

As an individual, each employee of a local board of education retains all the rights and obligations of citizenship provided in the Constitution and laws of the State of North Carolina and the Constitution and laws of the United States of America. Employment or volunteer service with the school system does not preclude an individual from participating in political activities, such as voting, campaigning for candidates or issues, running for or serving in public office, attending political events, and contributing funds to partisan groups or candidates.

These political activities must not:

1. take place during work hours and/or while on duty while performing official services as an employee of the board of education;
2. involve school system funds, materials, or resources; or
3. make use of an official school position to encourage or to coerce students, employees, or others to support or oppose a political party, candidate, or issue.

No employee of a local board of education shall:

1. Actively participate in managing a political campaign, campaign for political office, or otherwise engage in political activity while on duty or within any period during which he or she is expected to perform services for which the employee receives compensation from a local board of education.
2. Use the authority of his or her position, or utilize public funds, supplies, equipment, or vehicles to secure support for or oppose any candidate, party, or issue in an election involving candidates for office or party nominations, or affect the results thereof.
3. Utilize public funds, supplies, equipment, or vehicles for partisan purposes, political purposes, or to engage in advocating for or against issues of local, State, or federal policy.

No member of a local board of education or employee of the local board of education exercising supervisory authority shall make, issue, or enforce any rule or policy the effect of which is to interfere with the right of any employee of the local board of education as an individual to engage in political activity while not on duty or at times during which he or she is not performing services for which the employee receives compensation from the local board.

As specified in policy 1360, Official School Spokesperson, the chairperson of the board or designee and the superintendent or designee are the official spokespersons for the school system. Employees, when exercising their rights as citizens, should take steps to ensure that their personal political activities or opinions are not erroneously attributed to the school board or the school system.

This policy should not be construed as prohibiting the impartial study and discussion of political or other controversial issues in the classroom setting. However, employees must be mindful of their responsibility to deliver the curriculum of the school system and may not present their personal political views to students in the classroom or when otherwise engaged in the instruction of students.

Legal References: G.S. 115C-47(18) Legal References: U.S. Const. amend. I; G.S. 115C-46.1, -47(18); Boring v. Buncombe County Bd. of Educ., 136 F.3d 364 (4th Cir. 1998); Lee v. York County Sch. Div., 484 F.3d 687 (4th Cir. 2007)

Cross References: Official School Spokesperson (policy 1360)

Adopted: January 11, 2016; January 9, 2017

Replaces: Policy 3.07.10, Political Activities

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