

November 14, 2017

To: All Administrators and FWEA Certificated Members

From: David Brower, Performance Management Officer  
Shannon McCann, President, Federal Way Education Association

Re: Clarification of Wellness Leave for Certificated FWEA Members

We are grateful for your dedication to all of our scholars and your commitment to each scholar each day. We want to share and clarify the purpose and parameters of Wellness Leave and to ensure all staff receive this information.

As stated in our Collectively Bargained Agreement (CBA), we believe “that leaves are necessary for the health and well-being of staff and their families. Therefore, if staff welfare is addressed, then staff will be better prepared to continue the quality education of students” (Section 15.1). The following parameters for wellness leave apply, per our CBA, Section 15.2.D:

- Each full time staff member is provided “twelve days of wellness leave per contract year”
- “Wellness leave is intended to be utilized for” the following purposes “at the discretion of the employee and the employee’s professional judgment recognizing the necessity of maintaining the educational program and the limited resources of substitute coverage.”
  - personal and family illness
  - medical and legal appointments
  - emergencies
  - the occasional personal or family event that cannot be scheduled outside of the workday.
- “Wellness leave may not be used for:”
  - regularly shortening the work week;
  - regularly extending a break;
  - regularly attending classes to pursue advanced degrees, internships,
  - activities or responsibilities related to an outside business;
  - other employment.
- “Prearranged wellness leave may not be taken during:”
  - the first five (5) days of school,
  - last five (5) days of school
  - Student Led Conference (SLC) days
  - waiver days



- “Prior to scheduling extended wellness leave in excess of four (4) consecutive days the employee will meet with the employee’s supervisor at least two (2) weeks in advance. The purpose of this meeting is to ensure a plan is in place that addresses substitute coverage, lesson plans for the substitute, minimizing impact on the school, and any communications with parents or colleagues that might be necessary.” Extended wellness must also comply with the intended purposes as indicate above.
- “Employees who appear to violate the intended purpose of wellness leave may be asked by the District to explain leave previously taken and/or be required to document subsequent use, and may be subject to discipline or have other restrictions placed on utilization of wellness leave in accordance with 3.3.A.

We remind staff that “notice of a pending absence will be provided as early as possible to assist in providing coverage ” (15.2) especially since the Substitute System does not contact guest teachers between 9pm-5am.

“The Association and the District will continue to monitor the wellness leave program and make adjustments as needed to maintain the viability of the program” (15.2.D). The Association and District are also working with all departments to limit the number of days teachers are pulled out of class for training or other work, to eliminate Friday trainings to the extent possible, and to recruit guest teachers.

If you have any questions about Wellness Leave, please contact your principal or your Association leadership.