

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN BOARD MEETINGS**

The Board recognizes the inherent right of every citizen to attend and observe the Board's proceedings at any meeting that is not declared in executive session. All actions of the Board shall be taken openly, and deliberations leading to Board action shall likewise be conducted openly, except when an executive session has been called pursuant to Board policy. The public is invited to attend Board meetings and will be given time to voice opinions or concerns.

The meetings are a meeting of the Board of Education in public for the purpose of conducting the County School System's business and are not to be considered a public community meeting. There is a time for public participation during the meeting as indicated in agenda item "Public Comment".

Any citizen who desires to address the Board should give notice of his/her intention to the Superintendent at least by Wednesday of the week preceding a regular meeting. If a delegation is to appear, the notice should include the name of the spokesman, the names of other members of the delegation who plan to address the Board, and the nature of the topic they wish to discuss. The Superintendent shall include on the Agenda for the next regular meeting all individuals or delegations who give notice in advance of their intention of addressing the Board. The Superintendent shall place such groups on the Agenda so they will appear as early in the meeting as possible.

Individuals or delegations who notify the Superintendent after the Agenda for a regular meeting has been prepared, or who come to a regular Board meeting without notice, shall be heard at the time for "Public Comment" unless their appearance is moved in the meeting by the President with the consent of the Board. By law the Board may not discuss matters at a special meeting that have not been on the call for the meeting. (See Policy BDF).

The time allotted to delegations or individuals appearing before the Board shall normally be limited to 10 minutes unless extended by the Board. Action taken on matters brought before the Board shall be made only after a Board has adequate information upon which to make a decision. In all cases, a record shall be made of the name and address of the petitioner; and he/she shall be informed of the action of the Board after a final decision has been reached.

Tape recordings, at the Boards' discretion, may be made of each meeting of the Board and shall be preserved as public documents of the Board. Provided, however, that executive session shall not be recorded.

Attendees must register their intention to address the Board in the public portion of the meeting no later than 5 minutes before the meeting is scheduled to begin. The Board shall provide a form for such registration and such form shall be located in a convenient and accessible place within the meeting room. (Members of the public may not be required to register to address the Board more than fifteen (15) minutes before the meeting is scheduled to commence). 6-9A-3, Code of West Virginia.

The portion of the meeting during which the participation of the public is invited shall be limited to 60 minutes, unless extended by a vote of the Board.

Tape or video recordings are permitted, providing the person operating the recorder has contacted the Superintendent prior to the Board meeting to review possible placement of the equipment, and agrees to abide by the following conditions:

1. No obstructions are created between the Board and the audience.
2. No interviews are conducted in the meeting room while the Board is in session.
3. No commentary, adjustment of equipment, or positioning of operators is made that would distract either the Board or members of the audience while the Board is in session.

The presiding officer may:

1. interrupt, warn, or terminate a participant's statement when the statement is too lengthy, personally directed, abusive, obscene, or irrelevant;
2. request any individual to leave the meeting when that person does not observe reasonable decorum;
3. request the assistance of law enforcement officers in the removal of a disorderly person when that person's conduct interferes with the orderly progress of the meeting;
4. call for recess or an adjournment to another time when the lack of public decorum so interferes with the orderly conduct of the meeting as to warrant such action

(See also Hardy County File: BDB)

SOURCE: Board of Education Minutes

DATE: February 9, 1998 - October 9, 2000 – December 19, 2006

LEGAL REFERENCE: West Virginia Code 6-9A-3; 6-9A-4