

REGULATION

ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Related Entries: GANN, GANN-RA, GC
Responsible Office: OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES

EXTENDED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT LEAVE

A. PURPOSE

To establish procedures for requesting and implementing employee requests for leave to pursue professional development.

B. BACKGROUND

Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) is committed to maintaining a quality learning environment in which staff and students can develop skills and ideas, acquire knowledge, and engage in creative activities covering a wide range of disciplines and fields. As an expression of this commitment, the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County (Board) provides an Extended Professional Development Leave program for certain employee groups to enhance their professional competence. Extended Professional Development Leave, therefore, represents a dual investment – an investment of time and commitment on the part of the employee and a financial investment by the Board which promises to result in improved professional outcomes for students.

C. DEFINITIONS

1. *Extended Professional Development Leave* – Leave granted to an employee to pursue a professional development program which will not result in a degree or earned academic credit, including exchange teaching, subject matter immersion programs, and action-based research projects. An example is the Distinguished Fulbright Awards in Teaching program. Extended Professional Development Leave may be for a full year, a half year, or a short term leave between 3 weeks and 6 months.

D. PROCEDURES

1. Units I and II

Employees in Units I and II shall be granted Extended Professional Development Leave in accordance with the applicable negotiated agreements and the terms set forth in this regulation. This regulation shall be implemented in compliance with the

provisions of the applicable negotiated agreements, the provisions of which shall supersede any language that may be inconsistent.

2. Units V and VI

Employees in Units V and VI shall be granted Extended Professional Development Leave in accordance with this administrative regulation.

3. Limitation on grants – Extended Professional Development Leave shall be available for up to four employees in any one Unit in a fiscal year.
4. Eligibility – Before taking Extended Professional Development Leave, employees must have completed 6 continuous full years of service with the school system and have received at least Satisfactory or higher performance evaluations and be recommended for such leave by the employee's division head. Any employee who has previously participated in Sabbatical Leave shall complete 6 full years of employment with AACPS after their return from Sabbatical Leave in order to be eligible for Extended Professional Development Leave. They shall also receive at least Satisfactory or higher performance evaluations for that period of time.
5. Written request – Employees shall submit a written request for Extended Professional Development Leave which must be received by the Office of Human Resources no later 90-days prior to the application deadline of the program to permit adequate planning and coverage during the period of leave. The employee, once qualified and notified by the Office of Human Resources, must provide three professional references, one of which must be from the immediate supervisor. Requests from eligible employees shall be submitted to the Superintendent who shall make a recommendation to the Board for approval. Action shall be taken on all such requests no later than 30 days after receipt of all professional references.
6. Compensation – The employee on Extended Professional Development Leave shall be paid by their regular salary which would have been received if they had remained on active duty.
7. Obligation of Employee
 - a. Program Expectation – The employee must be enrolled in and complete a professional development program, evidence of which must be submitted.
 - b. Contractual Agreement – An employee accepting Extended Professional Development Leave for a full year or half year shall enter into a separate, written contract whereby they agree to return to service in AACPS for no less than a 2-year period immediately following the leave. If the employee fails to return and

remain for the specified time, they shall refund any monies paid to them or on their behalf (salary and the Board's share for healthcare benefits) by AACPS.

An employee accepting an Extended Professional Development Leave for a short-term program shall enter into a separate, written contract whereby they agree to return to service in the AACPS for no less than 1 full school year after the completion of the leave. If the employee fails to return and remain for the specified time, they shall refund any monies paid to them or on their behalf (salary and the Board's share for healthcare benefits) by AACPS.

- c. Reporting – At the conclusion of Extended Professional Development Leave, the employee shall submit a report regarding the program and their completion of the program to the Chief Human Resources Officer and to their supervisor.
 - d. Change of Status Due to Inability to Complete Program – If the employee on Extended Professional Development Leave cannot complete the planned program for which leave was granted, it is their responsibility to notify the Chief Human Resources Officer as soon as possible and at least within 30 days. The leave may then be rescinded by the Board, and the employee shall be placed on an appropriate leave status, reassigned, or terminated.
 - e. Conduct – An employee on an Extended Professional Development Leave is held to all standards of conduct as if actively at work, and compliance with all laws. Employees on a leave shall self-report all charges, arrests, and convictions for any offense, including driving under the influence (DUI) or driving while impaired (DWI) and other criminal traffic offenses.
 - f. Program Expenses – The employee is responsible for expenses related to their Extended Professional Development Program.
8. Obligations of the Board
- a. Reinstatement – In granting Extended Professional Development Leave, the Board obligates itself to offer to the employee, on the expiration of the leave, employment in as near comparable status as possible at the time of departure without creating a new position or transferring another employee. Upon return from Extended Professional Development Leave, the staff member shall be placed on the salary schedule at the level which they would have achieved had they remained actively employed in the system during their period of absence
 - b. Benefits – Employees on Extended Professional Development Leave shall continue to receive any health benefits elected as well as AACPS provided term life insurance and long term disability insurance for which they would have been eligible had they remained in their regular position with the Board.

- c. Retirement – During the Extended Professional Development Leave, the employee’s contributions to the Maryland State Retirement and Pension System shall continue at the current rate at the time of the employee’s departure.
- d. Leave – Employees on a full year or half year Extended Professional Development Leave may not accrue any annual, sick, or personal business leave. Employees on a short term Extended Professional Development Leave shall accrue all leave as if they had remained working in their assignment.

Regulation History: Issued 06/10/14; Technical Edit 11/04/25

Note Previous Regulation History: None

Legal Reference: None