

Policy 3126

Certificated: Sickness, Absences and Leaves

A. Definitions

1. Paid Time Off (PTO): Paid leave granted annually to be used for personal illness, injury, family illness, medical appointments, or personal business requiring absence during the workday.

B. General Provisions

1. All leave types must be input in the appropriate system before the absence occurs. Emergency situations would be the only exception.
2. PTO must be used in half-day or full-day increments.
3. Educators are expected to exercise professional judgment in the use of PTO and to minimize disruption to the educational program.
4. First or Last Day of School
 - a. PTO may not be utilized on the first or last day of school for students, except in an emergency.
5. Calendar Breaks
 - a. Use of PTO before or after a calendar break may be granted at the supervisor's discretion. An educator must submit a written request for consideration via email. The supervisor may approve up to twenty percent (20%) of employees on a first-come, first-serve bases.
6. In the event an educator does not fulfill the contract year, sick leave will be pro-rated, based on the number of days worked. Salary due upon termination will be adjusted accordingly.

C. Family Illness

1. Certificated employees may utilize their leave for illness or accident involving members of the employee's family. Family is defined as parent, spouse, child, in-law (father, mother, brother, sister), grandchild or sibling either by blood relationship or by law. Days of family leave taken will be deducted from the

employee's leave. [Family Medical Leave Act](#) (FMLA) and [District Policy 3090 Family Medical Leave Act](#).

D. Extended Illness

1. In cases where the accumulated sick leave days of an educator do not adequately care for the sick leave needs of that educator or family, the Board may, upon written request of the educator, grant an extension of the sick leave benefits of said educator, with or without pay, to carry the educator over the period of need.
2. Accumulated sick leave will be granted for the extended illness of an educator to the end of the school year in which the illness occurs. At that time, a determination will be made regarding the severity of the illness and/or the educator's ability to continue employment. If the educator is unable to begin the next school year and qualifies for disability retirement or can retire under the provisions of the [Utah State Retirement Act](#) and/or Social Security, the educator must apply for these benefits. The School District will pay the salary difference between these benefits and the educator's daily salary under normal circumstances for the number of accumulated sick leave days.

E. Misuse of Individual Sick Leave Reserve

1. Educators are expected to act in a professional manner when using their individual sick leave reserve (after exhausting their PTO). In the event an educator misuses sick leave the educator will forfeit pay for that day(s) and the substitute wages will be deducted from the educator's pay. The sick leave days used will not be reinstated. The administrator may request verification of the need for sick leave if they believe misuse has occurred.

F. Annual Allocation and Proration

1. At the beginning of each contract year, each **full-time** educator will be granted thirteen (13 days of paid time off (PTO)) annually.
 - a. Educators on extended contracts shall receive one additional day of PTO for each additional month of employment beyond the regular contract period.
2. PTO will be prorated for employees who begin employment after the start of the contract year **or do not meet the full-time equivalent**.
3. If employment terminates prior to the end of the contract year, PTO will be prorated based on the number of contract days worked.
 - a. Final pay will be adjusted to reflect any previously used unearned PTO.

4. Unused PTO is forfeited upon termination of employment for any reason.

G. Extended or Catastrophic Illness

1. If accumulated individual sick leave reserve and Sick Leave Bank benefits are exhausted, the Board may, upon written request, grant an extended leave with or without pay to carry the educator through the period of need.
2. If the educator remains unable to return to work at the start of the next school year and qualifies for disability or retirement benefits, they will be required to apply for such benefits in accordance with applicable state and federal law.
3. Voluntary Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank (Certificated)
 - a. The Board and the Association will cooperate in maintaining a Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank on a voluntary basis. All educators shall be eligible to participate. Participants must be enrolled in the Bank.
 - b. Educators enrolling in the Bank will automatically donate one day of their sick leave each October 1st until the Bank has accumulated 750 days; thereafter, if the Bank becomes depleted to 500 days, all members will donate one day of sick leave. New members will donate one day of sick leave when joining. Educators will be notified in writing when sick leave days are withdrawn to add to the Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank.
 - c. An educator wishing to withdraw from the Bank must give written notification by October 1st of each school year. An educator withdrawing from membership in the Bank will not be able to withdraw any days which such educator has previously contributed.
 - d. An educator must use at least 25 leave days for the same illness (with any combination of leave days and/or leave without-pay days) prior to receiving Sick Leave Bank benefits and have a life-threatening medical condition in order to qualify for the Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank. A provisional teacher may apply to the Sick Leave Bank Committee to have up to 10 of the 25 days waived.
 - e. After having used the required 25 days, all remaining leave days will be the educator's new balance.
 - f. A maximum of 75 days each school year can be drawn by an educator from the Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank in addition to the educator's own accumulated days.

- g. And educator who withdraws sick leave days from the Bank will not be required to replace such days except as a regular contributing member to the Bank.
 - h. Sick leave days can only be withdrawn from the employee's Bank for an individual educator's illness or injury.
 - i. At the end of each contract year, all unused PTO will automatically roll over into the employee's individual Sick Leave Bank.
 - j. Employees are encouraged to use PTO conservatively to maintain a sufficient individual Sick Bank.
- 4. A written request for use of the Bank days, accompanied by a letter from the attending physician certifying that the educator is unable to fulfill contractual obligations and explaining the medical reasons therefore, must be submitted to the Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank Committee for its review.
 - 5. The Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank Committee shall consist of three educators appointed by the Association and three persons from the Administrative Staff appointed by the Superintendent.
 - 6. The duties of the Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank Committee will be to receive applications from members desiring to use Sick Bank benefits, to review such applications, to make decisions on usage, and to respond to the applicants. Decisions will be made by a 2/3 majority.
 - 7. All 6 members of the Committee shall be present in order to conduct business. If a member is unable to attend, the member may send an alternate for that particular meeting.
 - 8. If the applicant is denied benefits, the educator may appeal such decision in writing within 14 days after notification. The applicant may provide additional information or explanation, and the full Committee will have 14 days to respond to the appeal.

H. Absences with Pay

- 1. Bereavement
 - a. Death and Burial – Immediate Family Members
 - 1) Educators may be absent from their assignment without loss of pay for up to five consecutive days in any one instance for the death and burial of husband or wife and/or child of either spouse.

- 2) An educator may be absent from assignment without loss of pay for up to three days for the death and burial of the educator's mother, father, legal guardians, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sibling, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, grandchildren, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, miscarriage or stillbirth.
- 3) An educator may be absent from assignment without loss of pay for up to one day for the death and burial of the educator's grandparents, grandparents-in-law, aunt, aunt-in-law, uncle, uncle-in-law, niece, or nephew.

2. Other Educational Absences

- a. At the discretion of the Superintendent, personnel may be designated or excused to attend educational meetings or to participate in educational meetings or to participate in educational committee work, and will suffer no loss in pay.

I. Procedures for PTO Use

1. Requests for three (3) to five (5) consecutive days of PTO require at least 24 hours' notice and prior supervisor approval via email.
2. Requests for more than five (5) consecutive days require at least two weeks' written notice and documented supervisor approval via email.
3. Medical absences exceeding ten (10) consecutive working days require certified medical verification.
 - a. Additional medical verification will be required every ten (10) working days thereafter.
 - b. The District may, at its expense, require a second medical opinion to confirm ongoing need.

J. Absence Without Pay

1. Leaves of Absence – A career educator may apply for a Leave of Absence without salary and insurance. The reasons for granting such leaves will be considered on an individual basis. Leaves of Absences will be granted for a period of one year with the option to request an extension of up to two additional years. Requests for extension must be received by the Personnel Office no later than February 1 prior to the end of the initial Leave Absence.

- a. Career educators returning from a one year leave of absence will be reinstated to the previously held position or given a school committee interview for available vacant positions at another school for which they are qualified. The interviews will be conducted before the interviews are opened to outside applicants. Those reinstated shall receive the same status as when the leave was granted, namely: step on the salary schedule, accrued sick leave benefits, insurance and other benefits granted by these policies. Educators desiring to return to employment in the District following a one year leave of absence must notify the Personnel Office in writing, no later than February 1 of the year in which they intend to return.
 - b. Those returning from an extended leave of absence (in excess of one year) will be given professional consideration for available vacant positions. Notice of desire to return from an extended leave of absence must be given to the Personnel Office in writing no later than February 1 of the year they intend to return. Those reinstated shall receive the same status as when the leave was granted, namely: step on the salary schedule, accrued sick leave benefits, insurance and other benefits granted by these policies.
2. Military Leave – Educators employed by the Board of Education who leave for service in the Armed Forces shall be granted a military leave of absence as per federal laws governing such absences. Such absences will be granted without pay.
3. FMLA or Extended Absences for three or more weeks
 - a. 30 days before an anticipated long-term absence
 - 1) Communicate with your principal/supervisor
 - 2) Arrange for your substitute
 - 3) Prepare one week of general lesson plans including materials as needed
 - 4) Communicate with your PLC team
 - b. District will help compensate PLC team members for the creation of ongoing lesson plans up to two hours per week during extended absence.
 - c. The substitute will receive the Long-Term Sub rate for the duration of the extended absence.

K. Sabbatical Leave

1. Sabbatical Leave is provided under the following regulations:

- a. Sabbatical leave shall be granted only for full-time attendance at an institution of higher education for the purpose of pursuing a graduate degree and/or other certification. Payment of one-half salary will be contingent on verification of enrollment and registration for at least 12 quarter hours or eight and one-half semester hours credit each term or an approved full-time internship or apprenticeship for a minimum of two semesters or three quarters.
- b. Applicants must have completed a minimum of six consecutive years of professional experience with the Box Elder School District before being eligible for a sabbatical leave.
- c. Two sabbatical leaves will be available each year. If one or zero are taken in a given year, Sabbatical Leave shall accumulate to a total of three. No more than three educators shall be absent on sabbatical leave at any one time.
- d. Applications, made upon forms to be furnished by the Board, shall be filed by February 1 of the year in which the sabbatical leave is to begin. Notification of leave approval shall be given by March 1 of the same year. No person shall be given such leave of absence more than once in seven years. The final selection of those to receive sabbatical leave is to be made by the Superintendent based upon criteria jointly determined by the Association and the Board.
- e. A person who accepts a sabbatical leave of absence must signify their written intention of returning to the Box Elder School system for one year as part of the sabbatical leave contract. The leave-taking educator shall be reinstated to their previously held position, and upon return, the educator shall be placed in the appropriately gained salary lane (if applicable). They will, however, be placed on the increment step they would have been on if sabbatical leave had not been taken with the following exception:
 - 1) A person taking sabbatical leave and assuming a full-time teaching assistantship (as determined by the university or college attended) will be granted an increment step the same as if they had been employed in the District.
- f. In case an educator who has taken advantage of sabbatical leave fails to return to service as provided above, all monies received from the Board while on sabbatical leave are to be returned to the Board, including the insurance premiums paid by the Board for the benefit of the educator.
- g. All educators on sabbatical leave shall be entitled to all insurance benefits provided by the Board at the expense of the Board.

L. Attendance at Conventions

1. Leaves of absence, with or without pay, shall be granted for the purpose of attending conventions, workshops, committee meetings, etc., as per the following policy:
 - a. The Superintendent shall build into the annual budget an amount of money not less than \$10,000 for the purpose of sending District educators to conventions, workshops, committee meetings, etc. Such funds shall be exclusive of funds budgeted for substitute teachers used when such leaves are granted.
 - b. A committee of five persons composed of four educators selected by the Association, two of whom represent elementary education and two of whom represent secondary education and the Superintendent or his designee shall have the responsibility of reviewing applications and making recommendations to the Superintendent and the Board regarding personnel who they feel should attend the conventions, etc.
 - c. Each educator selected to attend a convention shall receive a per diem and/or travel allowance. In the event the educator drives a car, the educator shall receive the current district mileage rate. Other forms of transportation may be utilized as thought best by the committee. The per diem amounts will be reviewed annually by the committee which will make recommendations to the Board of Education for approval.
 - d. The Board shall not give financial support to educators for participation in UEA and NEA conventions.
 - e. If it is deemed advisable, permission may be granted to educators to attend conventions, etc., at their own expense. If such permission is granted, the Board shall pay the cost of the substitute if such is required for the educator.

M. Association Leave

1. The Box Elder Education Association (BEEA) may request leave, not to exceed 15 days per year, for teachers to be absent from their assignment to conduct Association business when it is deemed such leave would directly [promote the interest of] benefit education within the District, and is approved by the Superintendent.
 - a. Request for Association leave shall be submitted, in writing, clearly stating the purpose of the leave to the Superintendent. The final approval regarding requests for leave shall be made by the Superintendent or designee. Association representative(s) will be notified of the decision. Requests should

- be submitted in adequate time to facilitate the approval process. All requests and notifications of approval will be documented and maintained in the Superintendent's office.
- b. The Superintendent or designee shall supervise employees on paid Association leave.
 - c. All paid Association leave shall be reported to and accounted for through the District's leave accounting system. This accounting shall include the costs and expenses of paid Association leave.
 - 1) The first 15 days annually of Association leave directly benefiting education within the District shall be paid out of District funds.
 - 2) Paid leave in excess of 15 days annually, shall be reimbursed at the substitute wage rate to the District by the Association.
 - 3) Association leave for activities that do not provide direct benefit to education in the District, shall be unpaid leave.
 - d. Employees using Association leave may not engage in political activity, including:
 - 1) Actively campaigning for candidates for public office in partisan and non-partisan elections; and
 - 2) Fundraising for political organizations political parties, or candidates.
 - e. Any willful violation of this policy may be used for disciplinary action of the [Box Elder School District Certificated Handbook](#).
2. The BEEA president shall have six days per trimester of released time for the purpose of conducting Association business. The substitute will be paid for by the BEEA. All reporting, accounting, and other restrictions in J.1. above apply to this section also.

N. Leave Without Pay

- 1. Educators are expected to act in a professional manner by consulting with their supervisor when they have used all their appropriate leave. In special situations as approved by the supervisor, leave without pay will be approved. In the event an educator misuses leave without pay the educator's pay will be deducted for the day and will cover the substitute wages. If this leave without pay is denied by the school administration, it may be appealed to the Superintendent or his designee.