

# NORTHERN WESTMORELAND CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY CENTER

No. 903

SECTION: COMMUNITY

TITLE: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN  
JOINT OPERATING COMMITTEE  
MEETINGS

ADOPTED: October 20, 2011

REVISED: February 17, 2022

## **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 center and the need to conduct its business in an orderly and efficient manner.

## **Authority**

The Joint Operating Committee shall establish guidelines to govern public participation in Joint Operating Committee meetings necessary to conduct its meeting and to maintain order.

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 which are or may be before the Joint Operating Committee prior to official action by the Joint Operating Committee.

The Joint Operating Committee shall require that all public comments be made at the beginning of each meeting.

There will be a time limit of three (3) minutes for each speaker.

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.

When an item is added to the agenda after the public comment period has ended, the Joint Operating Committee shall offer a further public comment opportunity limited to the added item(s).

## **Delegation of Responsibility**

The presiding officer at each open Joint Operating Committee meeting shall follow Joint

## 903 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN JOINT OPERATING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Operating Committee policy for the conduct of open meetings. Where the presiding officer's ruling is disputed, it may be overruled by a majority of those Joint Operating Committee members present and voting.

### **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 center.

The Joint Operating Committee requires that public participants be residents or taxpayers of participating school districts; anyone representing a group in the community or a participating school district; any representative of a firm eligible to bid on materials or services solicited by the Joint Operating Committee; any employee of the center; or any student of the center.

All individuals wishing to participate in an open Joint Operating Committee meeting shall register their intent with the Joint Operating Committee Secretary at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting and shall include the name and address of the participant, topic to be addressed and group affiliation, if applicable.

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 the person's 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.

## 903 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN JOINT OPERATING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Electronic recording devices and cameras, other than those used as official recording devices, shall be permitted at open 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 distributed to the press and public at the meetings.

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Legal

24 P.S. 1850.1

65 Pa. C.S.A. 710

65 Pa. C.S.A. 710.1

65 Pa. C.S.A. 712.1

24 P.S. 407

Pol. 006

65 Pa. C.S.A. 711

65 Pa. C.S.A. 709

65 Pa. C.S.A. 701 et seq

Pol. 906