

187 (Rule) GUIDELINES FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT BOARD MEETINGS

School District citizens have the expressed right and are encouraged to attend Board meetings and to listen to and observe the deliberations of its members. The following rules are adopted to preserve the orderly pursuit of Board business and to provide proper opportunities for legitimate and objective discussion and analysis of the issues presented.

The Board of Education supports opportunities for civil discourse on all issues in a respectful atmosphere. As such, meetings will be conducted in a manner which incorporates the “Speak Your Peace” Resolution as adopted by the Board in May, 2008. The Board recognizes nine tools of civility that will provide increased opportunities for civil discourse and behavior as issues are deliberated:

- ◆ Pay attention
- ◆ Listen
- ◆ Be inclusive
- ◆ Don’t gossip
- ◆ Show respect
- ◆ Seek common ground
- ◆ Repair damaged relationships
- ◆ Use constructive language
- ◆ Take responsibility

1. Any citizen may request the opportunity to speak regarding any issue included in the agenda and may be recognized to speak during public comment regarding issues which are not on the agenda.
 - a. Every person who requests the opportunity to speak to the Board should submit in advance of the meeting a written request to the Board Secretary stating his/her name, address and the topic about which he/she wishes to speak.
 - b. The Board President shall determine whether it is in the interest of the Board to allow the request to be heard.
2. The President may limit the time allowed for the presentation. If there are numerous requests to address the Board on the same subject, the President may select representatives to speak on each side of the issue.
3. Prior to speaking, a citizen must be recognized by the Board President.
4. The Board will not hear oral complaints regarding school personnel except in the manner provided for elsewhere in Board policy. Speakers bear the personal risk if comments made are defamatory, slanderous, or otherwise harmful to another individual.
5. All persons seeking the opportunity to speak at a Board meeting are to address the President and may direct questions or comments to Board members or other officers of the school district only upon the approval of the President. Board members and the

Superintendent may have the privilege of asking questions of any person who addresses the Board.

6. The President may interrupt, warn and/or stop a participant (speaker) when the statement being made is too lengthy, repetitive, personally directed, abusive, obscene, or frivolous.
7. Items 1-6 similarly apply to committee meetings of the Board in that the Committee Chair will decide whether public comment will be allowed, and to what extent. Citizens interested in making a comment should raise their hand and wait for the Committee Chair to acknowledge them.

These rules are not designed to restrict the scheduled appearance of citizens who have regular business with the Board and whose presentations are provided for in the agenda.

Participation by citizens who are present as witnesses in any hearing or by vendors or other business representatives who are present for the consideration of bid awards is guided by rules affecting these special procedures. Participation by employees and their representatives is guided by the personnel policies and rules, except, of course, that all employees have the right to attend Board meetings in the same manner as all other citizens. Recognition of individuals who are not citizens of the School District is determined by the President or Committee Chair.

APPROVED: November 11, 1974

REVISED: November 11, 1996
December 11, 2000
December 10, 2012