

FCPS Policies Concerning the Conduct of Political Campaigns

Candidates' Right to Information

- Any candidate for any office (whether or not currently in office) has the same right to school system information as does any other citizen.

Employee Participation in Political Campaigns

- FCPS employees are encouraged to exercise their constitutional rights to participate in political activity---e.g. campaigning, running for office, registering voters, displaying and distributing political materials---but should do so on their own time, or by taking leave.
- Instructional personnel may discuss political issues with students as part of the instructional program, following FCPS guidelines to insure balanced and critical review of issues.
- FCPS employees may not participate nor may FCPS facilities be used in political campaigns during school or work hours. During work hours, employees and those acting on behalf of FCPS should not wear campaign buttons, T shirts, hats or other items designed to influence the outcome of an election, nor should they display such items in their workplaces.

Campaigning on School Grounds

- Neither candidates nor their supporters may campaign on school grounds during school hours.
- Anyone wanting to use school facilities for political activities outside school hours must apply for such use under the Community Use of School Facilities Regulation 8420 as a "cultural and civic group."

Distribution of Campaign Literature

- Distribution of campaign literature and political statements by candidates or their supporters may occur in class and at school events ONLY as part of impartial instructional discussion of controversial issues as provided in Regulation 3280. Students have the right to express their political views and distribute political literature during noninstructional time as provided by the Student Responsibilities and Rights (SR&R) Regulation 2601 and Regulation 1367.
- Candidates and supporters may not distribute political literature at evening activities (e.g., Back-to-School Nights) except if they distribute it outside the building without impeding entrance and egress. . No campaign signs may be placed on school grounds at any time except on election day at schools being used as polling places.
- As in the case of all materials distributed on school grounds, the principal may limit the time, space, and manner of such distribution, but not the content of the materials. Materials may not be left on cars parked on school property nor otherwise litter school grounds.
- Materials advocating the passage or defeat of any candidate, any referendum question, or any matter pending before any governing body may not be sent home with students.

Application to All Campaign Issues

- All these policies apply to any political issue (e.g., a bond referendum), whether or not a candidate is involved.

References:

Fairfax County Public Schools Policies and Regulations P1800, R1367, R2601, R3280, R8420
Va. Code Ann. §22.1-79.3