

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

All regular and special meetings of the Franklin School Committee shall be open to the public. Executive sessions will be held only as prescribed by the Massachusetts General Laws.

The Chair of the Franklin School Committee shall preside at all meetings of the Committee and as such has the responsibility to conduct an effective business meeting.

The Committee desires citizens of the District to attend its meetings so that they may become better acquainted with the operations and the programs of our local public schools. In addition, the Committee would like the opportunity to hear the wishes and ideas of the public.

In order that all citizens who wish to be heard before the Committee have a chance and to ensure the ability of the Committee to conduct the District's business in an orderly manner, the following rules and procedures are adopted:

1. The Committee will hear public comment not related to an agenda item at the beginning of each regular Committee meeting. The Committee will listen, but not respond, to any comment made. Written comments may be presented to the Committee before or after the meeting for the Committee members' review and consideration at an appropriate time.
2. The Chair shall determine the length of the public participation segment.
3. Topics for discussion during the meeting must be limited to those items listed on the Committee meeting agenda for that evening. At the discretion of the Chair, members of the public may speak to an agenda item.
4. A Committee member may add an agenda item to a future meeting as a result of a citizen comment during the public participation segment. If the Committee believes that an issue requires a dialogue with the Franklin community, the Committee may schedule a separate public hearing on that issue.
5. Improper conduct and remarks will not be allowed. Defamatory or abusive remarks are always out of order. If a speaker persists in improper conduct or remarks, the Chair may terminate that individual's privilege of address.
6. All remarks will be addressed through the Chair of the meeting.
7. Speakers may offer such objective criticisms of the school operations and programs as concern them, but in public session the Committee will not hear personal complaints of school personnel nor against any member of the school community. Under most circumstances, administrative channels are the proper means for disposition of legitimate complaints involving staff members.

If a member of the public wants to have an issue addressed at a Committee meeting, the individual must notify the Chair in writing no later than five (5) days prior to the meeting. Such request should contain background statements explaining the scope and intent of the issue. The Chair reserves the right to place the issue on the agenda, send the issue to subcommittee, direct the issue to appropriate school personnel, or reject the request.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. c. 30A, §§ 18-25; MASC July 2016

CROSS REFS.: BDB School Committee Officers
BEDB Order of Business
KE Public Complaints
KE-E School Department Communication Procedure

Adopted by School Committee: 11/28/2017