PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT MEETINGS

Code **BEDH** *Issued* **11/26**

Purpose: To establish the basic structure for public participation in board meetings.

The public is encouraged and cordially invited to attend board meetings. The board conducts meetings for the purpose of carrying on the official business of the school district. The meetings are not public forum meetings but are meetings held in public. Orderly conduct of a meeting does not permit spontaneous discussion from the audience. Regular, special and emergency meetings are open to the general public, news media and school staff.

In order that the board may fairly and adequately discharge its overall responsibility, citizens wanting an item to be placed on the agenda for a specific board meeting should direct requests to the superintendent or board chairperson.

Agenda

The board urges all persons to participate through established procedures. These procedures are designed to encourage participation and ensure the orderly management of the school district. The board is committed to compliance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act as well as all other federal and state laws which regulate or impinge on board actions and policy.

A citizen must submit a written request for an item to be placed on the agenda no later than 5:00 p.m. on the fifth working day prior to a scheduled meeting of the board. That request will state the name of the individual or group submitting the request, the address, the purpose of the request, and the topic to be addressed.

The chairman of the board will introduce speakers who have previously submitted a request to the board at the appropriate time during the agenda and invite them to make comments on agenda topics. Speakers may offer objective comments on school operations and programs that concern them. The board will not permit in public session any expression of personal complaints about school personnel nor against any person connected with the school system.

The number of persons appearing before the board may be limited to not more than five, including the spokesperson for the group. Participants will be limited to no more than five minutes. The total time for public participation will be limited to thirty minutes.

Adopted 6/2/80; Revised 6/2/97, 11/5/12,11/26

Legal references:

A. S.C. Code, 1976, as amended:
   1. Section 30-4-10 et seq. – South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.