

The board recognizes the individual rights of its employees to participate in political activities, including seeking elective office or participating in candidate or ballot measure campaigns. To protect the rights of district employees to engage in such activities, while at the same time preserving the integrity of the education objective and responsibilities of the district, the board adopts the following policy.

DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

“Advocate” means to campaign for or against a candidate or the outcome of a ballot measure. The term does not include providing factual information about a ballot measure and the district’s reason for the ballot measure stated in a facially neutral manner. Factual information includes but is not limited to the cost of indebtedness, intended purpose, condition of property to be addressed, date and location of election, qualifications of candidates, or other applicable information necessary to provide transparency to electors.

“Ballot measure” means constitutional amendments, bond measures, or levy measures.

“Candidate” means and includes every person for whom it is contemplated or desired that votes be cast at any political convention, primary, general, local or special election and who either tacitly or expressly consents to be so considered.

“School activities” means any activity sponsored by the district including, but not limited to, classroom work and the end of the employee’s assigned work day (excluding the employee’s lunch and break periods), and any paid overtime hours or extra-duty hours for which the employee volunteered or been assigned.

POLITICAL ACTIVITIES OF EMPLOYEES IN GENERAL

Employees of the district, while acting in the capacity of a school district employee, shall not advocate for or against a candidate or ballot measure during instructional time or while they are responsible for other duties, or while they are in settings where they are likely to have contact with students. Employees are free to engage in political advocacy outside of the school day, work hours or school activities, and to campaign for and run for elective office. Employees shall not allow such political advocacy to interfere with the proper performance of their duties.

Teachers or other district employees may not use or recruit students during the school day, during work hours or at school activities for wither distribution of political materials or other

political activities. This prohibition does not preclude balanced classroom discussions or debate of current or pending election issues.

Employees shall not use their official authority or influence to compel a person to support or oppose a candidate or ballot measure, or to pay or promise to pay a political contribution.

Employees may not use public facilities, equipment, or supplies that are purchased with district funds to advocate for or against a candidate or ballot measure. This prohibition does not preclude the district or its employees from preparing and distributing to electors an objective statement explaining the purpose and effect of a ballot measure or other information required or otherwise authorized by law.

Nothing in this policy shall prohibit district employees from personally campaigning, speaking or otherwise advocating for or against a candidate or ballot measure, or from personally contributing to a candidate or ballot measure campaign, provided no district funds or property are used for such purposes.

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LEGAL REFERENCE:

Idaho Code Sections

33-506(1) – Organization and Government of Board of Trustees

74-601 *et seq.* – Public Integrity in Elections Act

ADOPTED: September 23, 1998

AMENDED: February 21, 2023