

Book	Policy Manual
Section	900 Community
Title	Public Participation in Joint Operating Committee Meetings Do NOT Adopt - New Version
Code	903
Status	Second Reading
Last Revised	September 28, 2021

Purpose

The **Joint** Operating Committee recognizes the value **to school governance** of public comment on educational issues and the importance of involving members of the public in **Joint** Operating Committee meetings. **The Joint Operating Committee also recognizes its responsibility for proper governance of the school and the need to conduct its business in an orderly and efficient manner.**

Authority

The Joint Operating Committee adopts this policy to govern public participation in **Joint** Operating Committee meetings **necessary to conduct its meeting and to maintain order.**[\[1\]](#)[\[2\]](#)

In order to permit fair and orderly expression of **public** comment, the **Joint** Operating Committee **shall** provide **an opportunity** at **each** open meeting of the **Joint** Operating Committee **for** residents **and** taxpayers of participating districts **to comment on matters of concern, official action or deliberation before the Joint Operating Committee prior to official action by the Joint Operating Committee.**[\[3\]](#)

The **Joint** Operating Committee **shall require that all** public **comments be made** as indicated on the order of business.

If the **Joint** Operating Committee determines there is not sufficient time at a 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.[\[3\]](#)

Delegation of Responsibility

The presiding officer at each public **Joint** Operating Committee meeting **shall** follow **Joint** Operating Committee policy for **the** conduct of public meetings. Where his/her ruling is disputed, it may be overruled by a majority of those **Joint Operating Committee** members present and voting.[\[4\]](#)[\[5\]](#)

Guidelines

Whenever issues identified by the participant are subject to remediation under policies and procedures of the **Joint** Operating Committee, they shall be dealt with in accordance with **those** policies, procedures **and the organizational structure of the school.**

The **Joint** Operating Committee requires that public participants be limited to the residents or taxpayers of participating school districts, **anyone having registered a legitimate interest in a contemplated action of the Joint Operating Committee**, anyone representing a group in the community **of a participating** school district, representatives of a firm eligible to bid on materials or services solicited by the **Joint** Operating Committee, employees **of the school** and students **of the school.**

Individuals with disabilities **who require accommodations to participate in** the **Joint** Operating Committee **meeting are requested to contact** the **Joint** Operating Committee **Secretary in advance of the meeting** so that arrangements can be made **for appropriate accommodations to allow participation**, including communication **to participate in public comment, in accordance with applicable law, regulations and Board policy.**[\[6\]](#)[\[7\]](#)[\[8\]](#)

All **individuals** wishing to participate in a public **Joint** Operating Committee meeting shall register their intent **with** the **Joint Operating Committee** Secretary by the close of **the** business **day at least one (1) day** in advance of the meeting **and shall include the name and address of the participant, topic to be addressed and group affiliation, if applicable. Each statement made by such participants shall be limited to five (5) minutes duration.**

At the start and at the end of each **Joint** Operating Committee meeting, a brief period of time will be set aside to permit any person not on the agenda to make a statement or comment on the proceedings or to ask questions pertaining to the agenda items of the **Joint** Operating Committee that evening. Public comments pertaining to items not on the agenda will take place at the end of the meeting. **Each statement** should be limited to no more than three (3) minutes **duration** per individual or fifteen (15) minutes **duration** for a group.

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

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

All statements shall be directed to the presiding officer; no participant may address or question **Joint** Operating Committee members individually.

The presiding officer may:

1. Interrupt or terminate a participant's statement when the statement is too lengthy, personally directed, abusive, obscene, or irrelevant.
2. Request any individual to leave the meeting when that person does not observe reasonable decorum.
3. Request the assistance of law enforcement officers **to remove** a disorderly person when **his/her** conduct interferes with the orderly progress of the meeting.
4. Call a recess or adjournment to another time when the lack of public decorum interferes with the orderly conduct of the meeting.

5. **Waive these rules with the approval of the Joint Operating Committee.**

Electronic recording devices **and cameras, in addition to those used as official recording devices, shall be permitted at public meetings under guidelines established by the Joint Operating Committee.**

No placards or banners will be permitted within the meeting room.

The meeting agenda and all pertinent documents shall be **available** to the press and public at the meetings.

Legal

1. 24 P.S. 1850.1
2. 65 Pa. C.S.A. 710
3. 65 Pa. C.S.A. 710.1
4. 24 P.S. 407
5. Pol. 006
- 65 Pa. C.S.A. 701 et seq
6. Pol. 103
7. Pol. 103.1
8. Pol. 104