

## STAFF PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

The Board of Trustees recognizes that successful functioning of our democratic society depends upon each individual's acceptance of his or her responsibility for participation in politics and government. This shall not be construed to mean that the district will provide financial support by paying salaries during absences related to elective political offices. It is also recognized that School District employees have a primary obligation for providing quality instruction to the children with whom they work.

The Board of Trustees does not restrict the political involvement of district employees provided:

- 1) That an absence for political activities will be treated the same as any other absence for personal reasons and must have prior approval by the administration;
- 2) That no school facilities, equipment, or supplies can be used for campaigning or other political activities nor shall the employee discuss the campaign with school personnel or students during the work day, nor shall the employee use any time during the work day for campaigning purposes;
- 3) Employees while acting in the capacity of a school district employee, shall not engage in any political activity during the school day or during work hours,
- 4) That approval of candidacy for public office or other political activity that necessitates absence from work in excess of that provided by board policies or contract must be approved by the Board of Trustees at least five (5) days before any public announcement of such candidacy. Except in exceptional cases the Board will not allow employees to miss any significant amount of work in order to hold office and carry out the duties of their elected office. In those instances, in which the Board approves the candidacy for public office and the absence from work, the Board will determine the terms and conditions under which the employee may continue employment as she/he seeks and holds public office. No salary will be paid by the School District for any absence from school duties because of political activities or duties of political office.
- 5) Speech on political issues and candidates can be highly controversial and divisive. The school and staff while fulfilling duties as a school district employee, will retain the position of neutrality on political issues and candidates and respect the varying viewpoints of the public.

An employee elected to the state legislature will continue to receive his/her school district salary less the cost of a substitute. The employee may retain his/her legislative salary and per diem allowance to cover living costs while serving away from home. All candidates for elective state or national office, other than the state legislature, shall request a leave of absence. They will also submit a letter of resignation if elected.

Adopted: 3/11/85  
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