

Tucson, Arizona ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINES	TITLE: Restrictions on Political Activities
	DEPARTMENT: Legal

A. **The statute regulating political activity for school districts is [ARS 15-511](#).**

This statute provides the following rules for all school district employees:

1. Employees shall not use school district equipment, materials, buildings or other resources including email to conduct political activities.
2. Employees shall not give pupils written materials that support or oppose any of the following:
 - o candidates or potential candidates for public office
 - o pending or proposed legislation
 - o pending or proposed ballot initiatives
3. Employees shall not use their positions to influence the vote or political activities of any subordinate employee.

B. **Guidelines for TUSD employees during non duty time:**

1. When acting as private citizens, during non-duty time outside the classroom or other instructional settings, using their own or other private resources, TUSD employees may:
 - o circulate petitions,
 - o distribute election literature
 - o wear political buttons,
 - o place political bumper stickers on their cars,
 - o wear clothing with political messages,
 - o distribute campaign flyers or information,
 - o make campaign contributions,
 - o talk with neighbors, friends and members of the community about elections,
 - o put up or display signs, make speeches and speak to community groups, or
 - o engage in any other political activity in non instructional settings during non-duty time, as long as they are not using TUSD email, personnel, equipment, materials, buildings or other resources.

2. TUSD employees engaging in political activities during non duty time shall refrain from taking any action or making any statement that would suggest that they are acting on behalf of TUSD.

C. Guidelines for TUSD employees while on duty:

1. No campaign signs, banners, stickers or any item that advocates for or against a candidate, recall, initiative, referendum, bond election, budget override or any ballot measure shall be placed in or on TUSD buildings (including but not limited to playing fields, parking lots, walls and fencing).
2. TUSD employees shall not wear political buttons, T-shirts, hats or other items displayed on their persons or apparel that are designed to influence the outcome of an election in a classroom, in any other instructional setting, or at a school-sponsored extracurricular event at which they are supervising or assisting with supervision or organization of the extracurricular event.
3. TUSD employees shall not use the authority of their positions to influence the vote or political activities of any subordinate employee.
4. TUSD employees shall not use TUSD mailboxes, telephones or e-mail accounts for political communication.
5. TUSD employees shall not give pupils written materials that support or oppose any political position. This includes flyers prepared by a private citizen group supporting a candidate or passage of a ballot measure or materials urging citizens to call their legislators to support or oppose legislation.

D. Use of TUSD Premises by Outside Groups

The use of TUSD buildings by outside groups for election activities is only allowed when equal access under the same terms and conditions is offered to all political parties, candidates and proponents/opponents of ballot measures.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. May students wear clothing or other indicators of their support or opposition to a candidate or political issue?

Yes. Generally, clothing with political slogans may be worn at school by students, so long as any particular position is not implied or claimed to be the position of the District.

2. May teachers/staff wear clothing or other indicators of their support or opposition to a candidate or political issue?

No. Staff may not wear clothing, buttons or other items indicating their support or opposition to a candidate or political issue in an instructional setting or school-sponsored event.

3. May teachers discuss political issues during class time?

Yes, but only when the discussion and study of politics and political issues are appropriate to classroom studies, the teacher does not support or oppose any political position, and the pupils are not given written materials that support or oppose any political position.

4. May employees engage in political campaigning at work?

No. Employees may not engage in political activity while the employee is at work and on District business. During free periods such as breaks and lunch periods, employees may discuss politics, **so long as they do not interfere with the activities of on-duty employees** and so long as they do not utilize District resources including telephones and email, send political material home with students, or attempt to coerce subordinates to vote or act in a particular way with regard to their political beliefs or activities.

5. May campaign literature be sent through TUSD mail or e-mail?

No.