

**VENTURA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**BOARD POLICY NO. 9325**

**ADOPTED: 02/24/97**

**CLASSIFICATION: Board Bylaws**

**REVISED:**

**SUBJECT: Board Meetings**

---

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN BOARD MEETINGS

Meetings of the Board are conducted for the purpose of carrying on the business of the Board, and therefore are not public meetings, but meetings held in public. Meetings are closed to the public only during closed session, the purpose of which is to discuss certain matters which are confidential by nature and which are permitted by law to be considered in closed session.

While it is the intent of the Board to extend to all citizens a fair and adequate hearing on every matter of concern, the Board does not hear complaints regarding employees of the Superintendent. The Superintendent, as the employer, is the final authority in matters relating to personnel.

Any member of the public may speak during Board meetings, subject to the following:

Addressing the Board, General

1. The person will complete a Speaker form and submit it to the Board President or Recording Secretary no later than 5 minutes prior to the topic coming up for discussion on the agenda.
2. Presentations under "Public Comments" are limited to items within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Board. No matter which is legally a proper subject for consideration in closed session will be accepted for discussion with the public.
3. Comments made immediately prior to the Board's discussion of an agenda item must refer to the published agenda item.
4. When called upon, the person should come to the podium, state his/her name and city of residence for the record, and if speaking for an organization or other group, identify the organization or group represented.
5. All remarks should be addressed to the Board as a whole, not to individual members thereof.
6. The Board may not take action or discuss any item not included in the published agenda unless the item is determined to be an emergency, as specified in law.

7. Questions, if any, should be directed to the presiding officer who will determine whether or in what manner an answer will be provided. Members of the Board or the Superintendent may interrupt the speaker at any time to ask questions or to make a comment as frequently as necessary to clarify the discussion.
8. All agenda item comments will be heard prior to the start of Board discussion on an item. Board discussions will not be interrupted for further public comments; however, the Board may invite a speaker to clarify, repeat or further explain previously presented comments or information. Only those persons recognized by the presiding officer shall be permitted to participate in the discussion. Any attempt by any person not so recognized to discuss any matter before the Board is out of order.
9. The “Public Comments” portion of the Board agenda shall be deemed to constitute the opportunity for members of the public to address the Board in compliance with Government Code Section 54954.3.

#### Comments in Writing Encouraged

10. Persons who anticipate oral presentations exceeding five minutes are encouraged to submit comments in writing, in advance, in care of the Board, for prior distribution to the Board and other interested parties, whenever possible, by the Thursday preceding the scheduled Board meeting relating to the matter or, if that is not possible, at the earliest feasible time prior to the meeting. In addition, submission of comments in writing is encouraged in lieu of possible lengthy oral presentations which may not be permitted.

#### Oral Presentations, Cumulative Limit and Repetitious Comments

11. The speaker may elect to speak during the public comments section of the meeting or prior to Board discussion and deliberations regarding any items appearing on the Agenda.
12. Speakers shall not present the same or substantially same items or arguments to the Board repeatedly or be repetitious or dilatory in presenting their oral comments. If a matter has been presented orally before the Board, whether the Board has taken action, or determined to take no action, the same or substantially same matter may not be presented orally by the same person any further. Nothing in the foregoing precludes submission of comments to the Board in writing for such action or non-action as the Board, in its discretion, may deem appropriate.
13. In order to expedite matters and to avoid repetitious presentations, whenever any group of persons wishes to address the Board on the same subject matter, the presiding officer may request that a spokesperson be chosen by the group and, in case additional matters are to be presented by any other member of the group, that there be a limit on the number of such persons addressing the Board. A specific time limit may also be set for the total presentation.

Miscellaneous

14. Inappropriate conduct by a person declared out of order by the presiding officer for violation of any of the above rules shall be grounds for summary termination of that person's privilege of addressing the Board for that meeting.
15. Any of the foregoing rules may be waived by majority vote of the Board members present when it is deemed that there is good cause to do so based upon the particular facts and circumstances involved.
16. The rules set forth above are not exclusive and do not limit the inherent power and general legal authority of the Board, or of its presiding officer, to govern the conduct of Board meetings as may be considered appropriate from time to time or in particular circumstances for purposes of orderly and effective conduct of the affairs of the Board.

Legal Reference:

GOVERNMENT CODE  
54950 et seq. Ralph M. Brown Act