

I. **Policy Statement**

The Catamount School (hereinafter "School") recognizes the need to be consistent, open and transparent in its admissions policies. The School will adhere to the legal requirements set forth in G.S. 116-239.5 *et seq.* (hereinafter "Statute"). The Catamount School shall not limit admissions based on race; color; religion; sex; sexual orientation; gender identity or expression; disability; national origin; intelligence level as ascertained by an intelligence quotient examination; or identification as a child with exceptionality. The purpose of the admissions policy is to define the procedures that shall apply regarding all admissions at The Catamount School.

II. **Policy Scope**

This policy shall apply to all faculty, staff, students, and applicants of the School

III. **Enrollment Plan**

Enrollment at The Catamount School will be determined exclusively by Western Carolina University (hereinafter "University"). Available slots shall be filled based on availability by grade. All students residing in Jackson County are eligible for consideration of enrollment based on the requirements of the Statute.

IV. **Admission Committee**

- A. The Admission Committee (hereinafter "Committee") shall oversee all aspects of the admission process.
- B. The Committee shall be comprised of three (3) members: the School principal who shall serve as Committee chairperson; one faculty member from the WCU College of Education appointed by the Dean of the WCU College of Education (hereinafter "Dean"); and one laboratory school staff member, appointed by the Dean. The Committee will keep records of all admissions decisions and report to the Chancellor when requested.
- C. Members of the Committee will maintain all student and parent and/or guardian information in the strictest confidence pursuant to law and University policy. No information received during the application process will be discussed with any individual who is not a member of the Committee or who does not have a need to know. All applications and information received for an application will be considered property of the School and will not be released to any individual, committee, agency, or other entity unless required by the laws of the State of North Carolina; policy of the University; or an order from a court of competent jurisdiction.

V. **Selection Procedures**

- A. All applicants will be placed on one of the following lists which are defined by G.S. 116-239.9, and establishes enrollment eligibility for admission.

1. Applicants currently enrolled in a low-performing school in Jackson County, as defined by G.S. 115C-105.37.
 2. Any student who did not meet expected growth in the prior school year based on one of the following indicators:
 - a. Grades;
 - b. Observations;
 - c. Diagnostic and formative assessments;
 - d. State assessments; or
 - e. Other factors, including reading on grade level.
- B. On a yearly basis, the Committee shall determine the period of enrollment as well as any application deadline(s) and related procedures. Additionally, the Committee shall publish information regarding the period of enrollment and applicable deadlines in multiple sources within Jackson County
- C. Enrollment consideration shall be based upon (a) eligibility status of the applicant pursuant to G.S. 116-239.9 and Section V.A of this policy; (b) timeliness of the applicant's application; (c) the order in which the application is received; and (d) the capacity of the program, class, grade level, or building applied to. The Committee may maintain a waiting list at its discretion pursuant to this policy.
- D. Parents or guardians of students currently attending the School will be advised by letter (hereinafter "Continuation Letter") from the School that they must notify School staff of their intent to continue their child(ren) as students of the School. *If a parent or guardian fails to respond by the date specified in the Continuation Letter, the School shall contact the parent or guardian and determine the student's intent to continue.*
- E. The Chancellor or designee will determine the availability of seats for each school year.

VI. **Other Provisions Relating to Admissions**

- a. Any parent or guardian who makes application for a student must provide all required documents substantiating the student's enrollment eligibility (i.e., evidence of enrollment in a low-performing school or State assessment results or standardized assessments) to the Committee. If the documents are not received by the deadline set by the Committee, the student's name will be removed from consideration but may be considered at a later date when and if the parent or guardian provide the required documentation. To assist any parent or guardian, parents or guardians may sign a waiver at time of application for a representative of The Catamount School to obtain the necessary academic records from a child's current school. This waiver should be signed at the time of application.
- b. Students who have been expelled from another private or public school will not be considered for admission until such time the student would be eligible to return to the school from which the student was expelled.

- c. If a student fails to enroll after 5 days into the first semester, the student will be dropped from the enrollment list. The parent and/or guardian will be required to repeat the application process.
- d. If a student is granted admission based on false or misleading information, the student may be discharged from the school at any time during the school year, or at the end of the current school year. The Chancellor or designee will make a decision based on the recommendation of the Committee as well as any documentation submitted by the School and/or the student. The Committee shall determine procedures for the submission of documentation.
- e. If legal guardianship has been transferred from natural parent to any other entity or individual, such guardianship will only be recognized and accepted when the guardianship is permanent and approved by a court of competent jurisdiction.

VII. **Waiting Lists**

- A. No student will be included on the School's waiting list unless the student is eligible to be enrolled if admission were to be granted.
- B. After the first day of the school year, if the School is not at capacity or when vacancies have occurred by a student leaving the school for whatever reason, the Committee may agree to admit a student from the waiting list. Any decision to consider an applicant during this time beyond the first day is the sole discretion of the Committee. The admission process will follow the regular admissions policy.
- C. Applicants on the waiting list who were not admitted during the school year of their initial application must reapply for admission in succeeding years.

- I. Legal References
- II. Cross References
- III. Version History