

March 17, 2004

**Panther Valley School District
P. O. Box 40
Lansford, PA 18232**

**SABBATICAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR RESTORATION OF HEALTH OR
LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

General Compliance Statement:

Sabbatical leave of absence (restoration of health) and leaves of absence for professional development (hereafter "leaves") shall be granted to professional employees or members of the supervisory, instructional, or administrative staffs under the conditions specifically set forth in the Public School Code of 1949, as amended, leaves may be granted for restoration of health or for professional development.

1. Any professional employee shall be eligible for a leave if the employee has completed ten (10) years of service in Pennsylvania and at least five (5) years of consecutive service in the Panther Valley School District. Thereafter, leave shall be allowed after each seven (7) years of service.
2. A leave shall be for one of the following durations.
 - A. Half a school term (one {1} semester).
 - B. A full school term.
 - C. Two (2) half terms (semesters) during a period of two (2) years.
3. The initial application for a leave shall define the total length of leave time requested except in cases of health when an additional request may be made prior to the expiration of the original leave.
4. No leave shall be granted except by the approval of the Board of School Directors of the Panther Valley School District.
5. An employee who is granted a leave by the Board of School Directors shall sign a Leave Contract prior to beginning leave.
6. No employee granted leave may be granted "the option not to return."
7. All of the regulations pertaining to a leave which are set forth in the Public School Code of 1949, as amended, or in other applicable statutes, are incorporated herein by reference, including but not limited to Section 1166 and 1166.1 of the School Code.
8. This policy shall not provide expanded or greater benefits than provided in any agreement or contract in force for covered employees, nor shall this policy be employed to change, modify or expand provisions included in applicable agreements or contracts.

SPECIFIC REGULATIONS:

As provided by the School Code, these directives shall regulate the application, approval, and completion of Sabbatical Leaves of Absence for Professional Development ("Leaves").

1. **APPLICATION.** Requests for leave shall be presented in writing to the office of the Superintendent by June 1 if the leave requested is to become effective the following August, and by October 1, if the leave requested is to become effective at the beginning of the second semester of the school year. Exemptions to this may apply to requests for a leave for health which should be initiated as far in advance as possible to allow for a minimum of disruption in the educational program.

a. Requests for leave must state specific reasons for the leave and in the case of professional development, include the overall objective and a general description of the employee's planned professional development program.

b. Requests for Sabbatical Leave of Absence for health shall be considered only with the written advice of an attending licensed physician. At the discretion of the Board of School Directors, the District may require at its expense an independent medical examination by a physician of its choice to assist it in determining whether a leave should be granted.

2. **GRANTING OF LEAVES.** In accordance with the School Code and after a review of the application, the Board of School Directors shall grant leave in accordance with the following guidelines:

a. No leave shall be granted unless such person shall agree to return to his or her employment with the school district for a period of not less than one (1) school term immediately following such leave of absence.

b. Applications for leaves shall be considered in accordance with but not limited by the following:

1. The number of leaves approved in any school year will be limited to 10% of the total number of employees eligible.
2. Those deemed by the Board of School Directors most beneficial to the Panther Valley School District.
3. The years of service since any previous Leave or Sabbatical Leave under prior statutes by the applicant.

4. Those applicants in cases of professional development whose program presented to the Board seems most complete in terms of a reasonable program of professional development as determined by:

--- A request for the purpose of professional development shall show how the nature of the study will contribute directly to the professional improvement of the employee in his/her instructional capacity. Study programs in accredited institutions of higher learning shall entail a minimum of twelve (12) graduate credits, fifteen (15) undergraduate credits, 240 hours of professional development activities or a combination of these for each semester. A detailed plan of study shall be submitted including courses of study, professional development activities and their anticipated value and the institution(s) to be attended.

- c. Approval of leaves for professional development shall be within the exclusive discretion of the School Board, and such leaves shall be granted only to employees participating in an academic program for the purpose of retaining a professional certificate or commission, further preparation and improvement in his/her area(s) of certification, attaining additional certification or eligibility for other appropriate and identifiable educational positions within the school district, or as the School Board may require, and upon the recommendation of the Superintendent.

- d. Employees granted leave of professional development shall forward to the office of the Superintendent a detailed program of study which reflects the objectives of the application. This report from the employee shall be due thirty (30) days prior to the commencement of said approved leave. Non-compliance may serve as the basis for withdrawal for such leave.

- e. An employee who has been granted a leave and intentionally or willfully fails to perform said Sabbatical Leave in conformance with this policy and objectives shall be subject to disciplinary action which may include termination of service.

3. **LEAVE REPORTS**

- a. Employees on Sabbatical Leave of Absence for professional development shall submit a written report to the Superintendent at the conclusion of each official collegiate or university time sequence, such as semester, quarter, or other such designation. This report should describe the nature of the studies pursued and any accomplishments to date.

- b. If for any reason the program of study indicated on the application must be modified, it shall be the responsibility of the employee to notify the District Superintendent immediately (in writing) and indicate the change or modification.

c. Employees on leave for health shall keep the Superintendent apprised of their status. At the close of each semester (half term) of leave granted, a written report of the employee's condition shall be prepared by the employee and the attending physician and forwarded to the office of the Superintendent.

d. At the conclusion of all leaves, a comprehensive written report shall be prepared by the employee and submitted to the Office of the Superintendent within thirty (30) days of the employee's return to his or her position. In cases of professional development, this report shall deal with the educational aspects relating to the objectives of the study. In cases of health, it should summarize the employee's progress and present condition. Official transcripts of study are also to be provided to the Superintendent as soon as available.

4. **RESTRICTIONS**

a. If the employee fails to return to school service upon expiration of the leave, unless prevented by illness or physical disability, the employee shall forfeit all benefits and compensation to which that person would be entitled for the period of the sabbatical leave, and any benefits or compensation paid shall be reimbursed to the district.

b. Employees who have been granted approval of a leave may choose not to take the leave by notifying the Superintendent of their decision (in writing) according to the following time schedule:

Full year leave recipient: By July 1 prior to the scheduled leave

First semester leave recipient: By July 1 prior to the scheduled leave

Second semester leave recipient: By November 1 prior to the scheduled leave

Panther Valley School District

Application for:

**SABBATICAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR RESTORATION OF HEALTH OR
LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

To the Superintendent of Schools:

Applicant Appropriate One:

I hereby apply for a sabbatical leave of
absence for:

- half a school term (one sem.)
- a full school term
- two half terms (semesters)
- _____ during a period of two years

from _____ through _____

The definite purpose for which this leave of absence is desired is _____

I have taught in Pennsylvania schools for _____ years.

I have taught in Panther Valley School District for _____ years.

My last sabbatical leave of absence ended in _____ (Month/Year).

If this application is granted, I agree to comply with Board Policies 438 and 438.1 and Regulations (see attached) governing such leave.

I have read the leave contract and understand its provisions. If my request is granted, I agree to sign the leave contract provided at that time.

I understand that it is my responsibility to notify immediately the Superintendent's Office of any change in the conditions for which leave was requested or granted.

Date _____ Signature _____
 Grade or Subject _____ Present Address _____
 School _____ Street _____
 _____ City State Zip

OFFICE USE

Received by: _____ Date: _____
 Reviewed by: _____ Date: _____
 Board Action Date: _____
 Granted: _____ Denied: _____

 Board Secretary Signature Superintendent of Schools Signature

Panther Valley School District

LEAVE CONTRACT

WHEREAS, _____, having fulfilled all the requirements of the provision of the Act of 1949, March 10, P.L. 30, Article XI, Section 1166, and/or Section 1166.1, as amended, has applied to the Panther Valley School District for a Leave of Absence for _____ purposes; and whereas, the Panther Valley School District had granted to _____ Leave of Absence for _____ purposes for the school year from _____ to _____. I do hereby agree to conform to the policy, rules and regulations of the Panther Valley School District pertaining to this Leave and failure on my part to do so shall constitute a breach of this Leave contract. I further agree to write the Superintendent's office no later than thirty (30) days prior to the expiration of my leave concerning my plans for the next semester/school year.

NOW THEREFORE, I, the said _____, do, in consideration of the Leave of Absence for _____ purposes granted by the Panther Valley School District for a period of not less than one (1) year after return from such Leave of Absence for _____ purposes, if physically and mentally able to do so. Failure to return to my employment shall be a breach of my contract with the Panther Valley School District. Further, in the event of a failure to return to my employment, I acknowledge the right of the Panther Valley School District to deduct amount contributed by the School District under Section 1170 of the Public School Code form refund payable to me under existing law for the Public School Employee's Retirement Fund.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, and intending to be legally bound hereby, the parties herein have hereunto caused these present to be executed and their seals affirmed thereto the _____ day of _____, 2_____.

Panther Valley School District

Attest:

Secretary

by: _____
President

Witness

Professional Employee

Contact: Superintendent of Schools
Panther Valley School District
P. O. Box 40
Lansford, PA 18232
Phone: (570) 645-4248