

Employee Political Education, Activities and Materials Policy Code: 7720

Employment or volunteer service with the school system does not preclude an individual from participating in political activities, such as registering and voting, campaigning for candidates or issues, running for or serving in public office, attending political events, and contributing funds to partisan groups or candidates. These political activities must not: (1) take place during work hours; (2) involve school system funds or materials; or (3) make use of an official school position, school system branding or other intellectual property to encourage or to coerce students, employees, or others to support or oppose a political party, candidate, political platform or potential legislation.

The following activities are prohibited of all GCS employees and volunteers:

- A. Actively campaigning or soliciting support for any candidate for public office while on duty or providing services or labor to the Guilford County school district or its students.
- B. Using a position with GCS to force, coerce, or compel any student or other GCS employee to make financial or other contributions to any political campaign.
- C. Circulating political posters or petitions, writing or addressing campaign materials, or distributing campaign materials on school property while on duty or providing services or labor to the Guilford County school district or its students.
- D. Using a position with GCS to intimidate, harass, or coerce a student or another employee relative to a particular political issue, policy, or campaign platform.

As specified in Policy 2220 Official Board of Education Spokesperson, the chairperson of the board or designee and the superintendent or designee are the official spokespersons for the school system. Employees, when exercising their rights as citizens, should take steps to ensure that their personal political activities or opinions are not erroneously attributed to the board or the school system.

This policy should not be construed as prohibiting impartial study and discussion of political or other controversial issues in the classroom setting. However, employees must be mindful of their responsibility to deliver the curriculum of the school system and may not present their personal political views to students in the classroom or when otherwise engaged in the instruction of students.

Descriptor Term: POLITICAL EDUCATION, ACTIVITIES, AND MATERIALS	Descriptor Code: 7720* (formerly KIAB)
Draft Date: June 4, 2002	Date Issued by the Superintendent: August 26, 2002 Recodified as policy 7720: May 10, 2022

A. — GENERAL STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Guilford County school district believes that all students should have opportunities to learn about the democratic political processes that occur at local, state, and national levels. Educating students about the political systems operating in American society is critical in preparing students to become informed and involved citizens.

B. — POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS AND THE CURRICULUM

Teachers and students may study political campaigns, the Democratic Party system, and the analysis of political issues through classroom instruction and through school activities or events. Central office administrators, central office staff members, school administrators, school faculty, or school staff members shall not use their positions to promote political candidates or partisan political issues or activities on Guilford County Schools school grounds, facilities, or property during school hours, after school during school sponsored events or activities, or during official business hours of operation.

C. — POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS' MEETINGS

Meetings of non-Guilford County School clubs or organizations for the purpose of promoting a political party, candidate or partisan political issue will not be permitted on Guilford County Schools property, including but not limited to, all school facilities and grounds, all central office facilities, and all other Guilford County School owned buildings or property during school hours, after school during school sponsored events or activities, or during official business hours of operation. Such groups desiring to use Guilford County Schools' schools, facilities, or property at times that will not interfere with school activities or official business hours of operation may apply to do so according to the district's policy governing the use of Guilford County Schools' facilities.

D. — VISITS BY POLITICAL CANDIDATES

Visits by political candidates, their representatives, or their supporters to Guilford County school campuses made for the purposes of soliciting votes, promoting political platforms or partisan issues, making political contacts, or advancing in whole or in part their candidacies through other means shall not be permitted during school hours or after school hours during school sponsored activities or events. Furthermore, such visits shall not be permitted during hours of operation at any other Guilford County Schools' facilities.

An exception to this policy will be permitted if the school or facility invites the candidates of all parties for the same office, or offices, and the principal or the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee has approved such invitation. The invitation will be extended to all candidates sufficiently in advance of the designated event or activity to allow each candidate the opportunity to make preparations to attend.

E. — STUDENTS AND POLITICAL ACTIVITIES**Student-Initiated Clubs**

Student-initiated clubs or groups organized for the purposes of promoting a political party, candidate, or partisan issue shall follow established procedures to receive formal club/organization recognition by the principal. All recognized student-initiated political clubs may then hold meetings on school grounds according to procedures established by the principal.

General Events

~~Student groups shall not participate in partisan political activities. However, the Guilford County school district approves of student participation in other public assemblies, exhibitions, and performances, where such events will provide educational experiences for the student participants or will contribute to the general welfare of the students, school, or community. Such participation shall take place after school hours with parental consent, the approval of the principal, and at the request of the organization or group sponsoring the event.~~

~~F. EMPLOYEES AND POLITICAL ACTIVITIES~~

~~Employees are encouraged to exercise their rights to participate in the democratic political process as citizens within boundaries outlined below:~~

- ~~1. Employees shall not actively campaign or solicit the support of other employees or persons for any candidate for public office while on duty or being paid to provide services or labor to the Guilford County school district or its students.~~
- ~~2. Employees shall not use their position of employment to force, coerce, or compel subordinate employees to make financial or other contributions to any political campaign.~~
- ~~3. Employees shall not use their position of employment to force, coerce, or compel students to make financial or other contributions to any political campaign.~~
- ~~4. Employees shall not be compelled to join a designated political party or organization, or to contribute monies or other types of support to a particular political party, organization, or candidate as a condition of employment by the Guilford County Schools.~~
- ~~5. Employees shall not circulate political posters or petitions, write or address campaign materials, or distribute campaign materials on school property while on duty or being paid to provide services or labor to the Guilford County school district or its students.~~
- ~~6. Employees shall not use their position of employment to intimidate, harass, or coerce another employee relative to a particular political issue, policy, or campaign platform.~~
- ~~7. Employees shall not use their position of employment to further personal views on candidates for office or political issues by attempting to indoctrinate students with these personal views. Employees shall not intimidate, harass, or coerce students relative any political candidates, political issues, or campaign platforms.~~

~~G. DISTRIBUTION OF POLITICAL MATERIALS~~

~~The distribution of political materials to students or through students on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities is subject to the provisions in Administrative Policy KI, Distribution of Materials to Students.~~

~~If you are interested in volunteering at a school, please register [here](#).~~

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:

| Adopted:– August 26, 2002

| Revised:– May 10, 2022 (recoded from policy KIAB); [\[date\]](#)

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