

17 Seconds

posted – 14 March 2019

What happen in the 17 seconds from the time the school board clerk finished reading the **Protocol for Public Comment** to the time the first speaker began to address their remarks to the board at the March 13 school board meeting? I know one thing that can happen; protocol can fly out the window. Failure to adhere to school board policy didn't bother Ann Stephens-Cherry, school board chairman, or Nancy Reaves, school board attorney. Both sat through the comments without leaping to the district's defense by shutting down the speaker. Did school board members hold a secret vote on their iPads in those 17 seconds changing the policy on the protocol for public comment? Something had to occur for the strict protocol requirement of speakers "not to address matters involving individual students as these topics may violate confidentiality and are not appropriate in public forum" to be disregarded. Was the board practicing synchronized napping during public's comments? I have often thought that was the case. "NOT APPROPRIATE"!

Not long ago, February 6th to be exact, a parent was so frustrated that she needed to talk about obtaining help for her daughter. She wanted to explain the trials and tribulations her daughter is suffering because of an ignored Individualized Education Program. That was not to be. Ann Stephens-Cherry, school board chairman, found her speech to be in violation of school board's policy for public comment and shut her down. "NOT APPROPRIATE"!

<https://www.vibby.com/watch?vib=X1cfuGr1P>

Recently, March 13th to be exact, another parent appearing to be frustrated, needed to talk about obtaining help for her daughter and a hand full of students who are being shafted by Hampton City Schools' dual enrollment program. This parent was given the floor to air her grievances during the public comment portion of the school board meeting...without interruption. The parent shared her daughter's name and told how she is suffering over this issue of the hosed up dual enrollment program. The parent also shared the names of other students suffering the same issue with Hampton City School's dual enrollment program without being slammed for speech that was "NOT APPROPRIATE".

<https://www.vibby.com/watch?vib=mySSiC3-v>

What the hell? To allow a parent to discuss not only their child but also children not theirs certainly gives the appearance of a discriminatory practice at Hampton City Schools. Yup, I am not surprised.

PROTOCOL FOR PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

- Citizens are invited to address the School Board on matters of public concern about the School Division.
- Speaker forms are available prior to the start of the meeting. If you wish to address the School Board, please complete the form and give it to the Clerk.
- Each individual will have five (5) minutes to speak.
- All comments shall be directed to the School Board.
- Speakers may not yield their time to another.
- Speakers should address the School Board with decorum on policy issues.
- **Speakers shall not address matters involving individual students as these topics may violate confidentiality and are not appropriate in a public forum.**
- Presentation of Resolutions, Declarations, Proclamations, Manifestos, Awards or other similar documents not originated under the auspices of the School Board or Administration is prohibited during the Public Comment Period.
- The audience is asked to be respectful of all speakers.
- Public comment is the School Board's opportunity to listen to the speaker. Since our purpose is to hear from you, the Board will not engage in dialogue with the audience or whomever is at the podium. Matters requiring a response will be directed to the Superintendent for research and response. The Superintendent may report back on such matters at a subsequent business meeting session as appropriate.
- The School Board carefully considers your comments as we decide matters that are brought before us. We appreciate your attendance and your input.