

SECTION: PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES

TITLE: SABBATICAL LEAVE

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# SOUTHERN LEHIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

438. SABBATICAL LEAVE	
<p>1. Purpose SC 1166-1171</p>	<p>This policy shall establish the school district's parameters for granting sabbatical leaves for professional development or for restoration of health for eligible employees.</p>
<p>2. Authority SC 1166  SC 1171</p>	<p>The Board shall grant sabbatical leaves to professional employees only for the purposes of professional development or restoration of health.</p> <p>The Board reserves the right to specify the conditions under which sabbatical leaves for professional development or restoration of health may be taken, consistent with law.</p>
<p>3. Guidelines SC 1166  SC 1166</p>	<p><u>Eligibility</u> To be eligible for sabbatical leave, an employee shall have completed ten (10) years of satisfactory service in the public schools of the Commonwealth; at least five (5) consecutive years of such service shall be in this school district.</p> <p>A sabbatical leave may be taken for a half or full school term or for two (2) half school terms during a period of two (2) years, at the option of the employee: Provided, however, that if a sabbatical leave is requested because of the illness of an employee, a leave shall be granted for a period equivalent to a half or full school term or equivalent to two half school terms during a period of two years: Provided further, that if a sabbatical leave for restoration of health or a leave of absence for professional development for one half school term or its equivalent has been granted and the employee is unable to return to school service because of illness or physical disability, the employee, upon written request prior to the expiration of the original leave, shall be entitled to a further leave for one half school term or its equivalent: Provided further, that if a leave for a full school term or its equivalent has been granted and the employee is unable to return to school service because of illness or physical disability, the board of school directors may extend such leave for such periods as it may determine but not to exceed one full school term or its equivalent. Thereafter, one leave of absence for professional development or a sabbatical leave for restoration of health shall be allowed after each seven (7) years of service. A sabbatical leave shall also operate as a leave of absence without pay from all other school activities.</p>

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<p>SC 1167</p>	<p><u>Application</u>  Requests for sabbatical leave shall be submitted on the approved district form and forwarded with required documentation to the Superintendent or designee as soon as possible.</p> <p>Requests for sabbatical leave for professional development shall be submitted by April 1 for the following school year and by October 1 for the following semester.</p> <p>Applications for sabbatical leave shall be given preference, according to the years of service since the previous sabbatical leave of the applicant. The total number of professional employees on sabbatical leave at any one time shall not exceed ten percent (10%) of the number of eligible employees.</p> <p>The Board shall review each application for sabbatical leave and shall approve those meeting the requirements of adopted policy.</p>
	<p><u>Documentation</u></p> <p><u>Applications for Sabbatical Leave for Professional Development:</u>  Applicants for sabbatical leave for professional development shall submit with the application form a detailed plan describing the professional development activities to be undertaken at an accredited institution approved by the Board. The applicant's professional development shall be for the purposes of retaining a professional certificate or commission, further preparation and improvement in the applicant's area(s) of certification, additional certification, attaining other appropriate and identifiable educational positions with the school district, or as the Board may require, and upon recommendation of the Superintendent. The Board may at any time require additional information from the employee in order to assist the Board in evaluating the request and the leave's benefits to and impact on the employee and the school district. At a minimum for a half term, a sabbatical leave for professional development shall consist of any of the following or a combination thereof: nine (9) graduate credits, twelve (12) undergraduate credits, one hundred eighty (180) hours of professional development activities. At a minimum for a full school term, a sabbatical leave for professional development shall consist of any of the following or a combination thereof: eighteen (18) graduate credits, twenty-four (24) undergraduate credits, three hundred sixty (360) hours of professional development activities. Upon completion of the leave, the employee shall provide to the Board satisfactory evidence that the employee's approved plan for professional development was fully complied with during the leave of absence. All requests shall be subject to review and authorization by the Board of school directors.</p> <p><u>Applications for Sabbatical Leave for Restoration of Health:</u>  Applicants for sabbatical leave for restoration of health shall submit with the application form an official supporting medical statement and recommendation from his/her physician. At both the approximate midpoint of the leave and at least thirty (30) days prior to the conclusion of the leave, a physician's statement shall be submitted to the Superintendent or designee, indicating the extent to which the purpose of the leave has been achieved and evaluating the health status of the</p>

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	<p>employee relative to his/her ability to return to employment. The Board reserves the right to require at its own expense additional examinations and reports by physicians of its choice to determine the validity of the leave request.</p>
<p>SC 1168</p>	<p><u>Commitment of Employee</u>          Acceptance of a sabbatical leave incurs a commitment by the employee to return to active duty in this district immediately following the sabbatical leave for one (1) full school year, unless physically or mentally unable to do so. In the case of a sabbatical leave for professional development, the employee shall have fully complied with the approved plan for professional development submitted with the employee's application, including completion of courses with passing grades. Upon return from sabbatical leave for professional development, the employee shall submit to the Superintendent within the first month an official transcript of all courses completed.</p> <p>The Board reserves the right to require at its own expense additional examinations and reports by physicians of its choice to determine the employee's ability to return to work.</p> <p>If the employee fails to return to employment, unless prevented by illness or physical disability, and, in the case of sabbatical leave for professional development, if the employee has failed to have fully complied with the plan for professional development, including completion of courses with passing grades, the employee shall forfeit all benefits to which said employee would have been entitled and shall be required to reimburse to the school district any salary received by the employee while on sabbatical and any amounts contributed by the school district to the Public Employees' Retirement Fund shall be deducted from the refund payable to such employee under existing law and the amount so deducted shall be refunded to the school district.</p>
<p>SC 1168  SC 1170</p>	<p><u>Commitment of Employer</u>          At the expiration of the sabbatical leave, the employee shall, unless agreed otherwise, be reinstated in the same position held at the time of the granting of the leave.</p> <p>Time on sabbatical leave shall be counted as time on the job for purposes of seniority, where applicable in the district, and for retirement fund purposes but for no other purpose.</p>
<p>SC 1169</p>	<p><u>Compensation</u>          During the period of sabbatical leave, an employee shall be compensated at least one-half the salary to which s/he would have been entitled had the employee not taken leave.</p>