

0167.3 - PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT BOARD MEETINGS

There is no legal requirement that the public be given the opportunity to speak at board meetings. However, the School Board recognizes the value of public comment on matters involving the school corporation and the importance of allowing members of the public to express themselves on Corporation matters. The purpose of public comment is to share information with Board members, not to engage in conversation or debate.

To permit fair and orderly public expression, the Board shall provide a period for public input (either in person or virtually) at every regular meeting of the Board and publish procedures to govern such participation in Board meetings.

The Board will not tolerate abusive or inappropriate language including, but not limited to statements that are: threatening, harassing, discriminatory, illegal, obscene, lewd, vulgar, defamatory, libelous, hostile, or that involve personal attacks. Additionally, disruptions such as signage, clapping, booing, name calling, shouting or cheering during meetings will also not be tolerated.

Any member of the audience who is disruptive will be given a warning. If the disruptive activity continues, the audience member will be asked to leave the meeting by the presiding officer. If several individuals are disruptive, the Board president may choose to end the board meeting or call a recess and continue later.

Public comments should be directed to the Board, not an individual Board member and may not reference specific Corporation employees, patrons, or students.

For safety purposes, meeting attendees may not bring large bags/backpacks into the meeting room and may be subject to inspection by a gun-detecting safety dog and/or law enforcement.

The presiding officer of each Board meeting at which public participation is permitted shall administer the procedures for public participation.

The presiding officer shall be guided by the following rules:

- A. Public participation shall be permitted (either in person or virtually) at the discretion of the presiding officer.
- B. Any School Corporation resident having a legitimate interest in the activity of the Board may provide input during the public comment portion of a meeting.
- C. Attendees must register their intention to speak in person in the public portion of the meeting upon their arrival no less than five minutes prior to the beginning of the meeting. Proof of residency and/or state issued ID will be required when registering to speak. A complete registration must be submitted to be eligible for participation in the public comment portion of the meeting.
- D. Participants must be recognized by the presiding officer and must preface their comments by an announcement of their full name, group affiliation, if applicable, and the current board meeting agenda item with which they are addressing. Participants not speaking to a current meeting agenda item will be asked to take their seat.
- E. The total amount of time designated for the public comment portion of the meeting is 45 minutes. Due to time constraints, any speakers unable to make a public comment, can leave their written comment for the board president.
- F. Public comments made by a participant shall be limited to three (3) minutes duration and limited to a single agenda topic.

- G. No participant may speak more than once on the same topic.

The presiding officer may:

- A. Prohibit public comments which are frivolous, repetitive, or harassing;
- B. Interrupt, warn, or terminate a speaker's privilege to speak if, after being called to order, the speaker persists in improper conduct or remarks, or if the remarks violate any of the speaking guidelines noted above;
- C. Request any individual to leave the meeting when that person behaves in a manner that is disruptive to the orderly conduct of the meeting;
- D. Request the assistance of law enforcement officers in the removal of any disorderly person when that person's conduct interferes with the orderly progress of the meeting;
- E. Call for a recess, end public comment, or an adjournment to another time when the lack of public decorum so interferes with the orderly conduct of the meeting as to warrant such action;

Digital, audio or video recordings are permitted, providing the person operating the recorder has given notice to the Superintendent prior to the Board meeting and has agreed to abide by the following conditions:

- A. No obstructions are created between the Board and the audience.
- B. No interviews are conducted during the Board meeting.
- C. No commentary is made that would cause a disruption to the meeting or distract either the Board or members of the audience.

Revised 11/22/93

Revised 8/20/02

Revised 7/16/19

Revised 9/21/21

Legal

I.C. 20-26-4-3 Notice of meetings to Board members

I.C. 5-14-1.5 Open Door Law notice to the public and news media of regular, emergency and special meetings

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