

POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

The Board of Trustees recognizes that successful functioning of our democratic society depends upon each individual's acceptance of his or her responsibility for participation in politics and government. Employment by the district does not infringe on the individual's rights of citizenship to register to vote, discuss political issues, vote, campaign for candidates or issues, run for or serve in public office or participate on a committee or board which seeks to serve the welfare of the community.

An employee shall not engage in political campaigning while officially carrying out assigned duties. A school employee who engages in political activities does so as an individual and not as a representative of the school system.

To the extent as permitted by law, employees may be candidates for, and serve if elected to, the city council or other offices within the city and county. Campaigning must be done on the time of the employee. Serving in an official capacity will be permitted with prior administrative approval when there is not a significant loss of time from district duties and when a substitute for the employee is not required.

In the event that the elected office will require significant time away from the job, the employee must negotiate an arrangement satisfactory to the Board of Trustees regarding hours to be worked as well as salary to be paid by the district. The arrangement should be agreed on by both parties in advance with contract adjustments allowed, if appropriate. Negotiations will be based on the amount of time the duties of the elected office will take the employee away from all of his/her district duties including classroom, committee and other obligations the employee has to his/her position. However, the Board of Trustees may require the employee to resign from his/her position when the seeking or fulfillment of public office conflicts with the performance of duties as a district employee.

Upon request, the Board of Trustees may grant a leave of absence to an employee for campaigning and/or serving in public office in accordance with Policy GADM.

The Board of Trustees reserves the right to review all situations. However, the political involvement of district employees will not be restricted provided:

1. Absences for political activities have prior approval by administration.
2. The employee does not make use of his/her position in any way to encourage or coerce students or other employees of the system to support a political party, candidate or issue.

3. No district facilities, equipment, supplies or monies are used for campaigning or other political purposes.

Campaign literature supporting one or more candidates shall not be distributed within the schools or on school buses by pupils, teachers, or others, nor shall campaign posters be displayed on school owned property. Customary community political activities may be expected on election days at schools when schools are used as polling places. Employees shall not poll their pupils to determine how their parents are voting on any issue, and shall not attempt to indoctrinate pupils with personal political and social philosophy; however, employees are not prohibited from political activity after hours of official employment.

Nothing in this policy should be interpreted as prohibiting employees from conducting appropriate activities which encourage students to become involved in the political processes of the party of the student's choice or as independents, nor does it prohibit the use of political figures as resource persons in the classroom.

It is within the discretion of the school board to determine the use of the school property for public meetings and gatherings.

VIOLATIONS

Violations of this policy shall be reported and discussed in a conference between the employee and the superintendent.

If the superintendent finds the complaint to be factual, he shall issue a written reprimand to the employee(s) involved. This reprimand shall become a part of the employee's personnel file. Depending on the severity of the violation, the result may be non-renewal of an employee's contract or dismissal.

Continuous violation of this policy may result in additional disciplinary action.

SOURCE: Jackson Public School District, Jackson, Mississippi; Mississippi School Boards Association

DATE: October 16, 1978

AMENDED: July 16, 1990
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December 20, 2016

REVIEWED: May 24, 2006