Board meetings are conducted for the purpose of carrying on the official business of the school system. The public is cordially invited to attend Board meetings to observe the Board as it conducts its official business.

The Board of Education, as an elected representative body of the school system, also wishes to provide a forum for citizens to express interests and concerns related to the school system. In order that the Board may conduct an orderly meeting while providing an opportunity for input, individuals or groups may be heard by the Board in accordance with this policy.

Each month, a part of at least one regularly scheduled business Board meeting will be set aside for citizens to address the Board through public comment. All individuals or groups requesting to address the Board shall sign up with the Board Secretary prior to the meeting.

The Board Chair will recognize the speaker. Comments will be limited to three minutes. When the three minutes end, the speaker must stop speaking immediately. Yielding time to another speaker will not be permitted. Board members will not respond to individuals who address the Board except to request from the Board Chair that the speaker provide clarification of points being made during public comments.

The length of the period of time designated for public participation shall be governed by the Board Chair and generally shall not exceed a total of fifteen (15) minutes unless extended by action of the Board. Unless the Board extends this time, any speakers remaining at the end of the fifteen-minute period will be recognized at the conclusion of the Board’s agenda.

Public comments should not address any specific confidential student or personnel matter. Specific concerns related to confidential student or personnel matters should be directed to the Superintendent or designee.

No profanity, vulgar language or personal abuse against any person will be permitted. The Board vests in its Chair or other presiding officer authority to terminate the remarks of any individual when he/she does not adhere to the rules established above. Any person who willfully interrupts or disturbs a Board meeting may be directed to leave the meeting by the presiding officer. Any person who refuses to leave may be prosecuted for disrupting a public meeting.

Persons appearing before the Board are reminded as a point of information that the members of the Cleveland County Board of Education are without authority to act independently as individuals in official matters. Immediate answers are not generally possible and must be deferred pending investigation and consideration by the full Board.

Legal References: G.S. 143-318.10 and -318.17; 115C-36, -51

Adopted: March 13, 2017
Replaces: Board Policy 1450, Public Participation in Board Meetings; Board Policy 1450-R, Public Participation Rules