

CHARTIERS-HOUSTON SCHOOL DISTRICT

Policy No.: 005

Section: Local Board Procedures

# POLICY GUIDE

Title: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION  
IN MEETINGS

Adopted: 8/21/00

Revised:

## POLICY NO. 005

### PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN MEETINGS

The Board of School Directors recognizes the rights of its citizens to be present at all meetings and to witness its deliberations, policy formulations and decision making processes. The Board desires citizens of the District to attend its sessions and Committee meetings so that they may become better acquainted with the operations and programs of the schools and so the Board may have the opportunity to hear the wishes and ideas of the public.

In order to assure that persons who wish to appear before the Board may be heard and at the same time, conduct its meetings properly and efficiently, the Board will permit public participation in accordance with the terms of this Policy as follows:

#### Section 1. Public Participation:

During the format of any Regular, Committee of the Whole Meeting or Special Meeting of the Board of School Directors, the Board will receive comments from the public.

#### Section 2. Public Participation - Regular, Committee of the Whole or Special Meetings:

a) The agenda for all Regular or Special Meetings of the Board of School Detectors shall include a time for public comments and participation at the beginning of the meeting.

(b) The overall time period for public participation at the beginning of the meeting shall not exceed twenty (20) minutes each time, and the time period for receipt of comments from any one individual shall not exceed three (3) minutes. Presentations should be as brief as possible.

(c) Any person who wishes to address the Board of School Directors at a Regular or Special Meeting should submit to the Presiding Officer, through the Board Secretary a written statement including the following information:

- (1) Name and address of speaker;
- (2) Name of the group that the speaker is representing (if any);
- (3) General nature of the topic and comments to be made.

To accommodate the ability of the public to orderly participate in Board meetings, the Board Secretary shall make available cards upon which such information can be stated.

(d) Citizens are encouraged to submit such comments to the Board as early as possible prior to the meeting, including submission to the Superintendent during business hours on days prior to the meeting. This will permit orderly scheduling of public comments on the meeting agenda. Persons submitting written statements to the Superintendent and Board Secretary shall have priority. Any citizen not doing so shall have the right to speak, time permitting and pursuant to these rules and regulations by raising his or her hand so that the President of the Board may recognize his or her desire to speak.

(e) Public participation shall be limited to those persons comply with Section (c) and (d) herein.

(f) Citizens are further encouraged to submit written statements to the Board of School Directors containing any supplemental information to remarks made or the comments themselves.

(g) Comments presented to the Board of School Directors shall be made by the public in the form of informational items or statements and not in the form of questions to the Board.

(h) Upon receipt of a request in writing to address the Board as provided in subparagraph (c) and (d), the Presiding Officer shall recognize first those individuals who have submitted comments related to items on the agenda for that particular Regular, Committee of the Whole or Special Meeting. The Presiding Officer after hearing from all those submitting written comments shall time permitting allow oral comments on agenda items. When recognized by the Presiding Officer, the speaker shall state his/her name, address and the nature of his/her remarks.

(i) If sufficient time remains following the taking of agenda-related items, the Board may hear from such other individuals who have submitted written statements or wish to speak in accordance with this Policy, that are not addressed to agenda items.

(j) No person may speak twice until all others interested in addressing the Board have been heard.

(k) Subject to the twenty (20) minute time limitation, the Presiding officer retains the discretion to determine at any given meeting whether any individual who has not submitted a written request to address the Board will be recognized, after all written requests are completed.

(l) Except as set forth in this Policy, the determination of the order in which individuals may address the Board lies within the sole discretion of the Presiding officer.

(m) When the twenty (20) minute time period has expired, the Presiding officer will close the period of public participation.

### Section 3.

The Board vests in its President or other Presiding officer the authority to terminate the remarks of any individual when they do not adhere to the provisions of this policy. The Presiding Officer retains the right to declare out-of-order members of the public who engage in discussions concerning personnel matters or otherwise privileged or confidential matters.

### Section 4.

Speakers may offer such objective criticisms and comments of school operations and programs as concern them. In public session, the Board will not hear personal complaints against school personnel or against any person previously connected with the school system. Other channels provide for Board consideration and disposition of legitimate complaints involving individuals. Any such charges, complaints or challenges should be presented to the Superintendent or Secretary of the Board in writing and signed by the Complainant. All such charges, if presented to the Board directly, will be referred to the Superintendent for investigation and report.

### Section 5.

Persons appearing before the Board are reminded, as a point of information, that members of the Board are without authority to act independently as individuals in official matters. All information, statements, and comments shall be directed to the Presiding officer and Board as a whole. No participant may address statements or comments to individual Board members.

### Section 6.

Items of information, statements or comments brought before the Board at a Regular, Committee of the Whole, and/or Special Meeting will not necessarily be responded to or acted upon at that meeting, if at all.