Book Policy Manual

Section 000 Local Board Procedures

Title Attendance at Meetings Via Electronic Communications

Code 006.1

Status Recommended

Legal 1. 24 P.S. 407

2. Pol. 805

3. 65 Pa. C.S.A. 701 et seq

4. Pol. 903

Pol. 006

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Authority

The Board recognizes that factors such as illness, travel, schedule conflicts, weather conditions and other emergency situations can make impossible the physical presence of a school director or other necessary participants at a Board meeting and that electronic communications can enable a school director or other necessary participants to participate in a meeting electronically from a remote location.

A school director shall be able to attend a Board meeting, and participate in Board deliberations and voting, through electronic communications, but only under extraordinary circumstances. The Board President may permit other necessary participants to participate in meetings via electronic communications as the Board President deems appropriate.[1]

The Board authorizes the administration to provide the equipment and facilities required to implement this Board procedure.

Guidelines

A school director who attends a meeting through electronic communications shall be considered present only if the school director can hear everything said at the meeting and all those attending the meeting can hear everything said by that school director and other participants addressing the Board. If the Board President determines either condition is not occurring, s/he shall terminate the school director's attendance through electronic communications.

A majority of school directors shall be physically present at a Board meeting when a school director attends through electronic communications.

To attend a Board meeting through electronic communications, a school director shall comply with the following:

1. Submit such request to the Board President at least three (3) days prior to the meeting. 2. Ensure that the remote location is quiet and free from background noise and interruptions.
3. Participate in the entire Board meeting.

Emergency Conditions

In the event that the county, state or federal public health authorities, the Governor, or any similar authority with appropriate jurisdiction declares an emergency condition that prevents or discourages public gatherings due to a public health or safety concern, the Board shall be authorized to conduct meetings primarily or entirely via electronic communications to enable all school directors and other necessary participants to fully participate in the conduct of official Board business through electronic communications.[2]

Meetings held primarily or entirely via electronic communications shall be conducted in a manner that assures compliance with the public access and public comment requirements of the Sunshine Act. All rules normally applicable to in-person meetings of the Board shall be observed in meetings held primarily or entirely via electronic means to the extent practicable and appropriate to the nature and features of the technology used.[3][4]

The requirement for school directors to submit a request to participate in meetings through electronic communications shall be waived during such emergency conditions.

The Board authorizes the administration to utilize available technical resources to permit the public to attend and submit public comment during open meetings via electronic communications, in accordance with law and Board procedures and policy. [3][4]