

**DISTRICT INVOLVEMENT IN POLITICAL ACTIVITY**

The Board believes in the importance of democracy in American society and advocates political participation as an act of self-governance. In this spirit, the Board recognizes the rights of district employees, as private citizens, to be involved in local, state and federal political activities, and encourages politically related material, discussions and projects in the classroom with the intent to teach students about democracy.

For the purpose of educating voters and lawmakers, the Board will also provide information on ballot questions. The Board authorizes the Superintendent/CEO or Superintendent's/CEO's designee to communicate such information to citizens, media sources, public officials or candidates running for office as the Superintendent/CEO or designee deems appropriate.

However, the board prohibits the following actions:

1. Use of an official school title to endorse or oppose candidates running for elected office, a political party or a proposition, referendum or issue being voted upon by the electorate;
2. Use of district funds to support or oppose a candidate running for elected office, a political action committee, a political party or a proposition, referendum or other ballot issue;
3. Distribution or posting of material which supports or opposes any candidate, political party or action committee, or proposition, referendum or other ballot issue on school property during school hours; and
4. Use of school facilities by candidates, their representatives, political parties, or political action committees.

**SCHOOL AS POLLING PLACE**

In the case that a public school building is used as a public polling place, candidates, their representatives, members of a political party or political action committee or citizens acting in support or opposition to a ballot question may hand out literature or speak with prospective voters as long as this is done outside a 100-foot radius of the entrance to the polling place.

**Legal References:**

SDCL 12-27-20	<u>Expenditure of public funds to influence election outcome prohibited</u>
SDCL 12-27-21	<u>Acceptance of contributions from public entities prohibited</u>
SDCL 13-43-1	<u>Employment of board member in same district prohibited</u>
SDCL 13-43-15.1	<u>Right of employee to run for office</u>
SDCL 13-7-3	<u>Public offices incompatible with board membership</u>
*Hatch Act	<u>Act to prevent pernicious political activities</u>

1<sup>st</sup> Reading-4/19/2016  
2<sup>nd</sup> Reading-5/17/2016  
Date Adopted-5/17/2016  
Last Revised-