

# BYLAW GUIDE

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Public Participation in Board Meetings

## 0167 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN BOARD MEETINGS

The Board of Education recognizes the value of public comment on educational issues and the importance of allowing members of the public to express themselves on school matters of community interest.

In order to permit the fair and orderly expression of such comment, the Board shall set aside a portion of every Board meeting, the length of the portion to be determined by the Board, for public comment on any school or school district issue that a member of the public feels may be of concern to the residents of the school district.

Public participation shall be governed by the following rules:

1. A participant must be recognized by the presiding officer and must preface comments by an announcement of his/her name, **municipality** of residence, and group affiliation, if **applicable**;
2. Each statement made by a participant shall be limited to **(not less than three)** 5 minutes' duration;
3. No participant may speak more than once on the same topic until all others who wish to speak on that topic have been heard;
4. All statements, **questions, or inquiries** shall be directed to the presiding officer; **and any questions or inquiries directed by a participant to another Board member shall be redirected to the presiding officer who shall determine if such statement, question, or inquiry shall be addressed by the presiding officer on behalf of the Board or by the individual Board member**;
5. The presiding officer may:
  - a. Interrupt, warn, **and/or** terminate a participant's statement, **question, or inquiry** when **it** is too lengthy;
  - b. **Interrupt and/or warn a participant when the statement, question, or inquiry is abusive, obscene, or may be defamatory**;



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- c. Request any **person** to leave the meeting when that person does not observe reasonable decorum;
- d. Request the assistance of law enforcement officers in the removal of a disorderly person when **that person prevents or disrupts a meeting with an act that obstructs or interferes with a meeting**;
- e. Call for a recess or an adjournment to another time when the lack of public decorum interferes with the orderly conduct of the meeting; and
- f. Waive these rules when necessary for the protection of privacy or **to maintain an orderly operation of the Board meeting**.

N.J.S.A. 2C:33-8  
N.J.S.A. 10:4-12

Adopted:

