

Administrative Procedure 426

Special Leave

Background

The district considers that all staff members have an obligation to be at work and to fulfill their duties. In exceptional circumstances, special leaves may be granted in accordance with the terms of the applicable collective agreement and this administrative procedure. Where there may be a deviation between this procedure and the collective agreement, the collective agreement shall prevail (per Administrative Procedure 407). Each application for special leave shall be judged individually, using the following procedures as guidelines.

Procedure

Criteria for Special Leave

1. Special leave may be granted in circumstances which are beyond the control of the staff member, that necessitate a staff member's absence.
2. The criteria for granting special leave shall be degree of control over the date and event; the urgency of the occasion and the impact on the welfare of other people.
3. Special leave is intended to assist a staff member in a difficult situation, but is not to be interpreted in any way as an automatic right.
4. This special leave is in addition to other forms of leave under the collective agreement such as sick leave, compassionate leave, quarantine leave, court appearance leave, and sabbatical leave.
5. Except in the case of emergency, requests for leave shall be submitted ten (10) school days prior to the commencement of the leave. Such leave requests will be responded to within fifteen (15) school days.
6. Occasional Teachers do not have special leave with pay; however they do have other leave provisions as outlined in the collective agreements.

7. Special Leave With Pay

Special Leave with Pay may be granted for the following:

- 7.1 attendance at a college or university graduation ceremony in which the staff member, spouse or dependents are receiving a diploma or degree (maximum of one day);
- 7.2 when a staff member is a member of a school board or municipal council, and attendance at a conference or convention is requested by the school board or council;
- 7.3 participation in significant athletic events of an international, Olympic or provincial final level of importance;
- 7.4 attendance as a delegate at a political convention of a national or provincial party;
- 7.5 appointments of a legal or other professional nature where clear evidence is provided that the arrangements could not be made for a time outside of school hours (maximum of one day);
- 7.6 writing examinations, when the course is of an academic or professional nature related to the staff member's duties for the Board;
- 7.7 attending the wedding of a family member or friend when travel outside of Renfrew County is required (maximum of one day);
- 7.8 the death of a close friend of the family when the staff member would feel a need to attend even if the special leave with pay were not granted;
- 7.9 an emergency in the staff member's family involving a child, spouse or parent;
- 7.10 the cancellation of a return flight when confirmation had been obtained prior to departure;
- 7.11 serious weather conditions when the Principal/Supervisor, Director or designate feels that the safety of the staff member would be endangered through endeavoring to meet his or her obligations to the district;
- 7.12 participation in religious holy days; and
- 7.13 a staff member who is the spouse of a member of the military shall be granted paid leave of up to three (3) days with deduction from the

staff member's sick leave account for the purpose of attending to matters associated with a military deployment (for a minimum of six (6) months) where the spouse is deployed to an active war zone.

Specific to teaching staff only:

- 7.14 an academic or professional summer course which starts a few days prior to the beginning of the summer vacation period, when the course involves education or training which would be useful to the teacher in the performance of their duties for the Board (maximum of one day);
- 7.15 attendance at drama or music festivals in which the teacher is a participant and where, in the opinion of the principal, the program has a specific relationship to the teacher's curricular or co-curricular duties;
- 7.16 the move of a teacher and his or her family from one location to another within Renfrew County, when clear evidence is provided to the principal that this could not be undertaken at a time outside of school hours (maximum of one day)
8. Special leave with pay is not granted for the following activities ***but may be granted without pay.***
- transporting a child to and from university or attending a university activity other than graduation;
 - celebration of a family member achievement;
 - participation of child in sporting events or other competitions that are not at a provincial level (maximum 1 day per year);
 - unspecified personal business or personal business which could be arranged outside of school hours;
 - arranging to move to or from Renfrew County;
 - accompanying a spouse on a business trip;
 - arrangements for retirement for self or spouse;
 - interview for a job outside of the district; or
 - court appearances to challenge a charge such as a traffic violation.
9. Not Eligible for Special Leave

Special leave, ***with or without pay***, shall not be granted for such purposes as the following (unless specifically provided for by a Collective Agreement):

- marriage of the staff member;
- a vacation or pleasure trip;
- activities of social or service clubs when the activities do not have a direct bearing on the professional duties of the staff member; or

- activities related to seeking some political office either personally or on behalf of a candidate, other than being a delegate at a political convention of a national or provincial party.

Legal Reference

Education Act S. 264; S. 265

Ontario Regulation 298—Operation of Schools S. 11; S. 20

*PPM No. 119 – Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education
Policies in Ontario Schools*

AP 453 – Equity & Inclusive Education

Religious Accommodation Guideline