

## Shelby County Board of Education

4029

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Revised: 06/25/13, 03/25/14

# PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS/ASSOCIATIONS

## I. PURPOSE

To allow time off without pay for employees to participate in a professional organization/association; and/or hold a statewide office as an officer, director, trustee or agent of a professional employees' organization/association.

## II. SCOPE

This policy applies to all full time permanent employees who have a minimum of three (3) years of employment with the Shelby County Schools and are not otherwise covered by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

## III. DEFINITIONS

**Professional association/organization** – any organization/association granting membership to individuals within a specific profession and requires a certain level of education, training, or experience or a license or certificate issued by a state or private authority to practice the profession.

**Professional employee** – any person employed by the District in a position which requires a license issued by the Department of Education for service in public elementary and secondary schools in Tennessee, supported, in whole or in part, by local, state or federal funds, but shall not include any member of the management team, or a retired teacher who is employed as a teacher in accordance with the law.<sup>1</sup>

**Management team** – Members of the management team, in accordance with the law, shall consist of employees who devote a majority of their time to the system-wide area or areas of professional personnel management, fiscal affairs or general

management and shall specifically include principals, assistant principals, supervisors and others whose principal responsibilities are administration rather than teaching.<sup>1</sup>

#### IV. POLICY STATEMENT

The Board recognizes the right of its employees to join and take part in professional associations/organizations. Absence from work or performance of association/organization responsibilities during the hours of business for the Shelby County Board of Education shall require prior approval of the principal or department head; and Superintendent or designee.

At the discretion of the District, unpaid leaves may be granted to allow eligible employees time to participate in professional associations/organizations that will promote the status and growth of the employee and welfare of students; and that directly benefit the District.

##### **Professional Employees (see definition) Only**

At the discretion of the District, unpaid leave may be granted to a professional employee to hold a statewide office as an officer, director, trustee, or agent of a professional association. Leaves granted under this policy shall be in accordance with applicable state laws.<sup>2</sup>

- A. Any teacher on leave shall retain any accumulated tenure, salary, or fringe benefit credits; and the leave shall not be construed to be a forfeiture of any accumulated tenure, salary, or fringe benefit credits.<sup>3</sup>
- B. The leave shall be date certain and will carry no increment privileges nor fringe benefits (i.e., advancement on the salary scale, or accrual of sick and/or personal and professional leave) except that the employee has the option to continue insurance coverage only if the full cost of the benefits is paid by either the employee or the association for which the employee is serving as an officer, director, trustee, or agent.<sup>2,4</sup>
- C. At the end of the granted leave period to hold a statewide office as an officer, director, trustee, or agent of a professional employees' association, the employee shall be returned to his/her former position or a comparable position.<sup>2</sup>
- D. Additional expenses incurred by the District for staffing the position held by the employee granted leave shall be reimbursed by the employee and/or the association prior to the employee being allowed to return to a position in the District.<sup>2</sup>
- E. Any president who was granted leave by the District to hold the office prior to April 25, 2013 may continue to hold the office of president with leave from the

District until the end of the leave and termination of the agreement that covers the leave.<sup>2</sup>

## **V. RESPONSIBILITY**

- A. The employee is responsible for reporting absences to his/her supervisor.
- B. Senior management is responsible for ensuring the employee's absences are properly coded for pay purposes.
- C. Any questions concerning this policy should be directed to the office responsible for human resources.
- D. The Superintendent is responsible for ensuring that this policy is followed.

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**Legal References:**

- 1. §49-5-602
- 2. §49-5-715
- 3. § 49-5-708
- 4. § 49-5-704

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**Cross References:**