

Use of District Resources for Partisan Purposes.

The use of district resources to support or oppose ballot measures or candidates is restricted. The fundamental reason for the restriction is that public money cannot be used for partisan activities. Put another way, resources that have been obtained for the district's support from all taxpayers must not be used "to take sides." Therefore, district employee time, equipment, supplies, or other public resources may not be used in advocating for either side of a ballot measure or to support or defeat any candidate. These restrictions are largely set out in an article in the Education Code entitled "Political Activities of School Officers and Employees" that encompasses sections 7050 through 7058.

Districts must be mindful that employees retain their constitutional rights to engage in political activities. The Education Code includes the legislative declaration that "political activities of school employees are of significant statewide concern." (Ed. Code, §7050.)¹ Nevertheless, section 7055 allows districts to establish rules and regulations concerning political activities during employee working hours and on district premises.

This section confirms that a district may regulate political activities of its employees on its premises without violating employee rights.² Nothing in the provisions permits districts to require or to permit employees to use paid service time to engage in partisan political action.

What employees do on their own time and using their own funds or other resources in connection with elections is their own business. Employees should certainly be encouraged to exercise their rights of citizenship and to participate in elections.³ However, district resources are not available for employee advocacy activities.