

CHARTIERS HOUSTON SCHOOL DISTRICT

Policy No.: 420

Section: Professional Employees

POLICY GUIDE

Title: TEACHER CONFERENCES

Adopted: 09/21/1998

Revision Adopted: 8/8/16

POLICY NO. 420 TEACHER CONFERENCES

1. RATIONALE

While the Board recognizes the value that educational conferences can bring to the School District and staff members involved, the Board seeks to ensure that the absences occasioned by participation of its teachers, guidance counselors, school nurses and other professional employees in conferences does not unreasonably interrupt and/or interfere with the educational program. Thus, the Board hereby clarifies guidelines for conferences scheduled during the student instructional day.

2. AUTHORITY

The Board delegates to the Superintendent authority to implement the following regulations concerning the attendance of professional employees at conferences during the student instructional day.

1. Any professional employee who desires to attend a conference during the student instructional day, regardless of whether he/she is seeking payment for said conference from the School District, must submit an application to the Building Principal on designated forms. Materials describing the conference, as well as the estimate of any costs to the School District, should also be provided to the Building Principal at that time.
2. As all such conferences must be approved by the Building Principal, the District Superintendent, such requests to attend a conference during the student instructional day must be submitted to the Building Principal as far in advance as possible, but in no event later than the week before the regularly scheduled worksession meeting of the Board prior to the date(s) of the conference. All overnight conferences require Board approval. All conferences during the instructional day shall be listed as informational items for the Board but shall not require Board approval.

3. If the conference request is approved by the Building Principal and the professional employee is not requesting any local funds, program funds and/or grant funds from the School District, the Building Principal shall forward the request to the District Superintendent.
4. If the conference request is approved by the Building Principal, and the professional employee is requesting any local funds, program funds, and/or grant funds for any part of the conference, meals, lodging and/or related travel, the Building Principal shall forward the request, with the accompanying documentation, to the Business Manager, for a determination of the availability of sufficient funds within the appropriate budgetary category and/or federal program or grant. If sufficient funds are available, the Business Manager shall forward the request to the District Superintendent.
5. The District Superintendent shall review the conference request to determine, in his sole discretion, the extent to which the professional employee's participation in the conference will benefit the School District. If he determines that the conference will benefit the School District, the Superintendent shall review the number of days that the professional employee at issue has already been absent from his/her normal duties during that student school year, and the number of additional days of absence, if any, already approved for that employee during the remainder of the student school year.
6. The District Superintendent shall not approve a professional employee's request to attend a conference to the extent that he determines, at the time the request is made, that the employee's attendance at the conference would result in his/her absence from his/her normal duties for more than 10 days during that student school year. In determining whether approval of the requested leave would result in absences of more than 10 days, the Superintendent shall take into account:

*previously approved conferences scheduled during the student instructional day

*sick days and personal days already used/scheduled

*unpaid leaves of absences already taken/scheduled

*sabbatical leaves of absence already taken/scheduled

*professional development leaves of absence already taken/scheduled

*family and medical leaves of absence already used/scheduled

*other approved leaves of absence already taken/scheduled

7. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Superintendent shall retain the right to approve, or to recommend to the Board of School Directors, the participation of appropriate and/or necessary professional employees in mandated training programs and/or conferences, regardless of the number of days the affected professional employees had previously been absent from their normal duties during the student school year at issue.
8. If approved by the District Superintendent as set forth above, and/or recommended by the District Superintendent in light of statutory or regulatory mandates, the request for conference attendance shall be submitted to the Board of School Directors for approval, or as an information item, as the case may be.
9. Nothing set forth herein shall restrict or impair a professional employee's use of leaves of absence, as provided by the Public School Code of 1949, as amended, and/or the collective bargaining agreement between the School District and the Chartiers Houston Federation of Teachers.

3. COSTS

1. Teachers requesting reimbursement are required to turn in a District-provided mileage form and all receipts.
2. The District shall pay the maximum allowable by law for the use of automobiles by a professional employee when directed by the District.
3. For Board approved conventions and workshops, meals shall be reimbursed up to \$45.00 per day. Transportation shall be reimbursed at the negotiated mileage reimbursement. Room reimbursement shall be up to \$150.00 per day.
4. The District shall pay the full cost of tuition and other reasonable expenses incurred in connection with any courses, workshops, seminars, conferences, in-service trainings, or other such sessions which a teacher is required and/or requested by the Superintendent to take. Such payments are not applicable to courses taken toward permanent certification. The employee will also be reimbursed for mileage.
5. To the extent that any rules pertaining to cost reimbursements change in any successor collective bargaining agreement other than that which is in place at the time of the adoption of this Policy, such successor collective bargaining agreement shall control.