

Political Processes

State and Federal Legislation

The Yolo County Superintendent of Schools (“Superintendent”) and the Yolo County Board of Education (“County Board”) have a responsibility to advocate good fiscal and public policy that support the schools and the children in public schools of Yolo County. The Superintendent and County Board members shall be proactive in supporting the Yolo County Office of Education’s (“YCOE”) advocacy agenda based on the needs of YCOE and the direction set forth in YCOE’s vision and goals. This responsibility includes that of lobbying at the state and national levels and informing members of the community about these activities.

The Superintendent and County Board may join with other groups in promoting legislation to maintain and improve the educational program. The Superintendent and County Board also may provide members of the community with information which may help them communicate with their legislators about educational needs. The Superintendent and County Board shall work to establish ongoing relationships with city and county officials and agencies and shall inform them of the potential effect of local issues on schools.

The Superintendent and the County Board shall identify issues that will affect YCOE programs and services, establish goals and priorities for legislative advocacy, and adopt legislative positions.

Statewide Election Measures

The YCOE may investigate ballot measures that affect the schools and may furnish students, parents/guardians, and community members with fair, complete, and impartial statements of objective, relevant factual information about the impact of statewide ballot measures on the YCOE. However, California law clearly prohibits public agencies from spending public funds to influence the outcome of statewide ballot measures.

The County Board respects the free speech rights of its members and the public. Any County Board discussion of the effect statewide measures will have on the YCOE shall be conducted in such a manner as to provide a public forum for all sides to be heard. If based on its findings, the County Board takes a position on a statewide measure, this position may be provided to individuals requesting such information; however, the County Board does not allow its positions to be disseminated by the YCOE for campaign purposes.

When a bill or other item before the Legislature is identified as meriting or requiring official County Board position, the County Board may request that the Superintendent direct the office of Governmental Relations study the matter, obtain appropriate recommendations and legal opinion, and draft a position recommendation report for County Board review and approval.

No YCOE funds, services, supplies, or equipment shall be used to urge the support or defeat of any ballot measure or candidate, including any candidate for election to the County Board or Superintendent. (Education Code 7054.)

Local School Measures

The County Board may determine how ballot measures may affect the schools. Any County Board discussion of the effect such measures would have on the YCOE shall include an opportunity for County Board members and members of the public to speak on all sides of the issue. The County Board may also adopt positions in support of, or in opposition to, ballot measures of importance to education.

No YCOE funds, services, equipment, or supplies shall be used to urge the support or defeat of any ballot measure or candidate.

The Superintendent or designee may use YCOE funds to furnish students, parents/guardians, and community members with fair and impartial information about the impact of ballot measures on the YCOE.

County Board members are not prohibited from speaking out or disseminating information about local school measures in circumstances that do not involve the use of public funds. As individuals, County Board members have the right to take a personal position on legislation that may affect the YCOE. However, any communication of such a position shall clearly establish that the position is personal and is not to be construed as an official position of the County Board.

Legal Advocacy

The Superintendent and County Board recognize that some issues are more appropriately addressed judicially rather than legislatively. When a legal issue is likely to set a state or national precedent, the Superintendent and/or County Board may join with school districts or other parties in order to challenge the issue through litigation or other appropriate means.

Political Forums

Forums on political issues may be held in facilities owned by the County Board or leased by the Superintendent so long as the forum is made available to all sides of the issue on an equitable basis. (Education Code 7058.)

Legal References:

Education Code, 7054, 7054.1, 7056, 7058, 35160, 35172
Government Code, 81000-91015

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