



Book	BHASD Policies
Section	000 Local Board Procedures
Title	Public Participation in Board Meetings
Code	006.1
Status	Active
Adopted	February 7, 2011
Last Revised	January 4, 2021
Prior Revised Dates	9/21/2017

Purpose

The Board recognizes the value to school governance of public comment on educational issues and the importance of involving members of the public in Board meetings. The Board also recognizes its responsibility for proper governance of the district and the need to conduct its business in an orderly and efficient manner.[1]

Authority

The Board shall establish guidelines to govern public participation in Board meetings necessary to conduct its meeting and to maintain order.[2]

In order to permit fair and orderly expression of public comment, the Board shall provide an opportunity at each open meeting of the Board for residents and taxpayers to comment on matters of concern, official action or deliberation before the Board prior to official action by the Board.[3]

The Board shall require that all public comments be permitted relative to items on the agenda to be discussed by the Board and at the end of the meeting for non-agenda items.

If the Board determines there is not sufficient time at a meeting for public comments, the comment period may be deferred to the next regular meeting or to a special meeting occurring before the next regular meeting.[3]

Delegation of Responsibility

The presiding officer at each public Board meeting shall follow Board policy for the conduct of public meetings. Where his/her ruling is disputed, it may be overruled by a majority of those Board members present and voting.[4]

Guidelines

Whenever issues identified by the participant are subject to remediation under policies and procedures of the Board, they shall be dealt with in accordance with those policies and procedures and the organizational structure of the district.

The Board requires that public participants be residents or taxpayers of this district or anyone having registered a legitimate interest in a contemplated action of the Board, anyone representing a group in the community or school district, any representative of a firm eligible to bid on materials or services solicited by the Board, any district employee, and any district student.

All individuals wishing to have an item placed on the agenda at a public Board meeting shall register their intent with the Board Secretary ten (10) days in advance of the meeting and shall include the name and address of the participant, topic to be addressed and group affiliation, if applicable.

All individuals wishing to participate in a public Board meeting shall sign in prior to the start of the meeting and shall include the name and address of the participant, topic to be addressed and group affiliation, if applicable. The Board President may recognize participants who have not signed in after all signed in participants have spoken.

Participants must be recognized by the presiding officer and must preface their comments by an announcement of their name, address, and group affiliation if applicable.

Speakers are limited to three minutes per topic unless time is extended by the Board President.

No participant may speak more than once on the same topic unless approved by the Board President.

All statements shall be directed to the presiding officer; no participant may address or question Board members individually.

The presiding officer may:

1. Interrupt 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 or security officers to remove a disorderly person when his/her conduct interferes with the orderly progress of the meeting.
4. Call a recess or adjourn to another time when the lack of public decorum interferes with the orderly conduct of the meeting.

Broadcasting and Taping of Board Meetings

Photographic and electronic audio and video broadcasting and recording devices may be used at regular and special Board meetings according to the following guidelines:

1. Photographs, broadcasting and recording of meetings are permitted only when all parties involved have been informed that cameras, broadcasting and/or recording devices will be used.
2. Persons operating cameras, broadcasting and/or recording devices must do so with a minimum of disruption to those present at the meeting. Specifically, the view between Board members and the audience must not be obstructed, interviews must not be conducted during the meeting and no commentary is to be given in a manner that distracts Board members or the audience."

No placards or banners will be permitted within the meeting room.

The meeting agenda and appropriate reference documents shall be distributed to the press and public at the meetings.[5]

- Legal
1. 65 P.S. 701 et seq
 2. 65 P.S. 710
 3. 65 P.S. 710.1
 4. Pol. 006
 5. PA Statute 65 P.S. 701 et seq; Board Policy 006