

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

Regular, special and emergency meetings of the Hull School Committee are open to the public. The School Committee, as an elected representative body of the school district, wishes to provide an opportunity for citizens to express interests and concerns related to the school district. The public is cordially invited to attend School Committee meetings.

School Committee meetings are conducted for the purpose of carrying out the official business of the school district. The meetings are not public forum meetings, but are meetings of the School Committee held in a public venue.

The School Committee will not permit in public session any expression of personal complaints about school personnel nor against any person connected with the school system. Persons with personal complaints of personnel shall follow the procedures identified in Hull School Committee policies KE and KEB.

The School Committee has established the following guidelines to help facilitate community participation at School Committee meetings.

### Placing an item on the agenda.

In order for the School Committee to fairly and adequately discharge its overall responsibilities, citizens desiring an item be placed on the agenda for a specific School Committee meeting should direct requests to the Superintendent of Schools at least seven days before the meeting. The request shall be made in writing and shall include the name of the individual, group or organization submitting the request, the address, a phone number, the purpose of the request and the topic to be addressed. The chair of the School Committee in conjunction with the Superintendent will determine the appropriateness of the request and decide if the request will be placed on the agenda and on which agenda the request will be placed.

Initial presentations by speakers are limited to ten minutes, though the School Committee may wish to extend the time through a question-answer session or through further discussion.

### Input from the Public

The purpose of *input from the public* is to provide members of the community with an opportunity to speak on specific agenda items. Community members are asked to call the Superintendent's office or sign-up on the provided sign-up sheet 15 minutes before the meeting starts. If that is not possible community members may, when called upon by the chair, go to the podium and state their names, addresses and specific agenda items they wish to reference.

The chair of the School Committee may use his/her prerogative to recognize any member of the audience who wishes to speak during input from the public. Comments must be objective, germane to the agenda item and free of invectives. No person shall speak on an agenda item more than two times unless at the chair's discretion.

### Addressing specific agenda items.

Subsequent to discussion of an agenda item by School Committee members and the Superintendent, the chair of the School Committee may use his/her prerogative to recognize any member of the audience who wishes to speak to the agenda item under discussion. Comments must be objective, germane to the agenda item and free of invectives.

### Public Forum Session

The purpose of a *public forum session* is to provide members of the community an opportunity to speak on matters of immediate concern that fall within the jurisdiction of the School Committee even though the subject is not on the formal agenda. Speakers will not be permitted to participate in gossip, make defamatory comments or use abusive or vulgar language.

Public forum sessions will be an informal session that are encouraged to be held once a month, before the start of the actual School Committee meeting.

It is encouraged that groups identify a single spokesperson to present their collective point-of-view, thus reducing redundant comments. Other members of the group may be heard if they feel that they can contribute additional information regarding the topic under discussion.

The chair will endeavor to respond to a speaker's request for information and materials. However, in order to provide the speaker a comprehensive response and adequate information, the chair may direct the request to the Superintendent for future follow-up.

A request for the School Committee to take a position or to take action cannot normally be satisfied at the meeting at which the request is made. The matter will be taken under advisement and may be placed on a specific future agenda or directed to the Superintendent for follow-up.

Correspondence to and comments from School Committee members.

All correspondence sent to School Committee members will be recognized by the chair as received. Letters may be read at the chair's discretion as long as they are received at least 48 hours in advance and it is determined that the contents of the letter pertain directly to an agenda item. If a letter is received that falls within School Committee purview but does not pertain to an agenda item the committee may vote whether or not to have the letter read. Majority vote will prevail.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 39:23C

*Adopted: 10/2003*

*First reading 2010 revision: January 11, 2010*

*Second reading: January 25, 2010*

*Adoption: March 15, 2010*

*Proposed reconsideration: March 2015*

***Hull Public Schools***