

# SOUTHERN FULTON SCHOOL DISTRICT

SECTION: COMMUNITY

TITLE: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN  
BOARD MEETINGS

ADOPTED: April 16, 2013

REVISED:

903. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN BOARD MEETINGS	
<p>1. Purpose 65 Pa. C.S.A. Sec. 701 et seq</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>2. Authority 65 Pa. C.S.A. Sec. 710</p> <p>65 Pa. C.S.A. Sec. 710.1</p> <p>65 Pa. C.S.A. Sec. 710.1</p>	<p>The Board shall establish guidelines to govern public participation in Board meetings necessary to conduct its meeting and to maintain order.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>The Board shall require that all public comments be made at the beginning of each meeting.</p> <p>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.</p>
<p>3. Delegation of Responsibility Pol. 006</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>4. Guidelines</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>

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.

Persons that have made a written request in a timely manner, to the Superintendent to have an item on the Board agenda shall have five (5) minutes to state their case.

Any group wishing to address the Board shall appoint a spokesperson. The spokesperson shall communicate the desires of the group to the Board. The spokesperson will have up to fifteen (15) minutes to present a case.

The Board has the authority to permit any person in the audience to speak for up to five (5) minutes.

No participant may speak more than once on the same topic, unless all others who wish to speak on that topic have been heard.

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 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 under guidelines established by the Board.

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.

References:

Sunshine Act – 65 Pa. C.S.A. Sec. 701 et seq

Board Policy – 006