

California Education Code Section 44987

Association Release Time

44987.

(a) The governing board of a school district shall grant to any employee, upon request, a leave of absence without loss of compensation for the purpose of enabling the employee to serve as an elected officer of any local school district public employee organization, or any statewide or national public employee organization with which the local organization is affiliated.

The leave shall include, but is not limited to, absence for purposes of attendance by the employee at periodic, stated, special, or regular meetings of the body of the organization on which the employee serves as an officer.

Compensation during the leave shall include retirement fund contributions required of the school district as employer. The required employer contribution rate shall be the rate adopted by the Teachers' Retirement Board as a plan amendment with respect to the Defined Benefit Program as provided in Section 22711. The employee shall earn full service credit during the leave of absence and shall pay member contributions as prescribed by Section 22711. The maximum amount of the service credit earned may not exceed twelve calendar years. Any employee who serves as a full-time officer of a public employee organization is not eligible for disability benefits under the State Teachers' Retirement Plan while on the leave of absence.

Following the school district's payment of the employee for the leave of absence, the school district shall be reimbursed by the employee organization of which the employee is an elected officer for all compensation paid the employee on account of the leave. Reimbursement by the employee organization shall be made within 10 days after its receipt of the school district's certification of payment of compensation to the employee. The leave of absence without loss of

compensation provided for by this section is in addition to the released time without loss of compensation granted to representatives of an exclusive representative by subdivision (c) of Section 3543.1 of the Government Code.

For purposes of this section, "school district" also means "county superintendent of schools."

(b) An employee who after August 31, 1978, was absent on account of elected-officer service, shall receive full service credit in the State Teachers' Retirement Plan; provided that, not later than April 30, 1981: (1) the employee makes a written request to the employer for a leave of absence for the period of the elected-officer service, and (2) the employee organization of which the employee is an elected officer pays to the employee's school district an amount equal to the required State Teachers' Retirement Plan member and employer retirement contributions, as prescribed by this section.

The school district, following this written request and payment, shall transmit the amount received to the State Teachers' Retirement System, informing it of the period of the employee's leave of absence. The State Teachers' Retirement System shall credit the employee with all service credit earned for the period of the elected-officer leave of absence.

If the employee has been compensated by the school district for the period of the service, then, as a condition to the employee's entitlement to service credit for this period, the school district shall be reimbursed by the employee organization for the amount of the compensation.

The provisions of this subdivision shall apply retroactively to all service as an elective officer in a public employee organization occurring after August 31, 1978.