

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT BOARD MEETINGS

The Berlin Board desires citizens and staff of the district, including those from towns sending students to Berlin Schools, to attend sessions so that they may become better acquainted with the operation and programs of the schools and that the Board may have opportunities to hear the wishes and ideas of 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 to discuss such matters as are properly considered in non-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3.

In order to assure that persons who, wish to appear before the Board may be heard and, at the same time, it 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. Time will be set aside during each meeting for Berlin residents, SAU3 staff, and/or parent/guardians of tuition or agreement students to address the Board regarding matters of the school district. The Board reserves the right to impose a time limit for each speaker and/or to restrict the topics to matters pertaining to the agenda of the meeting.
2. Anyone wishing to speak before the Board, either as an individual or as a member of a group, should inform the Superintendent of the desire to do so and of the topic to be discussed as early as possible, preferably at least seven days before the meeting.
3. Any individual desiring to speak shall give his or her name, address, and the group, if any, that is represented.
4. The presentation should be as brief as possible. Written remarks are encouraged.
5. Speakers may offer supportive statements, express concerns or give objective criticisms of school operations and programs. But in public session, the Board will not hear personal complaints of school personnel nor against any person connected with the school system. Other channels provide for Board consideration and disposition of legitimate complaints involving individuals. Note also that the public comment session is the time for members of the public to be heard by the Board. The Board will not respond as it is not a "question and answer session."
6. 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.

The Board vests in its Chairperson or other presiding officer authority to terminate the remarks of any individual when they do not adhere to the rules established above as to content or time limitation.

Persons appearing before the Board are reminded, 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.

With the aim of maintaining focus on the issues in discussion, it is desired that all speakers strive to adhere to ordinary norms of decorum and civility.

First Reading: December 2, 2009

Second Reading: December 16, 2009

Adopted: December 16, 2009

Revised: November 15, 2018

First Revision: August 8, 2019

**Adopted August 29, 2019**