

Book	Policy Manual
Section	0000 Bylaws
Title	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT BOARD MEETINGS
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#### **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 offers public participation to members of the public in accordance with the procedures below. The Board applies these procedures to all speakers and does not discriminate based on the identity of the speaker, content of the speech, or viewpoint of the speaker.

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 this bylaw.

In order to permit the fair and orderly expression of such comment, the Board shall provide a period for public participation at all regular 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**

1. as indicated on the order of business.
2. before the Board takes official action on any issue of substance.
3. at the discretion of the presiding officer.

**B. Anyone having a legitimate interest in the actions of the Board may participate during the designated public participation portion(s) of a meeting.**

**C. Any person wishing to participate shall register upon arrival at the meeting and provide:**

1. Name and address of the participant;
2. Group affiliation, if and when appropriate;
3. Topic to be addressed.

**D. Individuals may not register others to speak during public participation. No individual may cede their allotted speaking time to another individual.**

**E. The presiding officer may arrange the order of speakers based upon the item being discussed. Those speaking on items scheduled for action may be called upon before those speaking on non-action items.**

**F. Participants must first be recognized by the presiding officer and will be required to preface their comments by an announcement of their name, address, group affiliation, if and when appropriate, and the topic to be addressed.**

G. Each statement made by a participant shall be limited to three (3) minutes duration unless extended by the presiding officer.

H. During the portion of the meeting designated for public participation, no participant may speak more than once on the same topic unless all others who wish to speak on that topic have been heard.

I. All statements shall be presented from the lectern/dais and shall be directed to the presiding officer; no person may address or question Board members individually. Board members may ask questions of the speaker for information or clarification and may or may not make comments in response to a speaker's remarks. No Board member has the power or authority to act for the Board; therefore, no response from an individual Board member shall be interpreted as an official action of the Board.

J. Audio or video recordings are permitted. Media or individuals with large recording equipment should contact the Superintendent prior to the Board meeting to review possible placement of the equipment, and must agree 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.

K. The presiding officer may:

1. interrupt, warn, or terminate a participant's session when they make comments that are repetitive, obscene, and/or comments that constitute a true threat (i.e., statements meant to frighten or intimidate one (1) or more specified persons into believing that they will be seriously harmed by the speaker or someone acting at the speaker's behest).
2. request any individual to stop speaking and/or leave the meeting when that person does not observe reasonable decorum or is disruptive to the conduct and/or orderly progress of the meeting;
3. request the assistance of law enforcement officers in the removal of a disorderly person when that person's conduct interferes with the conduct and/or orderly progress of the meeting;
4. 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;
5. waive these rules with the approval of the Board when necessary for the protection of privacy or the 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 (30) minutes unless extended by a vote of the Board. The Board may further limit the total time for comment and/or may reduce the time allotted for each speaker and will announce such a change in advance.

The Board may permit individuals to attend meetings remotely through live broadcast; however, public participation will be limited to those who are in attendance at the meeting site only. The Board is not responsible for any technology failures that prevent or disrupt any individual from attending remotely.

As an alternative to public participation, individuals may submit a formal written statement to the Board through the process established by the Communications Department. Submissions will not be read aloud at Board meetings but may be posted on the District website along with meeting records.

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