

Executive Sessions

Except as provided by law, all meetings of the Board shall be open to the public, and all persons shall be permitted to attend the meetings. The Board may hold executive sessions upon recorded vote of 3/5 of the members present and voting. Deliberations may be conducted in executive session only on those matters defined in the law. No public record shall be kept and no final action shall be taken in executive session. Items that may be discussed in executive session include but may not be limited to:

- A. Discussion or consideration of the employment, appointment, assignment, duties, promotion, demotion, compensation, evaluation, disciplining, resignation, or dismissal of public officials, appointees or employees of the school unit or the investigation or hearing of charges or complaints against persons, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1. An executive session may be held only if public discussion could be reasonably expected to cause damages to the reputation or the individual's right to privacy would be violated;
 - 2. Any person charged or investigated is permitted to be present if the person so desires;
 - 3. Any person charged or investigated may request in writing that the investigation or hearing of charges or complaints be conducted in open session. Such requests must be honored; and
 - 4. Any person bringing charges, complaints or allegations of misconduct against the individual under discussion shall be permitted to be present.

- B. Discussion or consideration of suspension or expulsion of a student, the cost of whose education is paid from public funds. The student and legal counsel (and parents/guardians if student is a minor) will be permitted to be present if the student, parents/guardians so desire.

- C. Discussion or consideration of the condition, acquisition or the use of real or personal property permanently attached to real property, disposition of public property, or economic development, but only if premature disclosure of the information would prejudice the competitive or bargaining position of the public body.

- D. Discussion of labor contracts and proposals and meetings between the Board and its negotiators. Negotiations between the representatives of a public employer and public employees are closed unless opened by agreement of both parties.
- E. Consultations between the board and its attorney concerning the Board's legal rights and duties, pending or contemplated litigation, settlement offers, or other matters protected by attorney/client privilege, or where premature public knowledge of the matter would place the Board at a substantial disadvantage.
- F. Discussion of information contained in records made, maintained or received by the public body, when access by the general public is prohibited by statute.

A motion to go into executive session must indicate the nature of the business of the executive session and include a citation of one or more sources of statutory or other authority that permits an executive session. Failure to state all authorities justifying the executive session does not constitute a violation of the Freedom of Access Act if one or more of the authorities are accurately cited in the motion. An inaccurate citation of authority for an executive session does not violate the Freedom of Access Act if valid authority that permits the executive session exists and the failure to cite the valid authority was inadvertent. The parties must be named when labor contracts are the subject of an executive session.

By its very nature, the subject matter of executive sessions is highly confidential. It is expected that all parties to such discussion will respect the confidentiality of all matters discussed in executive session. Notes taken by Board members must be collected and destroyed at the conclusion of an executive session.

Legal Reference: 1 MRSA § 401 et seq. (Freedom of Access Act)
Cross Reference: BE- School Board Meetings

Adopted: February 26, 2009

Reviewed: November 13, 2013
Revised: March 17, 2016