



**Responsible Office:** Department of Government Affairs

## **BOARD POLICY 1310**

### **POLITICAL ACTIVITY ON DISTRICT PROPERTY INCLUDING SCHOOLS**

#### **PURPOSE**

The Board of Trustees (Board) believes our students and staff should be able to attend school or work, respectively, without the undue influence that may be caused by political activity. Political Activity is hereby prohibited on Washoe County School District (District) property and school campuses, during operation or school hours, or during District or school activities.

#### **DEFINITIONS**

1. "Political Activity" means any activity directed toward the success or failure of a political party, candidate for political office, political group, political organization, political issue, ballot initiative, bill, petition, or any other matter currently before the state legislature or local government agency.
2. "Political Group" means **a group** of people that assembles together in order to promote a common ideology and achieve particular objectives in the public, governmental sphere.
3. "Political Issue" refers to controversies debated within the political system.
4. "Political Organization" means those engaged in political activities (e.g., lobbying, community organizing, campaign advertising, etc.) aimed at achieving clearly defined political goals, which typically benefit the interests of their members.

#### **POLICY**

1. Prohibition
  - a. Political Activity is prohibited on District property and school campuses, during operation or school hours or during District or school activities.
  - b. The distribution of pamphlets or leaflets that amount to Political Activity is prohibited on District property or school campuses.
  - c. Any signage that amounts to Political Activity is prohibited on District property or school campuses.

- d. The following may not under any circumstances be used for political activity:
  - i. The District's bulk-mailing privilege;
  - ii. District mailing lists - including the addresses and e-mail addresses of District schools and offices or of faculty or other employees;
  - iii. District-provided office supplies, telephones, facsimile machines, copiers, etc.;
  - iv. The District's sales tax exemption for purchases of goods and services; and/or
  - v. District buildings—including posting political materials on the interior or exterior of District buildings, fencing, and athletic fields during school hours and/or school sponsored events.

## 2. Permissible Activities

- a. Political activity is permissible for the Board of Trustees after an action by the Board, the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee and only as the political activity relates to District issues.
- b. Collective bargaining agents and their membership may utilize District mail services and bulletin boards for organizational material, which may contain political activity, in accordance with NRS Chapter 288 and current collective bargaining agreements.
- c. Students may engage in campaign activities for school leadership offices or other school-based student elections.
- d. Certain nonpartisan political activities (such as properly organized voter registration activities, voter education programs, and candidate debates) may be permissible on District property if they do not evidence a preference for or opposition to a political party or to candidates who have taken a particular position. In order to ensure that all legal and District requirements are followed, advance approval for these events must be obtained from (and all materials must be reviewed by) the District's Department of Government Affairs which will, if necessary, provide further guidance to the organizer.
  - i. In addition, an announcement should be made at the beginning of each such event and in any written materials setting forth the following disclaimer of the District:

"The Washoe County School District does not support or oppose any political candidates. The views expressed are

those of [the candidate or other partisan political speaker]  
only. The [organization] is sponsoring this event.

- e. Political Activity, including temporary signage and distribution of pamphlets or leaflets, is permitted after operation or school hours and not during a District or School activity with an approved Facility Use Form.
  - f. Political parties or groups are allowed to form clubs on campuses, provided they adhere to the following guidelines:
    - i. Conforming to all policies and regulations related to the establishment and operation of clubs; and
    - ii. Membership must be open to any student who wishes to participate.
3. The Superintendent shall adopt administrative regulations necessary to implement the provisions of this policy.

### **LEGAL REQUIREMENTS & ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS**

- 1. This policy reflects the goals of the District's Strategic Plan and aligns/complies with the governing documents of the District, to include:
  - a. NRS Chapter 288
  - b. Board Policy 4500, Staff Speech and Expression
  - c. Board Policy 5150, Student Freedom of Speech, Freedom of Expression, and Right to Assemble
  - d. Board Policy 5300, Student Activities

### **REVISION HISTORY**

Date	Revision	Modification
9/9/1997	1.0	Adopted
11/8/2013	1.1	Revised to include NRS 281A under Implementation Guidelines
11/18/2014	2.0	Revised
1/25/2018	2.1	Reviewed by Staff for Potential Revision
3/10/2020	3.0	Revised to clarify language and remove redundancy
4/27/2021	4.0	Revised to specify language to prohibit Political Activity on District Property or School Campuses