

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

All regular and special meetings of the Westfield School Committee shall be open to the public. Executive session will be held only as prescribed by the Statutes of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The Westfield School Committee desires citizens of Westfield to attend its meetings so that they may become better acquainted with the operation and the programs of the Westfield 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 that chance and to insure the ability of the committee to conduct the Westfield Public Schools business in an orderly manner, the following rules and procedures are adopted:

1. At the start of each regularly scheduled school committee meeting individuals or group representatives will be invited to address the committee. There will be a 30-minute time limit. The length of the public participation segment may be extended by the chairperson.
2. Speakers will be allowed three (3) minutes to present their material. The presiding chairperson may permit extension of this time limit.
3. Topics for discussion are not 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 chairman may terminate the speaker's privilege of address.
5. All remarks will be addressed through the chairman of the meeting.
6. Speakers may offer such objective criticisms of the school operations and programs as concerns them, but in public session the committee will not hear personal complaints of school personnel nor against any member of the school community. Other channels provide for committee consideration and disposition of legitimate complaints involving individuals.
7. Written comments longer than three (3) minutes may be presented to the committee before or after the meeting for the committee members' review and consideration at an appropriate time.
8. No person shall address a meeting of the school committee without permission of the chair, and all persons shall, at the request of the chair, be silent. No person shall disrupt the proceedings of the meeting. If, after clear warning from the chair, a person continues

to disrupt the proceedings, the chair may order the person to withdraw from the meeting and if the person does not withdraw, the chair may authorize a constable or other officer to remove the person from the meeting.

9. After notifying the chair of the Committee, any person may make a video or audio recording of an open session of a meeting of the committee or may transmit the meeting through any medium, subject to reasonable requirements of the chair as to the number, placement and operation of equipment used so as not to interfere with the conduct of the meeting. At the beginning of the meeting the chair shall inform other attendees of any such recordings.

Adopted:       October 12, 1978

Revised:       June 30, 1980  
                  February 7, 1994  
                  June 28, 2010

LEGAL REF.:       M.G.L. c.30A Sections 18-25