

BYLAWS

HOWELL TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION

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Public Participation in Board Meetings

0167 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN BOARD MEETINGS

The Board of Education 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 the Board may have the opportunity to hear the wishes and ideas of the public. The public shall be provided the opportunity to speak at every Board meeting.

When a group, organization, or individual wishes to make a formal presentation to the Board, they may request time on the agenda by contacting the Board Secretary in writing, stating the purpose of the presentation and the approximate amount of time needed for the presentation. A spokesman will then be appointed by the group or organization, and the Board will recognize the designated spokesman. All presentations must conform to this paragraph.

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

1. Individuals and delegations shall have two opportunities to address the Board at every public meeting. The second public opportunity to address the Board shall begin no later than 11:00 p.m., after which the Board may continue its business.
2. In the event it appears the public comment portion of the meeting may exceed forty-five minutes, the presiding officer may limit each statement made by a participant to three minutes' duration.
3. Any individual desiring to speak shall give his or her name, place of residence, and the group, if any, that is represented.
4. All statements shall be directed to the presiding officer; no participant may address or question Board members or administration individually.
5. No speaker shall be heard twice until all others wishing to speak have had the opportunity to be heard.
6. Speakers may offer such objective criticisms of school operations and programs as concern them. However, in public session the Board will not hear personal complaints about school personnel nor against any person connected with the school system. Other channels provide for Board consideration and disposition of legitimate complaints involving individuals. The Board vests in its President or other presiding officer authority to terminate the remarks of any individual when they do not adhere to the rules established above.



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7. The presiding officer may:
 - a. Interrupt, warn, or terminate a participant's statement when the statement is too lengthy, abusive, obscene, or irrelevant;
 - b. Request any individual to leave the meeting when that person does not observe reasonable decorum;
 - c. 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;
 - d. 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; and
 - e. Waive these rules when necessary for the protection of privacy or the efficient administration of the Board's business.
8. Complaints or suggestions directed to the Board will be referred to the appropriate staff member for study or suggestion.
9. If a citizen has proceeded through the appropriate administrative chain without satisfaction, he or she will be requested to put the complaint in writing so that it may be placed on the agenda for a future Board meeting.

All time limits contained in this policy may be adjusted by the Board President or by a majority vote of the Board members present when conditions warrant.

N.J.S.A. 2C:33-8
N.J.S.A. 10:4-12

Adopted: 03 January 2013

