

CIVILITY AND DECORUM

Standards of Civility:

All schools and school events, inclusive of Board of Education meetings, should be places where mutual respect is practiced and reinforced and where all persons in attendance treat each other with courtesy, politeness and mutual consideration, regardless of differences of opinion.

It should be clearly noted that the District and the Board of Education do not intend by this policy to deprive any person of his/her First Amendment rights to freedom of speech or expression or to deprive any person of any other constitutional right.

Expected Behavior:

The Board of Education and those in attendance at schools and school events, inclusive of Board of Education meetings, reciprocally expect a standard in civility, mutual respect, courtesy, politeness and mutual consideration to be followed by all persons in attendance.

The Board recognizes that differences of opinion and disagreements may occur. While members of the school community are free to express their views, there is an expectation relating to the manner in which people communicate with each other. Disrespectful, rude, abusive, accusatory or intolerant statements and/or behavior or language violate standards of civility, mutual respect, courtesy, politeness and mutual consideration and, therefore, are counterproductive to standards of education and are unacceptable and will not be tolerated: such behavior shall immediately be addressed when it occurs.

Unacceptable behavior

Unacceptable behavior includes, but is not limited to, disruptive, demeaning or antagonistic behavior or statements, or conduct intended to be disrespectful or insulting, or personal accusations and/or comments directed at members of the Board of Education, administration, faculty, staff or agents of the Board, visitors or other persons in attendance at schools and school events, inclusive of Board of Education meetings.

The following are a non-all-inclusive example of such unacceptable behavior:

- Making personal accusations and or comments directed to other persons, including but not limited to members of the Board of Education, administration, faculty, staff or agents of the Board, visitors or other persons in attendance at schools and school events, inclusive of Board of Education meetings;
- Conducting oneself in a manner calculated and intended to be disrespectful toward others;
- Using loud and/or offensive language, displays of temper, speaking in an insulting or demeaning manner, through personal actions, spoken words, graphic representations or in writing;
- Threatening or intimidating administrative, professional and classified staff, members of the Board of Education, agents of the Board, visitors or other persons in attendance at such function or meeting;
- Behaving in a physically or verbally intimidating manner;
- Damaging or destroying school property;
- Communicating abuse, threats, obscenities, emails or electronic or voice messages;
- Such other conduct or behavior which shall either be intended and/or calculated to or shall have the result of interferes with the functioning of the school setting, school event or the orderly, conduct of board of education meeting and/or board governance.

Unacceptable behavior which interferes with the functioning of the school setting, school event or the orderly conduct of board of education meeting and board governance shall not be permitted to continue and shall be immediately dealt with.

Any person(s) who exhibits/exhibit unacceptable behavior may be directed to immediately leave the premises, and, in the event that he/she/they is/are uncooperative and refuses/refuse to do so, he/she/they shall be deemed trespassers and subject to ejection by security and, if necessary, the assistance of law enforcement officials may be requested. As trespassers, his/her/their authorization to remain upon any District property shall be deemed withdrawn and such persons thereafter remaining on school property shall be subject to prosecution. Such person(s) who persist in exhibiting unacceptable behavior may be directed to immediately leave the premises and in the event that he/she/they is/are uncooperative and refuses/refuse to do so, he/she/they shall be deemed trespassers and subject to ejection by security and, if necessary, the assistance of law enforcement officials may be requested. As trespassers, his/her/their authorization to remain upon any District property shall be deemed withdrawn and such persons thereafter remaining on school property shall be subject to prosecution.

Public Comment at Board of Education

While the Board of Education encourages public participation in the form of public comment in relation to school-related matters at regular Board of Education meetings, such participation and comment must conform to standards of civility, acceptable behavior, mutual respect, courtesy, politeness and mutual consideration to be followed by all persons in attendance at Board meetings.

To allow for public comment, a period not to exceed thirty (30) minutes shall be set aside at the conclusion of Board meetings.

Persons wishing to address the Board shall advise the Board President. The request shall be made in writing on a form provided by the District and shall include the name of the speaker, the address of the speaker, the telephone of the speaker, the name of any organization that the speaker may be representing, and a brief description of the District-related topic to be discussed. Such form shall be submitted to the District Clerk prior to or at the scheduled commencement of the meeting.

Any group or organization wishing to address the Board at a regular meeting must identify a single spokesman.

All presentations should be as succinct and as brief as possible, and speakers should avoid repetitiveness. No speaker will be permitted to speak for longer than three (3) minutes.

Speakers may only comment on District-related topics. Speakers must conduct themselves in a respectful manner, with courtesy, politeness and mutual consideration, regardless of differences of opinion.

Speakers shall not engage in, and the Board shall not permit, any public session discussion relating to any individual district personnel, any Board agent or any individual student. Persons wishing to comment on matters involving any individual district personnel, any Board agent or any student must present their comments in writing to the Superintendent of Schools during regular business hours, and the Superintendent shall thereupon immediately forward a copy thereof to the Board President, who may, in turn, cause copies thereof to be distributed to the members of the Board of Education.

Speakers engaging in behavior which is intended to be disrespectful or discourteous, are impolite and/or utilize obscene language, make defamatory statements, threats of violence, statements advocating racial, religious or other forms of prejudice shall be called to order by the Board President. Such persons who persist in making such statements and/or conduct, and who is thereby exhibiting unacceptable behavior, may be directed to immediately leave the premises, and in the event that he/she/they is/are uncooperative and refuses/refuse to do so, he/she/they shall be deemed trespassers and subject to ejection by security and, if necessary, the assistance of law enforcement officials may be requested. As trespassers, his/her/their authorization to remain upon any District property shall be deemed withdrawn and such persons thereafter remaining on school property shall be subject to prosecution. In addition, in the event that such person(s) is/are member(s) of the faculty, staff or administration, he/she/they shall be subject to disciplinary action as prescribed by and in accordance with any applicable law and/or any applicable collective bargaining agreement. Such person(s) who persist in exhibiting unacceptable behavior may be directed to immediately leave the premises and in the event that he/she/they is/are uncooperative and refuses/refuse to do so, he/she/they shall be deemed trespassers and subject to ejection by security and, if necessary, the assistance of law enforcement officials may be requested. As trespassers, his/her/their authorization to remain upon any District property shall be deemed withdrawn and, such persons thereafter, remaining on school property shall be subject to prosecution.

In the event that any unacceptable behavior shall occur and shall interfere with the orderly proceedings of any Board meeting, the Board President shall have the right to immediately terminate the privilege of public comment.

Any person(s) making a presentation at a Board of Education meeting shall, at all times, address all of his/her remarks to the Board president. Board members and the Superintendent of Schools shall, subject to the approval of the Board president, have the privilege of asking questions of any person who addresses the Board.

Any questions and/or comments from the public concerning matters which are not on the agenda will be taken under consideration and referred to the Superintendent of Schools for appropriate action.

The President of the Board of Education (or, in his/her absence, the Vice President or, in his/her absence, the next senior member of the Board in attendance) shall be responsible for the orderly conduct of the meeting and shall rule on such matters as the time to be allowed for public discussion and the appropriateness of the subject being presented. The Board President shall have the right to discontinue any presentation which violates this policy.

Adopted: August 20, 2013