

EMPLOYEE PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL, GOVERNMENT, OR RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

1. Political Activities:

Employees of the School Board are encouraged to exercise all of their rights as citizens, including involvement in political activities. No employee of the School Board, however, will use his/her position within the school system to further a political cause; nor will any employee of the School Board attempt to indoctrinate students. School employees engaging in political activity must make it clear that their views and actions are made as individuals and that they do not represent the views of the school division.

2. Rights of Employees:

The School Board encourages all employees of the School Board to exercise their rights as citizens and to set an example for the community by the use of their franchise. All employees may take part in political campaigns, so long as it is not done in the name of the Gloucester County Public Schools or during work hours. Participation cannot be done in a manner which might be construed to indicate official partisan support of an organization or a candidate by the Gloucester County Public Schools.

3. Employee Distribution of Political or Religious Material:

An employee may not distribute badges, buttons, and/or printed political or religious advertisements to other employees of the School Board or to students on school property during the school day. In addition, school mail or facilities will not be used by employees to produce or to distribute any partisan political or religious materials.

4. Employees Elected and/or Appointed to or Campaigning for Public Office:

An employee seeking an extended leave of absence for campaigning, holding office, or other time-consuming responsibilities connected with government, will apply in writing for annual leave or leave without pay well in advance of the activity. Leave for political activity may vary widely in time required, due to the varying types of political activity; consequently, each will be considered on an individual basis by the School Board.

An employee serving on government bodies requiring leave from the job station for short periods of time must apply annually in writing to the School Board for annual leave or leave without pay. Once the Board has approved the employee's initial request, such short leave periods should be scheduled through the immediate supervisor of the employee.

The School Board encourages employees to recognize their responsibilities as citizens; however, leave should be scheduled so as not to impede or interfere with the work schedule, with the operation of the school division, or with the duties assigned to the employee.

These restrictions are not intended to limit the rights of school division employees to support or oppose any political candidate or party on their own time. They are intended to minimize distractions from instruction, to assure that no public funds are used to support any candidate for public office, and to assure that the public is not given the false impression that the school division supports or opposes any political candidate or party. School division employees who engage in political activities on their own time must make it clear that their views and actions represent their individual positions and do not represent the views of the school division.

ADOPTED: February 8, 1983

REVISED:	November 11, 1986	July 1, 1991
	July 1, 1992	December 10, 1998
	October 9, 2007	June 12, 2012

LEGAL REFERENCES: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-70, 22.1-78.