

Bylaws of the Board

Meeting Conduct

Meetings of the Board of Education shall be conducted by the Chairperson in a manner consistent with the adopted bylaws of the Board and the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act.

All Board meetings shall commence at or as close as practicable to, the stated time provided there is a quorum, and shall be guided by an agenda which has been prepared and delivered in advance to all Board members and other designated persons.

The conduct of meetings shall, to the fullest possible extent, enable members of the Board to (1) consider problems to be solved, weigh evidence related thereto, and make wise decisions intended to solve the problems, and (2) receive, consider and take any needed action with respect to reports of accomplishment of students or of school system operations.

Provisions for permitting any individual or group to address the Board concerning any subject that lies within its jurisdiction shall be as follows:

1. Three minutes may be allotted to each speaker and a maximum of twenty minutes to each subject matter with prerogative of Board Chairperson to extend the time as appropriate. The Board may modify these limitations at the beginning of the meeting if the number of persons wishing to speak makes it advisable to do so.
2. No inappropriate or disrespectful conduct shall be permitted at any Board of Education meeting. Persistence in such conduct shall be grounds for summary termination, by the Chairperson, of that person's privilege of address. If necessary, the Chairperson may clear the room so that the Board can continue the meeting.
3. Speakers may offer objective criticism of district operations and programs, but the Board encourages members of the public to address complaints concerning individual district personnel through the proper chain of command. The Chairperson may direct the member of the public to the appropriate means to address concerns brought before the Board; however, the Board will not respond with action but will take comments under advisement and direct the comments to the appropriate staff member to address outside of the Board meeting.
4. Speakers are asked to express themselves in a civil manner, with due respect for the dignity and privacy of others who may be affected by their comments. While it is not the Board's intent to stifle public comment, speakers should be aware that if their statements violate the rights of others under the law of defamation or invasion of privacy, the speaker may be held legally responsible. Speakers unsure of the legal ramification of what they are about to say are urged to consult first with their legal advisor.

The Board of Education may adjourn any regular or special meeting to a specified time and place. If all members of the Board are absent, the clerk may adjourn the meeting. A copy of the notice of adjournment shall be conspicuously displayed near the meeting room door within twenty-four hours of adjournment.

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Actions by the Board

No action will be taken unless the subject acted upon was listed in the agenda published for that meeting, except that an item of business not included on the agenda of a regular meeting may be considered and acted upon after a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting to add such business to the agenda.

The Board of Education shall not adopt resolutions except where such adoption is required by law, or where the intent of the Board is to publish a status position of the Board, as in advising the General Assembly of the Board's position on a proposed law, or commending staff members or other agencies for work well done.

All actions taken by the Board shall be identified clearly in minutes of the Board meeting.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
1-200 Definitions
1-206 Denial of access of public records or meetings.
Notice. Appeal 1-210 Access to public records
1-225 Meetings of government agencies to be public
1-226 Recording, broadcasting or photographing meetings
19a-342 Smoking prohibited in certain places. Sign
required. Penalty 1-231 Executive sessions
1-232 Conduct of meetings (re
disturbances) 10-224 Duties of the
Secretary

Bylaw adopted by the Board: February 10, 2005 NEW LONDON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
New London, Connecticut

Revised: February 12, 2009
November 20, 2014
June 10, 2021

Guide for Persons Attending a Meeting of the New London Board of Education

1. Board Membership

The New London Board of Education has seven members elected every two years. The officers are a President, Vice President, and a Secretary. They are elected by the Board members themselves at the annual meeting in December. Board officers serve for one year only unless re-elected.

2. Time and Location of Meetings

The Board meets regularly on the second and fourth Thursday of every month except July. The Board meets once in December. Changes are made from time to time for meetings that fall during school vacations or on special occasions. All other meetings are special sessions or committee meetings.

The Board meets regularly in a location as determined by the Board of Education. Meetings begin at 7:00 p.m.. Announcement of meetings will appear on the New London Public Schools website and when possible, in *The Day* newspaper prior to the meeting.

3. Conduct of Meetings

The Board of Education meets to take specific actions, hear reports, and listen to comments from the public. All Board meetings are conducted in public except authorized executive sessions. The Board observes *Roberts Rules of Order*.

4. Public Participation at Board Meetings

The Board agenda has a section early in the meeting reserved for comments and questions from persons attending the meeting. Anyone wishing to discuss a specific Board employee, such as a teacher or administrator, must request a special opportunity to do so in executive session. The Board employee has the right to be informed of this request and to be present. Persons wishing to discuss complaints against individual employees of the New London Public Schools at any meeting of the New London Board of Education shall be encouraged to pursue such complaints through the office of the Superintendent prior to presenting his/her complaints. Employees will receive copies of any complaints of their performance presented at a Board of Education meeting despite the referral of such complaints to the Administration.

Guide for Persons Attending a Meeting of the New London Board of Education (continued)

1. Any individual desiring to speak shall give his or her name; address; and group, if any, that is represented.
2. The presentation should be as brief as possible. Unless an extension of time is granted by the President, a speaker shall be limited to three minutes.
3. The recording secretary shall act as timekeeper for the meeting if deemed necessary by the Chairperson.
4. The Board may permit any individual or group to address the Board concerning any subject that lies within its jurisdiction during a portion of the Board's regular meetings so designated for such purpose.
5. Should there be a number of individuals who wish to speak about the same issue, the Board asks that one person be designated as the spokesperson to speak at the Board meeting.

It is important to understand that Board meetings are meetings before the public. They are not open hearings. Once the Board moves into its regular agenda, persons attending the meeting may not participate.

5. Agenda of Board Meetings

Each meeting has a formal written agenda. It consists basically of approval of minutes, specific actions, and reports by Board members and staff.

6. Committees

The Board President appoints committees to study issues and prepare recommendations to the full Board. Over the years it has proved advisable to have committees on curriculum, policy, negotiations, grievances and continuing committee issues.

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Quick Reference for Appropriate Motions to Use in Various Situations

<u>If you want to...</u>	<u>Motion to use</u>	<u>Needs a second</u>	<u>Can be debated</u>	<u>Can be amended</u>	<u>Vote required</u>
Introduce an item for action	Main motion	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Modify the motion	Amend	Yes	Yes	Once	Majority
	Divide the question	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
	Refer to committee	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Defer action	Postpone	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
	Table	Yes	No	No	Majority
	Refer to committee	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Prevent action	Before debate: object to consideration	No	No	No	Two-thirds
	After debate: postpone indefinitely	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
Reject the question	Before debate: object to consideration	No	No	No	Two-thirds
	Move previous question or close debate	Yes	No	No	Two-thirds
	After debate: postpone indefinitely	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
Consider a question second time	Take from the table	Yes	No	No	Majority
	Reconsider	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
	Rescind previous action: without previous notice	Yes	Yes	No	Two-thirds
	with previous notice	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
Vote on the question	Call for a vote	No	No	No	Majority
	Move previous question or close debate	Yes	No	No	Two-thirds
Re-open main question to debate	Reconsider	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
Change the form of debate	Limit debate	Yes	No	No	Two-thirds
	Move previous question or close debate	Yes	No	No	Two-thirds
Interrupt; make personal request	Rise for information	No	No	No	None
	Question of privilege	No	No	No	Decided by chair
	Withdraw a motion	No	No	No	Majority
	Parliamentary procedure inquiry	No	No	No	None
Correct a mistake in proceedings	Point of order	No	No	No	None
Propose action which violates a rule of the meeting	Suspend the rules	Yes	No	No	Two-thirds
Challenge a decision of the Chair	Appeal	Yes	No	No	Majority