

# Public Schools Branch

## OPERATIONAL GUIDELINE

POLITICAL ACTIVITY	
<i>Section</i> <b>Human Resources</b>	<i>Guideline Number</i> <b>507.1</b>
<i>Pages</i> <b>3</b>	<i>Approved Date</i> <b>February 26, 2019</b>
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<i>Replaces:</i>	

### 1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This document provides guidance and direction to Public School Branch employees in regards to their involvement in political activity. It applies to federal, provincial and municipal elections and to involvement in relevant political activity between elections. This document should be read in conjunction with applicable collective agreements, the *Education Act* and human rights legislation.

### 2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The Public Schools Branch is supportive of an employee's involvement in democracy and the election process, and encourages all employees to exercise their right to vote in any election. An employee's active participation in becoming informed and engaged in the election process is important and sets a positive example for our students.
- 2.2 Public Schools Branch employees, like all Canadians, have the right to participate in political activities. Any restriction on political activity is designed to protect the impartiality of our organization. Employees must be, and be seen to be, impartial in order to maintain the trust of the public.

### 3.0 GENERAL GUIDELINES

- 3.1 What is political activity? Political activities includes:
- 3.1.1 Being a candidate in a federal, provincial, or municipal election;
  - 3.1.2 Engaging in partisan work for a candidate or party during an election; or
  - 3.1.3 An activity in support of or in opposition to a political party (federal, provincial, or municipal) and/or a candidate.
- 3.2 Employees are generally prohibited from engaging in the following:
- 3.2.1 Political activity in the workplace;
  - 3.2.2 Political activity while wearing a uniform/identification associated with the Public Schools Branch;

- 3.2.3 Using Public Schools Branch premises, equipment, or supplies for political activity purposes; or
  - 3.2.4 Associating a Public Schools Branch position with political activity (except as necessary to identify the employee's position and work experience when seeking to be a candidate in a federal, provincial or municipal election.
- 3.3 A Public Schools Branch employee intending to seek nomination as a candidate in a federal, provincial, or municipal election or who is an active supporter or member of a political party should abide by the following:
- a) An employee intending to seek nomination as a candidate in a federal, provincial or municipal election, or who is considering taking on a formal role in a political party, is encouraged, before doing so, to notify the Director's Office (902-368-6850). There may be an opportunity or requirement to take a leave of absence.
  - b) An employee is not restricted to participate in political activities, however, they must not act outside the interests of their employer, in this case, the Public Schools Branch.
  - c) An employee must ensure that their participation in a political activity in no way compromises their ability to perform their duties in a fully impartial manner. They must also strictly observe the obligation to respect the confidentiality of information they obtain in performing their work.
  - d) An employee should not engage in any outside employment/duties related to political activity (paid or otherwise) which would impair the effectiveness of their professional service with the Public Schools Branch.
  - e) An employee should avoid any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest between their political activities and their Public Schools Branch employment. This will depend on the nature of the employee's employment and the nature of their political activity or association.
  - f) An employee must avoid engaging in partisan political activities during work time or using workplace facilities or resources for that purpose.
  - g) An employee must ensure they do not use information obtained through their employment with the Public Schools Branch except for Public School Branch purposes and in an approved manner.
  - h) Where a breach of this guideline occurs, the employee will be advised. A breach may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.
- 3.4 An employee who has questions or would like to discuss the information contained in this guideline, is asked to contact the Director's Office at 902-368-6850.

#### **4.0 CROSS REFERENCE**

- 4.1 Collective Agreement between the Education Negotiation Agency and the Canadian Union of Public Employees Union Local 3260
- 4.2 Collective Agreement Between the Education Negotiation Agency and the Canadian Union of Public Employees Union Locals 1145, 1770, 1775
- 4.3 Memorandum of Agreement between the Education Negotiation Agency and the Prince Edward Island Teachers Federation

- 4.4 Collective Agreement between the Government of Prince Edward Island and the Workers Compensation Board of Prince Edward Island and the Island Regulatory and Appeals Commission and the PEI Union of Public Sector Employees
- 4.5 Terms and Conditions of Employment for Excluded Supervisory and Confidential Employees of the Province of Prince Edward Island
- 4.6 *Education Act*
- 4.7 *Human Rights Act*

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