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May 29, 2018

Dear School Board Candidate:

Congratulations on your decision to participate in the 2018 Alexandria City School Board election. As required by [School Board Policy GBG](#), I am writing to outline ACPS policies regarding political campaigns and the involvement of staff members, as well as the use of school division resources and facilities.

[School Board Policy KF](#), related to the distribution of printed materials in schools, states, in part:

“No information or materials may be distributed that advocate (1) the election or defeat of any candidate; (2) the passage or defeat of any referendum question; or (3) the passage or defeat of any matter pending before a local school board, local governing body, the General Assembly, or Congress. This does not apply to political meetings or rallies held on school grounds through a community use agreement under [Policy KG](#).”

[Regulation GAC-R](#), which addresses school division social media use, states that:

“Employees may not use professional accounts and resources, including e-mail accounts, when participating in the political process.”

In addition, [School Board Policy GBG/KE](#), related to staff participation in political campaigns, states that:

“No candidate for election to the School Board, including current School Board members, or candidates for other local, state or federal office, shall host or participate in any program on the School Board’s cable television channel, or otherwise appear on it, except a televised School Board meeting or other public meeting; other on-the-spot coverage of a news event; an actual news broadcast or interview; or a news documentary in which the candidate is not the subject.

No candidate may promote themselves or their campaign on any of ACPS’ media platforms.

Candidates for election to the School Board shall not use school division equipment, facilities, logos, stationery, or school division events at which they are official participants in support of their campaigns. Candidates shall not use Division staff members to perform work in support of their campaigns unless an employee volunteers to perform such work outside of regular work hours.

The Alexandria City School Board acknowledges the right of its employees to engage in political activity not in violation of local, state, or federal law. The School Board also recognizes that school time and school property should not be used for partisan political purposes. The following is a non-exhaustive list of activities prohibited by this policy. An ACPS employee may not:

- Participate in campaign activities during hours of employment;
- Use his or her position within the school division to further a political cause;
- Engage in any activity supporting or opposing a candidate or political party while on duty, while on school property during school hours, or while representing the school division;
- Suggest in any manner that the school division supports or opposes a candidate for election to any office;
- Use school division resources to support or oppose a candidate for public office or political party; or
- Distribute campaign material to any student during school hours, unless such distribution is in furtherance of the objectives of the curriculum.”

Although [Policy GBG/KE](#) does place certain restrictions on staff participation in political campaigns,

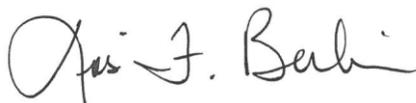
“They are not intended to limit the rights of employees to support or oppose any political candidate or party on their own time. They are intended to minimize distractions from instruction; assure that no public funds are used to support any candidate for public office; and assure that the public is not given the false impression that the school division supports or opposes any political candidate or party.”

When space is available, candidates may use school facilities as permitted by [School Board Policy KG](#) and [Regulation KG-R](#) governing the use of school facilities.

School Board meeting dates and materials are available on the Electronic School Board site for ACPS. It can be accessed at <http://esbpublic.acps.k12.va.us/>. Should you have any questions regarding these policies or their interpretation, please contact Jennifer Abbruzzese, Clerk of the Board & Policy Liaison, at 703-619-8314.

I hope you find this information helpful in conducting your campaign.

Sincerely yours,



Lois F. Berlin, Ed.D.
Interim Superintendent of Schools