

The board has discretion to approve or disapprove requests for leaves of absence, depending on whether the request complies with the following policy and according to what is in the best interests of the district. Any leaves of absence without pay shall be granted only after the employee has worked in the school district for at least three consecutive years as a full-time contract employee, except for involuntary military service. Extended leaves of absence for the following reasons may be granted for one year if approved by the board and may be renewed if approved by the board upon written request:

- Personal illness
- Caring for sick member of immediate family
- Involuntary Military service
- Further study
- Other reason(s) as determined appropriate by the board

Employees failing to meet the provision of a specific leave shall not be entitled to reinstatement. Requests for reinstatement or extension of an unpaid leave of absence must be filed with the Superintendent on or before March 15<sup>th</sup> for the following contractual year. An employee failing to submit a request for reinstatement from or an extension of a leave of absence terminates employment with the Board of Education at the expiration of the leave.

Upon return from leave of absence, the employee will be returned to a substantially equivalent position for which he/she may be qualified, if such a position exists. However, the board cannot guarantee that the employee will be placed in the same position which he/she left.

An employee on leave granted by the Board will retain all those privileges of employment attained prior to the leave. However the period shall not be applied to “time in service” as is applicable to the provisions of Title 70, Oklahoma Statutes, Section 6-122.

If an employee must request leave to commence during the course of a school year, only that “time in service” so completed will be applied to the employee’s record.

An employee, whose absences from work, for whatever reason, have become excessive on a continuing basis, may be placed on automatic leave of absence, without pay, by the Board upon proper notice; and a hearing, if requested in writing by the employee in question, will be held before the Geary Board of Education.

*Unpaid Leave of Absence for Personal Illness:* Requests for leaves of absence for personal illness, requests to return from such leaves, or requests to extend such leaves must be accompanied by a physician's statement. Teachers on leave of absence for personal illness will not be permitted to do substitute teaching.

*Unpaid Leave of Absence to Care for Sick Family Member:* Requests for leaves of absence to care for a sick member of immediate family (see definition in Sick Leave section) must be accompanied by a physician's statement.

*Unpaid Leave of Absence for Further Study:* Leaves of absence for further study may be granted for approved courses of study for not less than 15 hours of credit for the school year. Employees failing to comply with this requirement will not be entitled to leave of absence benefits. The Superintendent must approve courses of study in advance. Requests for leaves of absence for further study submitted after April 25<sup>th</sup> will not be considered.

Approved: February 7, 2011

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Board Clerk

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Board President