

## **Community Participation – Procedures**

Meetings of the Lumpkin County Board of Education are structured to allow the Board to conduct business. Citizens of Lumpkin County have the express right and are encouraged to attend meetings of the Board to listen and to observe the deliberations of its members. The regular meeting agenda will contain an item for community input. The following guidelines have been developed to provide the opportunity for public input while maintaining the orderly pursuit of business.

1. Personnel matters will not be discussed during the Community Participation portion of the agenda. Board policies are in place to address personnel matters, and these procedures will be followed rigorously. Personnel matters must be addressed via the chain of command. If matters remain unresolved after bringing it to the Superintendent level, it may be appropriate for the entire Board to hear and to address the complaint. In this event, the Superintendent shall determine what steps, if any, should be taken to protect any privacy rights that may exist for individuals when discussing confidential information relevant to the issue brought before the Board. If appropriate, the item will be scheduled as part of the formal agenda so that all involved parties may have the opportunity to attend the deliberations and to present their side of the matter. The Superintendent must receive the request for inclusion on the agenda no later than noon of the Thursday preceding the regularly scheduled meeting.
2. Persons desiring to address the Board during Community Participation shall submit a written request with the Board Clerk prior to the beginning of the meeting stating the individual's name and the topic desired to be discussed. The Board Chair will determine if it is in the interest of the Board to allow the request.
3. Each person participating in Community Participation will be allowed five minutes to speak. Discussion on a particular topic will be limited to 30 minutes. The Board reserves the right to additionally limit discussion if it becomes repetitive. The Board will not permit speakers to become personally abusive of employees or individual Board members.
4. If issues arise that stimulate high community interest, the Board may schedule special meetings or forums specifically to invite public comment.
5. Comments from those not recognized by the Board Chair or interruptions of the recognized speaker will be ruled out of order. The individual deemed to be out of order will be invited to leave following a second offense.
6. All presentation to the Board are to be brief and are intended for the Board to hear comments or concerns without necessarily responding to questions or taking action. While this policy does not totally prohibit Board members from responding during the meeting, the Board members and Superintendent generally need time to reflect on and/or research issues prior to making a public response to citizens' comments or concerns.

These guidelines are intended to facilitate the orderly pursuit of business and are in no way intended to stifle public participation in meeting of the Board.