

ARTICLE 16: UNPAID LEAVES OF ABSENCE

A. International and Federal Programs Leave

A leave of absence for one work year may be granted to any employee who has completed three or more years of service with the District, for the purpose of participating full time in exchange programs in other states, territories, or countries; foreign or military teaching programs; the Peace Corps, Teacher's Corps or Job Corps, or a cultural travel or work program related to the employee's professional responsibilities; provided said employee states in the leave request the employee's intention to return to the school system at the expiration of the leave. Upon return from such leaves, an employee shall be placed at the same position on the salary schedule as the employee would have been had the employee worked in the District during such period. Upon fulfillment of the requirements of the first year of the approved program, the employee may request and shall be granted a one-year extension of leave to complete the required length of service.

B. Professional Study Leave

Employees, who have gained contract status, may be granted a leave without pay for activities that will enhance their personal and/or professional growth. Such activities may include study, travel and other reasons as deemed appropriate by the District. Upon return at the expiration of such leave, an employee shall be placed at the same position on the salary schedule as the employee would have been had the employee worked in the District during such period.

C. Military Leave

Military leave of absence without pay or benefits shall be granted any employee who is drafted or enlists in any branch of the armed services of the United States for the period of the induction or initial enlistment. Upon return from military leave within 90 days after the employee is relieved from such military duty, an employee shall be placed at the same position on the salary schedule as the employee would have been had the employee worked in the District during the period of military service.

Any employee who leaves for military duty without completing 135 consecutive days of employment during a school year shall, upon return to an assignment, serve that entire probationary year over, notwithstanding the granting of continuous credit for time served in the armed forces.

D. Parental Leave

1. Parental leave may be granted, upon written request, for childcare or adoption. An employee requesting such leave shall give at least 30 days' notice except in extenuating circumstances.

2. At the time the leave is requested, the employee will discuss the expected duration of the leave and options to return with a Human Resource Administrator.
3. If the leave commences after the beginning of the second semester of the school year, the leave may be extended for the second school year following the school year in which the leave commenced.
4. At the conclusion of the leave, the employee shall, upon request, be reinstated to the same position held when the leave commenced if the leave is less than 60 working days in duration.
5. The employee must notify the Human Resource Department in writing by April 1 of the employee's intent to return at the beginning of the subsequent school year.

E. Personal Leave

Upon written request, a contract employee may be granted a leave of absence for up to one year for personal reasons including health or personal welfare. The recipient shall not work in another District during the period of leave; neither shall the recipient work half-time or more in other non-school employment during the period of leave.

F. Short-Term Unpaid Leaves

In non-emergency situations, at least two (2) weeks' notice of the request must be given. Each employee may take up to three (3) days of unpaid leave per year provided a suitable replacement is available and the leave is not during either the first two (2) or the last two (2) weeks of the school year and the affected principal approves the leave. Leaves of more than three (3) days require the approval of a Human Resource Administrator. The District shall continue to pay health insurance premiums during the three (3) day or less unpaid leave.

If a person is on an unpaid leave of more than three (3) days, other than FMLA, on the first working day of the month, District benefits for that month will be at the employee's expense should the employee wish to continue health insurance.

G. Other Unpaid Leaves

Unpaid leaves for other purposes may be granted by the Board upon request.

H. Governmental Service and Professional Leadership Leave

1. An employee seeking an appointive or elective position in government or a full time elective position within a professional organization may apply in writing for a leave of absence. The Board shall act on the request not later than the second regularly scheduled Board meeting following receipt of the written request.

2. An employee returning from such leave shall be given preference for the position the employee held prior to the leave unless the employee waives such right in writing.
3. An employee returning from such leave shall be placed on the salary schedule at the level the employee would have achieved had the employee remained actively employed in the District during the period of leave.

I. General Provisions for Unpaid Leaves

1. Employees who desire an unpaid leave of absence for any of the above reasons shall submit a written request to a Human Resource Administrator via the principal, for review and determination by the Board. All leaves which are granted shall be in writing specifying the beginning and termination dates of the leave. Such leaves, when granted, shall be without pay, or benefits, except as provided herein.
2. Extensions, renewals, or modifications of Unpaid Leaves may be granted in extenuating circumstances upon the employee's written request to a Human Resource Administrator and subsequent Board approval. Such leave, if granted, shall be in writing.
3. Employees on leave shall notify the Human Resource Administrator by April 1 prior to the beginning of the next school year of their intent to return from leave. Failure to provide such notice by April 1 or failure to return from leave at its expiration will be considered as a resignation unless such leave has been extended by the Board.
4. All benefits to which an employee was entitled at the time the leave of absence commenced and which are currently in effect for employees, including unused accumulated sick leave, shall be restored upon return. To restore health benefits, employees must re-enroll within thirty (30) days of their return from leave.
5. Group insurance coverage may be continued during the entire leave period up to one year, provided the employee reimburses the District for the applicable premiums during any portion of the leave in which the employee is on an unpaid status unless District paid insurance is required by Family Medical Leave Act. However, employees on International and Federal Program Leave, Military Leave, or who are engaged in other full time employment in which they are eligible for full family group medical coverage available through the employer, are not eligible to extend their group insurance through the District.
6. **Bargaining unit members shall retain access to District electronic infrastructure during unpaid leaves. This infrastructure includes but is not limited to access to District email, access to Google and/or other shared drives, access to leave balances and access to W2 forms.**
7. **For leaves four days or fewer, bargaining unit members shall prepare lesson plans for substitute(s), if practicable. Lesson plans shall be due by fifteen minutes before**

student contact time commences. For leaves that extend longer than four days, member shall not be responsible for preparing lesson plans