initiatives/nc-healthy-schools/athletics>

Cross References: Parental Involvement (policy 4002), Student and Parent Grievance Procedure (policy 4010), Evaluation of Student Progress (policy 3400), Student Promotion and Accountability (policy 3420), School Improvement Plan (policy 3430), Children of Military Families (policy 4050), Domicile or Residence Requirements (policy 4120), Homeless Students (policy 4125), School Assignment (policy 4150), North Carolina Address Confidentiality Program (policy 4250/5075/7316), Student Clubs (4060), Student Behavior Policies (4300 series), Attendance (policy 4400), Community Use of Facilities (policy 5030)

Adopted: March 21, 2016

Revised: June 13, 2016; September 11, 2017; November 9, 2020; March 8, 2021; August 9, 2021; March 13, 2023; July 11, 2024; November 12, 2024; DATE

PREGNANT AND PARENTING STUDENTS AND EMPLOYEES

Policy Code: **4023/7233**

A. STUDENTS

1. Nondiscrimination

The Watauga County Board of Education (the “board”) will provide all pregnant and parenting students with the same educational instruction as other students or its equivalent. ~~Pregnant and parenting s~~Students will not be discriminated against or excluded from school or from any program, class, or extracurricular activity based on the students’ current, potential, or past pregnancy or related conditions or because they are pregnant or parenting students. For purposes of this policy, “pregnancy or related conditions” means pregnancy, childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, or lactation; medical conditions related to pregnancy, childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, or lactation; or recovery from pregnancy, childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, lactation, or related medical conditions.

2. General Requirements

School administrators shall provide assistance and support to encourage pregnant and parenting students to remain enrolled in school and graduate. In accordance with state law, school system officials shall use, as needed, supplemental funds from the At-Risk Student Services allotment to support programs for pregnant and parenting students. Students who are pregnant or parenting will be given excused absences from school for pregnancy and related conditions for the length of time the students’ physicians find medically necessary and for absences due to the illness or medical appointment during school hours of a child of whom the student is the custodial parent. Homework and make-up work will be made available to pregnant and parenting students to ensure that they have the opportunity to keep current with assignments and avoid losing course credit because of their absence from school. To the extent necessary, a homebound teacher will be assigned.

3. Providing Title IX Coordinator Contact and Other Information

When a student or student’s parent or guardian informs any school system employee of the student’s pregnancy or related conditions, the employee shall promptly provide that person with the Title IX coordinator’s contact information and inform that person that the Title IX coordinator can coordinate specific actions to prevent sex discrimination and ensure the student’s equal access to the school system’s education program or activity. The employee does not need to provide such information if the employee reasonably believes that the Title IX coordinator has already been notified of the student’s pregnancy or related conditions.

4. Specific Actions to Prevent Discrimination and Ensure Equal Access

Once a student or student's parent or guardian notifies the Title IX coordinator of the student's pregnancy or related conditions, the Title IX coordinator must coordinate the following specific actions designed to promptly and effectively prevent sex discrimination and ensure access to the school system's education program or activity:

- a. inform the student (and, if applicable, the student's parent or guardian) of the school system's Title IX obligations under 34 C.F.R. 106.40(b)(1) through (5) and 34 C.F.R. 106.44(j) and provide the student (and, if applicable, the student's parent or guardian) the school system's notice of nondiscrimination on the basis of sex (see policy 1720/4030/7235, Title IX Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex);
- b. consult with the student in order to offer, based on the student's individualized needs, reasonable modifications to school system policies, practices, or procedures, as necessary, and implement each reasonable modification offered by the school system and accepted by the student;
- c. allow the student to voluntarily access any separate and comparable portion of the school system's education program or activity provided that the separate portion is comparable to that offered to students who are not pregnant and who do not have related conditions;
- d. allow the student to voluntarily take a leave of absence from the school system education program or activity to cover, at a minimum, the period of time deemed medically necessary by the student's licensed healthcare provider and when the student returns following the voluntary absence, reinstate the student to the academic status and, as practicable, to the extracurricular status that the student held when the absence began; and
- e. ensure that the student can access, as needed, a lactation space, other than a bathroom, that is clean, shielded from view, free from intrusion by others, and may be used for expressing breast milk or breastfeeding.

Supporting documentation or certifications will not be required unless necessary, reasonable, and legally permissible.~~except as permitted by law.~~

B. EMPLOYEES

The board prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of current, potential, or past pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. Pregnancy or related conditions will be treated as any other temporary medical conditions for all job-related purposes. (See also policy 7232, Discrimination and Harassment in the Workplace.) ~~Pregnant and~~

~~nursing employees will be provided accommodations as required by law.~~

1. Reasonable Accommodations for Pregnancy-Related Limitations

In accordance with the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act, qualifying applicants and employees with known limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions will be provided reasonable accommodations, unless the accommodation demonstrably would impose an undue hardship on the operation of the school system. No adverse action will be taken against an applicant or employee for requesting or using a reasonable accommodation.

The superintendent shall ensure that appropriate procedures are in place to implement this requirement.

2. Break Time to Express Milk

~~For one year a~~After the birth of an employee's child, the employee will be provided reasonable break times to express breast milk for the child or breastfeed as needed for at least one year after the child's birth~~each time the employee has need to express milk~~. The principal at each school and the site supervisor at other school system buildings and facilities will designate a place, other than a bathroom, that the employee may use to express milk or breastfeed. Any designated place must be functional as a space for expressing milk or breastfeeding, shielded from view, and free from intrusion from others.

Legal References: Consolidated Appropriations Act, P.L. 117-328, div. II - Pregnant Workers Fairness Act, 29 C.F.R. pt. 1636; Fair Labor Standards Act, as amended, 29 U.S.C. 201, *et seq.*; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000e *et seq.*, 29 C.F.R. pt. 1604; Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972, 20 U.S.C. 1681 *et seq.*, 34 C.F.R. pt. 106; G.S. 115C-375.5

Cross References: Title IX Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex (policy 1720/4030/7235), Equal Educational Opportunities (policy 4001), Attendance (policy 4400), ~~Discrimination and Harassment in the Workplace (policy 7232)~~

Adopted: July 14, 2014, replaces policy 5.05.55

Revised: January 11, 2021 (Legal references only); June 19, 2023; {DATE}

CHILD ABUSE AND RELATED THREATS TO CHILD SAFETY

Policy Code: 4240/7312

The Watauga County Board of Education (the “board”) is concerned with the health, safety, and welfare of all children and recognizes the legal and ethical obligations that school employees, contractors, and volunteers have to report known or suspected maltreatment of children. North Carolina has two separate systems that mandate reports to state authorities of suspected child abuse, neglect, dependency, or maltreatment and a third system for mandated reporting of certain crimes against juveniles to local law enforcement.

When a parent or other caretaker is suspected to have caused a child to be abused, neglected, or dependent, this information must be reported to the county child welfare agency. Suspected human trafficking, involuntary servitude, and sexual servitude of a child and death of a child as a result of maltreatment are special forms of child abuse under law and must be reported to the county child welfare agency, regardless of the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator. By contrast, suspected child maltreatment by a caregiver in a child care facility, including in a licensed preschool classroom or other licensed classroom or program operated by the school system, must be reported to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE). When the source of the harm or threat of harm to the child is uncertain, a report should be made to both the county child welfare agency and DCDEE.

In addition, state law mandates reports to local law enforcement when a child is a victim of certain violent offenses, sexual offenses, or misdemeanor child abuse. An adult who knows or reasonably should have known of any of these offenses inflicted upon a child must report that information immediately.

The board supports all employees who in good faith make a report under North Carolina’s mandated reporting laws.

The superintendent shall develop any necessary procedures for making a report or otherwise implementing this policy.

A. DUTY TO REPORT CERTAIN CRIMES AGAINST CHILDREN TO LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT

A school employee, contractor, or volunteer is legally required to report to local law enforcement when the employee or volunteer knows or reasonably should know that a child has been a victim of any of the following crimes:

1. a sexual offense (which for purposes of this policy, the board interprets to mean any offense that relates to inappropriate sexual conduct with or involving a child);
2. an offense that inflicts serious bodily injury or serious physical injury upon the child by nonaccidental means;

3. an attempt, solicitation, or conspiracy to commit either offense described above, or aiding and abetting either offense; or
4. misdemeanor child abuse, which occurs when a parent or any other person providing care or supervision to a child who is under the age of sixteen (1) inflicts or allows to be inflicted physical injury to the child by nonaccidental means or (2) creates or allows a substantial risk of physical injury to the child by nonaccidental means.

Compliance with this reporting requirement does not relieve the employee or volunteer from his or her duty to report pursuant to Sections B and C of this policy. The employee, contractor, or volunteer also shall immediately report the case to the principal.

A school employee, contractor, or volunteer is immune by statute from any state civil and/or criminal liability when making a report in good faith under this Section. An employee who fails to report or who prevents another person from making a report is subject to disciplinary action by the school system and civil and criminal action under the law. A volunteer or contractor who fails to report or prevents another person from making a report may be restricted from school property or lose the privilege of volunteering for or contracting with the school system and is subject to civil and criminal action under the law.

B. DUTY TO REPORT CHILD ABUSE, NEGLECT, DEPENDENCY, OR DEATH AS A RESULT OF MALTREATMENT TO THE COUNTY CHILD WELFARE AGENCY

A school employee, contractor, or volunteer who knows or has cause to suspect that (1) a parent, guardian, custodian, or caretaker of a child has caused the child to be abused, neglected, or dependent, or (2) that a child has died as a result of maltreatment or been a victim of human trafficking, involuntary servitude, or sexual servitude by any person is legally required to report the case to the director of social services. The employee, contractor, or volunteer also shall immediately report the case to the principal. Any doubt about reporting a suspected situation must be resolved in favor of reporting, and the report must be made immediately.

A school employee, contractor, or volunteer is immune by statute from any civil and/or criminal liability when making a report in good faith under this Section. An employee who fails to report or who prevents another person from making a report is subject to disciplinary action by the school system and civil and criminal action under the law. A volunteer or contractor who fails to report or prevents another person from making a report may be restricted from school property or lose the privilege of volunteering for or contracting with the school system and is subject to civil and criminal action under the law.

C. DUTY TO REPORT CHILD MALTREATMENT IN A CHILD CARE FACILITY TO THE DIVISION OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND EARLY EDUCATION

A school employee, contractor, or volunteer who has cause to suspect that a child in a child care facility has been maltreated by a caregiver or has died as a result of maltreatment occurring in a child care facility is legally required to report the case to DCDEE.

A "child care facility" includes any DHHS-licensed classroom or program operated by the school system, including for example, licensed pre-school or Title I classrooms, licensed afterschool programs, and licensed developmental day programs.

Any doubt about reporting a suspected situation or uncertainty whether the child's care is being provided in a child care facility must be resolved in favor of reporting, and the report should be made immediately.

An employee making a report to DCDEE also shall immediately report the case to the principal. If the suspected maltreatment occurred in a licensed preschool classroom or other licensed classroom or program operated by board, the principal shall immediately notify the superintendent of the suspected maltreatment. No reprisals of any kind may be taken against an employee who makes a good faith report of child maltreatment occurring in any licensed preschool classroom or other licensed classroom or program operated by the board.

An employee who fails to make a report as required by law and this policy may be subject to disciplinary action by the school system. In addition, if the employee works in a licensed preschool classroom or other licensed classroom or program operated by the board, failure to report maltreatment of a child in the program or classroom may itself constitute child maltreatment and result in the employee being placed on the state child maltreatment registry. A volunteer or contractor who fails to report or prevents another person from making a report may be restricted from school property or lose the privilege of volunteering for or contracting with the school system.

D. DUTY TO REPORT LICENSED EMPLOYEES TO THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In addition to the other reporting requirements of this policy, administrators shall report to the State Board of Education certain misconduct by licensed employees involving a child and resulting in termination of employment, nonrenewal of an employment contract, dismissal, suspension without pay, -disciplinary action, or resignation in accordance with Section F of policy 7130, Licensure.

E. COOPERATION WITH STATE AND LOCAL AGENCIES

1. The principal may establish a contact person in the school to act as a liaison with state and local agencies charged with investigating reports made pursuant to this policy.

2. Employees shall cooperate fully with agency personnel conducting an investigation.
3. In a case under the jurisdiction of local law enforcement in which the child's parent, guardian, or custodian is suspected of wrongdoing, employees shall permit the child to be interviewed by local law enforcement on school campuses during school hours. Otherwise, permission from the parent, guardian, or custodian must be obtained before the child may be interviewed by local law enforcement on school campus during school hours.
4. In a case under the jurisdiction of social services, employees shall permit the child to be interviewed by social services on school campuses during school hours.
5. In a case under the jurisdiction of DCDEE concerning suspected child maltreatment by a caregiver in a child care facility, permission from the parent must be obtained before the child may be interviewed on school campus during school hours.
6. Employees shall provide confidential information to agency personnel, so long as the disclosure does not violate state or federal law.
7. Any confidential information disclosed by the investigating agency to employees must remain confidential and may be redisclosed only for purposes directly connected with carrying out the responsibilities of the school system or the employee.

F. SHARING INFORMATION WITH OTHER AGENCIES

Upon request and to the extent permitted by law, school system officials shall share with other agencies designated in G.S. 7B-3100(a) information that is relevant to (1) any assessment by the department of social services of a report of child abuse, neglect, dependency or death as a result of maltreatment; (2) the provision or arrangement of protective services in a child abuse, neglect, or dependency case by the department of social services; or (3) any case in which a petition is filed alleging that a juvenile is abused, neglected, dependent, undisciplined, or delinquent. School system officials and the designated agencies must continue to share such information until the protective services case is closed by the department of social services or, if a petition is filed, until the juvenile is no longer subject to the jurisdiction of juvenile court.

G. CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE AND SEX TRAFFICKING TRAINING PROGRAM

In even numbered years, the school system will provide a child sexual abuse and sex trafficking education and awareness training program for teachers, instructional support personnel, principals, and assistant principals. The program will include at least two hours of training related to best practices from the field of prevention, the grooming process of sexual predators, the warning signs of sexual abuse and sex trafficking, how to intervene when sexual abuse or sex trafficking is suspected or disclosed, legal responsibilities for

reporting sexual abuse or sex trafficking, and available resources for assistance. Designated school personnel shall participate in such training as required by law and board policy.

H. CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT INFORMATION AND RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS

In accordance with G.S. 115C-47(65) and State Board of Education Policy SHLT-003, the school system will provide information on child abuse and neglect, including age-appropriate information on sexual abuse, to students in grades 6 through 12. Such information will be provided in the form of (1) a document given to all students in grades 6 through 12 at the beginning of each school year, (2) a display posted in visible, high-traffic areas throughout each secondary school, and (3) a video produced by the Center for Safer Schools shown to all students in grades 6 through 12 no more than five days after the first day of the school year.

Legal References: Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. 1232g; G.S. 7B-101, -301, -302, -309, -3100; 8-53.4; 14-208.6, -318.2, -318.4, -318.6; 110-90.2, -105.3, -105.4, -105.5; 115C-12(47), 47(65), -270.35(b), -326.20, -375.20, -400, -402; 126-5; 16 N.C.A.C. 6C.0608; 16 N.C.A.C. 6D .0403; State Board of Education Policy SHLT-003

Cross References: Professional and Staff Development (policy 7800), Staff-Student Relations (policy 4040/7310), Student Records (policy 4700), Licensure (policy 7130)

Adopted: July 14, 2014

Revised: July 9, 2018; September 9, 2019; January 13, 2020; March 12, 2020; August 9, 2021; May 8, 2023; April 16, 2024; July 11, 2024; DATE

Except as otherwise provided by law, all monies collected or received by an officer, employee or agent of the school system or an individual school must be deposited in accordance with this policy. Each officer, employee and agent of the school system or individual school whose duty it is to collect or receive any taxes or other monies shall ensure such collections and receipts are deposited daily. However, if the amount on hand is less than ~~\$250.00~~ ~~\$1500.00~~, daily deposits are encouraged but are not required. On any day when the deposit exceeds ~~\$250.00~~ ~~\$1500.00~~, the deposit shall be made on that day. Regardless of the amount on hand, all funds must be deposited at the end of each school week and on the last business day of each month. All deposits must be made with the finance officer or designee or in an official depository. Deposits in an official depository must be reported immediately to the finance officer or individual school treasurer by means of a duplicate deposit ticket.

Unless not feasible in a particular circumstance, the finance officer shall provide for sufficient segregation of duties to ensure that the individual making a deposit is not the same individual who collects, prepares, and/or records the deposit. All moneys collected, but not promptly deposited shall be kept in a secured drawer, cabinet, or safe with access limited to an authorized officer, employee, or agent. Authorized individuals shall be kept to the minimum necessary to achieve adequate internal controls and segregation of duties as determined appropriate by the finance officer.

The finance officer may at any time audit the accounts of any officer, employee or agent who collects or receives any taxes or other monies and may prescribe the form and detail of these accounts. The accounts of such an officer, employee or agent must be audited at least annually.

Legal References: G.S. 115C-445

Adopted: February 8, 2016

Replaces: Policy 6.04, Management of Funds (in part)

Revised: September 10, 2018;

The board provides its students and staff access to a variety of technological resources. These resources provide opportunities to enhance learning, appeal to different learning styles, improve communication within the school community and with the larger global community, and achieve the educational goals established by the board. Through the school system's technological resources, users can observe events as they occur around the world, interact with others on a variety of subjects, and acquire access to current and in-depth information.

The board intends that students and employees benefit from ~~technology~~these 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 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.

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.

School system Wi-Fi hotspots and/or services may be used off school system property only by students and school staff members who need them. Such use must be primarily for activities that are integral, immediate, and proximate to the education of students.

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 fileserver 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); 47 C.F.R. 54.516; 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; April 15, 2025;
DATE

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

An evaluation system of students' academic performance is necessary to help ensure that all students are succeeding within the framework of the educational goals and objectives of the board. The Watauga County Board of Education (the "board") believes that the formal issuance of student evaluations on a regular basis promotes continuous assessment of a student's performance; informs the student, his or her parents or guardians, and the school staff about the student's performance and progress; and provides a system of notice that allows intervention strategies to be implemented if necessary to improve the student's performance. The board encourages teachers and principals to pursue innovative methods of evaluating progress.

The superintendent or designee shall establish an evaluation system for assessing an individual student's academic achievement and progress relative to benchmarks set for students at that instructional level. The evaluation system should provide for regular communication with parents so that they may be informed and involved in their child's education.

Teachers shall evaluate student performance and keep accurate records in order to substantiate a grade or assessment given in a course. In evaluating student performance, each teacher shall make use of all available information, including but not limited to:

1. Formative, Benchmark, and Summative Classroom assessments and grades
2. North Carolina Ready End-of-Course tests (EOC)
3. North Carolina Ready End-of-Grade tests (EOG)
4. Writing Assessments
5. VoCATS
6. Other standardized tests
7. Teacher observation of student performance
8. Assistance of resource personnel

All high schools, middle schools, and elementary schools may will use the following grading scale.

<u>A</u>	<u>90-100</u>
<u>B</u>	<u>80-89</u>
<u>C</u>	<u>70-79</u>
<u>D</u>	<u>60-69</u>
<u>F</u>	<u>< 59</u>

The following letter grades also may be used as applicable.

<u>FF</u>	<u>FF may be used for a student who does not have a passing grade based on content and also has been absent for at least 10% of the classes for the course.</u>
<u>INC</u>	<u>If a student has extenuating circumstances, such as a medical condition, the superintendent, principal, or other designee may approve the temporary use of incomplete (INC).</u>
<u>P</u>	<u>Pass (P) may be used for elective courses but may not be awarded for non-elective graduation requirements.</u>
<u>WP</u>	<u>Withdraw (WP) may be used for courses from which a student withdraws during the current semester and receives no course credit.</u>
<u>CDM</u>	<u>Credit by demonstrated mastery (CDM) will be used to reflect earning credit for a course through the CDM process.</u>

Legal References: G.S. 115C-47; State Board of Education Policy GRAD-009

Cross References: Parental Involvement (policy 4002), Goals and Objectives of the Educational Program (policy 3000), Grading and Reporting (regulation 3400-R), Student Promotion and Accountability (policy 3420), Parental Involvement (policy 4002)

Adopted: July 11, 2016

Revised: March 15, 2018 (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

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. Beginning with the 2025-26 school year, students shall earn a numeric grade for credit recovery, which will be factored into the pre-existing incomplete or fail course grade on the student's transcript to a degree proportional to the percentage of the course completed through credit recovery, resulting in a new passing numeric grade for the course. The credit recovery will be graded as pass or fail and will not impact the student's grade point average. The original grade for the course will remain on the student's transcript.

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

I. REPEATING A COURSE FOR CREDIT

1. Repeating a Previously Failed Course

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

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

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

superintendent:

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

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

J. CREDIT FROM STUDYING ABROAD

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

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

K. ACCELERATION

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

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

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

L. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**1. Superintendent's Report to the Board**

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

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

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

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

3. Publication on the School System Website

Information about the reading performance of first, second, and third grade students

will be posted on the school system website in accordance with state law.

M. RESOURCES

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

N. NOTIFICATION TO PARENTS

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

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

O. CHILDREN OF MILITARY FAMILIES

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

Legal References: G.S. 115C-36, -45(c), -47, -81.5, -83.2, -83.3, -83.6, -83.6A, -83.6B, -83.7, -83.7A, -83.8, -83.9, -83.10, -83.11, -83.31, -105.21, -158.10, -174.11, -288(a), -407.5, -407.12; S.L. 2021-8; 16 N.C.A.C. 6D .0508, .0510; State Board of Education Policies CCRE-001, GRAD-001, GRAD-006, KNEC-002, KNEC-003

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

Other Resources: *Guidelines for Testing Students Identified as English Learners*, (N.C. Department of Public Instruction), available at <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/testing-and-school-accountability/testing-policy-and-operations/testing-students-identified-english-learners>; Comprehensive Reading Plan for Achievement, 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; April 15, 2025; DATE

All schools will participate in federal National School Nutrition Programs and will receive commodities donated by the United States Department of Agriculture. All federal and state revenues will be accepted and applied to maximize the use of such funds for the purposes of providing nutritional meals to students at the lowest possible price. The superintendent or designee shall develop procedures as necessary to implement the operational standards established in this policy.

A. OPERATIONAL STANDARDS

The school nutrition services program will be operated in a manner consistent with Watauga County Board of Education (the "board") goals and board policy. The program also will be operated in compliance with all applicable state and federal law, including requirements of the National School Lunch Program and all federal guidelines established by the School Nutrition Division of the United States Department of Agriculture. Specific legal requirements that must be met include, but are not limited to, the following.

1. School officials may not discriminate based on race, sex, ~~(including pregnancy, childbirth, sexual orientation, and gender identity)~~, color, national origin, disability, age, or eligibility status for free and reduced price meals. School officials are also prohibited from retaliating against an individual for prior civil rights activity.
2. The school nutrition services program will meet safety and sanitation requirements established in local, state, and federal rules and guidelines for school nutrition services programs.
3. The school nutrition services program will have a written food safety program that includes a hazard analysis critical control point plan for each school.
4. Menu preparation, purchasing, and related record keeping will be consistent with applicable state and federal rules and guidelines.
5. Banking, financial record keeping, budgeting, and accounting will be conducted in accordance with generally accepted practices and procedures, as dictated by the School Budget and Fiscal Control Act and in accordance with state and federal guidelines.
6. Commodity foods donated by the United States Department of Agriculture will be used and accounted for in accordance with federal regulations.
7. Preference will be given in purchasing contracts to high-calcium foods and beverages, as defined in G.S. 115C-264.1 and to foods grown or raised within North Carolina.

8. School Nutrition Program (SNP) funds will be used only for the purposes authorized by law. Indirect costs, as defined by law, will not be assessed to the SNP unless the program has an operating balance of at least two months.
9. The price for meals will be determined in accordance with federal law.
10. Non-program foods will be priced to generate sufficient revenues to cover the cost of those items. A non-program food is defined as a food or beverage, other than a reimbursable meal or snack, that is sold at the school and is purchased using funds from the school nutrition account.
11. All school nutrition services will be operated on a non-profit basis for the benefit of the SNP. School nutrition services are those that operate from 12:01 a.m. until 30 minutes after the end of the school day.
12. All income from the sale of food and beverages that is required by law or regulation to be retained by the SNP will be deposited to the SNP account and will be used only for the purposes of the school's non-profit lunch and breakfast programs. All other funds from food and beverage sales not otherwise required by law to be deposited to the SNP account will be deposited into the proper school account in accordance with guidelines developed by the superintendent or designee.
13. All competitive foods sold on school campuses will meet federal and state standards for nutrient content.
14. To the extent feasible consistent with legal, regulatory, and budgetary limits, the purchase of locally sourced foods and beverages is encouraged in the School Nutrition Program.
15. All employees whose job duties include procurement activities involving School Nutrition Program funds shall adhere to the conflict of interest rules and standards for ethical conduct established by the board in policies 6401/9100, Ethics and the Purchasing Function, and 8305, Federal Grant Administration. Failure to comply with these requirements will result in disciplinary action.

B. MEAL CHARGES

Students who are required to pay for meals are expected to provide payment in a timely manner. The board recognizes, however, that students may occasionally forget or lose their meal money. No adults will be permitted to charge meals or other items in the school cafeteria. No student will be permitted to charge supplemental or a la carte items, including milk.

No student will be deprived a meal nor served an alternate meal due to forgotten or lost money. At no time will a student meal be retrieved once the student has received the tray. The student shall be allowed to eat the meal and the student's account will be charged

accordingly.

If a student meal account has a negative balance, money offered by the student for purchase of supplemental or a la carte items cannot be used to pay against the negative balance without the student's permission.

The school nutrition director and principal shall work jointly to prevent meal charges from accumulating. Every effort will be made to collect all funds due to the school nutrition program on a regular basis and before the end of the school year. This may include but is not limited to sending letters home with students, sending emails to parents, and sending automated calls to homes. If a parent regularly fails to provide meal money and does not qualify for free meal benefits, the school nutrition program shall inform the principal, who shall determine the next course of action. This may include notifying the department of social services of suspected child neglect and/or taking legal steps to recover the unpaid meal charges. The principal shall not impose any administrative penalties on a student for unpaid meal charges. Administrative penalties include withholding a student's records, prohibiting a student from participating in graduation, and denying a student a diploma.

Parents are expected to pay all meal charges in full by the last day of each school year. Negative balances on student meal accounts cannot be carried forward to the following school year. All negative balances will continue to be owed to the school office until paid in full. The superintendent shall ensure that federal school nutrition funds are not used to offset the cost of unpaid meals and that the SNP is reimbursed for bad debt resulting from uncollected student meal charges prior to the last day of the school year. The school's general fund, or other fund designated by the school principal, will be financially responsible for outstanding charges that have not been paid.

This policy and any applicable procedures regarding meal charges must be communicated to school administrators, school food service professional, parents, and students. Parents will receive a written copy of the meal charges policy and any applicable procedures at the start of each school year and at any time their child transfers into a new school during the school year.

Legal References: Child Nutrition Act of 1966, 42 U.S.C. 1771 *et seq.*; National School Lunch Act, 42 U.S.C. 1751 *et seq.*, 2 C.F.R. pt. 200; 7 C.F.R. pt. 210; 7 C.F.R. pt. 215; 7 C.F.R. pt. 220; United States Department of Agriculture Policy Memos SP 46-2016, 47-2016, and 23-2017, available at https://www.fns.usda.gov/resources?f%5B0%5D=program%3A39&f%5B1%5D=resource_type%3A160&keywords=&page=1; G.S. 115C-47(7), -47(22), -263, -264, -264.1, -426, -450, -522; 147 art. 6E, art. 6G; 16 N.C.A.C. 6H .0104

Cross References: Parental Involvement (policy 1310/4002), Goals of School Nutrition Services (policy 6200), School Meal and Competitive Foods Standards (policy 6230), Goals of the Purchasing Function (policy 6400), Ethics and the Purchasing Function (policy 6401/9100), Federal Grant Administration (policy 8305)

Adopted: March 9, 2015

Replaces: Policy 5.07.90, Charging of School Meals

Revised: May 9, 2016; June 12, 2017; August 14, 2017 and April 9, 2018 (Legal references only); June 11, 2018; April 8, 2019; January 13, 2020; July 26, 2021 (Legal references only); June 30, 2022; December 12, 2022; January 16, 2024; DATE

INSURANCE FOR STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Policy Code:

6330

No school bus, activity bus or other ~~school-owned vehicle~~ owned, leased, or rented by the school system will be operated without bodily injury and property damage protection provided through the provisions of the State Tort Claims Act or through locally purchased liability coverage. School buses will not be used for any purpose or in any circumstance not covered by the State Tort Claims Act unless liability coverage has been purchased to cover such purpose or circumstance. Only activity buses and other vehicles meeting federal safety standards may be used for approved school-related activities. The superintendent or designee and principals shall monitor compliance with this policy.

Legal References: 49 U.S.C. 30125, 30165; G.S. 115C-42, -47(25), -239, -242, -257, -258, -259; G.S. 143 art. 31; Memorandum to All Superintendents from Eddie M. Speas, Jr., Special Deputy Attorney General, January 14, 1988, available at <https://www.ncsba.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/AG-Memo-1988.pdf>

Cross References: Insurance (policy 8340)

Adopted: April 11, 2016

Revised: July 25, 2023; DATE