

BOARD POLICY
Public Participation in Board Meetings

Descriptor Code: BCBI

Meetings of the Board of Education are held to conduct the affairs and business of the school system. Although these meetings are not meetings of the public, the public is invited to attend all meetings and citizens are invited to address the Board at all regular meetings at the time shown on the agenda and in accordance with procedures established by the Board or the Superintendent. Public participation may be allowed in the discretion of the Board at certain additional meetings under procedures set by the Board.

The Superintendent shall make available the procedures to allow citizens to address the Board at regular meetings in accordance with this policy. These procedures shall include a requirement that notice be given at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting and that the Chair shall have the discretion to limit the length of time for individual comments and the number of citizens speaking for or against an individual matter. These procedures shall be available at the Superintendent's office and shall be given, upon request, to anyone requesting a copy.

All comments to the Board in accordance with this policy are to be brief and are intended for the Board to hear from citizens but not to take action.

Sumter County Schools

Adopted: May 12, 2002

Revised: March 10, 2022

Cross Ref.: Also KCA

Public Participation in Board Meetings

BOARD POLICY**Descriptor Code: BCBI-R****RULES OF CONDUCT AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCEDURES****Public Participation in Board Meetings Regulations**

These procedures are in accordance with Policy BCBI and provide the Rules of Conduct, in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 20-2-58, for all Board meetings. Further, for scheduling purposes at regular board meetings, prospective speakers during the public participation item on the agenda must sign up at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting with the Superintendent's Office. The Board will set aside up to 30 minutes on the agenda of its regular meetings to hear comments from the public in accordance with these procedures.

All attendees shall remember that while the meetings are open to the public, the purpose of the meeting is to conduct the business of the school system and members of the public are invited to participate only as allowed by Board policy and these procedures.

1. Members of the public shall conduct themselves in a respectful manner that is not disruptive to the conduct of the Board's business. Signs, flags, and banners are prohibited inside the Board meeting room.
2. Each member of the public participating in public comment will be given no more than five minutes to speak. The Board or its Chair may limit further the total time allocated for public participation as well as further limit the length of individual comments during public participation at its discretion for the purpose of the efficient operation of the business of the meeting.
3. Only residents of the School District, representatives of businesses or organizations located in the District, parents or guardians of students attending the schools of the District, or school system employees may address the Board during public participation. No individual or group will be retaliated against, in any manner whatsoever, for speaking during public participation.
4. The Board requests that any group or organization appoint a single representative to address the Board.
5. All speakers shall address the Board by first stating their names. All remarks shall be made to the Board as a body and addressed through the Chair. Remarks shall not be addressed to individual Board members.
6. Issues involving individual employees or individual students and pending litigation are not subjects for public participation. Where appropriate, the public is urged to follow other resolution processes set forth in Board policy or available at individual schools, where those processes are clearly designed to address the issue to be raised.
7. Speakers are asked to keep their remarks civil. The use of obscene, profane, vulgar, physically threatening, or abusive remarks will not be allowed. Loud and boisterous conduct or comments by speakers or members of the audience are not allowed.
8. The Board will not respond to comments made by the speaker during public participation unless a member of the Board chooses to ask a question. Speakers should remain at the microphone while answering questions.

