

First Reading

BY-LAWS OF THE BOARD

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Time, Place and Notification of Meetings

9321.2

Electronic Board of Education Meetings

Definitions

“Meeting” A **“meeting”** is defined as a hearing or other proceeding of the Board, any convening or assembly of a quorum of the Board and any communication by or to a quorum of the Board, whether in person or by means of electronic equipment to discuss or act upon a matter over which the public agency has supervision, control, jurisdiction, or advocacy power. Communications between and among a quorum of members convening on electronically linked personal computers or by telephone conference call are subject to the Freedom of Information Act.

“Public Notice” Each Board member and each person who has duly requested such notification shall be notified no later than twenty-four hours in advance of the meeting of the time, date, location, and the agenda of any regular or special meeting. The twenty-four hour notice shall also be posted in the Board office, delivered to newspapers designated by the Board, and filed with the Town Clerk, except that such notice is not required where the time, date, and location of the meeting has been published in the annual list of meetings approved by the Board and filed with the Town Clerk not later than January 31 of each year in accordance with law. The meeting agenda must be filed at least twenty-four hours before the meeting convenes. (In an emergency meeting, the Board may proceed to conduct business if and to the extent required by the emergency.) The expectation shall also be adhered to in the event of a Board meeting held through electronic means as described in this bylaw.

“Voting” All Board actions requiring a vote may be conducted by voice, show of hands, or roll call provided that the vote of each member is recorded in the minutes of the meeting. Proxy voting shall not be permitted. Voice voting must occur in the event of a BOE meeting held through electronic means as described in this bylaw. Votes will be verbalized into the record by the Board Secretary. Abstentions shall not be counted as votes but shall be recorded.

“Internet (Chat) Discussions” In the event of a Board meeting held through electronic means as described in this bylaw, under no circumstances are members of the Board to have private chats with or among each other on any form of media while engaged in the public session of the meeting. All comments, inquiries, and votes must occur in the public forum for all to hear. All Board member(s) are expected to comply with the guidance of this bylaw.

Policy Statement

In accordance with an Executive Order by the Governor of Connecticut, the Region One Board of Education Board (Board) acknowledges, that in the event of a prohibition on public meetings for health & safety reasons, business of the Board may still need to occur. In this event where pressing business of the Board is required such as, but not limited to, personnel issues, budget

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hearings, approval of bills payments, policies etc., a meeting through electronic means will be permitted.

In accordance with Connecticut's Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) the following provisions will be implemented so that a meeting can occur:

1. Board of Education members shall make every attempt to participate through a technology portal where they can be viewable, or at a minimum heard, for each other and members of the public. The Board of Education will accomplish this through use of an electronic videoconferencing program, such as, but not limited to, ZOOM, GoToMeeting, WebEx, OnBoard, where members of the public can call and/or submit comments or questions electronically.
2. Notice of the Board meeting's virtual location shall be published through the traditional means and outlets as well as being posted on the Sharon District website and in the Board of Education Office no less than 24 hours in advance.
3. The Sharon District shall post the agenda for the meeting no later than 24 hours in advance for review and reference by members of the public. The agenda will also be posted on the Sharon District website.
4. Members of the public will be provided an opportunity to make comments in the place so designated in the agenda for the meeting. These comments will be submitted through the means allowed by the videoconferencing software used by the Sharon District to host the meeting. [All comments will be read into the record by the Board Chairperson or designee announcing the member of the public as is customary to provide with comments.] In the event that additional information can be provided by a member of the Board or the Superintendent, it may be provided.
5. The approved written records, as opposed to any recording, will comprise the minutes of the meeting.
6. When permitted by statute, Executive Session will be held in a second video conference open only to board of education members and to those individuals determined by the board to be necessary participants.
7. Under no circumstances other than an Executive order prohibiting in person gatherings, does the Board of Education approve of holding its meetings electronically. The Board recognizes that there may be times when a Board member, for good reason, is unable to be physically present at a Board Meeting. In conformity with Board Bylaw #9325.43, a Board member may participate in the meeting electronically, subject to the conditions in the aforementioned bylaw.

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Legal Reference:

Connecticut General Statutes

1-200 (2) Definitions. "Meeting."

1-206 Denial of access to public records or meetings.

1-225 Meetings of government agencies to be public, as amended by June 11 Special Session, PA 08-3.

1-226 Broadcasting or photographing meetings.

1-227 Mailing of notice of meetings to persons filing written request.

1-228 Adjournment of meetings. Notice.

1-229 Continued hearings. Notice.

1-230 Regular meetings to be held pursuant to regulation, ordinance or resolution.

1-232 Conduct of meetings.

10-218 Officers. Meetings.

10-238 Petition for hearing by board of education.

Approved: