

## **522.5 STAFF POLITICAL ACTIVITIES**

Consistent with the accepted ethical standards for the education profession, with the state statutes and constitution and with the United States Constitution and Bill of Rights, teachers and other staff shall have full rights of citizenship and the exercise thereof. The Board encourages employees to exercise full rights of citizenship in the community during off-duty hours.

Among the basic rights as American citizens, teachers and other employees have the right to participate in political activities and express political views, provided this does not interfere with their discharge of professional duties. School employees engaged in political activities shall make it clear that their utterances and actions are theirs as individuals and that they, in no manner, represent the views of the school system. Political activities of educational staff members must be conducted outside of school hours and off school premises.

The Board recognizes that an educational staff member has civic responsibilities and/or rights including the right to vote; to be an active member of the political party of his/her choice; to campaign for candidates for election to public office; to seek, campaign for, and serve in public office. In fulfilling his/her responsibility as a member of the educational staff, he/she will refrain from exploiting the privileges of his/her position and will not exploit students in any way for political purposes for him/herself or for any party or candidate.

A member of the educational staff may be granted leave of absence, with loss of full pay, for a definite period for the purpose of campaigning or for serving in public office.

The position of a member of the educational staff will at no time be in jeopardy due to his/her political activity as long as he/she adheres to the following criteria:

1. There is no conflict of interest on the part of that employee or of the employees involved.
2. The professional relationship of the teacher with the learner is not damaged.
3. The code of ethics of the employee group is not violated.
4. No clear and present danger to the school system itself is evidenced.

### Participation of Employees in School District Elections

Employees who are qualified residents of the school district are free to make their own personal decisions as to which Board candidate nomination petition to sign or to refrain from signing. Any activity of school district employees in regard to the circulating or signing of petitions shall be carried out while they are not on duty for the school district and at places other than on school district premises.

School employees shall avoid any type of activity during their "on duty" hours which could be interpreted reasonably as supporting or opposing any individual candidate.

CROSS REF.: WREA Agreement  
AFL-CIO Local 1075 Agreement (Lunch, Custodians and Maintenance)  
AFL-CIO Local 95 Agreement (Office and Professional Employees)

APPROVED: November 11, 1974

REVISED: *This policy was reviewed extensively by the Policy Sub-committee and came before the Board of Education several times for approval with no action taken at this time. Therefore the current policy in effect is from November 1974.*