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Inspiring a lifelong love of learning



Date: January 8, 2024

To: Prairie Spirit Teachers' Association Members

From: PSSD Human Resources and the PSTA

Re: Process for accessing personal leave days and earned days off

Section 12 of the Local Collective Bargaining Agreement, 2020-2024 provides a variety of leaves to help teachers attend to various needs, responsibilities and interests. The following information is provided to assist you in accessing personal leave days of a short duration, with or without pay, as well as extracurricular and noon supervision earned days off.

Noon Supervision earned days off may be taken as soon as the application to provide supervision is accepted and the days are submitted to payroll. (12.8.7, p.21-22) In the event that a Teacher accesses leave through earned days off prior to earning those days and does not possess sufficient EDO's or personal days, or fails to subsequently earn sufficient days to cover the days accessed, the Division may deduct from the Teacher's June pay the equivalent of the current minimum substitute teacher pay rate. If the contract ends prior to the end of the school year, the deduction will be made from the final pay period.

When accessing personal leave days and earned days off:

"Teachers will demonstrate a shared awareness and responsibility for student and teacher learning and safety as per The Education Act, 1995, and teacher professional codes. It is recognized that emergency situations may require the teacher to take an immediate leave, in which case the teacher will notify the administrator at the earliest reasonable opportunity" (12.10.6, p.23).

Communication with one's administrator *in advance* of scheduling or booking a leave will help to avoid situations where absences may negatively affect the learning or safety of students and colleagues. As we continue to navigate influenza, COVID-19, and other illnesses together, the demand for substitute teachers may exceed supply on some days. These conversations will help to prioritize substitute teacher service in relation to illness related absences.

When planning for a longer absence it is important to note:

"All earned days off and Personal days with pay may be carried to the next academic school year to a maximum of three (3) days. A maximum of five (5) consecutive earned days off or Personal leave days with pay may be used at any one time" (12.10.7, p.24).

Long weekends and breaks in the school year do not interrupt consecutive earned days off and/or personal leave days. Teachers should contact the Human Resources Superintendent *prior to* scheduling a leave, or booking a trip, for longer than five days to *gain approval* for additional consecutive days of leave, which would be days "without pay" (12.10.3, p.23). We consider approval for this type of request to be a '*rare occasion*'.

“PSSD may, upon written request, grant additional Personal leave without pay” (12.10.5, p.23). We recommend teachers make formal written requests in a timely manner and be aware that any unpaid leave in excess of ten (10) days will affect pension contributions.

Personal leave days and earned days off were negotiated in recognition of “the complexity of the teaching profession and that our teachers go beyond their regular duties to enrich learning and support students” (12.10.1, p.23). The PSTA and PSSD are committed to ensuring teachers are able to access these days as they were intended, through processes that ensure fairness and transparency, while considering the impact on students.

Please contact HR Superintendent, Fay Cassidy, or PSTA President, Scott Woods-Fehr, if you would like further information or support regarding leaves.

Sincerely,

Fay Cassidy
HR Superintendent
PSSD

Scott Woods-Fehr
President
PSTA