

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

All regular and special meetings of the School Committee shall be open to the public and the media.

Because the School Committee desires to hear the viewpoints of citizens throughout the school district, and also needs to conduct its business in an orderly and efficient manner, it shall schedule one or more periods each meeting for public participation. It may set a time limit on the length of this period and/or a time for individual speakers.

If a presentation requires more than such time limit allows, the Superintendent shall be notified so the presentation may be considered for inclusion as a formal agenda item. For regular meetings, such requests should reach the Superintendent no later than the first and third Monday of the month.

Comment and questions at a regular meeting may deal with any topic related to the School Committee's conduct of the schools. Comments at special meetings must be related to the call of the meeting. Ordinarily, the School Committee shall accept comments and questions from the public during a short period prior to adjournment. The length of time schedules for public discussion shall be stated in the agenda, together with any time limit proposed for individual speakers.

The Chair shall be responsible for recognizing all speakers (who shall properly identify themselves), for maintaining proper order, and for adherence to any time limits set.

The Chair may interrupt or terminate an individual's statement when it exceeds the time limit, is directed toward a particular individual, is defamatory, abusive, obscene or irrelevant. The School Committee as a whole will have the final decision in determining the appropriateness of all such rulings.

The School Committee shall give due attention to comments and contributions from the audience, but shall not be expected to respond or take action immediately. Audience inquiries, other than simple questions, shall be referred to the Superintendent, who shall investigate or consider the matter and report to the citizen and to the School Committee. If School Committee action is indicated, the item may be included on the agenda for a subsequent meeting.

Members of the public shall not be recognized by the Chair as the School Committee conducts its official business.

When a vote is to be taken on an item in less than the normal sequence (two meetings), the School Committee shall solicit comments from the public regarding each item prior to the School Committee vote.

Legal Reference: 1 MRSA s 401 et. seq.

Cross Reference: BEDD - Rules of Order

Adopted: 3/27/89

Revised: 11/26/91; 12/11/91; 7/22/98

Reviewed by Policy Committee: February 5, 2004, May 11, 2006