

## **0169.1 Public Participation at Board Meetings**

The Board of Education recognizes the value to school governance of public comment on educational issues and the importance of allowing members of the public to express themselves on school matters of community interest.

The Board is also committed to conducting its meetings in a productive and efficient manner that assures that the regular agenda of the Board is completed in a reasonable period of time, honors the voluntary nature of the Board's time and using that time efficiently, and allows for a fair and adequate opportunity for input to be considered. Consequently, public participation at Board meetings will be governed by the following principles:

- A. Any person or group wishing to place an item on the agenda shall register their intent with the Superintendent no later than seven (7) business days prior to the meeting and include:
  1. name and address of the participant;
  2. group affiliation, if and when appropriate;
  3. topic to be addressed.

Such requests shall be subject to the approval of the Superintendent and the Board President.

- B. In order to permit the fair and orderly expression of such comment, the Board shall provide a period for public participation at all public meetings of the Board and publish rules to govern such participation in Board meetings.

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

The presiding officer shall be guided by the following rules:

- A. Public participation shall be permitted as indicated on the order of business or at the discretion of the presiding officer.
- B. Anyone having a legitimate interest in the actions of the Board may participate during the public portion of a meeting.
- C. Participants must be recognized by the presiding officer and will be requested to preface their comments by an announcement of their name.
- D. Each statement made by a participant shall be limited to three (3) minutes duration.
- E. No participant may speak more than once on the same topic unless all others who wish to speak on that topic have been heard.
- F. All statements shall be directed to the presiding officer; no person may address or question Board members individually.
- G. Tape or video recordings are permitted. The person operating the recorder should contact the Superintendent prior to the Board meeting and must

agree to the placement of the equipment and to abide by the following conditions:

1. No obstructions are created between the Board and the audience.
  2. No interviews are conducted in the meeting room while the Board is in session.
  3. No commentary, adjustment of equipment, or positioning of operators is made that would distract either the Board or members of the audience while the Board is in session and not disrupt the meeting.
- H. The presiding officer may:
1. prohibit public comments that are frivolous, repetitive, and/or harassing;
  2. interrupt, warn, or terminate a participant's statement when the statement is too lengthy, personally directed, abusive, off-topic, antagonistic, obscene, or irrelevant;
  3. request any individual to leave the meeting when that person does not observe reasonable decorum;
  4. request the assistance of law enforcement officers in the removal of a disorderly person when that person's conduct interferes with the orderly progress of the meeting;
  5. call for a recess 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;
  6. waive these rules with the approval of the Board when necessary for the protection of privacy or the administration of the Board's business.
- I. The portion of the meeting during which the participation of the public is invited shall be limited to thirty (30) minutes.

R.C. 3313.20

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