

Valley View Local School District
Bylaws & Policies

0160 - MEETINGS

0169.1 **Public Participation at Board Meetings**

The Board of Education recognizes the value to school governance of public comment on educational issues and the importance of allowing members of the public to express themselves on school matters of community interest.

The Board is also committed to conducting its meetings in a productive and efficient manner that assures that the regular agenda of the Board is completed in a reasonable period of time, honors the voluntary nature of the Board's time and using that time efficiently, and allows for a fair and adequate opportunity for input to be considered. Consequently, public participation at Board meetings will be governed by the following principles:

- A. Any person or group wishing to place an item on the agenda shall register their intent with the Superintendent no later than five (5) days prior to the meeting and include name and address of the participant; group affiliation, if and when appropriate; and/or topic to be addressed.

Such requests shall be subject to the approval of the Superintendent or the Board President.

- B. In order to permit the fair and orderly expression of such comment, the Board shall provide a period for public participation at every regular meeting of the Board and/or at those public meetings of the Board during which action may be taken and publish rules to govern such participation in Board meetings.

The presiding officer of each Board meeting at which public participation is permitted shall administer the rules of the Board for its conduct.

The presiding officer shall be guided by the following rules:

- A. Public participation shall be permitted as indicated on the order of business, before the Board takes official action on any issue of substance, and/or at the discretion of the presiding officer. Participants who wish to present about a specific item on the agenda for that meeting will be given first opportunity to speak. Next, the presiding officer will recognize participants wishing to address the Board on items not on the agenda for that meeting. The second part of the public participation session (non-agenda items) may be scheduled after the regular agenda of the Board is completed.

- B. The Board requires that public participants be: (1) District residents, taxpayers, employees or students, or such individual's designee; (2) Representatives of contractors eligible to bid on materials or services solicited by the Board; or (3) a representative of a group in the community or District. All such participants must have a legitimate interest in a contemplated action of the Board.
- C. Attendees must register their intention to participate in the public portion of the meeting upon their arrival at the meeting.
- D. Participants must be recognized by the presiding officer and will be requested to preface their comments by an announcement of their name, address, and group affiliation, if applicable.
- E. Each statement made by a participant shall be limited to three (3) minutes duration, unless extended by the presiding officer.
- F. No participant may speak more than once on the same topic unless all others who wish to speak on that topic have been heard.
- G. All statements shall be directed to the presiding officer; no person may address or question Board members individually.
- H. Participants are not permitted to address matters relating to individual students or other matters made confidential by law.
- I. In the interest of respecting the privacy of the District's employees, participants will not be permitted to present comments, criticisms or complaints relating to the job performance or behavior of specific District employees until after the matter has been referred to the office of the Superintendent of the office of Treasurer (if the employee at issue reports to the Treasurer) for review and response in accordance with any established procedures and/or collectively bargained requirements relating to evaluation, discipline and the handling of complaints.
- J. Tape or video recordings of Board meetings legally open to the public are permitted. The person operating the recorder should contact the Superintendent prior to the Board meeting to review possible placement of the equipment, and must agree to abide by the following conditions:

1. No obstructions are created between the Board and the audience.
2. No interviews are conducted in the meeting room while the Board is in session.
3. No commentary, adjustment of equipment, or positioning of operators is made that would distract either the Board or members of the audience while the Board is in session and not disrupt the meeting.
4. Any recording equipment must be silent, unobtrusive, self-contained, self-powered and must operate on available light so as not to interfere with any individual's ability to see, hear and participate in the meeting, and so as not to interfere with the orderly transaction of Board business.

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5. The presiding officer of the Board or his/her designee will have sole discretion to designate a reasonable location within the meeting room for which recording may take place.

K. The presiding officer may:

1. prohibit public comments that are frivolous, repetitive, and/or harassing;
2. interrupt, warn, or terminate a participant's statement when the statement is too lengthy, personally directed, abusive, off-topic, antagonistic, obscene, or irrelevant;
3. request any individual to leave the meeting when that person does not observe reasonable decorum;
4. request the assistance of law enforcement officers in the removal of a disorderly person when that person's conduct interferes with the orderly progress of the meeting;
5. call for a recess or an adjournment to another time when the lack of public decorum so interferes with the orderly conduct of the meeting as to warrant such action.

- L. The portion of the meeting during which the participation of the public is invited shall be limited to thirty (30) minutes, unless extended by a vote of the Board.

R.C. 3313.20

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