

PUBLIC’S RIGHT TO KNOW/FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

Purpose

The school board recognizes that it is the general intent of RSA 91-A to make “public records” available to the public and to permit persons to attend public proceedings of the school board. The purpose of this policy is to establish school board procedures that are in compliance with the provisions of this statute.

Meetings Open to the Public

Generally, unless otherwise provided for under RSA 91-A, meetings of the school board shall be open to the public. The school board will meet in non-public session only when the subject matter under discussion and consideration falls within the exemptions identified in RSA 91-A:3, II, (a)–(f).

In accordance with RSA 91-A:2, I, (a)–(c), chance or social meetings, strategy or negotiations with respect to collective bargaining or consultation with legal counsel are not “meetings” subject to requirements of either this policy or RSA 91-A.

Notice of Meetings

Except in an emergency, a notice of time and place of each meeting, be it public or nonpublic session, shall be posted in two appropriate public places in each town in the school district, or shall be printed in a newspaper of general circulation in the city or town at least twenty-four (24) hours, excluding Sundays and legal holidays, prior to such meeting.

Emergency Meetings

An emergency meeting shall mean a situation where immediate, undelayed action is deemed to be imperative by the chairperson, or presiding officer of the school board. Whatever means are reasonably available shall be utilized to inform the public that an emergency meeting is to be held. The need for calling of an emergency meeting shall be spelled out in the minutes of said meeting.

Procedures Relative to Nonpublic Sessions

To enter a nonpublic session, any member of the school board shall make a motion to that effect, which shall be seconded. The motion shall state the statutory exemption(s). See RSA 91-A:3, II, (a)–(f) upon which the school board member making the motion is relying upon as the foundation for the nonpublic session. The vote on any such motion shall be by roll call, and shall require the affirmative vote of the majority of the school board members present. The chairperson will announce after a majority roll call vote of the school board members that the school board will meet in nonpublic session.



Matters discussed and decisions reached in nonpublic session shall be confined to the matters stated in the motion.

Minutes and Records Available

All school board minutes and public records are available at the SAU office. According to RSA 91-A:4, every citizen has the right to inspect and or photocopy all public records, including minutes of the school board, during the regular business hours of the SAU office.

Legal References:

RSA 91-A, *Access to Governmental Records and Meetings*

Adopted 2001

