

## **Professional Personnel**

### **Leaves of Absence**

#### **Sick and Bereavement Leave**

Each full-time employee is granted sick leave according to the collective bargaining agreement. Sick leave is defined in State law as personal illness, quarantine at home, serious illness or death in the immediate family or household, or birth, adoption, or placement for adoption.

A physician's certificate, or that of a spiritual adviser or practitioner of the professional staff member's faith, may be required as a condition for paying sick leave after 3 days absence for personal illness, or as it deems necessary in other cases.

#### **Sabbatical Leave**

Sabbatical leave may be granted in accordance with The School Code.

#### **Personal Leave**

Professional staff members are granted personal leave according to the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

The Collective Bargaining Agreement governs the use of personal leave.

#### **Leave of Absence Without Pay**

The School Board may grant a leave of absence without pay to tenured professional staff members who have rendered satisfactory service and desire to return to employment in a similar capacity at a time determined by the School Board.

Each leave of absence shall be of the shortest possible duration required to meet the leave's purpose consistent with a reasonable continuity of instruction for students.

#### **Child-Rearing Leave**

The School Board shall grant a professional staff member's request for a non-paid, child-rearing leave, not to exceed the balance of the school year plus one additional school year (but in no event shall such leave exceed 3 semesters), provided the request complies with this policy. Nothing in this policy shall prohibit a professional staff member from utilizing sick days during a disability due to pregnancy.

A teacher must request, if possible, a child-rearing leave by notifying the Superintendent in writing no later than 90 days before the requested leave's beginning date. The request should include the proposed leave dates. The leave shall end before a new school year begins or before the first day of school after winter recess.

Subject to the insurance carrier's approval, the teacher may maintain insurance benefits at his or her own expense during a child-rearing leave.

A professional staff member desiring to return before the leave's expiration will be assigned to an available vacancy for which the teacher is qualified, subject to scheduling efficiency and instruction continuity.

#### **Leaves for Service in the Military**

Leaves for service in the U.S. Armed Services or any of its reserve components and the National Guard, as well as re-employment rights, will be granted in accordance with State and federal law. A professional staff member hired to replace one in military service does not acquire tenure.

### General Assembly

Leaves for service in the General Assembly, as well as re-employment rights, will be granted in accordance with State and federal law. A professional staff member hired to replace one in military service or in the General Assembly does not acquire tenure.

### Leave for Employment in Department of Defense

The School Board may grant teachers a leave of absence to accept employment in a Department of Defense overseas school.

### School Visitation Leave

An eligible professional staff member is entitled to 8 hours during any school year, no more than 4 hours of which may be taken on any given day, to attend school conferences or classroom activities related to the teacher's child, if the conference or activity cannot be scheduled during non-work hours. Professional staff members must first use all accrued vacation leave, personal leave, compensatory leave, and any other leave that may be granted to the professional staff member, except sick and disability leave.

The Superintendent shall develop administrative procedures implementing this policy consistent with the School Visitation Rights Act.

### Leaves for Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence

Any professional staff member may take an unpaid leave from work who: (1) is a victim of domestic or sexual violence, or (2) has a family, or household member who is a victim of domestic or sexual violence whose interests are not adverse to the employee as it relates to the domestic or sexual violence. The unpaid leave allows the employee to seek medical help, legal assistance, counseling, safety planning, and other assistance without suffering adverse employment action.

The Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act, governs the purpose, requirements, scheduling, and continuity of benefits, and all other terms of the leave. Accordingly, an employee is entitled to a total of 12 work weeks of leave during any 12-month period. Neither the law nor this policy creates a right for an employee to take unpaid leave that exceeds the unpaid leave time allowed under, or is in addition to the unpaid leave time permitted by, the federal Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (29 U.S.C. § 2601, et seq.).

Other Leaves

Upon request, the School Board will grant: (1) an unpaid leave of absence to a teacher who is elected to serve as an officer of a State or national teacher organization that represents teachers in collective bargaining negotiations, (2) 20 days of paid leave of absence per year to a trustee of the Teachers' Retirement System to attend meetings and seminars as described in 105 ILCS 5/24-6.3, and (3) a paid leave of absence for the local association president of a State teacher association that is an exclusive bargaining agent in the District, or his or her designee, to attend meetings, workshops, or seminars as described in 105 ILCS 5/24-6.2.

LEGAL REF.: 20 ILCS 1805/30.1 et seq.  
105 ILCS 5/24-6, 5/24-6.1, 5/24-6.2, 5/24-6.3, 5/24-13, and 5/24-13.1.  
820 ILCS 147/1 et seq.  
820 ILCS 147/15.  
Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act, P.A. 93-591.

CROSS REF.: 5:180 (Temporary Illness or Temporary Incapacity), 5:185 (Family and Medical Leave), 5:330 (Sick Days, Vacation, Holidays, and Leaves)

ADOPTED: March 20, 2006

Revised: January 14, 2008