



Courtney Widener, right, walks with Lexi Delzeit up the red carpet to prom April 20 while her brother, Csaey, top left, stands at attention in his Air Force dress uniform on the curb. The Widener family and school officials have agreed to look at changing the prom policy at the May 6 school board meeting. L&T photo/Earl Watt

L&T staff report

Below is the text of a joint statement from USD No. 480 and Courtney Widener and her family addressing the policy that prevented Airman Casey Widener from escorting his sister to the front door of the school for prom April 20. The image is the actual document that the two parties issued jointly April 30. The family and district request all media to use this statement as the official statement on the issue and do not plan to answer any further questions on the matter. Both have respectfully asked the media to allow the issue to be put to rest. The new policy will be presented at the May 6 School Board meeting.

Joint statement from Unified School District 480 and Courtney Widener with her family

Based on the amount of media coverage and the distraction that comes along with this, the family and school district have decided to bring closure to the issue revolving around prom.

"Rest assured that Casey Widener is an American airman to be honored, and our school and community are proud of his service to our country. He was in no manner intentionally dishonored and kept from attending prom due to his military service. It was simply the matter of his age being too old to meet current policy." — LHS principal Keith Adams.

"It has been my intent all along to simply honor my brother. When it was explained to me that he was unable to escort me due to policy reasons I wanted this policy to change to make it better for the future." — LHS junior Courtney Widener.

The family and the district have come together to remedy the situation and have worked collaboratively to develop additional language to be added to our current policy.

"I have greatly respected the way that the Widener family has worked with the school district. I truly know that they did not intend for this story to become a national story. They have, along with school officials, focused on remaining positive and wanted to be a part of a positive solution rather than dwell on negativity. For that I am very appreciative." — Superintendent Dr. Lance Stout.

We are very appreciative that a policy has been drafted that allows more flexibility in dealing with prom and promenade. We are all eager to put this issue behind us and get back to school as normal in Liberal, Kansas.

Signed

Courtney Widener

Tiffany Brady

Lance D. Stout

Keith Adams

Press Release
April 30, 2013

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