

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT MEETINGS

Issued 10/19/04

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

The public is cordially invited to attend board meetings. The board conducts meetings for the purpose of carrying on the official business of the school. 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 Administrator or board chairman.

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. The board is committed to compliance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act as well as all other federal and state laws that regulate or impinge on board actions and policy.

A citizen must submit a written request for an item to be placed on the agenda to the board chairperson or Administrator no later than one week 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. A form may be sent asking for the specific information. The information must be received before a request can be considered.

The written request will be distributed to board members with the agenda. If more than one speaker represents a group, efforts should be made to coordinate the comments. A maximum of two speakers representing each side of an issue will be permitted to address a specific topic. Public hearings are excluded from these restrictions.

The allotted time for presentations will normally be five minutes. Time can be extended five minutes by majority vote of the board.

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.

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The board will not permit in public session any expression of personal complaints about school personnel or against any person connected with the school system. Based on legal advice of the school counsel, comments should not be made, either complimentary or critical, naming any student, school employee, administrator or board member as these matters are personnel matters that require an executive session.

The board's actions on citizens' public requests will be made after such individuals or groups have completed their statements and concluded their participation in the meeting and board members have had sufficient time to study such proposals. No decision will be made for a minimum of two weeks unless an emergency exists. Citizens and groups making such presentations are encouraged to present their statements in writing, with adequate copies for distribution to all board members.

All records of the board will be available to citizens for inspection at the school.

Adopted 10/19/04; Revised _____

Legal references:

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

**CITIZEN PARTICIPATION REQUEST FORM
FORMAL REQUEST**

Please complete this form and submit it to the Board Chairperson or his/her designee one week prior to the time the board meeting is called to order at 6:30 p.m.

Name _____

Address _____ Telephone _____

Please check appropriate response.

_____ I am representing myself.

_____ I am representing _____
(Name of group or organization)

Purpose of request

Topic to be addressed