

## **AP 411 STAFF PARTICIPATION IN EXTERNAL EVENTS INCLUDING POLITICAL ACTIVITIES**

### **Background**

The District recognizes the right of its employees to pursue their private social, political and financial affairs. The right to pursue private activities must be balanced against the employee's duty of fidelity to their employer.

District employees are free to comment on public issues at events external to the District, but must exercise caution to ensure, that by doing so, they do not jeopardize the perception of impartiality in the performance of their duties. For this reason, care is to be taken in making comments or entering into public or political debate regarding District Policies or Administrative Procedures. District employees must not use their position in the District to lend weight to the public expression of their personal opinions.

Occasional service to the public is not to prejudice the career opportunities of an employee of the District. However, prolonged and continuous public service must be construed as a different and possibly new career.

It is the intent of the District to permit its employees to participate in public affairs benefitting the public and concurrently to protect both the interests of the persons it employs and the public it serves.

### **Procedures**

1. Whether by their own undertaking or by invitation, employees are free to participate in activities of a political nature including attending a political party meeting, being a member of a political party, supporting a candidate for elected office and actively seeking elected office. Political activities, however, must be clearly separated from activities related to their employment.
2. If engaging in political activities, employees must be able to retain the perception of impartiality in relation to their duties and responsibilities. Employees must not engage in political activities during working hours or use District facilities, equipment or resources in support of these activities. Partisan politics at the local, provincial or national levels are not to be introduced into the workplace. This does not apply to informal private discussions among co-workers.
3. Wherever possible, an employee who wishes to run for public office is to notify their immediate Supervisor prior to declaring that intention publicly.
4. An employee may apply to the Superintendent in writing for a leave of absence without pay to conduct a political campaign once accepted as a candidate for public office (e.g. Board, Municipal, Provincial or Federal Government).

5. Any leaves granted under this Administrative Procedure will cover the period between the issue of the election writ and the day on which results of the election are declared.
6. If the candidate withdraws from the election prior to the election then the leave may cease as a result of a mutual agreement between the employee and the District.
7. On taking office as an MP or MLA an employee will be placed on leave of absence without pay for the first term of office period. Should an employee resign from office during or at the end of the first term or be defeated, employment with the District in an appropriate position will be offered. Should the employee be elected to a second term of office, the employee will be required to resign from the District.
8. Should an employee's campaign for public office prove to interfere with the performance of their ~~his/her~~ duties and responsibilities required by their position the District may choose to consider the employee's dismissal for cause.
9. Should a conflict arise due to the dual responsibilities of holding public office and maintaining District employee duties, mutually satisfactory alternate arrangements may be required and agreed to on an individual basis.

Reference:                Sections 22, 65, 85 School Act  
                                 Employment Standards Act  
                                 Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act  
                                 Collective Agreements

Approved:                November 2020  
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