

Lower Merion School District

Policy No.: 438
Section: PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES
Title: SABBATICAL LEAVE – RESTORATION OF HEALTH
Date Adopted: 8/24/87
Date Last Revised: 7/20/98

438 SABBATICAL LEAVE - RESTORATION OF HEALTH

The purpose of the Board Policy is to establish conditions for approval of leaves of absence for restoration of health. The Lower Merion School District Board of School Directors hereby adopts the following policy to comport with Act 66 of 1996 amending the School Code, 24 P.S. 1166.1 of the Public School Code of Pennsylvania, which extensively revised provisions concerning sabbatical leaves for professional employees.

The Board shall have the sole authority to adopt and enforce policies establishing the conditions for approval of a restoration of health leave. All requests for such leave shall be subject to review by the Board. The Board reserves the right to specify the reasons that a sabbatical for restoration of health may be taken, consistent with law.

A. Eligibility

To be eligible for a sabbatical for restoration of health, an employee shall have completed ten (10) years of satisfactory service in the public schools of the Commonwealth; at least five (5) consecutive years of such service shall be in the Lower Merion School District. A leave for restoration of health may be taken for one-half (1/2) or a full school term or two half school terms during a period of two years at the option of the employee. Thereafter, one full sabbatical leave of absence shall be allowed after each seven full years of service.

B. Limitations

The number of sabbatical leaves granted in any school year shall be limited to ten percent (10%) of the number of persons eligible for sabbaticals and regularly employed by the school district.

Requests for sabbatical leave for restoration of health shall be submitted no later than April 1 for the fall semester and October 1 for the spring semester. All requests must be in writing and shall be forwarded to the Superintendent, or the Superintendent's designee. Failure to meet the deadline shall result in the request being denied.

Requests for sabbatical leave shall include a certificate from the employee's personal physician, setting forth the reason for the request and a recommendation regarding the duration of the leave. At the end of the leave, an additional statement from the physician shall be submitted to the Superintendent, or the Superintendent's designee, indicating the extent to which the purpose of the leave has been achieved and evaluating the health status of the employee relative to the employee's ability to return to employment. The Board reserves the right to require, at its own expense, additional examinations and reports by a physician of its choice to determine the validity of leave requests.

Acceptance of a sabbatical leave for restoration of health for the equivalent of a full school term incurs a commitment by the employee to return to active duty in the school district immediately

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following the leave for one full school term, unless prevented by illness or physical disability. Acceptance of a sabbatical leave for the restoration of health for the equivalent of a half school term incurs a commitment by the employee to return to active duty in the school district immediately following the leave for one half school term, unless prevented by illness or physical disability. The Board reserves the right to require, at its own expense, additional examinations and reports by a physician of its choice to determine the validity of leave requests.

At the expiration of the restoration of health leave, the employer shall, unless agreed otherwise, reinstate the professional on leave in the same position held at the time of the granting of the leave. Time on restoration of health shall be counted as time on the job for the purposes of seniority, where applicable in the school district and for retirement purposes.

During the period of restoration of health, an employee shall be compensated at one-half (1/2) the salary to which the employee would have been entitled had the employee not taken leave. The employee shall be entitled to benefits provided to other professional employees.

An employee granted a sabbatical leave for restoration of health shall not engage in any new enterprise or employment while on leave.

§1166, 1166.1, 1167, 1168