

BROADCASTING/TAPING OF BOARD MEETINGS

Background

The Mt. Lebanon School Board recognizes the value and importance of keeping the parents and citizens of the community informed about the deliberations and decisions of the Board. The Board feels that one important way to help accomplish this goal is to broadcast its regular meetings (See Policy BEA) on the District's cable channel. The Board, at its discretion, may choose to broadcast all or parts of other meetings.

Objective

It is the purpose of this policy to establish the function and role of the broadcasting of Board meetings and of the videotapes which are produced.

Policy

1. All regular Board meetings (both discussion meetings and business meetings) will, where practical, be videotaped. The videotapes will be aired on the District's cable channel on subsequent days following the taping for a length of time and frequency to be determined by the District. Generally, the broadcasts will begin the day following the actual meeting; discussion meetings will be aired until the following business meeting; business meetings will be aired for two weeks. Frequency will depend on the length of the meeting and the amount of other information which needs to be aired during the same period. All or part of other public meetings may, at the Board's discretion, be videotaped and subsequently broadcast on the District's cable channel.
2. The videotaping and broadcasting of Board meetings is intended to be a public service, but is not a legal requirement. The lack of videotaping and/or broadcasting, whether due to equipment malfunction, other technical problems or otherwise, shall not have any impact upon the conduct of a meeting or affect the validity of any action lawfully taken at such meeting.
3. The videotape of any public Board meeting produced by the District is the exclusive property of the District to be used at the Board's discretion.
4. The videotape of any public Board meeting produced by the District is not the official record of the meeting and is not a public record available from the District for inspection and copying. The Board-approved written minutes will continue to be the official record of the meeting.

5. It is the Board's intent to broadcast videotaped Board meetings in their entirety. The Board, at its discretion, may, however, depart from that intent under certain circumstances:
 - a. The Board may discontinue the videotaping of a meeting at any time by majority vote of the quorum in attendance at that public meeting if videotaping becomes impractical due to equipment malfunction or operator unavailability, if the videotaping is creating any impediment to conducting the meeting in an orderly fashion, or during any portion of the meeting that would be subject to edit pursuant to subsection b., below.
 - b. The Board may have the videotape of a meeting edited prior to broadcast in order to avoid possible legal liability to the Board, the District or District employees. It is the intent of the Board that any edited tape will be described as edited for public dissemination.
 - i. The Board President, acting upon advice of the Solicitor or other appropriate legal counsel, will determine in his/her sole discretion (although the President will seek input and advice from the Board where practical), which portions, if any, of videotapes of public Board meetings will not be broadcast. Examples of the type of statements which would be subject to editing are abusive, obscene, disruptive, and potentially defamatory statements by those in attendance at the meeting.
 - ii. Any Board member, District employee or any other person who believes he/she has been defamed at a Board meeting should notify the Board President or Superintendent immediately to provide the Board President the opportunity to consider the editing of the videotape from that meeting.
6. After broadcast, the actual tape containing the video of any public Board meeting produced by the District may be erased, reused and/or disposed of at the discretion of the District.

Communication

This policy shall be communicated to:

1. All Administrators
2. The Mt. Lebanon community

Adopted July 19, 2004