

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 set aside a portion of Board meeting, the length of the portion to be determined by the Board, for public comment on any school or school district issue that a member of the public feels may be of concern to the residents of the school district.

Public participation shall be governed by the following rules:

1. In order to address the Board during the Public Comment period, members of the public shall sign in prior to the start of the Public Comments period by completing the form located in the meeting room. The presiding officer will call signed in participants forward at the appropriate time in the order in which they signed the form. Members of the public that wish to speak **AFTER** the Public Comments section has started will complete the form at the podium before they speak.
2. 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;
3. Unless the presiding officer states the time limit before the start of Public Comments, each statement made by a participant is limited to five (5) minutes, although the presiding officer shall retain discretion with regard to time allotment.
4. The public statement period will be limited to one-half hour at every meeting. However, that time period may be extended if the majority of the Board judges as sufficient for the presentation of public comments. All public participants who have not spoken will be given the opportunity to speak before a speaker is permitted to speak more than once.



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5. No participant may speak more than once on the same topic until all others who wish to speak on that topic have been heard;
6. Participants may not cede their time to others.
7. 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;
8. 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 to another time when the lack of public decorum interferes with the orderly conduct of the meeting; and
 - f. 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: 17 July 2012
Revised: 14 June 2016; _____

