



EAST TENNESSEE STATE
UNIVERSITY

Resolution on Parental Leave
ETSU Faculty Senate
March 23, 2020

WHEREAS, the Faculty Senate seeks to represent the entire faculty of East Tennessee State University in matters of faculty welfare in matters of University governance; and

WHEREAS, faculty wellbeing is a critical contributor to the sustainability and growth of an institution; and

WHEREAS, a key contributor to faculty wellbeing is family wellbeing, which can be influenced by institutional policies and employment benefits, including leave benefits; and

WHEREAS, availability of parental leave benefits has been shown to have a positive economic impact for the institution, including increasing labor-force participation and employee retention, which over time supports positive impacts on business operations; and

WHEREAS, availability of parental leave benefits has been shown to reduce the occurrence of both short- and long-term depression in parents, as well as prevent economic vulnerability amongst employees who are attempting to balance work, illness, and family care and experience financial burden as a result of needing to take unpaid leave; and

WHEREAS, availability of parental leave benefits increases the utilization of leave among working fathers, which results in their increased involvement with their children and positive effects for children and families; and

WHEREAS, numerous notable positive effects of paid parental leave have been demonstrated in children, including but not limited to decreases in neonatal and infant mortality, decreases in mortality of children less than 5 years of age, increases in the rate of immunizations, and increases in the rate of breastfeeding; and

WHEREAS, several states have adopted policies for mandatory paid maternity leave and the State of Tennessee has adopted a twelve-week paid family leave benefit for qualifying executive branch employees effective March 1, 2020.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Faculty Senate recommends the University adopt a parental leave benefit for all qualifying employees, regardless of gender, totaling a minimum duration of twelve (12) weeks of paid leave following the birth or adoption of a child.

In the instance of both parents being employed by the University, the recommendation is for twelve (12) weeks of paid leave for the primary parent and six (6) weeks of paid leave for the secondary parent;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Faculty Senate will recommend faculty representatives to support and assist the University's President, Executive Committee, Board of Trustees, and Office of Human Resources in the creation and vetting of policies related to these benefits.

Submitted by Senator Katelyn Alexander on behalf of the Parental Leave Ad Hoc Committee; comprised of Senators Todd Emma, Michelle Johnson, Rachel Walden and Faculty Members Leigh Johnson and Blair Reece, and approved this day by vote of the Faculty Senate.

Faculty Senate President

Date

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