No. 9240
SECTION: BYLAWS OF THE BOARD
TITLE: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN BOARD MEETINGS

ADOPTED: 12/16/74
READOPTED: 4/28/08;6/19/12;1/29/14; 11/15/16;4/16/19;6/20/23
REVISED: 5/26/98;2/23/99;5/25/04; 11/15/12

OXFORD AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

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.

In order to permit fair and orderly expression of such comment, the Board will provide a period for public participation at every public meeting of the Board and will formulate rules to govern such public participation in Board meetings.

The presiding officer at each public meeting of the Board and its committees will follow the rules of the Board for conduct of public meetings in accordance with this policy.

The presiding officer shall be guided by the following rules:

1. Public participation shall be permitted only as indicated on the order of business as reflected on the agenda for the meeting. However, the order of business will always allow an opportunity for public participation prior to any official action on any matter on the agenda. On a given issue, additional public comment may be permitted at the discretion of the presiding officer or upon a motion carried by majority vote of the Board.

The Board requires that public participants be residents or taxpayers of this District (or):

1. Anyone having a legitimate interest in a contemplated action of the Board.

2. Anyone representing a group in the District.

3. Any representative of a firm eligible to bid on materials or services solicited by the Board.

4. Any employee of the District.

5. Any pupil of the District.

Participants must be recognized by the presiding officer and must preface their comments by an announcement of their name, township/borough and group affiliation, if appropriate.

Statements made by participants will be limited to five (5) minutes in duration.

All statements shall be directed to the presiding officer. After visitors have been heard and the Board has begun its deliberations on an item of

business, no comments or questions shall be permitted from the floor. Visitors are often strongly tempted to make a suggestion, voice disagreement, or ask for clarification, but the Board cannot carry on an orderly discussion if the deliberative body is suddenly to be enlarged to include those who have come to observe. The Board is the only legitimate "citizens committee" since only Board members are duly elected representatives of all the citizens of the District.

The Board, through its presiding officer, shall maintain control of all meetings and shall not release control to any individual or groups during any part of any meeting for any reason.

The presiding officer may exercise discretion in recognizing any visitors at a public meeting to make brief comments.

The presiding officer may interrupt or terminate a participant's statement when the statement is too lengthy or obscene and may:

1. Request any individual to leave the meeting when that person does not observe reasonable decorum.

2. Request the assistance of law enforcement officers in the removal of a disorderly person when that person's conduct interferes with the orderly progress of the meeting.

3. Call for a recess or adjournment to another time when the lack of public decorum so interferes with the orderly conduct of the meeting to warrant such action.

No placards or banners will be permitted within the meeting room or on school grounds without prior approval which approval shall not be unreasonably withheld.

The meeting agenda shall be made available to the press and public on the morning of the scheduled Board meeting. By agenda is meant a copy of the order of business and a list of the items which will be discussed.

Reports generated by the Board will be available for examination following a Board meeting and by contacting the Board Secretary.

The meeting agenda and all pertinent documents, as determined by the Superintendent, less any confidential material, shall be distributed to the press prior to the meeting whenever publication is practical.

The Board requests that any written or printed material from any individual who, or group which wishes to have distributed to Board members by the administration before a specific session must be submitted to the office of the Superintendent no later than noon of the fifth day preceding that session. The following items should be included as part of the document:

1. Name of any and all authors.

2. Address of each author.

3. Telephone number of each author.

4. Names and addresses of any organizations affiliated with the publications.

Before this information is distributed, each page will have the following:

"This is not an authorized publication of the Oxford Area School Board."

Any material received by the Superintendent will be forward to Board members in the next available information packet.

Information distributed to the public during a public meeting must be accomplished in accordance with all guidelines of this policy inasmuch as such distribution is considered to be public participation.

Electronic recording devices and cameras, other than those used as official recording devices, will be permitted under the following rules:

1. No auxiliary lighting will be permitted.

2. Under no circumstances will recording devices or problems associated with them be permitted to interrupt or delay sessions of the Board.

3. Audio recording devices can be used from an individual's seat or from a location designated by the Board President.

4. The Board Secretary will audio record all public Board meetings. Tapes will be available for review for six months following a meeting via the Board Secretary.

5. Visual recording devices can be used from locations designated by the Board President.

6. Operators of audio/video recording equipment will not be granted concessions from the Board.

7. Tapes used by the District for replay or public broadcast must be played unaltered.

8. Coverage will not be curtailed at the request of any official, meeting participant, or member of the public.

9. An individual's right to record will be forfeited if there is an interference with the ability of others to observe the proceedings.