



Book	BHASD Policies
Section	300 Employees
Title	Compensated Professional Leave
Code	338.1
Status	Active
Adopted	June 28, 2004
Last Revised	November 2, 2020

Applicable Staff

ADMINISTRATIVE EMPLOYEES, PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES

NOT APPLICABLE FOR CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEES

Purpose

This policy shall establish the district's parameters for granting professional development and classroom occupational exchange leaves for certificated administrative and professional employees.

Definitions

Professional Development Leave - shall be defined as a leave of absence granted for the purpose of improving professional competency or obtaining a professional certificate or commission. Such leave shall be directly related to an employee's professional responsibilities, as determined by the Board, and be restricted to activities required by state regulation or law, or completed to improve professional competency.[\[1\]](#)

Classroom Occupational Exchange Leave - shall be defined as a leave of absence granted for the purpose of acquiring practical work experience in business, industry or government.[\[2\]](#)

Authority

The Board shall have sole authority to adopt and enforce policy establishing the conditions for approval of a professional development leave for eligible employees. All requests for such leave shall be subject to review by the Board. The Board may approve or reject a proposed plan for professional development leave.[\[1\]](#)

The Board may grant a leave to eligible employees for classroom occupational exchange leave for the specified purpose.[\[2\]](#)

Guidelines

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT LEAVE

Eligibility

To qualify for professional development leave, an eligible employee shall have completed ten (10) years of satisfactory service in the public schools of the Commonwealth; at least five (5) consecutive years of such service shall be in this school district.[\[3\]](#)

A leave for professional development may be taken for a half or full school term or for two (2) half school terms during a period of two (2) years, at the employee's option.[\[3\]](#)

The total number of administrative employees on either sabbatical or compensated professional leaves of absence shall not exceed ten percent (10%) of the number of eligible employees. The total number of professional employees on either sabbatical or compensated professional leaves of absence shall not exceed ten percent (10%) of the number of eligible employees.[\[4\]](#)

Application

Professional development leaves shall be granted only to employees participating in an academic program for the purpose of retaining a professional certificate or commission, further preparation and improvement in an area(s) of certification, additional certification, attaining other appropriate and identifiable educational positions within the school district, or as the Board may require, and upon the recommendation of the Superintendent.[\[1\]](#)

Requests for professional development leave shall be submitted on the district form and forwarded with a detailed plan to the Superintendent at least ninety (90) days prior to the date the requested leave would start.

Documentation

Applicants for professional development leave shall submit a detailed plan describing the professional development activities to be undertaken and a statement specifying the benefits of the leave to the employee and the school district. The plan shall provide sufficient information to permit the Board to adequately evaluate the request.[\[1\]](#)

The Board may at any time require additional information from the employee in order to assist the Board in evaluating the request and the leave's benefits to and impact on the employee and the school district.[\[5\]](#)

The minimum requirements for leave for a half school term shall consist of any one or a combination of the following:[\[1\]](#)

1. Nine (9) graduate credits.
2. Twelve (12) undergraduate credits.
3. One hundred eighty (180) hours of professional development activities.

The minimum requirements for leave for a full school term shall consist of any one or a combination of the following:[\[1\]](#)

1. Eighteen (18) graduate credits.
2. Twenty-four (24) undergraduate credits.
3. Three hundred sixty (360) hours of professional development activities.

Applicants who propose to take **graduate or undergraduate credits** shall submit notification of acceptance and enrollment from an accredited institution of higher learning for study in courses approved by the Superintendent. The employee shall successfully complete the approved courses and receive passing grades. Upon return from professional development leave, the employee shall submit to the Superintendent within the first month an official transcript of all courses completed. Failure to receive passing grades or to submit required transcripts on time shall result in forfeiture of monies paid by the district.

Applicants who propose to undertake **professional development activities** shall submit to the Board a detailed plan listing the specific activities. Upon return from professional development leave, the employee shall submit to the Superintendent within the first month a formal report describing the educational activities pursued and their benefits and relevancy. Failure to submit required reports on time shall result in forfeiture of monies paid by the district.

Failure to receive a B grade or better, to submit required transcripts, and to submit required reports on time shall result in forfeiture of monies paid by the district.

Commitment of Employee

Acceptance of professional development leave incurs a commitment by the employee to return to active duty in this district immediately following the leave for one (1) full school term, unless prevented by illness or physical disability. [1][6]

Employees shall submit required reports on time or forfeit all compensation and benefits.

If the employee fails to return to service, unless prevented by illness or physical disability, the employee shall forfeit all benefits to which he/she would have been entitled for the period of his/her professional development leave of absence.

If the employee resigns or fails to return to employment, the amount contributed by the District to the Public School Employees' Retirement System shall be deducted from the refund payable to the employee under existing law and the amount so deducted will be refunded to the Brandywine Heights Area School District.

The employee must reimburse the district for any salary paid and benefits costs while on leave if he/she fails to return to employment for a full school term following the leave.

Commitment of Employer

At the expiration of the professional development leave, the employee shall be reinstated in the same position held at the time of the granting of the leave. [6]

Time on professional development leave shall be counted as time on the job for purposes of seniority and for retirement fund purposes, but for no other purpose. [7][8]

Compensation

During the period of professional development leave, an employee shall be compensated one-half the salary to which s/he would have been entitled had the employee not taken leave. [9]

While on leave, the employee shall be entitled to insurance benefits provided other employees of a similar classification.

The School District shall pay into the Public School Employees' Retirement System on behalf of each such employee on leave, in addition to the contributions required by law to be made by it, the full amount of the contribution required by law to be paid by the employee as though said employee were actually in regular full-time daily attendance in the position from which the sabbatical leave was taken so that such employee's retirement rights shall be in no way affected by such leave of absence. The amount of the contribution required to be paid by the employee shall be deducted from any compensation payable to the employee while on leave.

Sick leave and personal days will not accrue during the year or pro-rata portion of the year on leave of absence.

A leave of absence granted for professional development shall also serve as a leave of absence without pay from all other school activities. [3]

Compensable employment may not be engaged in while the employee is on professional development leave.

CLASSROOM OCCUPATIONAL EXCHANGE LEAVE

Application

Requests for classroom occupational exchange leave shall be submitted on the approved district form and forwarded with appropriate documentation to the Superintendent.

Documentation

Applicants for classroom occupational exchange leave shall submit with the application form a statement from the employer agreeing to the terms and conditions of the leave, as specified in Board policy.

Upon return from such leave, the employee shall submit to the Board a final report detailing the work experience and its benefits. [2][1][5]

Commitment of Employee

Acceptance of classroom occupational exchange leave incurs a commitment by the employee to return to active duty in this district immediately following the leave for one (1) full school term, unless prevented by illness or physical disability. [\[6\]](#)

Commitment of Employer

At the expiration of the classroom occupational exchange leave, the employee shall be reinstated in the same position held at the time of the granting of the leave. [\[6\]](#)

Time on classroom occupational exchange leave shall be counted as time on the job for purposes of seniority and for retirement fund purposes, but for no other purpose. [\[2\]](#)

Compensation

The business, industry or government to whom the employee is assigned during the leave shall fully compensate the school district for all salary, wages, pension and retirement contributions, and other benefits as if the employee were in full-time active service. [\[2\]](#)

Legal

[1. 24 P.S. 1166.1](#)

[2. 24 P.S. 522.2](#)

[3. 24 P.S. 1166](#)

[4. 24 P.S. 1167](#)

[5. 24 P.S. 1171](#)

[6. 24 P.S. 1168](#)

[7. 24 P.S. 522.1](#)

[8. 24 P.S. 1170](#)

[9. 24 P.S. 1169](#)