

Professional Leaves

The Governing Board recognizes that a broad range of experiences can strengthen an employee's ability to meet the educational needs of the district's students.

The Board may grant a professional leave of absence for up to one year to certificated employees for the purpose of permitting study or travel which will benefit the schools and students of the district. No more than one such leave of absence may be granted to an employee in a seven-year period. (Education Code 44966, 44967)

(cf. 4131 - Staff Development)

(cf. 4161/4261/4361 - Leaves)

To be eligible for a professional leave of absence, an employee must have served in the district for at least seven consecutive years preceding the leave. For this purpose, any prior professional leave taken by an employee shall be deemed a break in the employee's service. No other type of leave authorized by the Board, and no service by the employee for one year or less under a national recognized fellowship or foundation approved by the State Board of Education for research, teaching, or lecturing, shall be deemed a break in the employee's service. (Education Code 44967)

Rather than granting a professional leave for a continuous one-year period, the Board may require that the leave be taken in separate six-month periods or separate quarters, provided that the total leave is completed within three years. Any period of service by the employee between the separate periods of leave shall comprise a part of the service required for a subsequent leave of absence. (Education Code 44966)

As a condition of being granted professional leave, the employee shall agree in writing to render service in the district following his/her return for a period equal to twice the period of the leave. (Education Code 44969)

The Board and employee may agree in writing to have the employee perform services for the district during the professional leave. (Education Code 44968)

Unless the employee agrees in writing with the Board not to receive compensation during the leave, the employee shall receive such compensation during the leave as the Board and employee agree upon in writing, which shall not be less than the difference between the employee's salary and the salary of a substitute employee in the position which the employee held prior to the granting of the leave. In lieu of such a difference, the Board may pay one-half of the salary of the employee or any additional amount up to and including the full salary of the employee. (Education Code 44968, 44968.5)

Compensation during the leave shall be paid in the manner authorized by Education Code 44969 and 44970.

At the end of the professional leave, the employee shall be reinstated in the position he/she held when the leave was granted, unless otherwise agreed upon by the employee. (Education Code 44973)

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

44966-44976 Leaves of absence for study or travel

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