

The Watauga County Board of Education (the “board”) recognizes the unique circumstances faced by children of military families who are often required to transfer to a new school system because their parents or guardians have a new military assignment. The board also recognizes that children whose immediate family members are deployed by the military may be at increased risk of emotional, psychological, or other harm. The board is committed to supporting these children in the school system and undertaking to serve their unique needs.

A. IDENTIFICATION OF MILITARY-CONNECTED STUDENTS

Each principal shall annually identify all military-connected students enrolled in the school and shall develop a means for serving their unique needs. For purposes of this section, a military-connected student is defined as a student who has a parent, step-parent, sibling, or any other person who resides in the same household serving in the active or reserve components of the United States Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Space Force, or National Guard.

The identification of military-connected students is not a public record subject to public records law.

B. PROVIDING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY FOR CHILDREN OF MILITARY FAMILIES

The board strives to promote flexibility and cooperation among the school system, parents and guardians, and children of military families, to promote the children’s well-being, and to assist these children in achieving educational success when transitioning to their new schools. To achieve these goals, the board has adopted policies consistent with the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children (hereinafter “Compact”) and G.S. 115C-407.12 to facilitate the enrollment of children of military families and to provide continuity in their educational services, including in the areas of education records, immunizations, age requirements for initial entry, course and education program placement, special education services, and extracurricular activities. The superintendent shall adopt procedures necessary to implement the policies and to otherwise comply with the Compact and G.S. 115C-407.12 and to educate employees about the unique needs of children of military families.

1. Definitions

The following definitions apply to all policies and procedures adopted in compliance with the Compact and G.S. 115C-407.12.

a. Active Duty

Active duty is full-time duty status in the active uniformed service of the United States, including members of the National Guard and Reserve on

active duty orders pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 12301 *et seq.* and 10 U.S.C. 12401 *et seq.*

b. Children of Military Families

Children of military families are school-aged children, enrolled in kindergarten through twelfth grade, in the household of one of the following:

- (1) a member of the uniformed services on active duty
- (2) a member or veteran of the uniformed services who is severely injured and is medically discharged or retired, for a period of one year after medical discharge or retirement;
- (3) a member of the uniformed services who died on active duty or as a result of injuries sustained on active duty, for a period of one year after death; and
- (4) an inactive member, but only if (1) the inactive member is required to move to perform military service-related responsibilities, (2) the move results in a transfer of school systems for the child, and (3) the inactive member presents a copy of the official military transfer order to the school from which services for the child are requested. If the move results in an interstate transfer of the child between the school system and another school system in a different state, the superintendent shall direct school officials to attempt to coordinate with the out-of-state school system on behalf of the child but cannot require the receiving school system to provide specific services.

c. Deployment

Deployment is the period one month prior to the service members' departure from their home station on military orders through six months after their return to their home station.

d. Education Records

Education records are those official records, files and data directly related to a student and maintained by the school or school system, including but not limited to records encompassing all the material kept in the student's cumulative folder, such as general identifying data, records of attendance and of academic work completed, records of achievement and results of

evaluative tests, health data, disciplinary status, test protocols, and individualized education programs.

e. Extracurricular Activities

Extracurricular activities are voluntary activities sponsored by the school or school system or an organization sanctioned by the school system. Extracurricular activities include, but are not limited to, preparation for and involvement in public performances, contests, athletic competitions, demonstrations, displays, and club activities.

f. Inactive Member

An inactive member is a member of the National Guard or Reserve of any branch of the uniformed services, who is inactive and not on active duty orders pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 12301 *et seq.* or 10 U.S.C. 12401 *et seq.*

g. Member State

A member state is a state that has enacted the Compact.

h. Non-Member State

A non-member state is a state that has not enacted the Compact.

i. Receiving State

The receiving state is the state to which a child of a military family is sent, brought, or caused to be sent or brought.

j. Rule

A rule is a written statement by the Interstate Commission promulgated pursuant to Article XII of the Compact that is of general applicability, implements, interprets or prescribes a policy or provision of the Compact, or an organizational, procedural, or practice requirement of the Interstate Commission, and has the force and effect of rules promulgated under the Administrative Procedures Act as found in Chapter 150B of the North Carolina General Statutes, and includes the amendment, repeal, or suspension of an existing rule.

k. Sending State

The sending state is the state from which a child of a military family is sent, brought, or caused to be sent or brought.

l. Student

The student is the child of a military family for whom the school system receives public funding and who is formally enrolled in kindergarten through twelfth grade.

m. Transition

The transition is (1) the formal and physical process of transferring from school to school or (2) the period of time in which a student moves from one school in the sending state to another school in the receiving state.

n. Uniformed Services

The uniformed services are the Army, Navy, Air Force, Space Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard, as well as the Commissioned Corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Public Health Services.

o. Veteran

A veteran is a person who served in the uniformed services and who was discharged or released therefrom under conditions other than dishonorable.

2. Resolution of Issues

The grievance procedure provided in policy 4010, Student and Parent Grievance Procedure, may be utilized by parents or guardians who disagree with a decision pertaining to education records, enrollment or eligibility for enrollment, placement, attendance, extracurricular activities, or graduation of a child of a military family, or a rule, as defined in this policy. In addition, parents or guardians may seek informal resolution of such decisions at any time by contacting the office of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) Military Liaison or the North Carolina Commissioner of the North Carolina State Council for the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children. Specific contact information may be found online at www.dpi.nc.gov/students-families/student-support/nc-supports-military-children or by calling NCDPI at (984) 236-2100.

Legal References: G.S. 115C-12(18)(f), -288(m), -407.5, -407.12

Cross References: Student Promotion and Accountability (policy 3420), Graduation Requirements (policy 3460), Extracurricular Activities and Student Organizations (policy 3620), Age Requirements for Initial Entry (policy 4100), Student and Parent Grievance Procedure (policy 4010), Immunization and Health Requirements for School Admission (policy 4110), Domicile or

Residence Requirements (policy 4120), Assignment to Classes (policy 4155), Attendance (policy 4400), Student Records (policy 4700)

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