

Welcome to Your Board of Education

The Maurice River Board of Education welcomes you to its public meetings and hopes that you find them informative. This brochure has been put together to answer common questions and as a guide to understanding how the meetings operate and how you may participate.

Board Member Information:





The School Board is the policy making body empowered by the State to govern the public school at the local level. It is responsible for the development, evaluation and implementation of policies, adopting budget, and establishing educational goals. Board members are officials elected by registered voters of Maurice River Township. (Vacancies during a term may be filled by Board appointment.) The members receive no payment or benefits for their service. Board members have no other legal status, except as a group at a legally constituted meeting. Three members are elected to a three-year term during annual school elections each April. The Board elects the President and Vice-President for a one-year term.

Maurice River Township Board of Education consists of nine members. Other officials include the Superintendent of Schools and the Board Secretary/School Business Administrator. The Superintendent serves as chief executive officer, administers Board policy and keeps the Board informed of the needs and programs of the school. The Board Secretary/School Business Administrator serves a dual function. The Business Administrator is the chief financial officer conducting all business functions of the school district. The role of Board Secretary carries the responsibility for correspondence, recording all Board action, and acts as an agent of the Board. The Superintendent and the Board Secretary/SBA do not vote on matters before the Board.

Public Meetings:

Public meetings generally take place in the school library at 7:00 p.m. on the third Tuesday of each month. The format is determined by State Law and Board policy and follows Robert's Rules of Parliamentary Procedure. There is a specific time allotted during the meeting when the public may address the Board. It is listed on the agenda as "Public Comment" and is announced by the President.

Board Members and your fellow residents appreciate if you:

-  Raise your hand and wait to be recognized by the President.
-  Speak at the microphone and begin by giving your full name and place of residency.
-  Address your comments to the President. If you wish to address an individual Board member, you must ask the President for permission to do so.
-  Be concise in your remarks and allow public persons the opportunity to speak, since the public comment session is limited to a total of thirty minutes.

Although the public's questions and comments are encouraged and welcomed, it's important to realize that the Board's authority is limited. The President may respond directly to your question or comment. However, in most cases neither the President nor the Board can engage the audience in dialogue or attempt to respond to a particular issue. The President may only be able to take note of the issue and acknowledge it with thanks. Issues will be resolved through the Superintendent's office as soon as possible following the meeting.

Personal matters and day-to-day operations are not appropriate for Board Meetings. Concerns should be addressed at the building level, beginning with the classroom teacher or appropriate staff member. If the matter is not resolved, it should be addressed to the Superintendent. If there is still no satisfaction, the matter may *then* be addressed to the Board President. Board members may listen to concerns, but cannot intervene. Individual board members do not have the authority to resolve conflicts. Only the Board, acting as a whole, at an advertised public meeting, is empowered to make decisions.

Other Meetings:

Other types of meetings are held when deemed necessary. These include Executive Sessions, which are held in accordance with NJ Open Public Meetings Act. These meetings are closed to the public. Only confidential matters such as personnel, litigation or negotiations may be discussed. Voting cannot occur during a closed session. The Board may adjourn during a regular meeting or workshop meeting into an executive (closed) session and reconvene into public session at that same meeting.

Another type of meeting is considered a Workshop/Committee-of-the-Whole Meeting which are work sessions. Much of the discussions about issues to be voted upon occur at this meeting. Voting generally occurs at the regular public meetings, but if necessary, may be done at the workshop meeting. The public is welcome to attend and observe the functioning of the Board at these meetings, but public comment is reserved for the regular public meetings only.

Special Board Meetings are public meetings called for a specific purpose. They are open to the public and provide public participation. Action and discussion, by both the Board and the public, are restricted by law to the stated purpose of the meeting.

Committee Meetings consist of three assigned Board members and an opening for another Board member who would like to "sit-in". The committees are as follows: Finance, Negotiations/Personnel, Transportation, Policy, Public Relations, Technology, Building and Grounds, and Legislative. Committee meetings are held as needed and are informal.