

Public Participation at Committee Meetings

All regular and special meetings of the School Committee shall be open to the public. Executive sessions will be held only as prescribed by the Statutes of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Public notice of these and any special meeting is made through posting on the bulletin board at the office of the town clerk. The agenda is posted on the school web site (www.psharvard.org). The public is welcome and invited to attend all non-executive session School Committee meetings.

The School Committee desires citizens of the District to attend its meetings so that they may become better acquainted with the operations and the programs of its local public schools. In addition, the Committee would like the opportunity to hear the wishes and ideas of the public.

In order that all citizens who wish to be heard before the Committee have such a chance and to insure the ability of the Committee to conduct the District's business in an orderly manner, the following rules and procedures are adopted:

1. As part of the agenda of each regularly scheduled School Committee meeting, individuals or group representatives will be invited to address the Committee. The length of the public participation segment shall be determined by the Chair.
2. Speakers will be allowed three (3) minutes to present their material. The presiding Chair may permit extension of this time limit.
3. Topics for discussion may be limited to those items listed on the School Committee meeting agenda for that evening.
4. Improper conduct and remarks will not be allowed. Defamatory or abusive remarks are always out of order. If a speaker persists in improper conduct or remarks, the Chair may terminate that individual's privilege of address.
5. All remarks will be addressed through the Chair of the meeting.
6. Speakers may offer such objective criticisms of the school operations and programs as concern them, but in public session the Committee will not hear personal complaints of school personnel nor against any member of the school community. Under most circumstances, administrative channels are the proper means for disposition of legitimate complaints involving staff members.
7. Written comments may be presented to the Committee before or after the meeting for the Committee members' review and consideration at an appropriate time.

APPROVED: October 23, 2006