### POLICY NO. 903 – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN BOARD MEETINGS

**Policy 903 will supersede policies 009 and 903.1**

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<th>Section</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
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<td><strong>Purpose</strong></td>
<td>The Board recognizes the value to school governance of public comment on educational issues and the importance of involving members of the public in Board meetings. The Board also recognizes its responsibility for proper governance of the district and the need to conduct its business in an orderly and efficient manner.</td>
<td>65 Pa. C.S.A. Sec. 701 et seq.</td>
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<td><strong>Authority</strong></td>
<td>The Board shall establish guidelines to govern public participation in Board meetings necessary to conduct its meeting and maintain order.</td>
<td>65 Pa. C.S.A. Sec. 710</td>
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In order to permit fair and orderly expression of public comment, the Board shall provide an opportunity at each open meeting of the Board for citizens to comment on matters of concern, official action or deliberation before the Board prior to official action by the Board.

If the Board determines there is not sufficient time at a
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meeting for public comments, the comment period may be deferred to the next regular meeting or to a special meeting occurring before the next regular meeting.

If the public comment period is deferred, voting on items related to those comments must also be deferred till after the public has been given an opportunity to comment on that matter.

### Section 3  
**Delegation of Responsibility**

The presiding officer at each public Board meeting shall follow Board policy for the conduct of public meetings. Where his/her ruling is disputed, it may be overruled by a majority of those Board members present and voting.

The presiding officer shall allow for public comment on any topic before any Board business takes place at a public Board meeting and at the conclusion of all Board business at all public Board meetings.

### Section 4  
**Guidelines**

Any member of the public present at an open meeting of the Board may address the Board in accordance with the Board rules as follows:

1. A member of the public may address the Board during the Public Comment time on the agenda.

2. Participants must be recognized by the presiding officer and must preface their comments by an announcement of their name, borough of residence, and group affiliation, if applicable.

3. No participant may speak more than once on the same topic, unless all others who wish to speak on that topic have been heard.
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The presiding officer may:

1. Interrupt or terminate a participant’s statement when the statement is too lengthy, personally directed, abusive, or obscene.

2. Request any individual to leave the meeting when that person does not observe reasonable decorum.

3. Request the assistance of law enforcement officers in the removal of a disorderly person when that person’s conduct interferes with the orderly progress of the meeting.

4. Call a recess or an adjournment to another time when the lack of public decorum so interferes with the orderly conduct of the meeting as to warrant such action.

The Board Secretary, as well as any member of the public, may record a Board meeting as long as the individuals involved in recording do not disrupt the orderly processes of the Board meeting.

References:

School Code – 24 P.S. Sec. 407

Sunshine Act – 65 Pa. C.S.A. Sec. 701 et seq.

Board Policy – 006