

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP

SECTION: COMMUNITY
TITLE: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN BOARD MEETINGS
ADOPTED: February 20, 2001
REVISED: April 3, 2012

903. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN BOARD MEETINGS	
1.Purpose 65 P.S. 271 et seq.	<p>The Board recognizes the value to school governance of public comments on educational issues and the importance of involving members of the public in Board Meetings.</p> <p>It is the intention of this policy to balance the need of the Board to conduct its stated business on the agenda and at the same time, provide for transparency in government and an opportunity for the public to comment on the proposed actions of the Board. Questions posed to the Board and not answered during the course of the public meeting, will be referred to the Administration for a response either to the Board or to the community member within a reasonable time following the Board meeting.</p> <p>It is the desire of the Board that meetings be formal enough for an orderly procedure to conduct the Board's proposed agenda. At the same time, the Board seeks to encourage free discussion and collaborative thinking among itself.</p>
2.Authority	To permit fair and orderly expression of such comment, the Board will provide a period for public participation at every open meeting of the Board and will formulate rules to govern such public participation in Board meetings.
3.Responsibility	The presiding officer at each public Board meeting will follow the rules of the Board for conduct of public meetings in accordance with this policy and Policy 006.
4.Guidelines (8344)	<p>A total of thirty (30) minutes shall be allotted for comments from the public on agenda items during the first public comment portion of the Board agenda. Each speaker shall provide his or her name or address before addressing the Board. At the discretion of the Board President, members of the public may be permitted to comment on non-agenda items during this period. Individuals who sign up for agenda items will be heard in the order from which they signed up.</p> <p>Time will be allotted for the public to comment on any issue during the second public comment portion of the agenda. Each speaker shall provide his/her name and address before addressing the Board.</p> <p>After a motion has been made and seconded, but before the Board begins debate, the presiding officer may, in special circumstances, permit comments from the public. All such comments shall be limited to the motion on the floor at that time.</p> <p>No speaker may speak more than once during each of the two (2) public comment portions of the agenda. However, at the discretion of the Board President, a speaker may speak more than once during each of the two (2) public comment sessions. The length of public comments should generally not exceed three (3) minutes in duration and may be further limited and/or lengthened at the discretion of the Board President.</p> <p>The Board, by majority vote, may extend or limit the time for public comment.</p>

<p>PA Statute 65 P.S. 271 et seq Board Policy No. 006</p>	<p>The Board requires public participants be residents or taxpayers of this District or a:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. representative of a group in the community that has a vested interest in school District operations or any school District group or club b. representative of a firm eligible to bid on materials or respond to services solicited by the Board c. District employee d. District student e. parent or guardian of a District student <p>Participants must be recognized by the presiding officer and must preface their comments by an announcement of their name, township or residence, and group affiliation if applicable.</p> <p>All statements shall be directed to the presiding officer; no participant may address or question Board members or administrators individually.</p> <p>Electronic recording devices and cameras, in addition to those used as official recording devices, shall be permitted at public meetings under guidelines established by the Board.</p> <p>For the safety of the attendees and participants, no placards or banners on sticks will be permitted on school property. Banners or placards on sticks will be confiscated. Banners, (on or not on sticks), placards (or or not on sticks), or apparel containing libelous, slanderous, obscene or profane language or images will not be permitted on school property.</p> <p>For the safety of the attendees and participants, to the extent possible, all in attendance must be seated throughout the meeting. No one in attendance shall be permitted to stand on the sides, in the rear of the room or in the aisles of the meeting room. Anyone refusing to sit or remain seated will be required to leave District property, unless there is unavailable seating for the individual. In the event of inadequate seating, every attempt will be made to move the meeting to a more accommodating forum.</p> <p>The meeting agenda and all pertinent public documents shall be available on the District website a minimum of 24 hours prior to the meetings, unless such documents cannot be disclosed or may not be disclosed pursuant to applicable law. A copy will also be available to the press and public at the meeting.</p> <p>In the event a reminder to adhere to policy is ignored the presiding officer may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. interrupt or terminate a participant's statement when the statement is too lengthy, personally directed, abusive, or irrelevant. b. request any individual to leave the meeting when that person does not observe reasonable decorum. c. request the assistance of law enforcement officers to remove a disorderly person when his/her conduct interferes with the orderly progress of the meeting or to assist with violations of policy. d. call a recess or adjourn to another time when the lack of public decorum interferes with
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	<p>the orderly conduct of the meeting.</p> <p>e. waive these rules with the approval of the board.</p>
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