

Public Disclosure Commission Guidelines

[Kent School District 2023 Levies](#)

Election Day: November 7, 2023

Like a subscription, local school levies must be renewed. Failure of either of these levies would mean significant reductions in staff and services that meet the needs of our students.

PDC Guidelines

Washington Public Disclosure Commission provides election guidelines on what is allowed and not allowed for a variety of job titles and roles within a public school system. **In general, please be aware:**

KSD EMPLOYEES CAN

- Respond to questions about school-related measures during work time by providing the facts. Information is available by using the link above.
- Hold information meetings and present the facts about the bond.
- Encourage people to [register to vote](#) and encourage them to mail in their ballots by election day, this year November 7, 2023.
- Campaign “yes” for school-related measures on your own time.

Please see below guidelines for specific roles.

[Principals or Building Administrators](#)

Permitted

- May inform staff during non-work hours of opportunities to participate in campaign activities.
- Are encouraged to communicate to staff the difference between acceptable and unacceptable activities related to a ballot measure.
- In the course of normal publications for the school may distribute an objective and fair presentation of the facts based on and expanded upon the information prepared by the district in accordance with the normal and regular conduct of the school and the district.
- May speak at community forums and clubs to present factual and objective information on a ballot measure during regular work hours.
- May encourage staff and members of the public to vote, as long as such encouragement routinely occurs for other elections.
- May respond to questions regarding a ballot measure if such activity is consistent with his or her normal and regular duties.
- May wear campaign buttons or similar items while on the job if the district's policy generally permits employees to wear political buttons.

- May engage in campaign activities on their own time, during non-work hours and without using public resources.

Not Permitted

- Shall not pressure or coerce employees to participate in campaign activities.
- Shall not use internal memoranda solely for the purpose of informing employees of meetings supporting or opposing ballot measures.
- Shall not coordinate informational activities with campaign efforts, in a manner that makes the district appear to be supporting or opposing a ballot measure.
- Shall not use public resources to operate a speakers' bureau in a manner that may be viewed as promoting a ballot measure.

General Considerations

- Has there been communications with staff and with union representatives regarding the prohibition on the use of the school's internal mail or email system to support or oppose a ballot measure?
- Is the distribution of this information consistent with the normal practices of the school (such as kid mail, newsletters, websites, or some other format)?
- Is the information provided an objective and fair presentation of the facts?
- Is the activity consistent with the school's normal and regular course of business?

Teachers or Other Employees

Permitted

- May speak at community forums and clubs to present an objective and fair presentation of the facts on a ballot measure during regular work hours.
- May inform staff during non-work hours of opportunities to participate in campaign activities.
- May engage in campaign activities on their own time, during non-work hours and without using public resources.
- May respond to questions regarding a ballot measure if such activity is consistent with his or her normal and regular duties.
- May wear campaign buttons or similar items while on the job if the district's policy generally permits employees to wear political buttons.
- May, during non-work hours, make available campaign materials to employees in lunchrooms and break rooms, which are used only by staff or other authorized individuals.
- May place window signs or bumper stickers on their privately-owned cars, even if those cars are parked on school property during working hours.
- May encourage staff and members of the public to vote, as long as such encouragement routinely occurs for other elections.

Not Permitted

- Shall not use work hours or public resources to promote or defeat a candidate or ballot measure (such as gathering signatures, distributing campaign materials, arranging speaking engagements, coordinating phone banks, or fundraising).
- Shall not pressure or coerce employees to participate in campaign activities.
- Shall not use district resources to organize the distribution of campaign materials.

General Considerations

- Do the presentations accurately present the costs and other anticipated impacts of a ballot measure?
- Is the employee acting on his or her own time, during non-work hours?
- Does the district have a policy permitting employees to wear political buttons?

Students

Permitted

- Students may originate school projects for credit that promote or oppose candidates or ballot measures.
- Students may use public resources to carry out school projects promoting or opposing ballot measures, to the extent that such resources are regularly and routinely made available for other student projects.

Not Permitted

- Student school projects supporting or opposing ballot measures shall not use public resources that are not regularly and routinely made available for other student projects. Teachers shall not assign school projects to students that require creating or distributing materials to influence an election's outcome.
- District employees and officials shall not use student projects to influence an election's outcome.

General Considerations

- Is the school project student-initiated?
- Is the district using the student project to influence the outcome of an election?

PTSAs

Permitted

- May use school facilities for meetings supporting or opposing a ballot measure to the extent that the facilities are made available on an equal access, nondiscriminatory basis, and it is part of the normal and regular activity of the district.
- May print and distribute a separate newsletter advocating support for the ballot measure so long as no district resources are used (such as kid mail newsletters, websites, or some other format).
- May remind voters of upcoming election dates in the PTSA newsletter or in their part of the school newsletter. Shall not print and distribute materials promoting the ballot measure in the school newsletter.

Not Permitted

- Shall not use a school or district sponsored event to promote or oppose a candidate or a ballot measure.

[Guidelines for School Districts In Election Campaigns | Washington State Public Disclosure Commission \(PDC\)](#)