



Georgia Department of Education

Policies and Procedures

Policy Title:	<i>Political Activity, State Schools</i>		
Policy Number:	<i>SS-3000 Descriptor Code-GAHB</i>		
Release Date:	<i>06-21-02</i>	Last Revised:	<i>11-22-03</i>

Purpose

To describe guidelines and limitations on political activity by employees of the Department of Education

Applicability

This policy applies to all classified and unclassified employees of the Georgia Department of Education.

Policy

Employees of the Georgia Department of Education (DOE) shall not take part in or support any form of political activity while on duty or under the color of office or position except as allowed by law. Further, employees of the DOE may not engage in any political activity in violation of state and federal laws. In addition to federal and state laws, classified employees may not engage in any political activity in violation of the Rules of the State Personnel Board. Employees who participate in political activities allowed under state and federal law and/or Rules of the State Personnel Board may do so only as private citizens and must take appropriate leave for activities that take place during normal working hours.

General Provisions

1. Employees of the DOE may participate in certain limited political activities allowed by law. However, employees may not participate in these allowable activities while on duty or under color of office or position. Appropriate annual or personal leave must be requested and approved prior to participation in allowable activities. Examples of allowable political activities for off-duty employees include registering and voting in elections; promoting and encouraging other persons to exercise their right to vote; participating in non-partisan activities of a civic, community, social, professional, employee, or similar organization; attending partisan and non-partisan political meetings or rallies as a *spectator*; holding membership in a political party or other political organization and participating in activities to the extent permitted by state/federal laws and Rules of the State Personnel Board; writing a

personal letter to a newspaper or other publication expressing a personal view on public issues; displaying a political picture, badge, or button as long as such display is *not under color of office or position or while on duty or on state property*; and displaying a political bumper sticker on a privately owned vehicle upon *which the state is not paying transportation mileage*.

2. DOE employees who work with the General Assembly must register as a lobbyist according to state policy.
3. DOE employees may not use state transportation to attend political functions or participate in political activities. State transportation includes, but is not limited to, leased state vehicles and state airplanes. Employees may not transport political materials in state vehicles or airplanes at any time or in personal vehicles while on duty. Employees will not be reimbursed for transportation mileage on personal vehicles displaying political bumper stickers or other political materials.
4. Employees of the DOE who violate any state or federal laws or Rules of the State Personnel Board (classified employees) regarding political activity or provisions referenced in this policy shall be subjected to appropriate disciplinary action which may include termination of employment.

**Authority and/or
Cross-Reference**

- State Personnel Board Rule 3.500
- DOE *Political Activity* Policy (HR-1112)
- O.C.G.A. 16-10-9, 20-2-51, 21-4-9, 35-2-12, 42-9-15, 45-2-1, 45-10-70, 45-11-10, 45-20-3, 45-20-3.1, 45-20-4, 50-19-8
- Federal Hatch Political Activities Act (5 U.S.C.A. 1501-1508)