

PROCEDURE - POLITICAL LEAVE

5252P

Upon request, employees may be granted political leave according to the following provisions:

1. With three (3) weeks written notice, an employee may be granted up to four (4) weeks of continuous leave without pay for the purposes of campaigning for his/her own election.
2. Any employee may hold a political office and continue as an employee as long as it does not interfere with the employee's assignment.
3. The Board may extend to the employee who is elected to a political office a leave of absence without pay up to one (1) year, provided the request for such leave is submitted in writing at least four (4) weeks prior to the commencement of the leave.
4. At the conclusion of the political leave, the employee will be given the same consideration for returning to the employee's last assignment.
5. The employee who intends to campaign for an elective office shall be advised that:
 - a. Political activities shall not occur during the working hours of the employee. This shall not preclude the employee from renting space if such space is available on a rental basis for candidates who are not associated with the District.
 - b. Political circulars, petitions or endorsements may not be distributed or posted on school property.
 - c. The collection of campaign funds and/or the solicitation of campaign workers is prohibited on school property.
 - d. The use of students for writing or addressing political materials, or the distribution of such materials to or by students is prohibited.
6. An employee may not campaign for a political candidate or for a political issue during school hours on school property; provided, however, that under Policy 5224 and existing District practice, employees, as citizens, have been allowed to exercise individual free speech rights in the work place that are not otherwise substantially disruptive of the educational process and do not interfere with the employee's performance of their work duties or responsibilities. Consistent with these requirements and the Washington State Public Disclosure Commission's Guidelines for School Districts in Election Campaigns, under Policy 5224 employees may engage in activities such as wearing campaign buttons, campaign related clothing or similar personal apparel items while on the job and in other activities permitted under said Guidelines.

7. Staff members who hold elective office are not entitled to release time from their school duties for reasons incidental to such office except as such time may qualify under the leave policies of the Board or a provision of a negotiated labor agreement.
8. Violation of any of the stated rules may constitute sufficient cause for reprimand or dismissal.

Implemented:	March 17, 1986	North Thurston School District
Amended:	October 3, 1988	
Amended:	November 23, 2015	
Reviewed:	August 22, 2023	Executive Director for Human Resources