



Book Policy Manual
 Section Series 1000 Community Relations
 Title Public Participation in Board of Education Meetings
 Code 1125
 Status First Reading

BRICK TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION Policy

X	Monitored
	Mandated
X	Other Reasons

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN BOARD OF EDUCATION 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.

Board of Education will permit public participation two times during the regularly scheduled monthly Board Meeting. The first public session will be held before the Board is scheduled to take action on agenda items. The comments or questions at this first public session shall be limited to questions on the agenda items and each speaker's comments or questions shall be limited to five minutes in duration. This first public session will be limited to a total of 45 minutes. The second public participation session shall be prior to adjournment of the regularly scheduled Board Meeting. Members of the public may make comments or ask questions regarding any school district matter at this public session and each speaker's comments or questions shall be limited to five minutes in duration. This session will be limited to a period of 30 minutes unless extended by a majority vote of the Board members present. The presiding officer may extend the time limits at his/her discretion.

Board of Education will permit public participation one time during other public meetings and speakers may make a comment or ask a question regarding any item. The speaker's comments shall be limited to five minutes in duration. The presiding officer may extend the time limits at his/her discretion.

Public participation shall be extended to residents of this district, persons having a legitimate interest in the actions of this Board, persons representing groups in the community or school district, representatives of firms eligible to bid on materials or services solicited by the Board, and employees and pupils of this district, except when the issue addressed by the participant is subject to remediation by an alternate method provided for in policies or contracts of the Board

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 five minutes;
3. No participant may speak more than once during each opportunity for public comment;
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 biased, abusive, obscene, or may be defamatory;
 - 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.
6. The first opportunity of the meeting during which the participation of the public for items on the agenda is invited shall be limited to 45 minutes unless extended by a majority vote of the Board members present.
7. The second opportunity of the meeting during which the participation of the public is invited shall be limited to 30 minutes unless extended by a majority vote of the Board members present.

Key Words

Board of Education Meetings, Reporting to the Public, Communicating with the Public, Confidentiality, Conduct

Legal [N.J.S.A. 2C:33-8 Disrupting meetings and processions](#)
 [N.J.S.A. 10:4-12: Meetings open to public; exceptions.](#)

Last Modified by Sandra Beyer on March 12, 2019