

# BOARD MEETINGS

Code **BE** Issued **2?/21**

Purpose: To establish the basic structure for the conduct of board meetings.

All board meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). All board meetings, except those in executive session, are open to the public.

## Annual Meeting

The board holds its annual organizational meeting at the first board meeting in November. The board elects officers at the annual meeting.

## Board Meetings

The board meets at the district office on the fourth Monday of each month, with open session starting at 5:15 p.m.

In unusual circumstances, the board may change the time and place of the regular meeting upon a majority vote and proper public notice.

## Executive Session

Board may go into executive session by a majority vote, and may include others at its discretion. Upon a vote to go into executive session, the chair must state the specific purpose of the executive session.

Proper topics for executive session are:

- student actions, such as hearings, transfers, or other matters
- personnel matters, unless the employee wants the matter to be discussed in open session
- contract negotiations
- acquisition or sale of property
- legal advice
- matters of security
- investigations of criminal conduct

No formal action may be taken in executive session. Formal action means a recorded vote committing the board to a specific course of action.

The board shall not take a vote in executive session, nor shall it poll its members in executive session. The board may only vote in open session.

Board members and other persons attending are duty-bound not to disclose matters discussed in executive session.

## Work Sessions

The purpose of work sessions is for the board to have opportunities for planning and discussion without formal action. Board members may suggest topics for work sessions. Topics for discussion shall be announced publicly, and sessions shall be conducted in accordance with (FOIA).

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## Special Meetings

The chairman of the board or a majority of members of the board may call a special meeting of the full board. The superintendent shall give at least 24-hours notice to all members of the board and the public except when emergency conditions make such notice impossible. The board shall not transact any business other than that which is stated in the agenda, unless matters are timely added consistent with FOIA.

## Public Participation in Meetings

The public is invited to participate in regular Board meetings and Public Hearings. Board meetings and public hearings shall be conducted in an orderly and efficient manner. Members of the public shall not speak out of turn during the meeting. Those wishing to attend and/or address the board must follow any safety and/or security protocols established by the Superintendent, including those that follow public health guidance. Failure to do so may result in removal of the individual from the meeting room.

Safety and security protocols will be noticed on the agenda in Board Docs and at the entrance to the meeting room. When the meeting room capacity is reached, staff shall provide additional space to have commentors safely line-up while waiting to address the board.

Reasonable controls shall regulate public presentations to the board. All speakers will sign in and be asked to identify themselves or the group they represent and give their address.

## Public Comment

~~Board meetings shall be conducted in an orderly and efficient manner. Reasonable controls shall regulate public presentations to the board.~~

Any individual who desires to appear before a regular meeting of the board shall sign in prior to the 5:15 p.m. open session and will be allowed a maximum of two minutes to address the board. A maximum of 30 minutes shall be provided for public comment to the board. If the list of those signed up to speak exceeds 15 names, the 30-minute period will be divided equally among those speakers. Each speaker shall be allowed a minimum of one minute. In the event that all speakers cannot each be afforded one minute within the 30-minute period, the period may be extended only by Board vote.

A suitable visible timing device shall be employed and it shall audibly mark the end of the presentation period.

No speaker may use the public comment session for personal or derogatory comment of any individual, to discuss personnel matters or to discuss matters otherwise private or confidential. Speakers are to discuss issues, not individuals. Issues addressed should reflect business that is before the board and/or is relevant to the district. The chairman or their designee is authorized to terminate any speaker's time who does not observe this policy.

If considered necessary, the Superintendent or their designee shall make a clarifying statement at the end of public comments in order to alleviate any confusion about the district's policies and protocols, including matters of public health and safety.

## Public Hearings

The board may conduct a hearing on any issue it deems appropriate. When a large delegation comes before the board, individuals wishing to speak shall sign in and indicate their position,

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for or against, on a particular issue. The board may not hear from those who do not follow this protocol.

The chairman opens and states the purpose of the hearing and the board or staff may present information on the issue.

Individuals who wish to comment shall be heard. Efforts will be made to answer questions at that time.

After the chairman closes public discussion, when appropriate, the board may deliberate and take action at that meeting.

### **Parliamentary Procedure**

The latest edition of *Robert's Rules of Order* shall govern all matters not covered by the rules of the board.

### **Conduct During Meetings**

To ensure that the board's business meetings are conducted with maximum effectiveness and efficiency, members will:

- come to meetings adequately prepared
- speak only when recognized
- not interrupt each other
- not engage in side conversations
- not repeat what has already been said
- not play to the audience or monopolize the discussion
- support the chairman's efforts to facilitate an orderly meeting
- communicate openly and actively in discussion and dialog to avoid surprises
- encourage balanced participation of all members
- practice respectful body language

### **Consent Agenda**

The board will use a consent agenda as a means to expedite the disposition of routine matters and dispose of other items of business previously and adequately vetted. All administrative matters delegated to the superintendent that are required to be approved by the board will be acted upon by the board via the consent agenda. The chairman shall ask at the beginning of each meeting if any board member wishes to remove an item from the consent agenda. A total of three members must agree to remove the item.

### **Meeting Attendance**

Absence without just cause from five (5) consecutive meetings is cause for removal by a majority vote of the board.

### **Board Minutes**

The minutes of the board meeting constitute the written record of board action. The minutes are legal evidence of the board's action. The board secretary/clerk shall keep a complete record of the action of board meetings per FOIA.

Minutes shall include, at a minimum:

- date, time, and place of the meeting

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- members recorded as either present or absent
- the substance of all materials proposed, discussed, or decided and a record, by individual member, of any votes taken
- any other information that any member asks to be included or reflected

The minutes shall become permanent records of the board and shall be in the custody of the superintendent who shall make them available to interested citizens of the district by all reasonable means, including the district website, and upon request, with exceptions as provided by law, at reasonable times during the working day.

### **Cancellation of Meetings**

A board meeting may be cancelled:

- by a majority vote of the board at a duly called board meeting
- by a declaration by the board chair, or if the chair is unavailable, the vice chair, in consultation with the superintendent, when a significant event beyond the board's control renders attendance at the meeting unsafe or unreasonable in light of the circumstances (e.g., inclement weather conditions or local, state, or national emergencies)
- when a quorum cannot be reached

Adopted 12/8/75; Revised 12/8/86, 11/11/91, 12/11/95, 7/26/04, 3/14/11, 11/9/15, 1/23/17, 2/22/21

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### Legal References:

- A. S.C. Code of Laws, 1976, as amended:
1. Section 30-4-10, *et seq.* - South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.
  2. Section 59-1-340 - Board meetings.
  3. Section 59-19-110 - Board may designate members to hear or otherwise explore matters under its control.