

Foster-Glocester Regional School Committee
Guidelines for Public Participation in Open Sessions of School Committee Meetings

PHILOSOPHY:

The Foster-Glocester Regional School Committee is fully supportive of conducting open meetings and, to the extent possible, inviting public to participate and comment on areas of the agenda of interest to them. It is also the legal responsibility and intent of the Regional School Committee to protect the reputation, the character and the legal rights of our personnel and students as well as any individual appearing before us. For these reasons, school committee meetings are properly deemed “Public Meetings” to conduct the business of the Regional School District and to hear public comment related to that business, and not “Public Forums” to provide a platform for the introduction of a private agenda.

PURPOSE:

To establish guidelines and procedures for the public to bring concerns and complaints about performances or actions of specific individuals to the attention of the School Committee.

POLICY STATEMENT:

1. Anyone with a complaint, concern or grievance with any individual employed by the Foster-Glocester Regional School District has the right to bring that complaint to the to the School Committee, preferably in writing, through the superintendent or co-chairs of the committee, or by contacting any school committee member and asking to be placed on the agenda for that specific purpose.
2. If the matter has not been brought to the attention of the individual involved, the building principal or supervisor of that individual, or the superintendent if the complaining party feels constrained about dealing directly with the first two; then whoever on the committee receives the complaint will refer the complainant and the matter to the superintendent.
3. If the complaint, concern, or grievance is not resolved by the chain of command and/or superintendent within the time requested by the superintendent to deal with the matter, or within a reasonable time if no specific response time is set, or if the response is deemed to be unsatisfactory, then the matter may be brought to the School Committee.
4. Any such request should be in writing, if possible or specific enough to allow the School Committee to know they are dealing with a personnel complaint. The matter will be heard in executive session at the next regularly scheduled School Committee meeting, or at an emergency meeting if deemed appropriate by the school committee. The subject of the complaint will be advised of the meeting and would have the right to attend under

ordinary circumstances. Only if both parties to the complaint agree and request that it be heard in a public session will consideration to hearing the matter in public be given. If such a request is made and granted, both parties agree to release the school committee and any administrator or witness from any liability that might arise there from.

5. If during an open meeting, a member of the public asks to be heard and their comments or statements become negative or critical about a specific individual, even if that individual remains unnamed but can be readily discerned, the speaker will be ruled out of order and invited to bring their complaint in accordance with the first four provisions of this policy. Refusal to accept this ruling from the Chair will result in removal from the meeting.

First Reading:	April 6, 1993
Second Reading:	June 1, 1993
Adopted:	June 1, 1993