

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS

The Laconia School Board desires citizens of the district to attend its sessions so that they may become better acquainted with the operation and programs of the schools and that the Board may have an opportunity to hear the wishes and ideas of the public. All official meetings of the School Board shall be open to the press and the public. However, the School Board reserves the right to meet and to adjourn or recess a meeting at any time to discuss such matters as are properly considered in nonpublic session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3.

In order to assure that persons who wish to appear before the School Board may be heard and, at the same time, conduct its meetings properly and efficiently, the Board adopts as policy the following procedures and rules pertaining to public participation at Board meetings:

1. At some point during each School Board meeting, 15 to 20 minutes will be set aside for citizens to address the School Board. Written or oral statements can take up to 2 to 3 minutes per speaker. If additional time is desired, the speaker's item needs to be put on the agenda, as noted in section 2. The Chairperson can at his/her discretion allow for comment from the public as is determined to be needed.
2. Anyone wishing to speak before the School Board, either as an individual or as a member of a group, should inform the Superintendent of the desire to do so and of the topic to be discussed as early as possible, but at least seven days before the regularly scheduled Board meeting in order for the subject to be placed on the agenda.
3. Any individual desiring to speak shall give his or her name, address, and the group, if any, that is represented.

4. Speakers may offer such objective comments on school operations and programs as concern them. But in public session, the School Board will not hear personal complaints of school personnel nor against any person connected with the school system. Other channels provide for the School Board's consideration and disposition of legitimate concerns involving individuals. Proper decorum is required at all times.
5. Unless an answer to a question is provided in the School Board's written policies or in established regulations, the Board will not respond to the request at the same meeting, nor will it take action on a proposed recommendation, but shall defer the item to a later meeting.

The School Board vests in its Chairperson or other presiding officer authority to terminate the remarks of any individual when they do not adhere to the rules established above as to content or time limitation.

Persons appearing before the School Board are reminded, as a point of information, that members of the Board are without authority to act independently as individuals in official matters. Thus, questions may be directed to individual School Board members, but answers must be deferred pending consideration by the full Board.

Adopted: December 11, 1990

Reviewed: October 16, 2012

Revised: February 4, 1997, February 17, 2015