

The Watauga County Board of Education (the “board”) encourages individuals and organizations to consider making a donation of real property, personal property, or funds to the school system. Donations, whether in the form of a gift or bequest, foster community support for the schools and improve the school system for the benefit of students and others. As an expression of the board’s gratitude, the superintendent shall provide for the appropriate recognition of donors.

A. SUITABILITY OF DONATIONS

The superintendent or designee shall evaluate any donation offer in order to determine whether the donation is suitable for the school or the school system. Donations may not conflict with the school system’s educational mission. In determining the suitability of a donation intended to benefit any program that is appropriately segregated by gender, such as a school athletic program, the superintendent must consider equity and Title IX issues in relation to overall funding and opportunities for participation.

Donations of real or personal property will be accepted only if the donor can demonstrate that he or she has clear and free title to the property. The superintendent/designee also must consider any safety hazards associated with gifts of real or personal property. Donations must not impose any undue financial burden or obligation on the school system. Any donation that includes advertisements must be consistent with policy 5240, Advertising in the Schools, and the food and beverage marketing requirements of policy 6140, Student Wellness.

For computer equipment or other technological resources, the superintendent/designee shall ensure that such items are compatible with minimum hardware and software standards set by the technology director. Any donation from an E-rate service provider must comply with gift rules applicable to federal agencies.

B. ACCEPTING DONATIONS

Upon receiving an offer of a donation to the school, a principal must give the superintendent written notification that states the nature of the donation and the purpose for which it is donated. The principal does not have the authority to accept donations to the school.

The superintendent may accept donations of less than \$10,000 on behalf of the board. The superintendent shall report any accepted donations of more than a nominal value at the next board meeting. The board reserves the right to determine in each particular case the appropriateness of a donation and may accept or reject a donation as the board sees fit.

The superintendent shall make a recommendation to the board on the suitability of any donation with a value that exceeds \$10,000. After considering the superintendent’s recommendation, the board will decide whether to accept the donation.

C. USE OF A DONATION

Unless otherwise specified in a written agreement approved by the board, any accepted donation becomes the permanent property of the school system. Anything purchased with donated funds, including funds raised through a crowdfunding campaign, project, or platform, become the property of the school system, and the title to such property vests in the board. If the board at any time determines that property donated, or acquired with donated funds, is unnecessary or undesirable for public school purposes, the board may dispose of such property in accordance with state law.

A donor may request that a donation be designated for a particular purpose. However, the board reserves the right to utilize the donation as it deems appropriate.

Any donation constituting revenues will be deposited in the proper account. The specific manner in which donated funds are expended for a designated purpose will be determined under the direction of the superintendent.

The board has no responsibility and makes no promises to continue any program initiated with donor contributions once the donated funds are expended.

Before installation of major donations that will become a permanent part of the school facility or grounds, such as playground equipment, bleachers, scoreboards, outdoor lights, or fences, the superintendent or designee must approve the design, location and construction material.

Legal References: 47 C.F.R. 54.503; FCC Sixth Report and Order 10-175; G.S. 115C, art. 35;. 115C-36, -47, -518

Cross References: Technology in the Educational Program (policy 3220), Advertising in the Schools (policy 5240), Student Wellness (policy 6140), Crowdfunding on Behalf of the School System (policy 7360/8225)

Adopted: February 8, 2016

Revised: August 13, 2018; February 10, 2020 (Legal references only)