

PRINCE GEORGE’S COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Board of Education  
Upper Marlboro, Maryland

4135  
Policy No.

BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY

**PERSONNEL**

Political Activities and Organizations

**I. POLICY STATEMENT**

- A. The Board of Education of Prince George’s County (Board) believes that all its employees have the right and obligation to be informed and active citizens. The Board guarantees all its employees’ full equality with other citizens in exercising their political rights and responsibilities, including rights such as voting, discussing political issues, campaigning for candidates, and running for and serving in public office.
- B. The Board believes that all employees possess First Amendment rights, but those rights must be weighed against the rights of students to learn in a nonpartisan environment.

**II. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to set forth the Board’s position with regard to employee participation in political activities.

**III. DEFINITIONS**

Within the context of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- A. *Candidate* – An individual who has filed a certificate of candidacy for election to a public or party office. This includes an individual, prior to that individual filing a certificate of candidacy, if a campaign finance entity has been established on behalf of that individual.
- B. *Employee* – An individual employed by the Board, including tenured and non-tenured teachers and certificated and non-certificated individuals, whether full-time, part-time, or temporary.
- C. *Nonpartisan* – Conduct that is not controlled by, or supporting, any single political party. Examples include voting in general elections and expressing in private one’s personal opinions and views on political subjects and candidates.
- D. *Political activity* – Any activity directed toward the success or failure of a political

- party, candidate for partisan political office, partisan political group, referendum or ballot issue. For the purposes of this policy, *political activity* refers to conventional politics and does not include social activism, such as neighborhood organizing, protest marches, and sit-ins conducted on behalf of special causes such as animal rights, antiabortion, environmental issues, or racial equality.
- E. *School grounds* – All Board property, including athletic fields, parking lots, school buses, and all areas of the school building. For the purposes of this policy, *school grounds* of public charter schools are included regardless of who owns the building or real property.
  - F. *School-sponsored activities* – Includes Prince George’s County Public Schools (PGCPS) -sponsored activities or events, including but not limited to sporting events, school dances, or other non-instructional meetings or events that occur outside of the instructional day.
  - G. *Secondary school* – For the purposes of this policy, *secondary school* means a school serving students in grades 6-12.
  - H. *Work hours or working day* – The time a PGCPS employee is scheduled to work.

#### IV. **STANDARDS**

- A. Employees shall refrain from involvement in political activities and campaigning during the working day and in the school setting, and such activities shall not negatively impact the employee’s ability to fulfill their job duties.
- B. Employees shall not advocate the overthrow of the government by unconstitutional or violent means.
- C. At no time is a PGCPS student to be regarded or used as a forum by an employee for a political activity.
- D. An employee shall not use their position to exploit students, parents, or other employees in the interest of their campaign.
- E. The Board shall not endorse any employee seeking public office.
- F. An employee shall not be obligated to contribute or render political service.
- G. An employee shall not be subjected to political activity on school grounds during the working day or during a school-sponsored activity. Nothing in this policy should be construed to mean that employees are restricted from conversing with colleagues about political topics during breaks/lunches outside the presence of students.
- H. An employee shall not be provided with additional compensation or benefits for

engaging in political activities.

- I. An employee may be assigned to attend meetings of a noncurricular, student-led, student-initiated political club at a secondary school. However, the employee shall not be compelled to monitor or attend such a student political club meeting if the content of the speech at the meeting is contrary to the beliefs of the employee. Employees who are assigned to monitor such clubs and meetings are not permitted to promote, lead or participate. An employee's presence at such activities is limited to a non-participatory capacity to ensure that discipline is maintained and that student participation is voluntary.
- J. Election activities involving employees' associations shall be conducted in accordance with the labor agreements negotiated.
- K. An employee shall not use PGCPs facilities, equipment, material, or personnel during working hours, in conducting their campaign or in the execution of their duties, if elected.
- L. A candidate's use of school facilities is governed by Administrative Procedure 1330.
- M. An employee, if elected to a public office, which requires full-time service or represents a conflict of interest with the duties required as an employee of PGCPs, shall have a choice of resigning their position or receiving a leave of absence without pay from PGCPs for the period of tenure in office.

**V. IMPLEMENTATION RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Superintendent is authorized to develop an administrative procedure to implement this policy.

**VI. REFERENCES**

**A. Legal**

The Equal Access Act, 20 U.S.C. §§ 4071 – 4073

MD. CODE ANN., EDUC. § 4-129

MD. CODE ANN., LOCAL GOV'T. §§ 1-301, *et seq.*

**B. Other Board Policies**

Board Policy 1330 – Community Use of School Facilities

**C. Superintendent's Administrative Procedures**

Administrative Procedure 1330 – After School Use of Facilities

**VII. HISTORY**

Policy Adopted

8/16/66

Policy Reviewed-No Revisions Required

4/1/99

Policy Reviewed-No Revisions Required

5/5/03

Policy Reviewed-No Revisions Required

11/9/04

Policy Reviewed – No Revisions Required

9/23/05

Policy Revised

6/26/25