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## Emergency and Discretionary Leaves

### Emergency Leave

Emergency leave may be applied as per Collective Bargaining Agreements.

An emergency arises out of unforeseen and unexpected circumstances which create an air of crisis or extreme need. The circumstances must present a grave and clear danger that imminently threatens physical or mental health or would result in irremediable harm or immediate disaster to life or property unless some action is taken.

A written application for emergency leave must be returned to the district office on the day of return to school. 

### Bereavement Leave

The district will allow each full-time staff member a maximum of 5 days leave upon the death of an employee's spouse, mother, father, son, daughter, sister, brother, mother-in-law, or father-in-law. Leave also will be allowed upon the death of a son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, grandmother, grandfather, granddaughter or grandson. The deaths of more than one family member resulting from a common occurrence will be treated as a single death with respect to the length of leave granted.

### Sabbatical Leave

Certificated staff will be eligible for unpaid sabbatical leave for study or research. The district may grant sabbatical leaves of absence for study and/or research upon application by certificated staff, the recommendation of the superintendent or designee, and approval by the board, provided such a leave will serve the best interest of the district and is within the fiscal parameters of the district. Sabbatical leave will be granted according to the following stipulations:

- A. Years to Qualify: Staff will have served 5 or more continuous years in the district.
- B. Limit on Number: Sabbatical leaves may be granted up to one full year to not more than 2 percent of the total certificated staff of the district in any one year, the number granted to be subject to determination by the board upon the recommendation of the superintendent or designee.
- C. Application Deadline: Applications for sabbatical leave will be filed with the superintendent or designee not later than 150 days prior to the school year for which it is requested. The board may, at its discretion, extend this deadline.
- D. Proposed Plan to Accompany Application: A proposed plan of study or research to which the time spent on leave will be devoted must accompany the application.
- E. Criteria for Evaluation of Applications: Applications will be evaluated on the following three criteria:
  1. The merit of the proposed plan of study or research and its relationship of service to the district in terms of the individual's professional background.
  2. Proportionate representation of the different levels of district schools, such as elementary, middle school, senior high school, and administration.
  3. Seniority will be considered.
- F. Final Approval by Board: Applications approved by the superintendent or designee will be presented to the board for final approval. Once approved by the board, any change of sabbatical plan will be presented in writing and approved by the superintendent or designee in advance of the leave.



- G. Maintenance of Tenure and Salary Standing: A staff member granted sabbatical leave will maintain standing in tenure and salary.
- H. Report Required Upon Return: Within 30 days of a staff member's return from sabbatical leave, the staff member will file with the superintendent or designee a report giving the substance of the program of study or research in which they were engaged, and indicating the value which they believe grew out of the experience.
- I. Return to Original Position: An effort will be made to replace a certificated staff member returning from sabbatical leave in his/her original position or in an appropriate comparable position.

### **Leave of Absence**

At the discretion of the superintendent or designee, the district may grant leaves of absence for specific periods of time for up to one school year. A leave of absence will be without pay or benefits. During the leave the staff member may pay the district's share of any insurance benefits program to maintain those benefits. In considering whether to grant a leave of absence, the needs of students and the district program warrant primary consideration. A leave of absence will be granted only when it will not have an undesirable impact upon the educational program or business operations.

A staff member will be entitled to return to a position in the district at the end of the leave of absence subject to the availability of a position for which the staff member is qualified. The staff member granted a leave of absence will inform the board by April 1 as to his/her intentions to assume a position in the district for the ensuing school year. If said notification is not received, the individual's employment rights with the district may be terminated.

A staff member on a leave of absence will not earn any salary schedule experience credit, any sick leave credit, or benefits during the leave of absence.

### **Leave to Attend Meetings/Conferences**

At the discretion of the superintendent or designee, the district may grant staff members leave to attend meetings or conferences that are likely to be of value to the staff member's performance. Meetings and conferences wherein bargaining unit activities are conducted are excluded. Such leaves will be granted without pay.

### **Legal References:**

- [RCW 28A.400.300 Hiring and discharging employees - Written leave policies - Seniority and leave benefits of employees transferring between school districts and other educational employers](#)

### **Management Resources:**

- [2011 - December Issue](#)
- [2011 - October Issue](#)
- [2009 - April Issue](#)

### **Cross References:**

- [5021 - Conflicts Between Policy and Bargaining Agreements](#)

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Classification: Discretionary

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