

STRIDE ACADEMY BOARD POLICY

POLICY: 409

DATE EFFECTIVE: July 1, 2015

APPROVED: June 18, 2015

REVISED: May 13, 2025

400-499 PERSONNEL POLICIES

409 EMPLOYEE LEAVE POLICY

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to identify the Employee Leave at STRIDE Academy Charter School. It is the belief of the Administration at STRIDE Academy that employees will benefit mentally and physically by a period of rest and relaxation away from the duties and responsibilities of their jobs, at least for some period of time during the year. Paid Time Off is designed to be used for various personal reasons. It is the intent of STRIDE Academy to provide each employee with the Paid Time Off schedule they desire; however due to the nature of our business, this is not always possible.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. PTO encompasses personal leave time, including vacation time. PTO hours will not count as hours worked for the purposes of any overtime calculation.
- B. Earned Sick and Safe Time (E.S.S.T): Pursuant to MN ordinance, employees are entitled to earn sick and safe leave.
- C. Full-time Employee: An employee, exempt or non-exempt, who works at least 30 hours per week. Full time equivalent (FTE) employees of 1 are defined the same.
- D. Part-time Employee: An employee, exempt or non-exempt, who works less than 30 hours per week.
- E. Year: For the purposes of this policy, a year is defined as a school year, which is July 1 through June 30.
- F. Black Out Days: Days identified by School Administration in which an employee should not request leave time.
- G. Immediate family member: A parent, child, spouse or domestic partner, or legal dependents who live in the employee's household.

- H. Undue Hardship: An undue hardship is a significant difficulty or expense that would be imposed on the company's operations by granting the accommodation.

III. POLICY

A. Paid Time Off (PTO)

PTO will be frontloaded beginning on the first day of employment for the current school year. PTO hours will be prorated for employees hired mid-year.

1. Employees working 220 or more days per year and more than 36 hours per week are given 64 hours of PTO per year.
2. Employees working 215 days and more than 36 hours per week are given 56 hours of PTO per year.
3. Employees working 178-185 days and more than 36 hours per week are given 48 hours of PTO per year.
4. Employees working 169 days and/or between 30 and 35 hours per week are given 24 hours of PTO per year.
5. Temporary employees are not eligible for paid time off.
6. PTO for part time employees depends on hours worked, but will equate to 1 workday per month in available PTO hours.

B. Rollover of PTO

Up to 40 hours for regularly assigned employees working more than 36 hours per week, and up to 16 hours may be rolled over to the next school year for regularly assigned employees working between 30 - 35 hours per week. Employees working part time may roll up to 12 hours to the next school year.

Employees who...

C. Use of PTO:

1. The Executive Director of STRIDE Academy reserves the authority to decline PTO requests for vacations should such leave negatively impact the operations of the Academy. All leave should be requested in advance and must be approved by the employee's supervisor or designee. PTO will be granted on a first come, first serve basis, at the discretion of the School Administrator or Human Resources. Individual scheduling preferences will be considered in view of each employee's total length of service with the Academy in relation to the availability of personnel to conduct business.
2. No more than 5 employees, including a maximum of 2 teachers and 1 para, may schedule Paid Time Off for one or more days, at one time unless approved by the Executive Director.

3. Employee absences will be closely monitored. Misuse of paid time off (PTO) may result in disciplinary action. For example, if an employee calls out sick or claims an appointment on short notice for a day that was previously requested and denied, it may be considered an abuse of PTO.
4. It is mandatory to utilize PTO before proceeding to unpaid leave.
5. In special/emergency circumstances administration will be able determine and adjust needed emergency Paid Time Off already accrued by the employee. While every effort will be made to accommodate emergency leave, it is subject to approval based on the nature of the situation and the organization's operational requirements.
6. PTO may not be used during Black Out Days except as granted by the Executive Director or designee. All Paid Time Off requests for the first two weeks or the last two weeks of school must be approved at least one month in advance by the administration.
7. Paid Time Off of more than two days may be granted if approved one month in advance by the administration.
8. Upon resignation, employees are not eligible for paid time off during the resignation period.
9. Upon severing employment with STRIDE Academy, any *accrued* unused PTO will be paid out at the employee's hourly rate. A payout of their PTO will be calculated based on the number of actual days worked and PTO used.

Example:

60 days worked	x	# of hours accrued	= 15.6 hours accrued
185 contract days		48 hours of PTO	

D. Earned Sick and Safe Time (E.S.S.T)

Pursuant to MN ordinance, employees are entitled to earn sick and safe leave. All employees are provided with a front loaded bank of 48 ESST hours. Covered family members include immediate family and/or a member of the employee's household, in addition to themselves. Unused ESST hours will roll over to the next school year for all employees. Unused ESST leave will be paid out when employment is terminated at the employee's hourly rate.

Earned Sick and Safe Time may be used to provide paid time off for the following purposes:

1. An employee's:
 - a. mental or physical illness, injury, or other health condition;
 - b. need for medical diagnosis, care, or treatment of a mental or physical illness, injury, or health condition; or
 - c. need for preventive medical or health care.
2. An employee's care of a family member:
 - a. with a mental or physical illness, injury, or other health condition;

- b. who needs medical diagnosis, care, or treatment of a mental or physical illness, injury, or other health condition; or
 - c. who needs preventive medical or health care.
- 3. An employee's absence due to domestic abuse, sexual assault, or stalking of the employee or employee's family member, provided the absence is to:
 - a. seek medical attention related to physical or psychological injury or disability caused by domestic abuse, sexual assault, or stalking;
 - b. obtain services from a victim services organization;
 - c. obtain psychological or other counseling;
 - d. seek relocation or take steps to secure an existing home due to domestic abuse, sexual assault, or stalking; or
 - e. seek legal advice or take legal action, including preparing for or participating in any civil or criminal legal proceeding related to or resulting from domestic abuse, sexual assault, or stalking.
- 4. If as a consequence of the School's announcement of a closure or reduced operations due to weather or other public emergency an employee is unable to work; or an employee's need to care for a family member whose school or place of care has been closed due to weather or other public emergency.
- 5. An employee's inability to work during a declared public emergency because the employee is:
 - a. prohibited from working by the employer due to health concerns related to the potential transmission of a communicable illness related to the public emergency; or
 - b. seeking or awaiting the results of a diagnostic test for, or a medical diagnosis of, a communicable disease related to the public emergency, and such employee has been exposed to a communicable disease or the employee's employer has requested a test or diagnosis.
- 6. When health authorities having jurisdiction, or healthcare professionals, determine that the presence of an employee or their family member in the community would jeopardize the health of others, because of the exposure of the employee or their family member to a communicable disease.
- 7. An employee's absence due to the need to make funeral arrangements, attend a funeral service or memorial, or address financial or legal matters that arise after the death of a family member.

If an employee plans to use ESST for an appointment, preventive care or another permissible reason they know of in advance, inform their direct supervisor and Human Resources as far in advance as possible, but at least seven days in advance. In situations where an employee cannot provide advance notice, the employee should contact their direct supervisor and Human Resources as soon as they know they will be unable to work.

Employees will be required to provide certain documentation regarding the reason for their use of ESST if it is for more than three consecutive days. For earned sick and safe time, reasonable documentation may include a signed statement by a health care professional indicating the need for use of earned sick and safe time. However, if the employee or employee's family member did not receive services from a health care professional, or if documentation cannot be obtained from a health care professional in a reasonable time or without added expense, then reasonable documentation may include a written statement from the employee indicating that the employee is using or used earned sick and safe time for a qualifying purpose.

E. Unpaid Leave

Unpaid leave will be granted in extenuating circumstances by the Executive Director or designee. Unpaid leave not required to comply with state statutes can be denied at the discretion of the Executive Director or designee.

F. Extended Leave

1. The Executive Director may grant an extended leave of absence without salary to any full- or part-time employee who has been employed by the school for at least five years and has at least ten years of allowable service, as defined in section 354.05, subdivision 13, or ten years of full-time teaching service in Minnesota public schools.
2. The duration of an extended leave of absence under this section must be determined by mutual agreement of the Executive Director and the staff member at the time the leave is granted. If the request is denied, the Executive Director must provide reasonable justification for the denial.
3. Extended Leave of Absence will comply with statute MN 122A.46 and all related school policies.

G. Flex time

The Executive Director may grant flex time to eligible employees. As it depends on the nature of the assigned position and the business needs of the school, not every job lends itself to flex time. Employees working in a position requiring extended work hours or additional days outside of the assigned reporting calendar and/or reporting hours, are eligible for flex time at the discretion of the Executive Director. Employees with an identified, documented performance problem will not be offered the flex time option. Also, the Executive Director may deny a flex time request for an employee whose presence is critical during standard work hours, or during a specific time frame or project in which the employee would be needed.

H. Religious Observance Leave

To accommodate religious observances, employees can request time off for religious holidays, services, or practices, with reasonable notice. STRIDE Academy will make reasonable efforts to accommodate these requests, unless it causes undue hardship. Employees wishing to take time off for a religious observance should provide their supervisor with as much advance notice as possible, ideally two weeks in advance, but not less than one week. The request should specify the dates and times needed, and the reason for the leave.

Potential accommodations may include:

1. Allowing the employee to take the time off, using either PTO or unpaid time.
2. Adjusting the employee's work schedule to allow for time off.
3. Allowing the employee to make up the time missed at a later date (Flex time to be approved only by the Executive Director.).

I. Holidays

1. Holidays: Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Thanksgiving Friday, Winter Break, Martin Luther King Day, President's Day, Mid-Winter Break, Spring Break Friday, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, and Fourth of July
2. All full-time employees will be provided a calendar of dates that they are expected to work with the work agreement each school year.
3. Holidays are not considered paid days.

J. Bereavement Leave

1. Full-time employees will be granted up to three workdays of leave with pay in the event of a death of a member of the immediate family or mother-in-law or father-in-law, sister, brother, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, grandparent, or grandchild. Bereavement leave is also granted for mothers and fathers who suffer a miscarriage.
 - a. PTO may be used to cover non-eligible funerals, or to extend time off beyond 3 days.

K. Jury Duty

STRIDE Academy recognizes the responsibility of its employees to the community and urges all employees to fulfill their civic responsibilities. Jury duty is one such responsibility that all employees have. The STRIDE Academy shall assist the employee to fulfill this responsibility by granting them time off with pay for the period of 10 school days. Time off will be granted without pay beyond 10 school days. The employee shall inform the principal or supervisor of upcoming jury duty as soon as possible after receiving a summons.

L. All leave outlined in this policy, as well as all other leave not outlined in this policy, will comply with the requirements of MN 122A.40-58 and MN 275-186.

Legal References

Minn. Stat. §122A.40-58 (Employment Contracts; Terms and Conditions)
Minn. Stat. §175-186 (Industry, Labor)
Minn. Stat. §181.9446 (Accrual Of Earned Sick And Safe Time)