

The Board encourages citizens of the District to attend its sessions so that they may become better acquainted with the operation and programs of the schools and so that the Board may have opportunity to hear the wishes and ideas of the public. 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 to discuss such matters as are properly considered in non-public session in accordance with 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. The first 15 minutes will be set aside for citizens to address the Board.
2. Any individual desiring to speak shall give his or her name, address, and the group, if any, that is represented.
3. The presentation should be as brief as possible. Written remarks are encouraged.
4. Speakers may offer comments on such school operations and programs as concern them. In public session, however, the Board will not hear personal complaints of school personnel nor complaints against any person connected with the school system. Other channels are provided for Board consideration and disposition of legitimate complaints involving individuals, which should be referred to the Superintendent for appropriate action.
5. Except as otherwise provided in this policy, members of the public may offer comments on agenda items or upon any other matter of public concern directly relating to the District's school policies, programs and operations. In the interest of preserving individual privacy and due process rights, the Board requests that comments (including complaints) regarding individual employees (other than the Superintendent) or individual students be directed to the Superintendent in accord with the complaint/grievance resolution processes set forth in School Board Policies KE and/or KEB. Complaints regarding the Superintendent may be directed to the School Board Chair as described in Board Policy KEB.
6. Any comments which do not adhere to the above, or which disrupt the official business of the Board may be ruled out of order by the Chair. Repeated disruption may result in the individual being asked to leave the meeting. Obscene speech, comments threatening bodily harm, or other unprotected speech will not be tolerated.
7. The Board Chair may terminate the speaker's privilege of address if the speaker does not follow the above rules of order. Repeated violations or disruptions may result in the intervention of law enforcement, with the potential for criminal charges.
8. Persons appearing before the Board are reminded that members of the Board are without authority to act independently as individuals in official matters. Thus, in most instances, any board response will be deferred pending consideration by the full Board.

With the aim of maintaining focus on the issues in discussion, it is desired that all speakers strive to adhere to ordinary norms of decorum and civility.

Legal Reference:

RSA 91-A:3, Public Records and Meetings: Non-Public Sessions