

Policy Code: 7720 Employee Political Campaign Activities

Employment or volunteer service with the school system does not preclude an individual from participating in political campaign activities, such as registering and voting, campaigning for or against particular candidates or issues, opposing or endorsing a referendum, running for or serving in public office, attending political events, and contributing funds to partisan groups or candidates. ~~These However, such~~ political campaign activities must not: (1) take place during work hours; (2) involve expenditure of school system funds or materials or use of public resources; or (3) ~~make use of an official school position to~~ encourage or ~~to~~ coerce students, employees, or others to support or oppose a political issue, party, or candidate, or issue, while acting in an official capacity as a school system employee; or (4) violate any federal laws, state laws, or Wake County Board of Education policies.

As specified in policy 2220, Official School Spokesperson, the ~~chairperson~~ Chair of the ~~B~~board ~~or designee~~ and the ~~superintendent~~ Superintendent or designee(s) are the official spokespersons for the school system. The policy further states that any person "speaking in an official capacity shall conduct his or her assignment from the standpoint of the best interests of the Board, the school system, and the community, not as a representative of his or her own personal ideas or feelings." ~~Views may be expressed as representing the view of the school system or part of the school system only with prior approval by the superintendent or designee. (See Board Policy 3225/4312/7320, Technology Responsible Use)~~

Employees, when exercising their rights as citizens, should take reasonable steps to ensure that their personal political activities or opinions are not erroneously attributed to the ~~B~~board or the school system. Views may be expressed as representing the view of the school system or part of the school system only with prior approval by the sSuperintendent or designee. Additionally, as specified Board Policy 7300, 3005/4005, or Staff Responsibilities and Code of Ethics, school system employees are role models, and their conduct should protect the integrity and/or reputation of both the employee and the school system.

This policy should not be construed as prohibiting the impartial study and discussion of political ~~or other controversial~~ issues in the classroom setting when such study and discussion is consistent with the approved curriculum and guidance from supervisors on appropriate instructional content and methods. However, employees must be mindful of their responsibility to ~~deliver the curriculum of the school system and may not refrain from~~ presenting their personal political views to students in the classroom or when otherwise engaged in the instruction of students.

Legal References: U.S. Const. amend. I; G.S. 115C-46.1, -47(18); Boring v. Buncombe County Bd. of Educ., 136 F.3d 364 (4th Cir. 1998); Lee v. York County Sch. Div., 484 F.3d 687 (4th Cir. 2007)

~~Cross References: Official School Spokesperson (policy 2220)~~

Adopted: