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**[admin\_super] Change to Unpaid Leave Process**

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**From :** Karen Hardin <hardin@4j.lane.edu>

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**Sender :** admin\_super <admin\_super-bounces@4j.lane.edu>**Subject :** [admin\_super] Change to Unpaid Leave Process**To :** Administrators <admin\_super@4j.lane.edu>

Good Morning -

HR needs to inform all managers, administrators and supervisors of a change in the process when 4J staff request an unpaid leave of absence.

As you know, absences are a significant concern this year with a reduced work force and reduced number of substitutes available for those positions which have access to substitutes. With this in mind, HR reached out to the Superintendent for guidance and to discuss the approval process for unpaid leaves. We all understand the pressure supervisors feel when employees ask for an unpaid leave, it can be awkward. However, as a district we need to understand the ramifications of approving these leaves and respond appropriately and consistently. Below are some of the considerations related to unpaid leaves:

- Unpaid leaves are not a right of our employees. These are not contractual and we have the right to deny them.
- Historically, we have approved unpaid days for "once in a lifetime" events. Unfortunately, the definition of "once in a lifetime" is being stretched. A cruise is not a once in a lifetime event, a trip to Egypt to meet family is not a once in a lifetime event, a family reunion is not... You get the point.
- Supervisors are hesitant to deny unpaid leave as they think staff will quit. We understand this feeling but we have an obligation to provide services to students and the district. Unpaid leaves interfere with our mission as they often take our limited number of substitutes.
- When our supervisors routinely sign their support of unpaid leaves without professional push back to the employee, HR is then required to stand alone and be responsible for being the gate keeper of consistency and equity in approvals. This creates hostility between employees and the district. We need everyone's help in addressing inappropriate requests for unpaid leave.

**This year, the process will be changing to add an additional step before HR approves the leave.**

If a supervisor signs a [Leave Request for Unpaid Leave form](#) stating their support for the leave, they must then send it to the Cabinet member who has oversight of their position. For example, if I signed and supported a request for unpaid leave for one of the HR administrators, I would then need to get the signed support of the CAO (Collina Beard). If a middle school principal signs and supported a request from one of their staff, they would need to forward it to Assistant Superintendent of Instruction (Brooke Wagner).

The Superintendent wants Cabinet to be informed and knowledgeable about this issue and the extent to which these leaves are occurring. This additional signature before the request is approved by HR will provide data to cabinet.

If you want to consult with HR prior to signing your support of any unpaid leave request, Bernadette (classified), Heather (licensed) and I (MAPS) are available to discuss it with you. If you have any other questions about this general process, we are also available.

Thanks for your attention to this change in process.

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