

## **Policy Code: 2150 Public Address to the Board**

Board meetings are conducted for the purpose of carrying out the official business of the school district. The public is invited to attend board meetings to observe the Board as it conducts its official business.

State and/or Federal laws and regulations provide protection for the privacy of school employees and students. Therefore, the Board and staff cannot address concerns about individual students and staff members in open session. The Board has a grievance policy, Board Policies 1740/4010 Student and Parent Grievance Procedure, 1742/5060 Responding to Complaints, and 1750/7220 Grievance Procedure for Employees, designed as an avenue for citizens, parents, students, and other staff to address their concerns or complaints about individuals. Complaints and concerns about students or staff members are best addressed through the available grievance policy other than public comments, as a grievance policy provides an alternative for resolution while protecting individual privacy rights.

The Board of Education, as an elected representative body of the school district, also wishes to provide a limited public forum for citizens to express interests and concerns related to the school system. In order that the Board may conduct an orderly meeting providing an opportunity for input of public concern regarding the school system, individuals or groups may be heard by the Board in accordance to this policy. A part of each regularly scheduled meeting shall be set aside for public comments pursuant to this policy.

### **A. Request to Address the Board.**

In order that the Board may fairly and adequately discharge its overall responsibility and receive input from the citizens of Johnston County, persons or groups desiring to address the Board shall do the following:

- Sign up in person with the Superintendent's designee at the JCPS Board of Education Evander Simpson Building prior to the beginning of the regular board meeting.
- Limit comments to 3 minutes or less;
- Furnish statements, written information or provide the topic at the time of sign up;
- If the individual is speaking on behalf of a group, the group will be identified; and
- Only the individual signing up to address the Board or an individual named representing a group will be allowed to speak for the board.
- Comments will be limited to matters relating to the school system.
- For complaints or concerns about the performance of school personnel, student issues or any other confidential matter, the Board suggests that the concern first be submitted to the school principal, the Johnston County Public School system official responsible for the program or facility, or to the superintendent.

To ensure an orderly presentation, disposition and hearing of the matters of interest, board members will not respond to individual who addressed the board except to request clarification of points made by the presenter. Speakers will be allowed three (3) minutes for comment before the Board.

**B.** Public comments shall not interfere with the Board's duty to conduct orderly and efficient meetings. Individuals who address the Board shall not use language that is obscene, contain

fighting or inflammatory words, profane, threatening or otherwise disrupt the orderly conduct of business.

Persons who willfully, interrupt, disrupt, or cause disturbances at official meetings of the Board may be directed to leave by the Board chair. The Board chair shall determine whether matters of discussion are inconsistent with these restrictions or other requirements for public comment, and may rule the speaker out of order, if necessary. Disruptions by any person or persons at a public meeting shall be subject to action in accordance to [G.S. 143-318.17](#).

Adopted: October 9, 2001

Amended: February 10, 2009, November 12, 2019; December 16, 2022 (Legal references only)

## **JOHNSTON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

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