

POLICY TITLE: Participation in the Political Process by Employees of Harford County Public Schools		
ADOPTION/EFFECTIVE DATE: 6/14/1982	MOST RECENTLY AMENDED: 8/23/1999	MOST RECENTLY REAFFIRMED: 5/20/2002
POLICY/PROCEDURE MANUAL SUMMARY CATEGORY: Personnel		

An employee of the Harford County Public Schools may campaign for candidates, run for office, and serve in public office, provided that no political activity interferes with any of the employee's duties.

An employee engaged in the educational process must make every reasonable effort to ensure that political issues are presented fairly. In addition, when an employee's political activities reach the point where extended absences would be required, it is mandatory that the employee request a leave of absence.

In most instances, it would not be necessary for an employee to seek a leave of absence to campaign for candidates or to run for office. These activities can usually be accommodated outside duty requirements unless the employee would be seeking an office which would require an extended campaign. This would also be true for part-time political offices in which the responsibilities of the offices generally are fulfilled outside of duty hours.

This would not be the case with a full-time political office. This policy provides for a leave of absence without pay for no more than one year. This should be ample time to conduct a campaign and, if successful, to provide a reasonable time for transition into the political office; but a leave of absence cannot reconcile the responsibilities of two full-time positions. When an employee seeks a full-time political position, in essence, he or she is making a career decision, and, if successful, he or she must make a career move which will ultimately require a resignation.

Application of Policy to Political Offices

1. **Municipal Offices.** The office of mayor or town commissioner is a part-time position for at term of two (2) or four (4) years, depending upon the municipality, in which the responsibilities of the office are generally fulfilled outside of duty hours. With occasional accommodations for an employee to be absent without pay and without prejudice, an employee could serve in a municipal office while employed with the school system.
2. **County Council.** The office of council person is a part-time position for a term of four (4) years in which the responsibilities of the office are generally fulfilled outside of duty hours. With occasional accommodations for an employee to be

absent without pay and without prejudice, an employee could serve in this office while employed with the school system.

3. County Executive. The office of county executive is a full-time position for a term of four (4) years. An employee could exercise his or her request for a leave of absence for not more than one year, but the eventual alternative would be to submit a resignation.
4. Maryland State Legislature. The office of delegate or senator is a full-time position for 90 days per year for a term of four (4) years. There are also some limited responsibilities which go beyond the 90-day session. An employee could be granted a leave of absence for the 90-day session and be permitted to be absent without pay and without prejudice to perform necessary duties of the office at other times.
5. United States Congress. The office of representative is a full-time position for a term of two (2) years. The office of senator is a full-time position for a term of six (6) years. An employee could exercise his or her request for a leave of absence for not more than one year, but the eventual alternative would be to submit a resignation.

Board Approval Acknowledged By:

Patricia L. Skebeck

Patricia L. Skebeck, Secretary and Treasurer
Board of Education of Harford County

Policy Action Dates					
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