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District Policy

0167 - PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN BOARD MEETINGS

Section: Bylaws
Date Created: January 2011
Date Edited: November 2021

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

In order to permit the fair and orderly expression of such comment, the Board shall provide a period for public comment at every public meeting pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, on any school district issue that a member of the public feels may be of concern.

Public participation shall be permitted only as indicated on the order of business in Board Bylaw No. 0164 or as otherwise provided on the published agenda.

Public participation shall be extended to residents of this district, persons having a legitimate interest in the actions of this Board, persons representing groups in the school district or otherwise pertaining to school district issues, representatives of firms eligible to bid on materials or services solicited by the Board, and employees and pupils of this district, except when the issue addressed by the participant is subject to remediation by an alternate method provided for in policies or contracts of the Board.

Public participation shall be governed by the following rules:

1. A participant must be recognized by the presiding officer and must preface comments by an announcement of his/her name, municipality of residence, and group affiliation, if applicable;
2. Each statement made by a participant shall be limited to six minutes’ duration.
3. No participant may speak more than once on the same topic until all others who wish to speak on that topic have been heard;
4. All statements, questions, or inquiries shall be directed to the presiding officer, and any questions or inquiries directed by a participant to another Board member shall be redirected to the presiding officer who shall determine if such statement, question or inquiry shall be addressed by the presiding officer on behalf of the Board or by the individual Board member;
5. Any responses shall be provided upon the completion of the participant's comments or expiration of the participants speaking time, unless otherwise determined by the presiding offer in the presiding officer's sole discretion.
6. The presiding officer may:
 - a. Interrupt, warn, and/or terminate a participant's statement, question, or inquiry when it is too lengthy,
 - b. Interrupt and/or warn a participant when the statement, question, or inquiry is abusive, obscene, or may be defamatory;
 - c. Request any person to leave the meeting when that person does not observe reasonable decorum;
 - d. Request the assistance of law enforcement officers in the removal of a disorderly person when that person prevents or disrupts a meeting with an act that obstructs or interferes with a meeting;
 - e. Call for a recess or an adjournment when the lack of public decorum so interferes with the orderly conduct of the meeting; and
 - f. Take any other action to the extent permitted by law; and
 - g. Waive these rules when necessary for the protection of privacy or to maintain an orderly operation of the Board meeting.

N.J.S.A. 2C:33-8
N.J.S.A. 10:4-12

Adopted: 24 January 2011
Revised: 22 August 2016
Revised: 30 July 2020

