

## **EMERGENCY and DISCRETIONARY LEAVE**

### **Emergency Leave**

Emergency leave may be granted for no more than three (3) days per year and may be taken in the case of emergencies. Any leave used under terms of this policy shall be deducted from the staff member's accumulated sick leave up to a maximum of 3 paid days. In the event the staff member's sick leave has been exhausted, the leave may be granted without pay.

For the purpose of this policy, an emergency arises out of unforeseen and unexpected circumstances that create an air of crisis or extreme need. The circumstances must present a grave and clear danger that imminently threatens physical or mental health or would result in irremediable harm or in immediate disaster to life or property unless some action was taken.

A written application for emergency leave must be returned to the district office on the day of return to school and is subject to the terms of the applicable collective bargaining agreement or other applicable law.

### **Family Emergency Leaves**

The board recognizes that the demands of the workplace and of families need to be balanced to promote family stability and economic security for school district employees. Conditions for the authorized use of accumulated leave for family leaves are to be fairly construed in a manner consistent with this policy, and other relevant district policies.

In the event the staff member's leave has been exhausted, the leave may be granted without pay. Unless otherwise provided by an applicable collective bargaining agreement, the following shall apply:

#### **Family Illness**

District staff members may use accrued sick leave to care for a child of the employee with a health condition that requires treatment or supervision. Staff members may use accrued sick leave as specified in their respective collective bargaining agreement for a family member who has a serious health condition or an emergency condition. The district may require a signed statement from a licensed medical practitioner to verify the need for treatment, care or supervision for any absence which exceeds five (5) consecutive days.

#### **Bereavement Leave**

The district shall allow each full-time staff member a maximum of five (5) days leave upon the death of an employee's spouse, mother, father, son, daughter, sister, brother, mother-in-law, or father-in-law. Leave also shall be allowed upon the death of a son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, grandmother, grandfather, granddaughter, grandson, or close friend. The deaths of more than one family member resulting from a common occurrence shall be treated as a single death with respect to the length of leave granted.

#### **Birth or Adoption of a Child**

The district shall grant leave upon the same terms to male employees as is available to female employees upon the birth or adoption of the employee's child. Leave shall be granted upon the same terms to employees who become adoptive parents or stepparents, at the time of birth or initial placement for adoption of a child under the age of six, as is available to employees who be-

come biological parents. Such leave is available only when the child lives in the employee's household at the time of birth or initial placement.

Employee requests for leave of absence due to birth or initial placement for adoption of a child shall be submitted in writing to the superintendent not less than 30 days prior to the beginning date of the leave. The notice shall include the approximate beginning and ending dates for the leave requested.

An extended unpaid leave of absence for a period up to the beginning of the next school term or school year may be approved at the discretion of the superintendent based upon consideration of educational program needs and the desires of the staff member, together with any recommendation of professionals such as medical practitioners or counselors regarding the leave request.

Nothing in this section shall preclude the use of accumulated sick leave to care for a child with a health condition that requires treatment or supervision, as provided in the **Family Illness** section of this policy.

## DISCRETIONARY LEAVES

### **Sabbatical Leaves**

If state funding becomes available for the purpose of this type of leave, the district shall declare its intentions to offer this option..

### **Leaves of Absence**

The district may grant leaves of absence for specific periods of time for up to one school year upon application by a staff member, the recommendation of the superintendent and the approval of the board. Such leaves shall be without pay or fringe benefits and, with the approval of the superintendent or designee and board, may be extended for one additional school year. During the leave the staff member may pay the district's share of any insurance benefits program in order to maintain those benefits. The needs of students and district programs warrant primary consideration. Leaves of absence shall be granted only when they shall not have an undesirable impact upon the educational program or business operations.

A staff member shall be entitled to return to a position in the district at the end of the leave of absence subject to the availability of a position for which the staff member is qualified. The staff member granted a leave of absence must inform the board by February 1 as to his/ her intentions to assume a position in the district for the ensuing school year. If said notification is not received, the individual's employment rights with the district shall be terminated.

Staff on leave of absence shall not earn any salary schedule experience credit or any sick leave credit or benefits during the leave of absence.

### **Professional Leave**

The district may grant leaves, subject to the recommendation of the superintendent and approval by the board, to staff for the purpose of attending meetings or conferences that are likely to be of value to the staff member's performance. (Meetings and conferences wherein bargaining unit activities are conducted are excluded.) Such leaves may be granted with or without pay and with or without travel expense reimbursement.

Legal References:	RCW 49.12.270	Sick leave to care for family members
	49.12.360	Parental leave — discrimination prohibited
	RCW 28A.400.300	Hiring and discharging employees — Leaves for employees — Seniority and leave benefits, retention upon transfers between schools

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