

BEDH - Public Participation at Board Meetings

See Also KE, KEB

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 parents and New Hampshire 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 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:

1. With an effort to ensure that all members of our school community have the opportunity to address the board, public comment will be moved to #8 on the agenda. Each person will have up to 3 minutes in which to speak and there will be no limit to the number of speakers.
2. Members of the public may offer comments on agenda items only. The Board will not entertain comments on items that do not appear on the agenda. Requests to address the Board on matters not on the agenda must be presented to the Dean and must set forth the specifics of the subject to be addressed. When appropriate, the Board may place such requests on the agenda.
3. Consistent with RSA 91-A:3, Policy BEDB, 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 Director in accord with Policies KE and KEB.
4. 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 this rule of order.

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.

Legal Reference:

RSA 91-A:2, Meetings Open to Public

RSA 91-A:3, Non-Public Sessions

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