

## **Bylaws of the Board**

### **Meeting Conduct**

#### **I. Authority and Purpose**

Meetings of the Board of Education shall be conducted by the Chairperson in a manner consistent with the bylaws of the board. Meetings of the Thomaston Board of Education (“Board”) shall be conducted by the Chairperson in a manner consistent with Board bylaws, adopted policies, and applicable law. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Board meetings are orderly, efficient, transparent, and consistent with the constitutional protections and public participation framework established in Policy 1120, Public Participation at Board of Education Meetings.

#### **II. Agenda and Conduct of Meetings**

All Board meetings shall commence at the stated time and shall be guided by an agenda that has been prepared and made available in advance to Board members and other designated persons.

The conduct of meetings shall, to the fullest extent possible, enable Board members to:

- Consider issues and problems requiring Board action;
- Weigh evidence and information relevant to such matters; and
- Make informed decisions intended to advance student achievement and effective school system operations.

#### **III. Public Participation**

Provision for permitting any individual or group to address the Board concerning matters within the Board’s jurisdiction shall be governed by Policy 1120. The following provisions shall be read and applied in a manner fully consistent with that policy.

##### **1. Time Limits**

Five minutes may be allotted to each speaker and a maximum of twenty minutes to each subject matter, unless modified by the Chairperson to ensure fairness or to accommodate significant public interest.

##### **2. Order and Disruption**

Conduct that materially disrupts the orderly conduct of the meeting shall not be permitted. A speaker who persists in materially disruptive conduct after warning may have their privilege of address terminated by the Chairperson solely to restore order. If necessary to restore order, the Chairperson may take reasonable steps consistent with constitutional standards to allow the Board to continue the meeting.

##### **3. Students and Personnel Matters**

Consistent with Policy 1120, oral presentations shall not be used to address confidential student matters or confidential personnel matters. Comments involving such matters may be redirected to appropriate administrative or statutory processes in order to protect

privacy, due process, and legal obligations. This provision shall be applied in a viewpoint-neutral manner.

#### 4. Civility and Legal Responsibility

Speakers shall conduct themselves in a manner that does not materially disrupt the meeting. Speech shall not be restricted based on viewpoint, criticism, tone, or disagreement with the Board, its members, or its policies. While the Board does not seek to stifle public comment, speakers remain legally responsible for their own statements. Nothing in this policy shall be construed as prior restraint or as a determination by the Board regarding the legality of any comment.

#### IV. Adjournment

The Board of Education may adjourn any regular or special meeting to a specified time and place. If all members of the Board are absent, the clerk may adjourn the meeting. A copy of the notice of adjournment shall be conspicuously displayed near the meeting room door within twenty-four hours of adjournment.

#### V. Actions by the Board

No action will be taken unless the subject acted upon was listed in the agenda published for that meeting, with the exception that an item may be added to the agenda of a regular meeting by a 2/3 vote of the members present and voting; such item may then be considered and acted upon at that meeting.

The Board of Education shall not adopt resolutions except where such adoption is required by law, or where the intent of the Board is to publish a status position of the board, as in advising the General Assembly of the Board's position on a proposed law, or commending staff members or other agencies for work well done.

All actions taken by the Board shall be identified clearly in minutes of the Board meeting as provided in Bylaw 9326, Minutes.

(cf. 1120 - Board of Education Meetings re Public Participation)

(cf. 1312 - Public Complaints)

(cf. 9321 - Time, Place, Notification of Meetings)

(cf. 9322 - Public and Executive Sessions)

(cf. 9323 - Construction/Posting of Agenda)

#### Legal Reference:

Connecticut General Statutes

1-200 Definitions.

1-210 Access to public records.

1-225 Meetings of government agencies to be public.

1-226 Recording, broadcasting or photographing meetings.

19a-342 Smoking prohibited in certain places.

1-231 Executive sessions.

1-232 Conduct of meetings.

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

10-224 Duties of the secretary.

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THOMASTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Thomaston, Connecticut