

FAIRVIEW SCHOOL DISTRICT

SECTION: COMMUNITY

TITLE: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN
BOARD MEETINGS

ADOPTED: December 20, 1999

REVISED: March 14, 2005

903. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN BOARD MEETINGS	
<p>1. Purpose 65 Pa. C.S.A. 701 et seq</p>	<p>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. The Board encourages its citizens to come before the Board to present their petitions, inquiries, concerns, or other communications of interest to the school district. It is the hope of the Board that the public will feel free to communicate with the district as it will be helpful to receive their input regarding their ideas or communication of problems and/or concerns.</p>
<p>2. Authority 65 Pa. C.S.A. 710</p> <p>65 Pa. C.S.A. 701.1</p>	<p>In the interest of providing the citizens equal opportunity to be heard, the Board shall establish guidelines to govern public participation in Board meetings necessary to conduct its meetings and to maintain order.</p> <p>In order to permit fair and orderly expression of public comment, the Board shall provide an opportunity at each open meeting of the Board for residents and taxpayers to comment on matters of concern, official action, or deliberation before the Board prior to official action by the Board.</p> <p>The agenda for the regular monthly Board meeting will be made available upon request. The meeting agenda and all pertinent documents shall be distributed to the press and public at the meetings.</p>
<p>3. Guidelines</p>	<p><u>Public Comments at Board Meetings</u></p> <p>The Board shall allow public comments on agenda items at the beginning of each meeting and public comments on other items at a point during regular Board meetings to be determined by the President.</p> <p>The Board requires that public participants be residents or taxpayers of this district or anyone having registered a legitimate interest in a contemplated action of the Board.</p>

All individuals wishing to participate in a public Board meeting shall register their intent with the Board Secretary three (3) days in advance of the regularly scheduled meeting and shall include the name and address of the participant, topic to be addressed, and group affiliation, if applicable. Each statement made by such participant shall be limited to five (5) minutes duration. The Board Secretary will include them on the Board agenda under the Recognition of Visitors.

Persons who attend a public Board meeting and desire to speak on a topic without having given three (3) days notice of such intent shall be permitted to speak, but shall be limited to two (2) minutes duration. The individual shall comply with all other requirements of this policy.

Participants must be recognized by the presiding officer and must preface their comments by an announcement of their name, address, and group affiliation, if applicable, and topics of discussion.

The portion of the meeting during which participation of the public is invited shall be limited to thirty (30) minutes.

The presiding officer may:

1. Interrupt or terminate a participant's statement when the statement is too lengthy, personally directed, obscene, or irrelevant.
2. Request any individual to leave the meeting when that person does not observe reasonable decorum.
3. Call a recess or adjournment to another time when the lack of public decorum interferes with the orderly conduct of the meeting.
4. Waive these rules with the approval of the Board.

If the Board determines that there is not sufficient time at a meeting for public comments, the comment period may be deferred to the next regular meeting or to a special meeting occurring before the next regular meeting.

Correspondence to the Board

It is to be noted that the district is interested and does appreciate receiving letters from the community.

<p>4. Delegation of Responsibility Pol. 006</p>	<p>The President of the Board and the Superintendent of Schools shall determine what correspondence should be read at a public meeting, except that which is governed by law.</p> <p>Correspondence which is received by the Board President, Board Secretary, or Superintendent of Schools requesting that said correspondence be read at the Board meeting shall be read by the Board Secretary at a public meeting. The presiding officer, in his/her discretion, may determine not to read such correspondence verbatim, or instead may determine to have it summarized, when the correspondence is lengthy (more than one typed, double-spaced page).</p> <p>However, any such correspondence which is personally derogatory to any individual will not be read at a public meeting.</p> <p>Requests by an employee for an extended leave of absence, as per the contract, shall be read or summarized at a public meeting.</p> <p>The presiding officer at each public Board meeting shall follow Board policy for the conduct of public meetings. Where his/her ruling is disputed, it may be overruled by a majority of those Board members present and voting.</p> <p>Whenever issues identified by the participant are subject to remediation under policies and procedures of the Board, they shall be dealt with in accordance with those policies and procedures.</p>
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