

BERMUDIAN SPRINGS SCHOOL DISTRICT

SECTION: COMMUNITY

TITLE: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN
BOARD MEETINGS

ADOPTED: March 14, 2006

REVISED:

903. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN BOARD MEETINGS	
<p>1. Purpose 65 P.S. 701 et seq</p>	<p>The Board recognizes the value to school governance of public comment on educational issues and the importance of involving members of the public in Board meetings. The Board also recognizes its responsibility for proper governance of the district and the need to conduct its business in an orderly and efficient manner.</p>
<p>2. Authority 65 P.S. 710</p> <p>65 P.S. 710.1</p> <p>65 P.S. 710.1</p>	<p>The Board shall establish guidelines to govern public participation in Board meetings necessary to conduct its meeting and to maintain order.</p> <p>In order to permit fair and orderly expression of public comment, the Board shall provide an opportunity at each open meeting of the Board for residents and taxpayers to comment on matters of concern, official action or deliberation before the Board prior to official action by the Board.</p> <p>The Board shall require that all public comments be made at the beginning of each meeting.</p> <p>If the Board determines there is not sufficient time at a meeting for public comments, the comment period may be deferred to the next regular meeting or to a special meeting occurring before the next regular meeting.</p>
<p>3. Delegation of Responsibility Pol. 006</p>	<p>The presiding officer at each public Board meeting shall follow Board policy for the conduct of public meetings. Where his/her ruling is disputed, it may be overruled by a majority of those Board members present and voting.</p>
<p>4. Guidelines</p>	<p>Board members shall refer all matters for Board consideration to the Superintendent at least ten (10) days prior to the Board meeting. Such items shall be included in the agenda.</p> <p>Residents seeking the reaction of the Board on certain issues shall call these matters to the attention of the Superintendent at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting of the Board. Such items shall be placed on the agenda.</p>

Whenever issues identified by the participant are subject to remediation under policies and procedures of the Board, they shall be dealt with in accordance with those policies and procedures and the organizational structure of the district.

If a person with a disability wishes to attend public meetings scheduled in the district and requires an auxiliary aid, service or other accommodation to participate in the proceedings, the Superintendent or designee should be contacted to discuss how the district may best accommodate his/her needs.

Electronic recording devices and cameras, in addition to those used as official recording devices, shall be permitted at public meetings under guidelines established by the Board. Such devices shall not be allowed to interrupt the meeting or impede the vision or hearing of any Board members or individuals in attendance.

The meeting agenda and all pertinent documents shall be available to the press and public at the meetings.

Procedures For Scheduled Delegations

Individuals or groups of citizens who have been scheduled to be heard by the School Board shall adhere to the following procedures:

1. To be guaranteed a hearing at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting, requests must be presented to the Superintendent's office at least ten (10) days prior to the scheduled meeting. Requests arriving after this deadline will be scheduled at the discretion of the Superintendent, in accordance with Board policy.
2. A group wishing to be heard by the Board shall select one (1) spokesperson who will speak for the group. Such spokesperson should be prepared to present all of the necessary information to properly represent the feelings of the group.
3. Each person or group scheduled for a hearing with the Board shall be allotted five (5) minutes to present his/her case. This time limit may be extended by the Board President if s/he feels more time is warranted to complete the presentation. Following the presentation by the individual or spokesperson for the group, there shall be time set aside for questions from or comments by members of the Board. Presenters needing additional time should make a request for such time prior to the appropriate meeting.
4. It shall be the policy of the Board to limit exchange of comments to the presenter and Board members and to refrain from entering into a general discussion with others present in the Board room.

<p>PA Statute 65 P.S. 701 et seq</p> <p>Board Policy 006</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">5. It shall be the policy of the Board to hear all delegations at a regular School Board business session. However, the Board may honor requests to be heard in a caucus/work session when the topic of discussion is sensitive or controversial. Private hearings closed to the public must meet the requirements of Pennsylvania's Open Meetings Law.6. Most concerns brought to the attention of the Board receive no action at that immediate meeting since, in most cases, the Board has had little opportunity to discuss the matter. As a rule, the Board will reply in a subsequent meeting if a decision is requested. Under some circumstances, the Board will reply immediately to a matter that requires little discussion or, through lack of action, may dismiss the request.7. The Board will treat all requests politely and seriously. It is recommended that citizens addressing the Board follow those same guidelines.8. In order to comply with the provisions of law, the Board will accept public comments during the portion of the meeting designated for the hearing of scheduled delegations or individuals. While the public has a right to address the Board without prior notice, all presenters shall adhere to the stated procedures.
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