

SCHOOL DISTRICT 63 (SAANICH)  
POLICY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
**Agenda**

Committee Members: Trustee VanWell, Chair  
Trustee Elder  
Trustee McMurphy

Staff Support: Dave Eberwein, Superintendent of Schools  
Jason Reid, Secretary Treasurer

Partner Representatives: Don Peterson, STA  
Nola Welsh, CUPE  
Suzanne Chisholm, SAA  
Ashley Sonosky, COPACS

Other Attendees:

**Tuesday, May 9, 2023  
1:00 pm**

**A. PRESENTATIONS AND QUESTIONS**

No Items.

**B. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

Political Meeting Attendance by Staff  
- Administrative Procedure 411 (Staff Participation in Political Activities) updated

**C. ITEMS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

1. Policy 29 (Diversity & Inclusion)

**Staff Recommendation:**

As the required Notice of Motion has been provided, I, Trustee VanWell move that Policy 29 (Diversity & Inclusion) be approved.

Feedback received during the consultation period is attached.

**D. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

**E. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

That the following remain as policies pending a review by the Board about what portions of these programs the Board wishes to retain as policy:

- Policy 9 – Provisions for Virtual Meeting Attendance
- Policy 3 – Role of the Trustee (ProD Funds)
- Policy Review – November 2024

## **AP 411 STAFF PARTICIPATION IN 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 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. Employees are free to participate in political activities including belonging to 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. If engaging in political activities, employees must be able to retain the perception of impartiality in relation to their duties and responsibilities.
2. 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 ~~his/her~~ **their** 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

**Updated:**

## Policy 29

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### DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The Board recognizes and values the diversity found within its school communities and believes that each individual contributes to the strength of the District's culture. The Board is committed to establishing and maintaining a safe and positive environment, free from discrimination, harassment or intimidation for all students, employees and community members. It recognizes and supports the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, as well as the BC Human Rights Code which prohibits discrimination based on race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, marital status, family status, physical and mental ability, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression.

The Board believes that each member of the District community must share the responsibility for supporting students and staff in addressing and facing the challenges in providing an education system that is safe, welcoming, inclusive and affirming for its students, employees and community members.

The Board will create and maintain policies and practices that foster student success and promote fair and equitable treatment for all. These include **providing**:

1. Equitable access to a quality education;
2. School cultures that value and celebrate diversity, and which respond to the diverse social and cultural needs of the people and communities they serve;
3. Learning and working environments that are inclusive, safe and welcoming, and free from discrimination, harassment or violence;
4. **Flexible personalized learning environments that are responsive and relevant to children's varied learning styles;**
5. **Inclusive practices that address the unique learning needs of all students.**

The Board will **neither** permit, encourage, nor condone any behaviours contrary to these commitments, whether by commission or by failing to act to bring such behaviours to an end, and is committed to providing support and assistance to those who may be the intended or unintended targets of such behaviours.

Reference: Sections 6, 7, 17, 20, 22, 65, 85 School Act  
BC Human Rights Code  
Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms  
Canadian Human Rights Act

Approved: xxxxx 2023

## Leigh Glancie

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**From:** Don Peterson - Local 63 President <lp63@bctf.ca>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 9, 2023 8:50 AM  
**To:** Leigh Glancie  
**Subject:** Re: Policy 29 (Diversity & Inclusion)

**[Caution: External Sender]** This email is from a sender outside the organization. Do not open attachments, reply, or click links unless you have verified the content and sender are legitimate.

Hi Leigh,

Here is the Associations feedback on Policy 29. Overall, we believe that such a policy is needed in the school district.

We did struggle with the wording of the final paragraph:

The Board will neither permit, encourage, nor condone any behaviours contrary to these commitments, whether by commission or by failing to act to bring such behaviours to an end, and is committed to providing support and assistance to those who may be the intended or unintended targets of such behaviours.

We believe that the highlighted section is awkwardly worded. The "whether by commission or by failing to act to bring such behaviours to an end" could either be rewritten or struck. Perhaps, "whether" could be changed to "including."

We believe it is important for people who witness discrimination to act. Acting could be different depending on who is the witness. If it is student who is the witness, we may expect them to report to an adult. If it is a staff member, they might intervene. The paragraph seems to have an expectation that the person acting is not only expected to act, but will also be required to be successful in bringing the behaviour to an end. They are not always going to have that success. We suggest that this section could be reworded to say "by failing to act with the goal/intent of bringing such behaviours to an end."

Thank Leigh!

Don Peterson

President, Saanich Teachers' Association



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Acknowledging the WSÁNEĆ people on whose unceded territory we are honoured to be guests. The WSÁNEĆ people have been the caretakers of this land since time immemorial.