

6337 CERTIFIED STAFF ACADEMIC STUDY

Upon written application, leave for academic study for a period not to exceed one full school year may be granted to certified staff by the Grand Island Public Schools, upon recommendation of the Superintendent or designee. An outline of a planned program must be submitted with the application for leave for the following school year by April 1 of each year. An applicant desiring academic leave during the second semester only will be considered, provided the applicant will be available for a position at the beginning of the following school term.

1. Eligibility - Certified staff members become eligible to apply for academic leave after they have served in the Grand Island Public Schools at least seven full consecutive years without a period of leave for academic study. Such leaves will be granted to certified staff ~~personnel~~ working on Doctorate degrees. The number of certified staff members to be granted academic leave in any fiscal year will not exceed one percent of the total number of certified staff ~~employees~~.
2. Selection - Selection of those to be recommended to the Board of Education shall be made by the Executive Director for Human Resources and the building principals involved. In making the selection of those to be recommended for academic leave, the committee shall give first consideration to the benefit which will accrue to the Grand Island Public Schools for such leave. Other factors which shall be considered are length of service, contribution to the general welfare of the schools, and benefit to the individual. The committee shall consider the availability of a replacement, should leave be granted.
2. Salary Allowance - Certified staff members granted academic leave shall receive one-half of the current base salary in equal monthly installments.
3. Provisions of leave -
  - a. Academic leave may be granted for study or travel.
  - b. If an academic leave is granted for the purpose of study, the staff member must complete at least twelve semester hours, or the equivalent, during each semester of leave.
  - c. If an academic leave is granted for the purpose of study, such study will be in the individual's current area of assignment or in such area deemed by the selection committee to be of value to the district.
  - d. If an academic leave is granted for travel, the complete itinerary must be approved by the Superintendent and the Board of Education. Such leave will not warrant pay or be considered in the one percent granted on academic leave for study.
  - e. Teacher contract to fill the position of leave will be terminal to one year.
  - f. Certified staff members granted an academic leave will not advance on the salary scale for that term. For example, if the staff member leaves on the fifth step, he/she will return on the sixth step and not on the seventh.
4. Contractual Agreements -- Certified staff members accepting academic leave shall agree to return to service in the School District of Grand Island for at least a three-year period immediately following the leave of absence. Said staff members shall sign a contract obligating them for a three-year period of time. If the staff member fails to return following the leave of absence, he/she shall refund all moneys paid him/her during the period of academic leave. If the staff member returns for only one of the three years, they shall refund the Board two-thirds of the moneys paid and if the staff member returns for only two years he/she shall refund the Board of Education one-third of all the moneys paid him/her. A person granted such leave shall sign a contractual agreement with the Board of Education which stipulates all regulations and agreements set forth in this policy.
5. Benefits --A staff member on academic leave, for all purposes other than the stipulation stated in 4(d. will be viewed as a full-time employee. This will include the staff member's right to contribute to the Nebraska School Retirement System, the school's group insurance plan, deduction for tax deferred annuities, and Social Security, plus any other rights granted to any other personnel.

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6. Change of Status Due to Inability to Complete Program - If the staff member cannot complete the planned program for which academic leave was granted, it is the staff member's responsibility to notify the Superintendent or designee. The leave may then be rescinded by the Board of Education and the staff member placed on the appropriate leave status, reassigned or terminated. Salary allowances and benefit shall be adjusted accordingly, and the staff member must make arrangements satisfactory to the Board of Education by payment of any moneys paid to him/her on their behalf for which they may be liable due to the change in leave status.
7. The Completion of a Leave for Academic Study -- does not carry with it a guarantee to return to a specific teaching position. The district reserves the right to assign the staff member to any equivalent position in keeping with the education and experience level of the teacher.

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