

# Political Activity

Staying in Line with the Chicago  
Board of Education's Code of Ethics

**Board Members, LSC Officials, and Employees of Chicago Public Schools are entitled to engage in Political Activities as individuals in their personal time. However, political activities must not result in the use of CPS personnel, time, property, or resources, or create an impression that the District supports particular candidates or referendums.**

This guide highlights key information on how to ethically engage in Political Activities without violating the CPS Code of Ethics.

## Summary of Definitions Based on State Law

**Political** – Used to describe any activity in support of or in connection with any campaign for elective office or any political organization or referendum, but does not include activities that are:

The support or opposition of any executive, legislative, or administrative action (as those terms are defined in Section 2 of the Lobbyist Registration Act)

Anything related to collective bargaining

That which is otherwise in furtherance of the person's official duties or governmental and public service functions

**Political Organization** – A party, committee, association, fund, or other organization that is required to file a statement of organization with the State Board of Elections or a county clerk under the Election Code

**Political Activities** – “Political Activity” or “Political Activities” means any of the following:

- Preparing for, organizing, or participating in any political meeting, political rally, political demonstration, or other political event
- Soliciting contributions, including but not limited to, selling, distributing, or receiving payment for tickets for any political fundraiser, political meeting, or other political event
- Purchasing tickets for any political fundraiser, political meeting, or other political event
- Planning the solicitation of campaign contributions
- Preparing any document or report regarding campaign contributions
- Planning, conducting, or participating in a public opinion poll or survey in connection with a Campaign for Elective Office, on behalf of a political organization, or for or against any referendum question
- Assisting at the polls on Election Day on behalf of any political organization, Candidate for Elective Office, or for or against any referendum question
- Soliciting votes on behalf of a Candidate for Elective Office, political organization, or for or against any referendum question or helping in an effort to get voters to the polls
- Initiating, preparing, circulating, reviewing, or filing any petition on behalf of a Candidate for Elective Office or for or against any referendum question
- Making contributions to any Candidate for Elective Office
- Preparing or reviewing responses to candidate questionnaires in connection with a Campaign for Elective Office or on behalf of a political organization
- Distributing, preparing for distribution, or mailing campaign literature, campaign signs, or other campaign material on behalf of any Candidate for Elective Office or for or against any referendum question
- Campaigning for any Elective Office or for or against any referendum question
- Managing or working on a Campaign for Elective Office or for or against any referendum question
- Serving as a delegate, alternate, or proxy to a political party convention

## Ethical Engagement in Common Situations

### Social Media

When not on Board or work time, personal social media accounts may be used to engage in Political Activity such as encouraging others to vote for a candidate or support a referendum. No CPS or CPS-affiliated social media accounts may be used to engage in Political Activities.

### School Events

All members of the public, including candidates for elective office, are welcome to attend school events that are open to the public, but they cannot campaign during public school events. Employees cannot endorse any candidate for elective office or referendum at a public school event.

### Civics Instruction

Student instruction must aim to be neutral by providing diverse perspectives. Learning activities should elevate and examine students' perspectives without establishing any particular viewpoint.

### Political Use of Board Property

Candidates and campaigns must seek a license for using Board property. Candidates can be denied access, but only for the same reasons as any other organization. Any filming on Board property requires a specific agreement with the Board.

## Consequences

Violations of the **Code of Ethics** may result in disciplinary action up through discharge for employees and removal from office for officials.

## Additional Resources

- Please review the complete Code of Ethics at [cps.edu/ethics](https://cps.edu/ethics) and the [CPS Code of Ethics Guidelines](#)
- Check out our one-pager on [Political Activity in an Election Season](#)
- Access additional guidelines and FAQ guidance for [high school](#) and [middle school](#) Participate Civics curriculum
- For specific ethics questions, please contact [ethicsinquiries@cps.edu](mailto:ethicsinquiries@cps.edu)