

0167 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN BOARD MEETINGS

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 school matters of community interest.

In order to permit the fair and orderly expression of such comment, the Board shall provide a period for public comment at every regularly scheduled meeting of the Board.

Public participation shall be permitted before the Board takes official action on any issue of substance.

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 community or school district, 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. All persons wishing to participate in a public Board meeting shall register their intent with the Board Secretary in advance of the meeting;
2. A participant must be recognized by the presiding officer and must preface comments by an announcement of his/her name, place of residence, and group affiliation, if appropriate;
3. Each statement made by a participant shall be limited to five minutes' duration;
4. No participant may speak more than once on the same topic until all others who wish to speak on that topic have been heard;
5. All statements shall be directed to the presiding officer; no participant may address or question Board members individually;
6. The presiding officer may:
  - a. Interrupt, warn, or terminate a participant's statement when the statement is too lengthy, personally directed, abusive, obscene, or irrelevant;
  - b. Request any individual to leave the meeting when that person does not observe reasonable decorum;
  - c. 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;
  - d. 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; and

e. Waive these rules when necessary for the protection of privacy or the efficient administration of the Board's business.

The portion of the meeting during which the participation of the public is invited shall be limited to thirty minutes and will be concluded by 8:00 p.m.

N.J.S.A. 2C:33-8

N.J.S.A. 10:4-12

Adopted: 9 February 2004

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