

# Welcome to a Meeting of your Board of Education

## Dobbs Ferry Union Free School District

### 2023-2024 School Year Board of Education

*The Board of Education is composed of seven members, elected by residents of the district, who serve three year terms of office without compensation.*

*Board members are your elected representatives; they invite you to make your concerns known to them. The members of the 2023-2024 Board of Education are as follows:*

Jean Lucasey, President <a href="mailto:lucaseyj@dfsd.org">lucaseyj@dfsd.org</a>	(914) 831-7601
Brooke Bass, Vice President <a href="mailto:bassb@dfsd.org">bassb@dfsd.org</a>	(917) 697-0216
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Rebecca Hershberg <a href="mailto:hershberg@dfsd.org">hershberg@dfsd.org</a>	(347) 782-1263

## **Welcome to the Meeting**

A strong and active partnership between the school district and the community is essential for insuring a quality education for our children. By attending meetings of the Dobbs Ferry Board of Education, you help to strengthen that partnership.

One of the goals of the Board of Education is to conduct its business openly, soliciting and encouraging broad-based involvement in the decision-making process by residents, staff and students.

Board of Education decisions affect the education of our children and the well-being of our community. The Board can best represent its constituents when residents take the time to join us, observe the Board in action, express their opinions and raise questions. We are pleased that you are here and hope you will attend meetings often.

This brochure is designed to help you follow the agenda of the meeting and to clarify the procedures which have been developed so that the Board can proceed as efficiently as possible with its business, promote understanding, and create a partnership among the schools and the community.

## **How Board Meetings are Conducted**

Meetings of the Board of Education for the school year are established by the Board of Education at its Annual Organizational Meeting. Meeting dates are posted in the PTSA calendar, on the district website and in the local newspapers. Regular public meetings begin at 7:00 PM and are usually held in the Middle/High School Library. A schedule of Board Meeting dates for the 2023-2024 school year is posted on the BOE Meeting webpage.

## **Correspondence**

Correspondence to the Board of Education should be addressed to the Board, c/o Dobbs Ferry School District, 505 Broadway, Dobbs Ferry, New York, 10522; email address: [boe@dfsd.org](mailto:boe@dfsd.org). Written correspondence will be acknowledged by the Board.

## **Guidelines for Public Speaking at School Board Meetings**

The Board of Education encourages public comment on school related matters at Board meetings, as outlined in this policy. To allow members of the public to address the Board, a period not to exceed 30 minutes will be set aside during the first part of each Board meeting for public comment, on items on the meeting's agenda. A second 15-minute time period will be set aside at the end of each Board meeting for public comment on matters pertaining to the district. These periods may be extended by a majority vote of the Board.

Presentations should be as brief as possible. No speaker will be permitted to speak for longer than three minutes. Speakers may not give unused time to other speakers. During the first comment period, speakers may comment on any agenda item. During the second comment period, speakers may comment on any matter related to district business.

Persons wishing to address the Board will advise the District Clerk within a reasonable time prior to the start of the meeting. The request to address the Board must be made (1) by email to the District Clerk prior to the meeting, or (2) in writing using a form provided by the district at in-person meetings. The request will include the speaker's name, an indication of whether the topic to be addressed is an agenda item, and a brief description of the topic to be addressed. The Board will limit comments to matters that may be properly discussed in public session. To maintain a first come, first served process, the district will request the name of the speaker and will utilize a number system. For purposes of following up with speakers later, the district may request the speaker's preferred contact information such as home address, telephone number, or email address, or speak with them in person. Any group or

organization wishing to address the Board must identify a single spokesperson. The Board President may limit the number of repetitive comments to keep within the time limit for the public comment period.

The District, by allowing a limited public forum for speaking at its meetings, neither screens nor restricts the content of speech, nor does it indemnify the speaker against legal liability. The Board will caution speakers about defamatory comments that may subject them to a lawsuit. The Board recommends that persons wishing to discuss matters involving individual district personnel or students should present their comments and/or concerns to the Superintendent during regular business hours.

All speakers and observers are to conduct themselves in a civil manner. Obscene language, defamatory statements, threats of violence, statements advocating racial, religious, or other forms of prejudice will not be tolerated.

Persons making presentations at a Board meeting will address remarks to the President and may direct questions or comments to Board members or other district officials only upon the approval of the President. Board members and the Superintendent have the privilege of asking questions of any person who addresses the Board, but commenters should not expect to engage in discussion with the Board.

Questions and comments from the public concerning matters that are not on the agenda will be taken under consideration and referred to the Superintendent for appropriate action. Persons wishing to have matters included on the agenda will contact the Superintendent in accordance with Policy 2342, Agenda Preparation and Dissemination.

The President will be responsible for the orderly conduct of the meeting and will rule on such matters as the time to be allowed for public discussion and the appropriateness of the subject being presented, as outlined in this policy and applicable provisions of law and regulation, and subject to the Board's parliamentary procedure.

The President will remind speakers whose presentations are inconsistent with this policy of the rules for public comment. For speakers who continue to violate this policy, the President may discontinue the presentation or call for a brief recess of the meeting. The President may order the removal of speakers from the speakers' area, or from the meeting in general, or may close the public comment period.

All individuals at Board meetings are expected to abide by the rules for Public Conduct on School Property as set forth in the district's Code of Conduct. At board meetings, speakers and observers may not engage in behavior that disrupts the meeting, such as shouting, interrupting others, blocking the free movement of others, or obstructing the views of others. In the event of such disruption, the President will remind those in attendance of the rules under this policy. Any Board member may request a brief recess of the meeting. The President may order the removal of those who are a threat to the safety of others or who disrupt the orderly conduct of the meeting. If appropriate, law enforcement may be called to remove disruptive individuals.

### **Responsibilities of the Board**

The Board of Education is responsible for the scope, depth and quality of education in the district. It is the policy making body for the school district. As elected officials they:

- Select the Superintendent of Schools as chief executive officer of the district.
- Define the philosophy of education for the district and set goals to achieve the desired educational progress.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of district programs and services.
- Appoint professional and non-certified personnel, grant tenure and set salaries.
- Establish policies for the operation of the school district.
- Develop a budget consistent with educational needs and community resources.
- Communicate the progress and needs of the district to the community, educational governing boards, and legislators.

## Meeting Agenda

The usual order of business at the Regular meeting of the Board of Education is as follows:

- Call to Order
- Approval of Minutes
- Citizens' Comments
- Announcements
- Superintendent's Report
- Correspondence
- Committee Reports
- Reports to the Board
- Board Actions
- Acknowledgements
- Citizens' Comments
- Old Business
- New Business
- Upcoming Meetings
- Adjournment
- Executive Session \* (if needed; closed to public)

*\*While the Board welcomes and encourages citizen's input and suggestions at its meeting, the public is reminded that pursuant to Board Policy No. 2330, the Board has expressly limited certain designated matters to executive session meetings.*

The agenda is available in BoardDocs via a link on the district's website. The Board receives the agenda and supporting documents in advance of the meeting to allow the trustees time to review and study information.

*Meetings are live streamed – please access the link under the BOE Tab on the District website <http://www.dfsd.org>*

## District Administration

The Superintendent of Schools and members of the Superintendent's Administration are present at Board Meetings. The Superintendent is the district's Chief Executive Officer. The Superintendent is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the school district, implementation of the educational programs and policies adopted by the Board and the execution of all decisions made by the Board concerning the internal operations of the school system.

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