

PERSONNEL

Political Activities

The School Board recognizes the right of its employees, as citizens, to engage in political activity. However, the Board also recognizes that school property and school time, paid for by the citizens of the City, should not be used for partisan political purposes except as provided for in policies pertaining to the use of school buildings by civic and political organizations. With approval from the Superintendent or designee, elected or appointed local, statestate, or federal officials who are acting in their official capacity and not campaigning, may address students and employees on matters relevant to the educational environment.

A. School Board employees: prohibition on certain activities

The School Board subscribes to the principle that School Boardpublic-school employees must, with all other citizens, share the responsibility for the development of a sound public body and assume full political and citizenship responsibilities. However, in his or her political activities, an employee will not:

1. Misrepresent the Sschool Division, but will take adequate precautions to distinguish between his/hertheir personal and institutional views.
2. Interfere with another person's colleague's exercise of political and citizenship rights and responsibilities while on School Board property or during school-sponsored events unless such activity is inconsistent with applicable policy, regulation, or law.
3. Use institutional privileges, School Division resources, or working time to promote political candidates or partisan political activities.
- 3.4. Poll students to determine their political beliefs or how their parents are voting on any issue and shall not attempt to influence or indoctrinate students with personal political and social philosophy.

For purposes of this Regulation, prohibited "political activities" is narrowly defined to mean "political, election or campaign activities" which would include, but not be limited to, the posting of political circulars or petitions; campaigning for any local, state or federal elected or appointed position; collection and/or solicitation of campaign funds; solicitations for campaign workers; the use of studentspupils/staff in writing or addressing campaign materials; the use of School Board property or resources (including email, audio announcement systems, web based or other electronic media or other communication or computer systems); or the distribution of election or campaign materials to studentspupils or staff on school property or during school time in any

manner which would indicate that a school employee is using the employee's position with the School Division~~a position in the school~~ to further personal views on candidates for public office or on questions of public policy. The exception is the circulation of literature pertaining to bond referenda for school purposes.

B. Teacher Guidance

Teachers should:

1. Address political topics as impartially and objectively as possible.
2. Not allow personal biases to intrude or interfere with professional judgment.
3. Handle political issues ~~w~~in a manner relevant to the content of the course and appropriate to the knowledge and maturity of the students.
4. Inform the principal/~~designee~~ when there is a doubt about the impact of a political topic in planned instruction.
5. Encourage critical thinking by offering multiple perspectives of the issue(s) under discussion, gathering information, considering implications and consequences of varying viewpoints, checking for assumptions, and using questions to guide ideas and clarify thinking.
6. Act consistent with School Board policy, regulation, and School Administration guidance on political and political policy in the educational environment.

Nothing in this ~~R~~regulation shall be interpreted as prohibiting teachers from conducting appropriate activities which encourages students to become involved in the political processes of the party of the students' choice or as independents.~~;~~ ~~n~~Nor does it prohibit the fair use of political figures as resource persons in the classrooms, provided appropriate authorization is obtained.

In view of the voting rights of eighteen-year-olds, school facilities may be used as meeting sites for student political groups before or after the regular instructional day. A teacher or a community person approved by the principal/~~designee~~ must be in attendance at such meetings.

Editor's Note

*See also Attorney General's Opinion, February 22, 1984.
For political leave see Division Regulation 4-74.2.
See School Board Policy 4-32—Employee Associations.
See school division website: www.vbschools.com*

Related Links

School Board **Regulation 4-74.2**

School Board **Policy 4-32**

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