

The Watauga County Board of Education (the “board”), as a corporate body, may transact business only at official meetings of the board. An individual board member has no authority to act absent the delegation of authority by the board at an official meeting.

As defined by law, an official meeting of the board includes any meeting, assembly or gathering together at any time or place or the simultaneous communication by conference telephone or other electronic means of a majority of the members of a public body for the purpose of conducting hearings, participating in deliberations, or voting upon or otherwise transacting the public business of the public body. However, a social meeting or other informal assembly or gathering together of the members of a public body does not constitute an official meeting unless called or held to evade the spirit and purposes of the open meetings law.

A. TYPES OF MEETINGS

While the board is determined to operate efficiently, it also is mindful of the importance of thoughtful planning and discussion prior to taking formal action. Regular meetings will be held at a predetermined time and place to conduct the business of the board. In addition, the board may hold specially-called meetings and emergency meetings, as it deems necessary to act in a timely manner and provide its members and executive staff with the opportunity to have an exchange of ideas and receive input from other staff, parents, students and the community.

B. REGULAR MEETINGS

The board shall hold a regular meeting on the second Monday of each month, except when the meeting day falls on a legal holiday; then the meeting date shall be set by action of the board. The meetings shall be held at the office of the Watauga County Board of Education or at another readily accessible Watauga County location approved by a majority of the board. The superintendent shall keep on file the schedule of regular meetings with the predetermined time and place. The schedule will be revised only in accordance with legal requirements for notice.

C. EMERGENCY MEETINGS

An emergency meeting may be called in order to address generally unexpected circumstances that require immediate consideration by the board. An emergency meeting may be called by the chairperson, the vice-chairperson if the chair is unable to act, or the superintendent when it is deemed necessary and cannot be delayed until 48 hours’ notice is provided as described in Section D. Additionally, the board chairperson or superintendent shall call an emergency meeting if a majority of the members of the board so request.

D. SPECIALLY-CALLED MEETINGS**1. Specially-Called Meetings Generally**

Specially-called meetings may be scheduled in between regular meetings of the board. Work sessions, retreats, and public hearings are specific types of specially-called meetings. The board chairperson (or the vice-chairperson, if the chairperson is not available) or the superintendent may call special meetings when necessary to conduct business that cannot reasonably be handled at regular meetings. The board chairperson or superintendent shall call a special meeting if a majority of the members of the board so requests.

2. Retreats and Workshops

Retreats and workshops are specially-called meetings that may be scheduled in order to give the board more time to deliberate or evaluate issues.

3. Public Hearings

Public hearings are official proceedings during which members of the public are given an opportunity to be heard. Public hearings may be required by law or deemed advisable by the board. Public hearings that are not required by law may be scheduled when the chairperson or superintendent determines that the public hearing is advisable or when a majority of the members of the board so requests. Notice of all public hearings will be provided as required by law and will include the subject, date, place and time of the hearing as well as any rules regarding participation, such as the length of time for each speaker. The purpose of a public hearing is to gather information and hear opinions from the community. Generally, board members will respond only to seek clarification. At the appointed time, the chairperson or designee shall call the hearing to order and preside over it in accordance with any rules regarding participation adopted by the board. When the allotted time expires or when no one wishes to speak, the chairperson or designee shall declare the hearing ended.

4. Notice

Notice of the time and place of the meeting and the subjects to be considered shall be given to each board member and the news media at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance in accordance with board policy and the open meetings law. See N.C. G.S. 143-318.12.

E. OPEN MEETINGS LAW COMPLIANCE

The board will comply with the open meetings law, including notice of meetings.

Legal References: G.S. 115C-41; 143-318.9, -318.10, -318.12, -318.14

Cross References: Compliance with the Open Meetings Law (policy 1420)

Adopted: November 9, 2015

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

Revised: January 28, 2016; February 10, 2020