

ARTICLE 21 - LEAVE WITHOUT PAY

SECTION 1 - Personal Leave of Absence

Personal leave of absence as described herein is leave without pay and may be requested by a member of the bargaining unit for purely personal reasons. A member of the bargaining unit may request short-term personal leave of absence within the school or department to which the employee is assigned. Personal leave as described herein shall be requested through the principal or department head for his/her approval and subsequently approved by the Superintendent.

An employee granted an unpaid leave of absence shall be returned to his/her former classification if the leave is less than ninety (90) days, notwithstanding the layoff provisions contained in this agreement. An employee granted a leave of absence and who wishes to return before the leave period has expired, may submit a request to return to the principal/department head. An employee granted a leave of absence in excess of ninety (90) days will be permitted to return to work provided there is an opening in the same job classification in the work unit. If the former position is not available, the employee, upon written request, shall be listed as an eligible applicant for a period of six (6) months.

Group Life and Hospitalization Insurance coverage may be continued for a period equal to the authorized leave of absence, provided full premium payments, including the Board's payment, are kept current by the employee.

SECTION 2 - Return From Leave

Failure to return to work at the expiration of approved leave shall be considered as absence without leave and grounds for dismissal. This section should be subject to extenuating circumstances preventing timely return, as determined by the Superintendent.

SECTION 3 - Personal Leave of Absence Due to Illness – Unpaid

- A. After accrued sick leave is exhausted, an employee may request unpaid personal leave of absence due to his/her personal illness. Personal leave due to illness is leave without pay and may be granted for a period of up to the end of the employee's work year.
- B. An employee granted personal leave of absence may not be employed in any capacity. It is the intent of this provision to make it clear that, if an employee is unable to fulfill his duties in the Palm Beach County School System, he likewise should be unable to perform employment duties elsewhere while on Board approved leave. Acceptance of other employment during the employee's normal duty day, while on approved leave, shall establish the employee's intent to resign and automatically terminate the leave.
- C. At the end of the leave, the employee, upon proper application, may be granted an extended leave of up to one (1) year and may be returned to the same or similar position, providing a vacancy exists and the employee is recommended by the principal/ supervisor.
- D. Granting of leave that extends to the end of the employee's work year does not denote rehire for the ensuing school year.