

## **PELHAM SCHOOL DISTRICT POLICY DRAFT BEDH – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT BOARD MEETINGS**

*Category: Recommended*

The primary purpose of School Board meetings is to conduct the business of the Board as it relates to school policies, programs, and operations. The Board encourages citizens of the District to attend its sessions so that they may become better acquainted with the operation and programs of the schools and so that the Board may have the opportunity to hear input from the public. All official meetings of the Board shall be open to the press and public; however, the Board reserves the right to meet and to adjourn or recess a meeting at any time. The Board also reserves the right to enter non-public session at any time, in accordance with the provisions of RSA 91-A:3.

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

1. The first 30 minutes will be set aside for citizens to address the Board. This period may be extended by a majority vote of the Board. Speakers will be allotted three minutes per person.
2. Speakers may not relinquish allotted time to another speaker. The Chair will recognize speakers on a first come basis.
3. In order to comply with the minute requirements of RSA 91-A:2, II, any individual desiring to speak shall give their name, address, and the group, if any, that is represented.
4. Written remarks are encouraged.
5. Requests to place items on the agenda must be presented to the Superintendent for consideration and must set forth the specifics of the subject to be addressed. When appropriate, the Chair may place such requests on the agenda.
6. Except as otherwise provided in this policy, members of the public may offer comments on agenda items or upon any other matter of public concern directly relating to the District school policies, programs, and operations. In the interest of preserving individual privacy and due process rights, the Board requests that comments (including complaints) regarding individual employees (other than the Superintendent) or individual students be directed to the Superintendent in accordance with the complaint/grievance resolution processes set forth in School Board Policies KE and KEB. Complaints regarding the Superintendent, may be made either during public comment, or directed to the School Board Chair as described in Board Policy KEB. All speakers are to conduct themselves in a civil manner. Any comments which do not adhere to the above, or which disrupt the official business of the Board may be ruled out of order by the Chair. Repeated disruption may result in the individual being asked to leave the meeting. Obscene speech, comments threatening bodily harm, or other unprotected speech will not be tolerated.
7. 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. Thus, questions may be directed to individual Board members, but answers must be deferred pending consideration by the full Board. In most instances, any Board response will be deferred pending consideration by the full Board.

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**District Policy History:**

*Adopted: December 16, 2015*

*Revised: August 10, 2022*

*Revised: August 31, 2022*

**Legal References:**

*RSA 91-A:3*