

STAFF PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

The M.S.A.D. No. 75 Board of Directors believes in the principles of democracy and respects the rights of its employees to participate in the democratic process. It is the intent of the Board to provide guidance for staff participation in political activities and communicate these expectations to parents, students and the community. The Board believes that campaigning and other political activities of individual staff members should not compromise the instructional program or disrupt the operations of the schools.

For the purposes of this policy, “political activities” is defined as:

“Activity directed toward the success or failure of a political party, candidate for partisan political office, or partisan political group.” (USDoJ Departmental of Ethics Office)

School employees shall not engage in political activities while carrying out their work responsibilities during the school day, while performing work for the school unit outside the school day on school premises, or while performing work for the school unit at any other location.

“Political activities” include but is not limited to:

- A. Campaigning for or against any candidate, political party or issue;
- B. An employee’s use of his/her position to attempt to influence students, parents or others to vote for or against any candidate or issue;
- C. Contacting students, parents or others for such purposes;
- D. Wearing apparel with explicit political messages (buttons, placards, signs or any other form), displaying campaign paraphernalia while performing work; or
- E. Soliciting for or collecting funds or distributing material in connection with campaigning or support of political issues.
- F. Distributing material in connection with campaigning or support of political issues unless it is part of curricular or co-curricular focus.

When engaging in conversations with students outside classes or school activities, employees should be mindful of the potential effect of their position, authority and influence when stating personal opinions in regard to candidates and political issues.

No school employee shall use the school unit’s resources (e.g., including but not limited to school unit-owned laptops and other electronic devices, school unit networks, copiers, scanners, or mail service) to promote political candidates or parties or to encourage a vote for or against an issue.

No school unit employee shall use the school unit's name or logo to promote his/her candidacy for political office, or to promote other candidates or political positions, or represent his/her view as those of the school unit or this Board.

Nothing in this policy shall prevent an employee from engaging in political activities on school premises when such activities are conducted in accordance with the school unit's facilities use policy.

Nothing in this policy shall preclude the discussion of political or controversial issues or current events or exposure of mature students to candidates as guest speakers provided that such is done in compliance with the Board's policy on the teaching of controversial issues (Policy INB).

Nothing in this policy should be construed as precluding mock elections, debates, conventions or other simulated political activities, where the activity is intended as an educational experience.

Nothing in this policy shall prevent the Board from providing information or expressing its position or views on any political issue affecting the schools or from directing or authorizing the Superintendent to use school unit resources to accomplish this purpose. The Board will not use its influence or school unit resources to promote any particular political party or to promote or discourage the election of any particular candidate.

The Superintendent is directed to develop and implement such administrative procedures as may be necessary to carry out this policy.

Cross Reference: ***GBI – Staff Gifts and Solicitations***
 GBCC - Teacher Dress
 GCSA – Employee Computer and Internet Use
 INB - Controversial Issues Policy
 KF – Community Use of School Facilities
 KHC – Distribution of Non-school/Community Materials

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/bb/PolicyGBIA