

4. EFFECTIVE BOARD MEETINGS

Effective Board Meetings

A board comprised of intelligent, sincere, and effective members does not guarantee that board meetings will run smoothly and efficiently. Effective board meetings have informed members and are well structured.

To keep meetings focused and functional, board members should assess their current practices, agree on needed improvements, and effect changes. Further, by documenting the policies and procedures that the board follows, all members and constituents shall understand the functioning process of the board and will know what is expected.

BEST PRACTICES FOR BOARD MEETINGS

- Set regular beginning and ending times for board meetings
- Recognize board meetings are generally open meetings; however, items such as personnel or discipline should be discussed in executive session
- Follow an agenda prepared by the administrator in consultation with the board chair
- Allocate appropriate time for each agenda item
- Review materials provided prior to meetings
- Notify the chair if facing a conflict of interest and recuse yourself
- Keep the meeting moving, neither rushing business nor letting it drag
- Develop an orderly process for stakeholders to be heard during meetings
- Remain focused, confining discussion to the topic at hand
- Maintain order by recognizing members who wish to contribute to the discussion
- Assure that all members have an opportunity to speak
- Address issues, not personalities
- Be brief and avoid interrupting
- Create a cooperative, rather than a competitive, environment
- Summarize discussion and motion before calling for a vote
- Ensure deferred or tabled items appear on the next agenda
- Develop procedures by which stakeholders may request to add agenda items
- Refer new issues not on the agenda to the appropriate individual or committee for investigation, recommendation, or follow-up before including on a subsequent agenda

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PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

In order for any official meeting to operate smoothly, standard procedures must be followed. Basic procedures are not complex and can be learned easily by each member. The following rules allow boards to function smoothly and efficiently.

- School boards can entertain short introductory discussions before motions are made.
- When making a motion, address the chair.
- Only one motion is considered at a time.
- If the motion is seconded detailed discussion will follow.
- A motion may require amending during the discussion phase. The amendment must be seconded and voted before the motion may be voted.

Roberts Rules Cheat Sheet

The motions and points in the table below are listed in established order of precedence. When any one of them is pending, you may not introduce another that is listed below, but you may introduce another that is listed above it.

To:	You say:	Interrupt Speaker	Second Needed	Debat-able	Amend-able	Vote Needed
Adjourn	"I move that we adjourn"	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
Recess	"I move that we recess until..."	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
Complain about noise, room temp., etc.	"Point of privilege"	Yes	No	No	No	Chair decides
Suspend further consideration of something	"I move that we table it"	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
End debate	"I move the previous question"	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
Postpone consideration of something	"I move we postpone this matter until..."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Amend a motion	"I move that this motion be amended by"	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Introduce business (a primary motion)	"I move that..."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority

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The motions, points, and proposals listed in the table below have no established order of preference; any of them may be introduced at any time except when meeting is considering one of the top three matters listed from the first chart (Motion to Adjourn, Recess or Point of Privilege).

To:	You say:	Interrupt Speaker	Second Needed	Debat-able	Amend-able	Vote Needed
Object to procedures or personal affront	"Point of order"	Yes	No	No	No	Chair decides
Ask for vote by actual count to verify voice vote	"I call for a division of the house"	Must be before a new motion	No	No	No	None unless someone objects
Object to considering some undiplomatic or improper matter	"I object to consideration of this question"	Yes	No	No	No	2/3
Take up matter previously tables	"I move we take from the table..."	Yes	Yes	No	No	Majority
Reconsider something already disposed of	"I move we now (or later) reconsider our action relative to..."	Yes	Yes	Only if original was debatable	No	Majority
Consider something out of its scheduled order	"I move we suspend the rules and consider..."	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
Vote on a ruling by the Chair	"I appeal the Chair's decision"	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Majority

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