

Policy 903 - Public Participation in Board Meetings

Adopted October 11, 2007

Purpose

The Board recognizes the value to school governance of public comment on educational issues and the importance of involving members of the public in Board meetings. The Board also recognizes its responsibility for proper governance of the district and the need to conduct its business in an orderly and efficient manner.

Authority

The Board shall establish guidelines to govern public participation in Board meetings necessary to conduct its meeting and to maintain order.

In order to permit fair and orderly expression of public comment, the Board shall provide an opportunity at each open meeting of the Board for residents and taxpayers to comment on matters of concern, official action or deliberation before the Board prior to official action by the Board.

The Board shall require that all public comments be made at the beginning of each meeting.

If the Board determines there is not sufficient time at a meeting for public comments, the comment period may be deferred to the next regular meeting or to a special meeting occurring before the next regular meeting.

Delegation of Responsibility

The presiding officer at each public Board meeting shall follow Board policy for the conduct of public meetings. Where his/her ruling is disputed, it may be overruled by a majority of those Board members present and voting.

Guidelines

Whenever issues identified by the participant are subject to remediation under policies and procedures of the Board, they shall be dealt with in accordance with those policies and procedures and the organizational structure of the district.

The Board requires that public participants be residents or taxpayers of this district or anyone representing a group in the community or school district, any representative of a firm eligible to bid on materials or services solicited by the Board, any district employee, or any district student.

An individual who wishes to be listed on the Board meeting agenda shall notify the Superintendent at least one (1) week prior to the regularly scheduled meeting. The name and address of the presenter, as well as the topic, must be stated in the notification.

An individual who wishes to participate in a public Board meeting, but who is not listed on the agenda, shall sign the visitors' log book the night of the meeting, indicating his/her intent to participate. It may not be possible to hear all public participants listed on the Board agenda due to an unusually long agenda or large number of participants.

Time shall be designated early in the Board meeting for public participation.

Time limitations for public participation shall be ten (10) minutes for those individuals on the agenda and five (5) minutes for those not on the agenda.

Time shall also be designated at the end of each committee meeting for public input. Each individual wishing to participate may speak for up to two (2) minutes on any topic listed on the committee meeting agenda. The Board President has the right to limit the time allowed for public input.

Individuals presenting to the Board shall state their name, home address, group or interest represented, and the topic to be discussed.

The Board President reserves the right to declare persons out of order if they stray from the topic; become obscene, loud or abusive; or become slanderous.

In the case of groups of two (2) or more, the Board President has the right to ask one (1) representative to act as spokesperson for the group.

No participant may speak more than once on the same topic, unless all others who wish to speak on that topic have been heard.

All statements shall be directed to the presiding officer; no participant may address or question Board members individually.

The presiding officer may interrupt or terminate a participant's statement when the statement is too lengthy, personally directed, abusive, obscene, or irrelevant; request any individual to leave the meeting when that person does not observe reasonable decorum; request the assistance of law enforcement officers to remove a disorderly person when his/her conduct interferes with the orderly progress of the meeting; call a recess or adjourn to another time when the lack of public decorum interferes with the orderly conduct of the meeting; or waive these rules with the approval of the Board.

Electronic recording devices and cameras, in addition to those used as official recording devices, shall be permitted at public meetings under guidelines established by the Board.

No placards or banners will be permitted within the meeting room.

The meeting agenda and all pertinent documents shall be available to the press and public at the meetings.