PUBLIC COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

Public comment about the School Corporation is welcomed by the School Board whenever it is motivated by a sincere desire to improve the quality of the educational program.

~~Public comments at school board meetings are reserved for individuals who reside within the Corporation boundaries, are parents/guardians of MVCSC students, and/or employees of MVCSC.~~

Comments and concerns related to curriculum, methods of instruction, instructional materials, or Corporation employees shall be submitted in writing to the principal of the school and the Superintendent. Comments and concerns thus submitted will be considered by the Superintendent or his or her designated assistants and the principal. At the discretion of the Superintendent, a committee may be appointed, an existing committee may be utilized, or other action may be taken to review the matter in question and submit a written decision to the Superintendent.

Subject to the reasonable rules and registration process described below, the Board shall allow members of the public, physically present at a meeting, to provide oral comment before the Board takes final action on a topic. The Board may choose to allow public comment during an electronic meeting held during a declared emergency or local disaster. At his or her sole discretion, the Board President may permit public comment on issues not listed as a public agenda item.

~~Time for public comments at school board meetings is limited to 30 total minutes and three (3) minutes per individual to allow for an efficient meeting. Persons wishing to address the Board on a scheduled public agenda item shall sign in at the start of the meeting, provide their home address, affiliation (if any), and the agenda item they wish to address.~~

~~a.~~ To allow for an efficient meeting, the total amount of time dedicated to public comment shall not exceed thirty (30) minutes. The Board may increase the time allotted for public comment in order to meet obligations under law.

b. The Board shall allot each person providing public comment two (2) minutes to speak.

c. Persons wishing to address the Board on an agenda item shall register twenty-four (24) hours ahead of the scheduled meeting time by completing the appropriate form. The registration form will include the name of the person(s) providing comment, the organization represented (if any), and identify the agenda item to be addressed.

d. No person may speak more than once on the same topic.

e. In order to receive public comment on all agenda items scheduled for final action, the Board will take speakers on a first-come, first-served basis according to the date and time of registration. If the overall time allotment does not allow for accommodation of all speakers, comment will rotate through agenda items to assure the Board hears comment on all agenda items. For example, the Board would hear comment from the first person to

register to speak regarding agenda item 1, then the first person to register to speak regarding agenda item 2, and so on and so forth for each agenda item scheduled for final action at the meeting. The Board would then repeat that process, moving to the second, third, fourth, etc., person registered to speak on each agenda item until all registered speakers have spoken or the thirty (30) minute time limit expires, whichever occurs first.

The purpose of public comment is to give the Board members as much information as possible, not to engage in debate. Board members or administrators may provide answers to questions asked during public comment if the information is readily available and not confidential. Often, however, questions will not be answered, but taken under advisement and answers returned at a later time, if possible.

The Board will not tolerate comments that are: threatening, harassing, illegal, obscene, defamatory, personal attacks, or on a topic outside of the agenda. Comments should be directed to the Board, not an individual Board member.

Nothing in this policy prohibits the Board from taking reasonable steps to maintain order in a meeting, including removal of any person who is willfully disruptive of the meeting.

~~The Board will not tolerate abusive or inappropriate language or statements including, but not limited to statements that are: threatening, harassing, illegal, obscene, lewd, vulgar, defamatory, libelous, hostile, or personal attacks. Comments should be directed to the Board, not an individual Board member. Comments may not reference specific Corporation employees, patrons, or students.¶~~

~~The Board President may take appropriate action to maintain order at a meeting. Such actions may include stopping the speaker or limiting comments due to the number of individuals desiring to comment and/or the length of the agenda. ¶~~

~~The presiding officer of each Board meeting at which public participation is permitted shall administer the procedures of the Board for its conduct.¶~~

~~The presiding officer shall be guided by the following rules:¶~~

~~A. Public participation shall be permitted at the discretion of the presiding officer.¶~~

~~B. Only those who have signed in prior to the start of the meeting, and have been verified as a resident or parent of a student, may be considered for participation during the public comment portion of the meeting.¶~~

~~C. Participants must be recognized by the presiding officer and will be requested to preface their comments by an announcement of their name, address, and group affiliation, if and when appropriate.¶~~

~~D. Each statement made by a participant shall be limited to three (3) minutes duration.¶~~

E. No participant may speak more than once on the same topic unless all others who wish to speak on that topic have been heard.¶

F. All statements shall be directed to the presiding officer; no person may address or question Board members individually.¶

G. The presiding officer may:¶

a. prohibit public comments which are frivolous, repetitive, or harassing;¶

b. interrupt, warn, or terminate a person's statement when the statement is too lengthy, personally directed, abusive, obscene, or irrelevant;¶

c. request any individual to leave the meeting when that person behaves in a manner that is disruptive of the orderly conduct of the meeting;¶

d. request the assistance of law enforcement officers in the removal of a disorderly person when that person's conduct interferes with the orderly progress of the meeting;¶

e. call for a recess or an adjournment to another time when the lack of public decorum so interferes with the orderly conduct of the meeting as to warrant such action;¶

f. waive these rules with the approval of the Board when necessary for the protection of privacy or the administration of the Board's business.¶

H. Tape or video recordings are permitted. The person operating the recorder should contact the Superintendent prior to the Board meeting to review possible placement of the equipment, and agrees to abide by the following conditions:¶

a. No obstructions are created between the Board and the audience.¶

b. No interviews are conducted during the Board meeting.¶

c. No commentary is made that would distract either the Board or members of the audience.¶

Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation

Adopted: [date]
Revised: [date]