



Nederland Independent School District Employee Campaign Speech & Action Guide

All employees have an opinion about the proposed bond issue for Nederland ISD and you may be wondering “*What can I legally do or say about the bond issue?*” This guide is based on legal opinion and information from the Texas Ethics Commission and Texas Secretary of State’s office.

Question

Can employees talk about the bond issue during working hours at school?

Answer

Yes. Employees can discuss the bond issue during working hours, but from the context of sharing information only. We cannot advocate for or against the bond issue while working.

Question

I want to support the bond issue. Can I use my conference period or break-time to email others and encourage them to support the bond issue?

Answer

No. Advocating for or against the bond issue during work hours, using school district provided email, district owned equipment, etc., is not permissible.

Question

If students in class initiate discussion about the bond issue and ask me a question about the bond issue, how do I respond?

Answer

Tell students that you can provide basic information about the bond issue, but legally you cannot advocate for or against the bond issue. Teachers may encourage students to register and vote if they are 18 years old, but again, not how to vote.

Question

What about after school hours? Can I advocate or oppose the bond issue after work?

Answer

Yes. You have all speech rights that any citizen enjoys after the work day. You may advocate for or against the bond issue as you deem appropriate.

Question

Can I put a sign in my yard or give a donation to the committee supporting the bond issue?

Answer

Yes, you can place a sign in your yard and donate money if you choose to do so.

Question

If I produce a brochure at home, using my own computer and printer, may I distribute it to other teachers and personnel using our internal mail system?

Answer

No. The district will provide information to all employees, but nothing can be placed in mailboxes that advocate for or against the bond issue.

Question

Can I wear a t-shirt or button advocating for or against the bond issue during working hours?

Answer

No.

Question

Can I wear a t-shirt or button advocating for or against the bond issue at a school sponsored event after regular working hours?

Answer

Yes, as long as you do not have an official working capacity at the event. For example, if you are a paid ticket-taker at the event you cannot wear promotional clothing or campaign buttons. If you are just attending the function, you may wear them.

Question

May I give information about the bond issue to students and ask them to bring the information home?

Answer

No. The district may provide documents for informational purposes only.

Question

If a parent is on campus, may they wear a t-shirt or button that advocates for or against the bond issue?

Answer

Yes. As long as they are at school for normal business/parent interests, parents may wear the items.

Questions

Can I share information advocating for or against the bond on my personal social media page?

Answer

Yes. Remember, employees will be held to the same professional standards in their personal use of social media as they are for any other public conduct. Employees should not post on social media during regular working hours.

Question

May school district employees electioneer on days of early voting and the general election?

Answer

As long as your electioneering is not during your scheduled work time and you obey electioneering laws (no closer than 100 feet to polling site) employees may participate in electioneering just like any other citizen.

Question

What information is available for employees that want to learn more about the bond issue?

Answer

A FAQ document is now available on the district website and other materials will be posted to the website soon. Also, an information session will be planned for each campus in the coming weeks.

Question

If I have a question not covered in this guide, who should I contact?

Answer

Send the question to Rene' Latiolais – rlatiolais@nederlandisd.org

Texas Ethics Commission

800-325-8506

<http://www.ethics.state.tx.us/>

Texas Secretary of State

512-463-5600 (Administrative Offices)

<http://www.sos.state.tx.us/>

Texas Secretary of State Elections Division

800-252-8683

<http://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/index.shtml>

Texas Election Code

<http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/statutes/eltoc.html>