

# CARLISLE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

SECTION: COMMUNITY

TITLE: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN  
BOARD MEETINGS

ADOPTED: April 19, 2007

REVISED: June 17, 2021

## 903. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN BOARD MEETINGS

### **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. [1]

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. [2]

The Board may impose reasonable limits on the duration of the public comment period and to the length of time available to individual speakers. [2]

### **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 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; or any district student.

Public comments shall be permitted at Regular Board Meetings as designated on the Board Agenda. At Regular Board Meetings, there shall be two opportunities for the public to provide comments to the Board. The first opportunity shall be on agenda items only, while the second opportunity is for all District related topics. All public comments will be limited to five (5) minutes in length. Participants must be recognized by the presiding officer and must preface their comments by an announcement of (for adults) their name, address, and group affiliation if applicable or (for students) name and grade level. The Board requests that no complaints regarding specific students, specific personnel, or of a personal nature be initiated at a public meeting. No participant may speak more than once on the same topic, unless all others who wish to speak on that topic have been heard. Please note that the Board will be listening and taking notes.

Public comments may be allowed at Committee Meetings at the discretion of the Board President, in consultation with the committee chair. These public comments shall follow the same protocols and procedures as Regular Board Meetings.

Comments may also be communicated via standard mail or email. Participants must identify their name, address, and group affiliation if applicable (adult) or name and grade level (student) in the body of the letter/written communication.

All statements shall be directed to the presiding officer; no participant may address or question Board Members individually. Statements will be received but may or may not be followed by a response from the presiding officer.

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 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.
5. Waive these rules with the approval of the Board.

Electronic recording devices and cameras, in addition to those used as official recording devices, shall be permitted at public meetings.

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

The meeting agenda and all pertinent documents shall be available to the press and public at the meetings.

Legal references:

1. 65 P.S. 701 et seq
2. 65 P.S. 710
3. 65 P.S. 710.1
4. Pol. 006