

STAFF PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

Employees of the Alleghany County School Board are encouraged to exercise all of their rights as citizens, including involvement in political activities, and to engage in citizenship activities, to set examples by registering to vote, and to participate in elections and carrying out other duties of responsible citizenship. No employee of the Board, however, shall use his or her position within the school system to further a political cause, nor shall any employees of the Board attempt to indoctrinate students or to use the school property, and especially the classroom, as a forum to promote any candidate or issue.

The School Board acknowledges the right of its employees as citizens to run for political office. All employees of the Board may take part in political campaigns so long as it is not done in the name of the Alleghany County Public Schools or any of its agencies. Participation cannot be done in a manner which might be reasonably construed to indicate support of a political organization or candidate by the School Division or interfere with the employee's job performance or otherwise conflict with the employee's job responsibilities. Employees shall not participate in campaign activities during hours of official employment; however, employees may participate in political activity after hours of official employment.

Display and distribution of political materials in the schools during school hours shall be restricted to those of an educational nature and as part of the educational program. Teachers who elect to use such materials for instructional purposes shall present them in an impartial and objective manner that is relevant to the course content and appropriate to the knowledge and maturity of the students. Consistent with these procedures, political campaign materials or materials that support or oppose political candidates, parties or issues shall not be sent home from school with students. Also, such literature shall not be distributed on school property during school hours or on a school bus by students, school board employees or others. Campaign-related posters, signs, buttons or other apparel may not be displayed by any employee on school property and during school hours or during official school functions after-hours unless those items meet the definition of educational programs as described herein.

This policy is not intended to prohibit reasonable campaign-related activities at public events that take place on school property after hours. Such activity, however, shall be subject to reasonable guidelines as established by the principal. This policy also is not intended to promote or restrict any activity that is governed by the electoral board during election-day activities that take place on school property.

Adopted: November 17, 1997

Amended: October 20, 2008

Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, sections 22.1-70, 22.1-78.