

XV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS

A. The Jefferson Parish School Board desires the citizens of the district to attend its meetings so that they may become better acquainted with the schools and so that the Board may have opportunity to hear the wishes and/or ideas of the public.

B. It is the policy of the Board to conduct all meetings in full view of and with welcomed participation by the public, except those items of the agenda that the Board may or must legally discuss in executive session.

C. PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

1. A public comment period shall be held before any vote is taken on an agenda item. Comments from the public shall occur after introduction of the item to be voted on and before any discussion by Board members. However, a person is not entitled to take up business before the Board requiring a vote unless the item in which he/she is interested has been placed on the agenda of that meeting. Should the item be withdrawn, there will not be a public comment period on the item.

2. Before each meeting of the Board, a copy of the agenda for that meeting shall be posted at the meeting place or otherwise conspicuously displayed. Any person wishing to speak on any of the items listed in such agenda must complete and submit a Speaker's Card containing the name of the person, the name of any organization or group for whom the individual wishes to speak, and the specific agenda item about which the person wishes to speak. A separate card must be completed and submitted for each different agenda item on which the individual would like to address the Board.

3. The Speaker's Cards will be collected and forwarded to the Board President at the beginning of the meeting.

4. As the Board reaches each item on its agenda, the Board Vice President shall review the submitted cards and shall call on those persons indicating a desire to speak on that agenda item. Each person may speak for not more than three (3) minutes on each item. The Board shall delay its deliberations on each agenda item until after all members of the public who have submitted cards in accordance with this procedure have been given an opportunity to speak.

5. In the event that the Board should add an item to its agenda after the Board meeting begins, a slightly different procedure shall be followed. After the item has been added to the Board's agenda by vote of the Board, the Board President shall orally request of the audience whether anyone in attendance would like to speak on that item. Each person indicating a desire to do so shall be given a period not to exceed three (3) minutes to address the Board on each agenda item. The Board shall delay its deliberations on each agenda item until

such time as all interested members of the public have had an opportunity to speak.

6. At the conclusion of all public input on each agenda item, the Board shall deliberate the matter and take such action as it considers appropriate. There shall be no further public input allowed on each agenda item after the Board has begun its deliberation of that item.

7. Copies of this procedure shall be available for distribution to the public during regular business hours and at meetings of the Board and its committees.

D. PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

1. The Public Comment on Non-agenda Items section of the agenda, which shall be held during regular meetings, shall be designed to give the public an opportunity to make statements, or comments on school related issues.

2. At any time when a member of the public addresses the Board under delegations, it shall require that the speaker give his/her name. Any person wishing to speak under delegations must complete and submit a Speaker's Card containing the name of the person, the name of any organization or group for whom the individual wishes to speak, and the specific issue about which the person wishes to speak. The Speaker's Card must be submitted prior to the beginning of the meeting.

E. DECORUM IN MEETINGS

All persons addressing the Board shall be treated courteously by Board members. Any person who fails or refuses to obey the rulings and directions of the presiding officer, or otherwise disrupts the meeting in any manner, shall be requested by the presiding officer to leave the meeting room for the remainder of that meeting. If any person refuses to follow the directions of the presiding officer, the presiding officer shall make a motion to remove that person under La. R.S. 42:17(C). If affirmed, the presiding officer shall cause such person to be removed from the meeting as authorized by La. Rev. Stat. Ann. 42:17(C) and other applicable Laws of the State of Louisiana.

F. Derogatory statements about, or directed at a Board member or any employee, shall not be allowed. Speakers who wish to make such comments shall be directed to submit their complaints by signed written statement. Written complaints shall be referred to the President of the Board, the Superintendent, or a designee who shall investigate the complaint, initiate further appropriate action, and notify the members of the Board of its disposition.

G. The Board or Superintendent and his/her staff will not, as a rule, answer questions from the public during the *Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items* period. The questioner's name, address, and telephone number shall be taken for later

personal reply. Previously stated Board policies or administrative rules and regulations may be explained, however. A Board member may, with the President's permission, ask a question of the speaker.

Ref: La. R.S. 17:81, 42:14, 42:15, 42:16.