

Paid Time Off (PTO)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Why were changes made to employee leave policies?

The subject of changing to a Paid Time Off (PTO) leave policy has been discussed for several years. Many employees have expressed that changing to PTO would be a benefit for staff as it would provide for more flexibility. During the 2015-2016 school year a subcommittee of Team Ray-Pec began gathering information from area districts and asking for feedback from current staff. Revisions to Policy GCBDA - Professional Staff Short-Term Leaves and Policy GDBDA - Support Staff Leaves were a result of this work. The new policies were approved by the Board of Education on June 23, 2016.

2. What are the major changes included in the new policies?

- Employee leave is classified as paid time off rather than sick and personal leave.
- Part-time staff will be awarded leave. Part-time staff have not been awarded leave previously.
- Leave buy-back is available prior to retirement for days accumulated above 100 at a rate equal to ½ daily substitute teacher rate. There was previously not an option for buy-back prior to retirement.
- Leave buy-back at retirement will be ½ the daily substitute teacher rate – currently \$46 per day. This was previously \$25 per day.
- The number and/or accrual rate of vacation days for 12-month staff increased.

3. How many days of PTO do I receive each year?

Staff receive 10, 11, or 12 days of PTO based upon their work schedule. The amount of time a staff member is awarded is based upon:

- Full-time or part-time status
- Work calendar
- Hours worked per day
- Employee classification
 - Employee classification is defined by Board Policy GCA as follows:
 “The classification of “professional staff” is used to designate positions that legally require a certificate or that have been designated as “professional” in the relevant job description. Positions not designated as professional will be considered “support staff” positions for purposes of Board policies.”

4. So.... How much PTO will I receive each year?

It is easier to think of PTO in hours rather than days because the number of hours worked per day is a factor considered when calculating PTO. The chart below summarizes how PTO will be awarded:

	Full Time Professional Staff	Part Time Professional Staff	Full Time Support Staff	Part Time Support Staff
10 Month Staff (178 - 194 days)	80 hours*	Pro-Rated based upon full time equivalency*	10 x Hours Worked per Day**	#5 x Hours Worked per Day#
11 Month Staff (209 - 231 days)	88 hours*	Pro-Rated based upon full time equivalency*	11 x Hours Worked per Day**	5.5 x Hours Worked per Day#
12 Month Staff (260 days)	96 hours*	Pro-Rated based upon full time equivalency*	12 x Hours Worked per Day+	6 x Hours Worked per Day^

*Time awarded at beginning each year	**Equivalence of three days of PTO awarded at the beginning of the school year. Remaining PTO accrues each payroll through March 25th pay.	+Equivalence of three days PTO awarded July 1st. Remaining PTO accrues each payroll through June 25th pay.	#Equivalence of 1.5 days PTO awarded July 1st. Remaining PTO accrues each payroll through March 25th pay.	^Equivalence of 1.5 days PTO awarded July 1st. Remaining PTO accrues each payroll through June 25th pay.
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5. What can PTO be used for?

- Illness, injury or incapacity of the employee
- Illness, injury or incapacity of a member of the employee's immediate family
- Pregnancy, childbirth, or adoption
- Military leave
- Court appearances
- Wedding or graduation
- Observance of a religious holiday
- Conducting personal business of such a nature that it cannot be performed on a Saturday, Sunday, or before or after school hours, including parent-teacher conferences.
- Absences under leaves authorized by law, policy or the Board that would otherwise be unpaid including, but not limited to, leave under FMLA
- Funerals that do not qualify under the definition for bereavement leave
- Other personal situations approved by the superintendent or designee

6. Who is considered immediate family?

The Board defines immediate family to include:

- The employee's spouse
- The following relatives of the employee or the employee's spouse: parents, stepparents, children, stepchildren, children's/stepchildren's spouses, grandparents, grandchildren, siblings, and any other person residing with the employee
- Any other person over whom the employee has legal guardianship or for whom the employee has power of attorney and is the primary caregiver or any person as granted by the superintendent.

Note: Family as defined for the purposes of FMLA is more limited.

7. How far in advance do I need to request PTO?

Requests for PTO should be made to your supervisor or building administrator at least five days in advance unless for reason of illness, an emergency, or other unusual circumstance.

Requests for PTO may be denied if the request will adversely affect the department or school. Examples may include inclement weather days, vacations, or lack of substitute availability.

8. Is there a limit on the number of PTO days that can be taken consecutively?

PTO is limited to a maximum of three consecutive days, one time per year. Remaining PTO can be taken in a combination of one and/or two day increments during the school year unless taken for unexpected illness, emergencies, unusual circumstances or with prior approval of the superintendent or designee.

9. What if I need to request more than three consecutive days of PTO?

If there is a special circumstance (other than illness) that requires a pre-planned absence of more than three days, it must be submitted to the Superintendent or designee for approval.

10. What if I would rather have my pay docked than use my PTO?

Policy requires that and accrued leave (PTO, Banked Leave, and/or Vacation) must be used before an absence will be unpaid.

11. What is a "Black-Out" day?

Unless there is an unexpected illness, emergency, or unusual circumstance, Board policy designates certain days in the school calendar that PTO will not be granted without approval of the superintendent. These days include:

- Before or after a holiday or break in school attendance
- During the first or last five student contact days of the school year

- Professional development days including early release days and contract days prior to the first day of school
- Parent-teacher conferences
- During the district assessment window

12. What if I have an unexpected illness or emergency and need to be absent on a black-out day?

If you find that you are unable to come to work on a day designated as a black-out day you should do the following:

1. Enter the absence in AESOP just as you normally would.
2. Call Lisa Hatfield at 816-564-9716 to inform her that you will be absent.
3. Contact your building administrator to inform him/her that you will be absent.

13. When do I need approval from the superintendent to use PTO?

All requests for PTO should first be approved by your supervisor or building administrator. If approval is given, an additional approval from the superintendent is needed under the following circumstances:

- When requesting a day designated as a black-out day
- When requesting to take three or more consecutive days of PTO unless it is being taken for illness, an emergency, or other unusual circumstances
 - Three consecutive days of PTO can be taken one time per year without superintendent approval

14. How do I request approval from the superintendent if needed?

If you need to request approval from the superintendent, you should do the following:

1. Request approval from your supervisor or building administrator.
2. Complete and submit the Special PTO Request form. This form can be found on the district website on the Human Resources page.

15. What happened to the sick and personal days that I had at the end of the 2015-2016 school year?

Any sick or personal days remaining as of June 30, 2016 have been rolled into “Banked Leave”. Banked Leave is available to an employee AFTER available PTO for the current year has been used. At the end of each year, remaining PTO hours will roll into Banked Leave (June 30th). You may accumulate Banked Leave up to 150 hours. Employees NEVER LOSE leave. See question #18 for information on leave buy-back.

Example: At the end of the 15-16 school year you had 35 hours of sick leave and 8 hours of personal leave remaining. You will see 43 hours of Banked Leave when you view Keynet.

16. When can I use my banked leave?

Banked Leave can be used for illness, pregnancy, childbirth, adoption, or bereavement as defined by policy after current year PTO has been used. (Banked Leave follows the same requirements that “sick” leave followed in our previous policy.)

Example: It is January and you have the flu and are unable to come to work and you enter an absence of 8 hours. You only have a PTO balance of 4 hours but you have 43 hours of Banked Leave. You will use the 4 hours of PTO and the additional 4 hours will be deducted from your Banked Leave and you will see that you are paid for these hours on your paycheck.

17. How does HR know to use my banked leave so that my pay is not docked?

Because banked leave can only be used for absences for reasons as listed above, HR will not automatically use this leave to prevent your pay from being docked. If you are in a situation that you have used all current year PTO, have available banked leave, and are absent for a reason listed above, submit a Banked Leave Use Request Form. This

form can be found on the district website on the Human Resources page or from your building/department secretary. Requests should be submitted as soon as possible following the absence preferably within 3 days. The form should be completed, printed, and signed by both you and your supervisor, and sent to Jennifer Simmons at ASC.

18. How does leave buy-back at the end of the school year work?

Employees can accumulate up to the equivalent of 150 days of banked leave. Days in excess of 150 will automatically be reimbursed at ½ of the daily substitute teacher rate each year with the July 25th payroll.

Employees can elect leave buy-back for any days in excess of 100 each year if they so desire. The deadline for making a request for buy-back must be made by May 15th each year and will be paid with the July 25th payroll.

An employee who, at the time of retirement, is eligible for benefits from PSRS or PEERS and who has completed five years of service in the district will be reimbursed for unused PTO/Banked Leave at ½ of the daily substitute teacher rate up to 150 days.

19. How did Bereavement leave change?

Bereavement leave did not change under the revised policies. Full time employees will be granted up to five days for the loss of an immediate family member and part time employees will be granted up to two days for the loss of an immediate family member. Bereavement leave is available per occurrence and does not have to be used consecutively. PTO can be used for funerals for individuals who are not defined as an immediate family member by policy.

20. What if I have a question or need further clarification about PTO?

Please email or call:

- Rachel.Surls@raypec.org – Coordinator Benefits and Payroll 816-892-1324
- Jennifer.Simmons@raypec.org – Payroll Specialist (AESOP/Veritime) 816-892-1328
- Tina.Fowler@raypec.org – Human Resources Specialists (Benefits) 816-892-1399
- Lisa.Hatfield@raypec.org – Director – Human Resources 816-892-1322