

Public Participation at School Board Meetings

The primary purpose of school board meetings is to conduct the business of the Board as it relates to school policies, programs and operations. The Board encourages residents to attend Board meetings so that they may become acquainted with the operation and programs of the schools. All official meetings of the Board shall be open to the press and public. However, the Board reserves the right to meet and to adjourn or recess a meeting at any time. The Board also reserves the right to enter into non-public session at any time, in accordance with the provisions RSA 91-A:3.

In order to assure that persons who wish to appear before the Board may be heard and, at the same time, it may conduct its meetings properly and efficiently, the Board adopts, as policy, the following procedures and rules pertaining to public participation at Board meetings:

- The Board will provide time to hear public comments.
- In order to comply with the minute requirements of RSA 91-A:2, II, speakers shall identify themselves clearly for the record.
- Consistent with RSA 91-A:3 and the laws pertaining to student and family privacy rights, the Board will not place any matter on the public agenda that is to be properly discussed in a non-public session. Complaints regarding individual employees, personnel or students will be directed to the Superintendent in accordance with policy #1312, Complaints Against School Personnel or Programs.
- All speakers are to conduct themselves in a civil manner. Obscene, libelous, defamatory or violent statements will be considered out of order and will not be tolerated.

The Board Chair may terminate the speaker's privilege of address if the speaker does not follow the rules of order. Repeated violations or disruptions may result in the intervention of law enforcement, with the potential for criminal charges

Persons appearing before the Board are reminded that members of the Board are without authority to act independently as individuals in official matters. Thus, questions may be directed to individual Board members, but answers must be deferred pending consideration by the full Board.

The Board reminds the public that there are many avenues to address the Board beyond Public Participation at School Board Meetings such as emails and phone calls.

Legal Reference:

RSA 91-A:2, Meetings Open to Public

RSA 91-A:3, Non-Public Sessions

Adopted: 09/25/89
Amended: 03/15/93; 6/8/98
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