

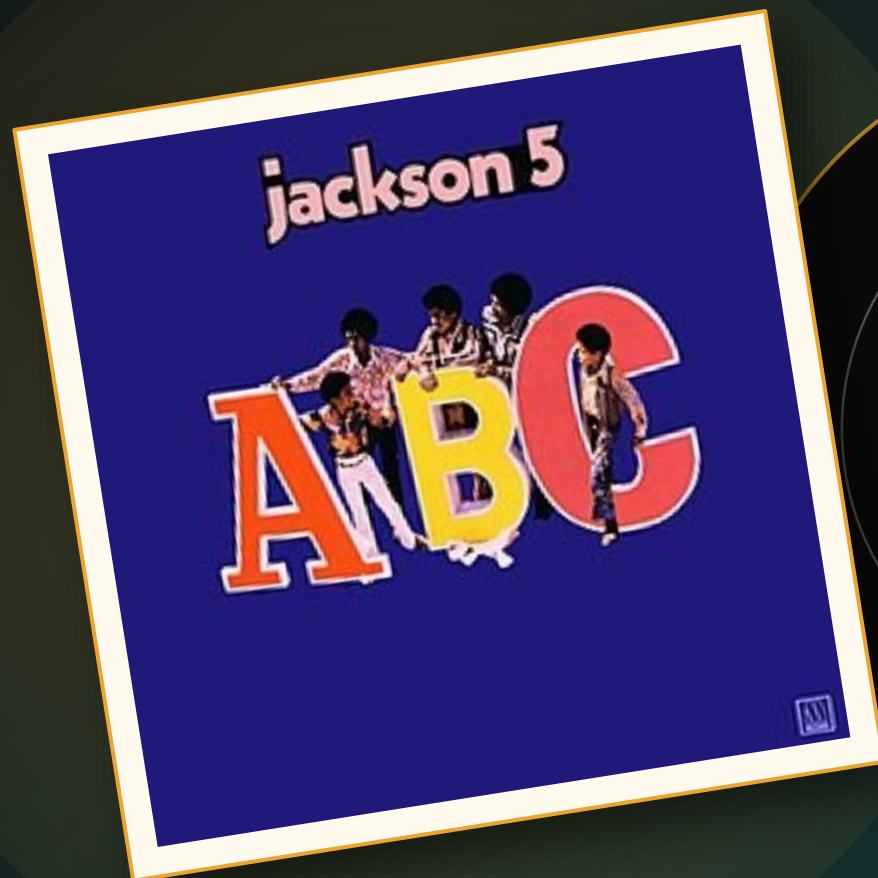
ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER

ABC...123

Learn the rhythm. Lead the meeting.

A practical guide for school board members

Dr. Tiffany N. Richardson • Registered Parliamentarian



Resources for the Rhythm

1. *Robert's Rules of Order* (12th Edition)
2. *Robert's Rules of Order Revised In Brief* (3rd Edition)
3. *Robert's Rules for Dummies* (4th Edition)
4. *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Parliamentary Procedure Fast-Track* (**FAVORITE**, but it has not been updated following the release of the latest edition of Robert's Rules)
5. Thirteen Ranking Motions – Plastic Card

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PARLIAMENTARIANS

Training, study courses, and credentialing in parliamentary procedure — a go-to source for members who want to keep learning: www.parliamentarians.org

F
O
I
A

The board should strive to conduct business in an open and public manner but also in an organized and orderly manner.

The intersection of parliamentary procedure and the SC Freedom of Information Act



THEME SONG

“Eternal Light” — The Jackson 5



From the Boardroom to the Livestream

THEN • In the room, in real time



NOW • Streamed live and on demand



MEETING LIVE STREAM

View board meeting livestream and
watch previous meeting videos

THEME SONG: "A Change Is Gonna Come" — The Jackson 5

Meeting Goals

A



Meeting is structured

B



Everyone has the opportunity to speak

C



Business is discussed, not people

1



Reduce or eliminate conflict

2



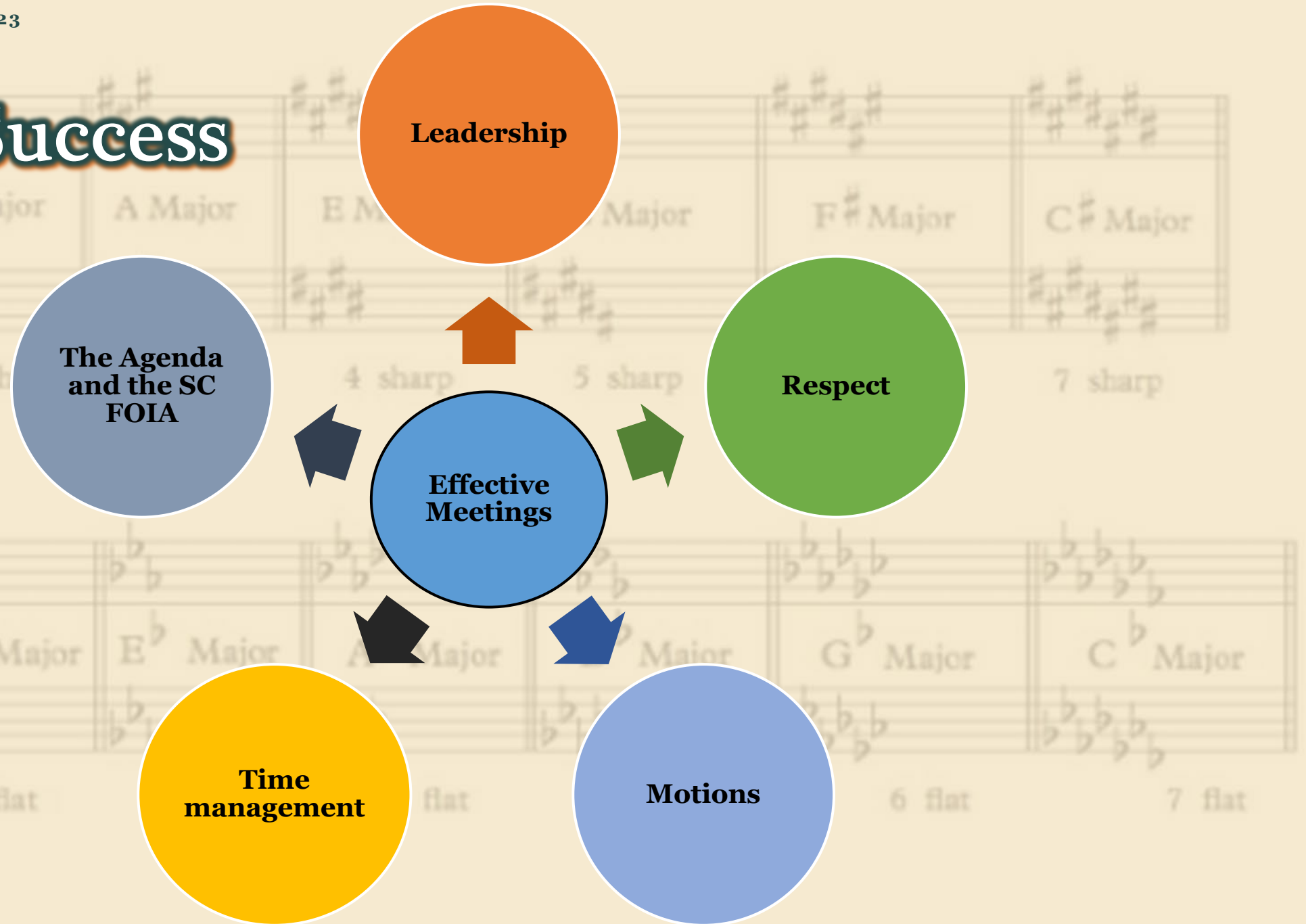
Votes are conducted properly

3

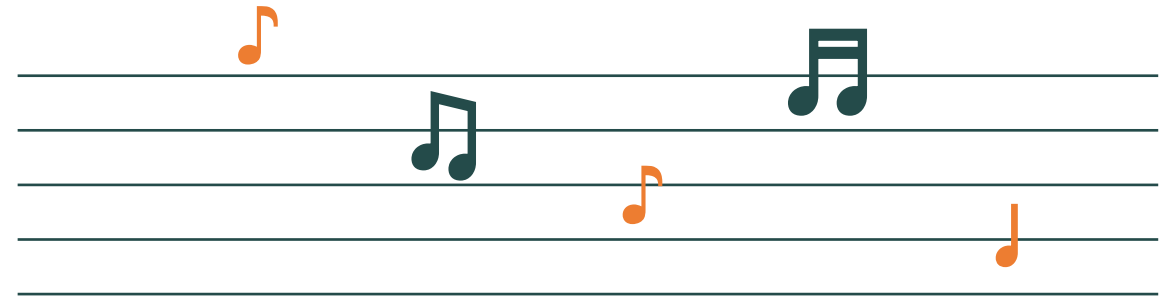


Board members are engaged

Keys of Success



Key of Leadership



Set the tone. Lead the meeting.

Who Wants to Be a Parliamentarian?

During a school board meeting, discussion on a controversial motion becomes heated, and several members begin speaking without being recognized by the chair. As board president, what is the most appropriate leadership response?

A. Allow the discussion to continue so every member feels heard.

B. Immediately call for a vote to prevent the disagreement from escalating.

C. Restore order, remind members to seek recognition before speaking, and continue discussion.

D. Recess the meeting and privately ask the members who are disagreeing to resolve the issue.

Final answer: C

Who Wants to Be a Parliamentarian?

Who is responsible for ensuring that the board follows its adopted parliamentary procedures during board meetings?

A. The Chair

B. The Longest Serving Board Member

C. The Parliamentarian

D. The Board

Final answer: D

Who Wants to Be a Parliamentarian?

During a school board meeting, a board member believes that the board is not following policy or parliamentary procedures. What should the board member raise to bring the issue to the attention of the Chair?

A. Point of Information

B. Point of Order

C. Point of Clarification

D. Point to the Chair

Final answer: B

Presiding Officer



Who Wants to Be a Parliamentarian?

If both the Board Chair and Vice Chair are absent from a school board meeting, who should preside over the meeting?

A. The Superintendent automatically assumes the role of chair.

B. The Board Secretary presides over the entire meeting.

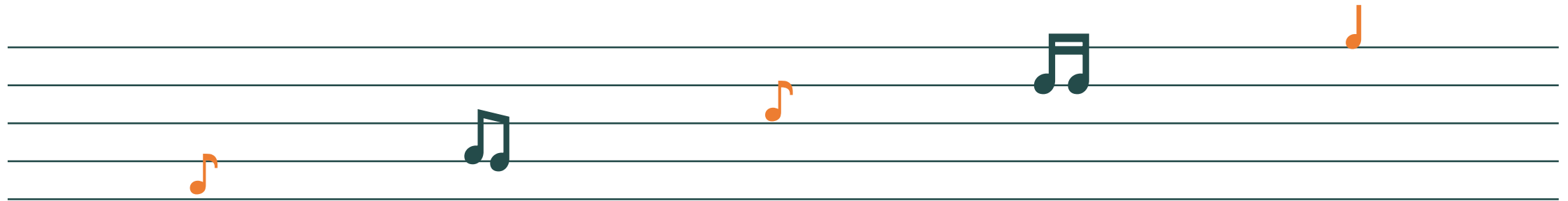
C. The board elects a chair from among the members present at the meeting.

D. The longest-serving board member automatically presides

Final answer: C



Keys of the Agenda



Mandated by FOIA...Ordered by the agenda.

Who Wants to Be a Parliamentarian?

Which statement best describes a school board meeting agenda?

A. The agenda provides public notice of the matters the board intends to discuss and take action on.

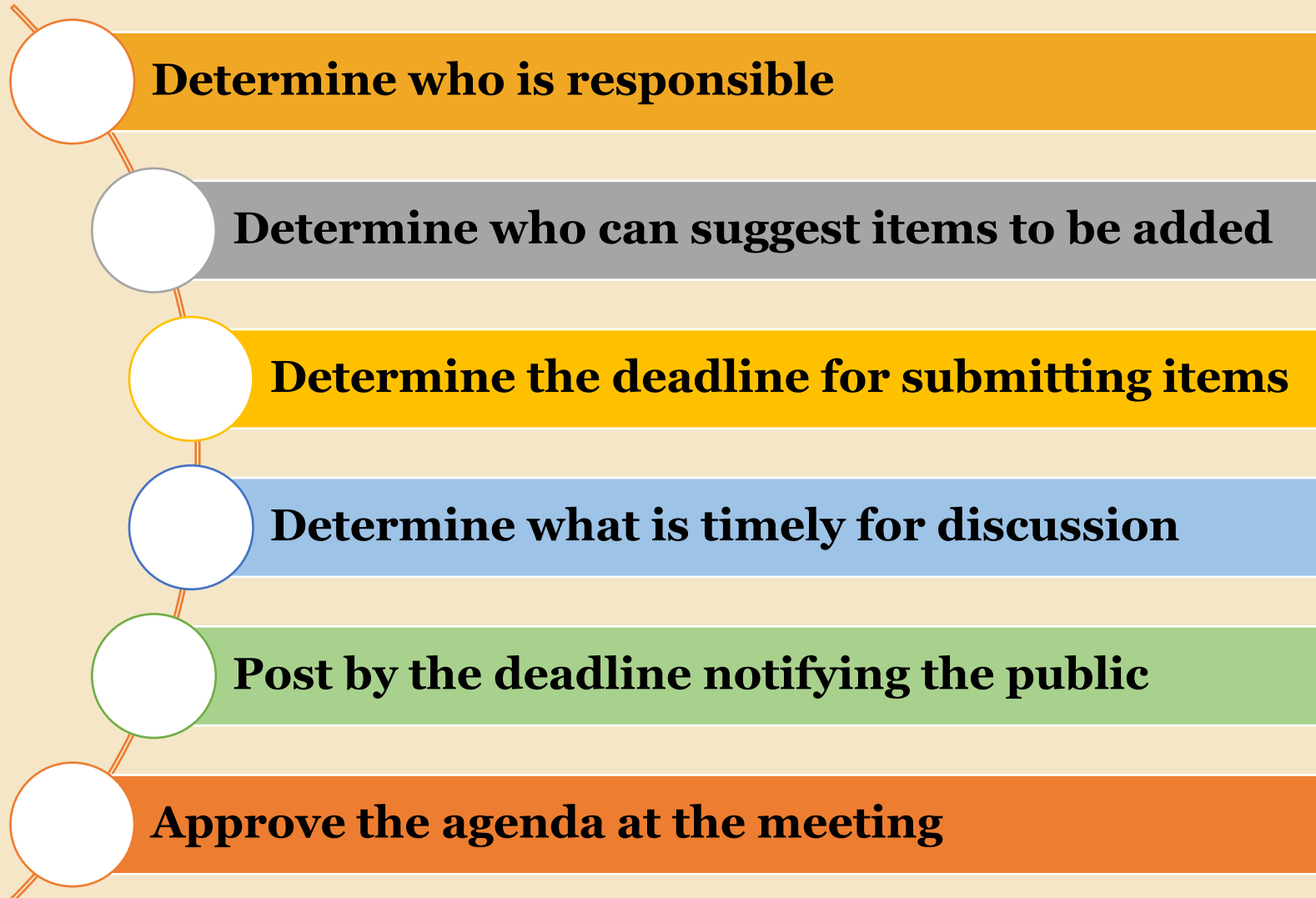
B. The Superintendent has sole authority to determine what the board may discuss.

C. Once an agenda is posted, it may be changed at any time without following additional requirements.

D. Board members may take final action on any issue raised during the meeting, even if it was not included on the agenda.

Final answer: A

Board Agenda (Policy BEDB)



Board Agenda: FOIA Requirements

Must be posted at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting notifying the public



Can be amended up until the 24-hour deadline



At the meeting, discussion items can be added with a 2/3 vote



At the meeting, final action items can be added with a 2/3 vote and a finding of an emergency or exigent circumstance

Consent Agenda

Typical consent agenda items are routine, procedural decisions for matters that are not controversial and do not require a lot of discussion. Supporting documents for items in the consent agenda must be given to board members in advance of the meeting. Examples of consent agenda items include:

- **Approval of the agenda and minutes**
- **Appointments of board members to committees**
- **Approval of field trips**

Sample Agenda

RICHARDSON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

BOARD MEETING

**Monday, August 31, 2026 – 6 p.m.
District Office Boardroom**

AGENDA

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. INVOCATION**
- 3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG**
- 4. CONSENT AGENDA**
 - a. Approval of Agenda
 - b. Minutes of the Previous Meeting
 - c. Football Fields Upgrades Rotation Schedule
 - d. CATE Field Trip to Boeing
- 5. SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS**
 - a. SCSBA Boardmanship Institute Recognition
- 6. PUBLIC COMMENT**
- 7. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**
 - a. Superintendent
 - b. Facilities Update
 - c. Financial Report
 - d. Instruction Report
 - e. Human Resources Report
- 8. EXECUTIVE SESSION**
 - a. Certified Personnel Recommendations for Hire and Resignations Discussion
 - b. Contractual Matters concerning Use of Facilities
 - c. Discussion on Property Acquisition for new school
- 9. RETURN TO OPEN SESSION**
- 10. ACTION ITEMS**
 - a. Personnel Recommendations for Hire and Resignations
- 11. ADJOURNMENT**

Who Wants to Be a Parliamentarian?

Which of the following is an appropriate reason for a school board to enter executive session?

A. To discuss conflict between board members Tito and Jermaine

B. To vote on a personnel matter

C. To receive legal advice related to a pending or potential legal matter

D. To discuss the policy governing board travel and reimbursement

Final answer: C

Executive Session Rules

Prior to going into executive session, the board must state the specific reason, which can only fall under one of the following:

**Personnel or
student matters**

**Contract
negotiations**

**Legal matters
related to a
pending,
threatened, or
potential claim;
settlement of a
claim; or the
position of the
district in other
adversary
situations**

**Security and
safety measures**

**Investigative
proceedings
related to
criminal
conduct**

Who Wants to Be a Parliamentarian?

The school board properly votes to enter executive session to discuss an administrative hire, a pending lawsuit, and a student transfer request. During the executive session, a board member raises concerns about a gun-related incident that occurred at a school earlier that day and begins discussing the matter. What should the board do?

A. Continue the discussion concerning the safety and security issue.

B. Continue the discussion and keep it confidential

C. Stop the discussion and continue it in open session.

D. Stop the discussion and return to matters that fall within the stated purpose of the executive session

Final answer: D

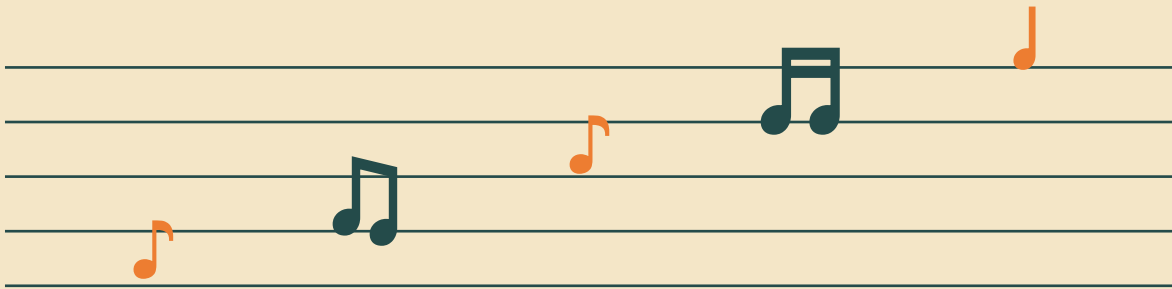
Executive Session Rules

The board will not take a vote, nor will it poll members in executive session.

A vote may be taken on any matter discussed in executive session only after the board returns to open session.

No action may be taken on an item discussed in executive session unless the meeting's agenda provides sufficient notice to the public that action may be taken on the topics discussed therein.

Key of Motions



*Move it, second it, debate it...then let the vote
play out.*



Who Wants to Be a Parliamentarian?

A school board member wants the board to discuss and take action on a matter that is properly before the board. Under parliamentary procedure, what should generally occur before the board begins its discussion?

A. A motion should be made and seconded before discussion begins.

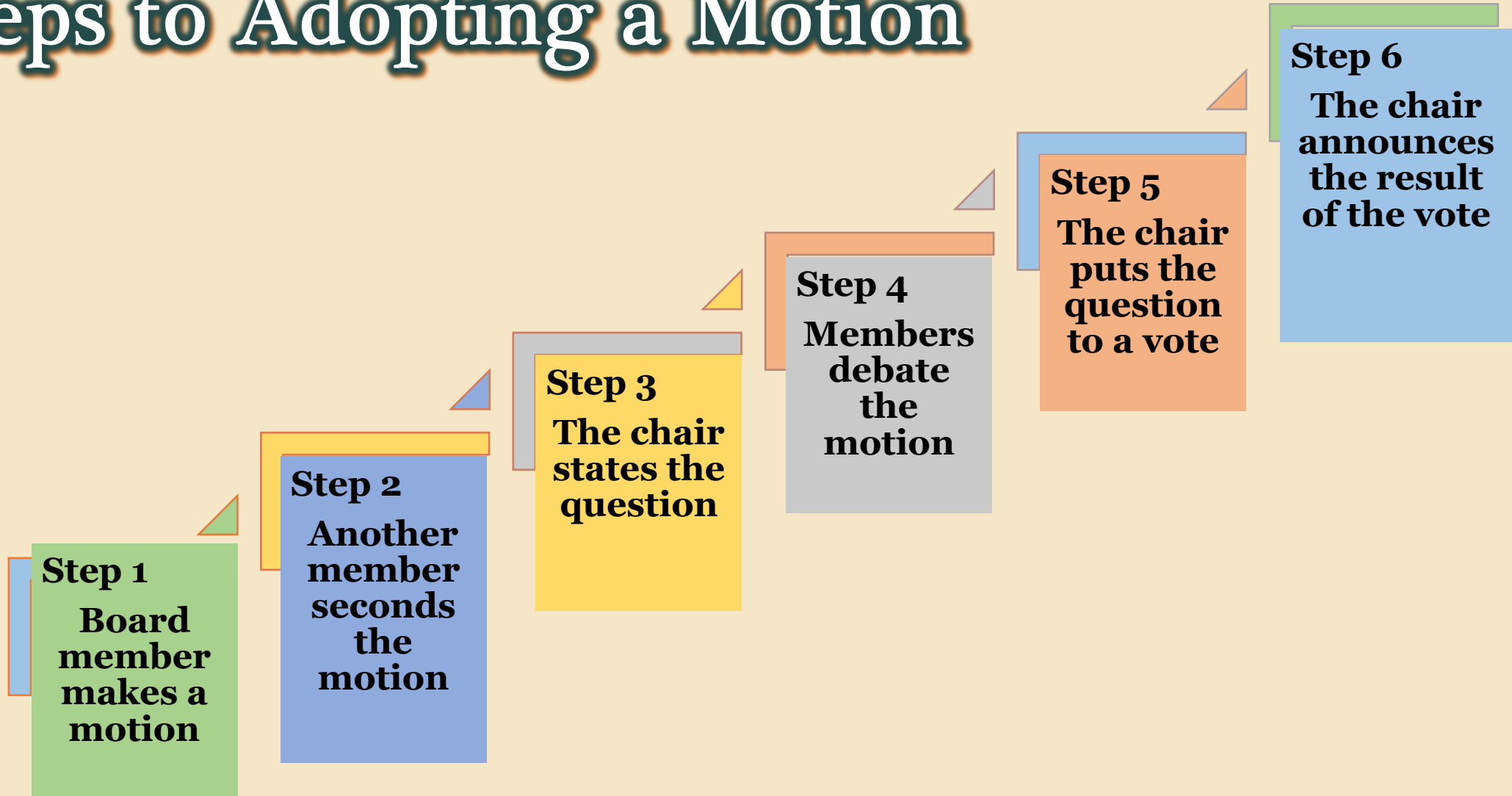
B. The Board Chair states the agenda item.

C. A board member must be acknowledged by the chair.

D. The Superintendent indicates that the matter is timely.

Final answer: A

Steps to Adopting a Motion



Tips for Effective Motions

- 1** Keep motions positive: State what the board proposes to do, not what it proposes not to do.
- 2** 'So moved' is not a complete motion. A motion should clearly state the specific action the board is being asked to take.

Option 1

Have the administration to clearly state its recommendation before the board action.

Option 2

Prepare the motion in advance, clearly stating the board's options to approve or deny the matter before it.

Tips for Effective Debate

- 1** The Chair should clearly restate the motion before debate begins to ensure all board members understand the issue before them.
- 2** Once the Chair restates the motion, it “belongs” to the board. The individual board member cannot withdraw the motion without consent from the board.
- 3** Avoid discussing personalities, questioning motives, or making derogatory remarks.
- 4** The Chair should not close debate while a board member who is entitled to speak is seeking recognition.
- 5** The Chair should ensure every board member who wishes to speak has an opportunity to do so before recognizing a member for a second time.

Who Wants to Be a Parliamentarian?

A five-member board is considering the addition of a CATE center to expand the district technology and career programs. One board member is out with the flu. Two board members abstain because they want to remain neutral. One board member votes yes, and one board member votes no. What is the outcome?

A. It is an illegal vote.

B. The motion passes.

C. The motion fails.

D. The board did not have a quorum.

Final answer: C

All About the Vote

Common Types of Voting

General consent or
unanimous consent

Voice voting

Show of hands

Roll call

The Chair should restate the motion before calling for the vote.

The Chair should call for negative votes during a voice vote.

The Chair should vote on all matters & must vote if the vote results in a tie.

A tie vote is a lost vote.

Absentee and proxy voting are not allowed.

Abstentions count as an absence from the vote.

The Chair should announce outcome of vote (i.e. number of those in favor and those opposed) for the minutes.

Who Wants to Be a Parliamentarian?

During discussion of a motion, the board determines that it needs additional information from the administration before making a decision and wants to consider the matter at a later date. What is the appropriate parliamentary action?

A. Withdraw the motion

B. Motion to Table the Matter

C. Motion to Postpone the Matter

D. Adjourn the meeting

Final answer: C

Motion to Table

The Purpose

1

Used only to interrupt the pending business so something else can be discussed immediately.

The Caution

2

A motion to table is not debatable and should not be used to end discussion, as doing so can infringe upon the rights of individual members and the minority.

The Test

3

Ask: Is the intent to kill or avoid dealing with a measure? If so, a motion to lay on the table is improper.

Move to Take From the Table

The matter is picked up exactly where it was when it was suspended

- Cannot interrupt a speaker
- Requires a second
- Is not debatable
- Requires a majority
- Cannot be amended

Time limit: that meeting or the next meeting if it is continued to another day.

Who Wants to Be a Parliamentarian?

At a previous meeting, the board adopted a motion. At a later meeting, the Board determines that the action is no longer in the district's best interest and wants to reverse its previous decision.
What is the appropriate motion?

A. Motion to Reconsider

B. Motion to Rescind

C. Motion to Move the Previous Question

D. None of the above

Final answer: B

Reconsider vs. Rescind

Reconsider

- May only occur at the same meeting in which the action took place.
- Only someone from the prevailing side can make a motion to reconsider.
- Must be seconded, is debatable if the original action was debatable, and cannot be amended.

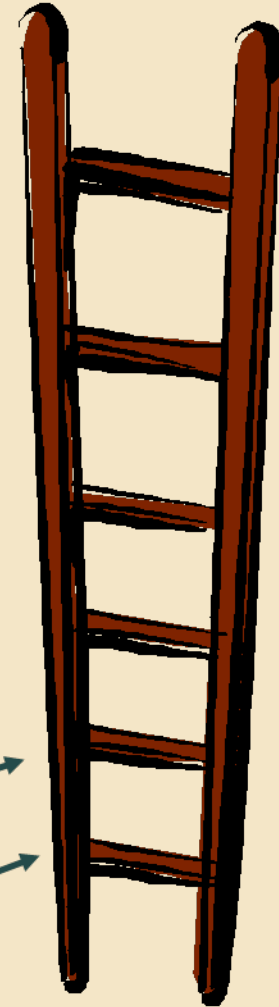
VS

Rescind

- No time limit.
- Anyone can make the motion regardless of how he/she voted on the original motion.
- Must be seconded, is debatable, and can be amended.
- Once the action from the original vote has been done, the action can no longer be rescinded.

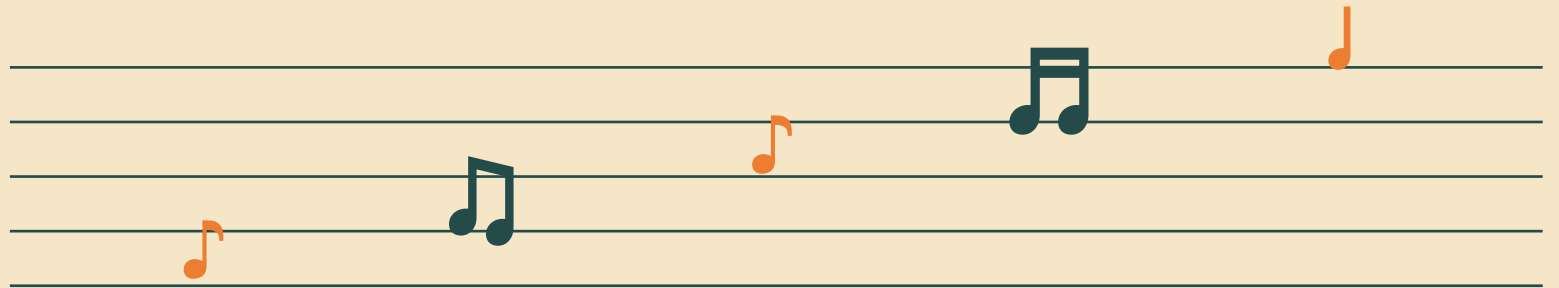
The Ladder of Motions

1. Fix time to which to adjourn
2. Adjourn
3. Recess
4. Raise a question of privilege
5. Call for orders of the day
6. Lay on the table
7. Previous question
8. Limit/extend limits of debate
9. Postpone to a certain time
10. Commit or refer
11. Secondary amendment
12. Primary amendment
13. Postpone indefinitely
14. Main motion





Key on Time Management



Start on time, keep the tempo...and end on the beat.

Tips to Keep the Tempo

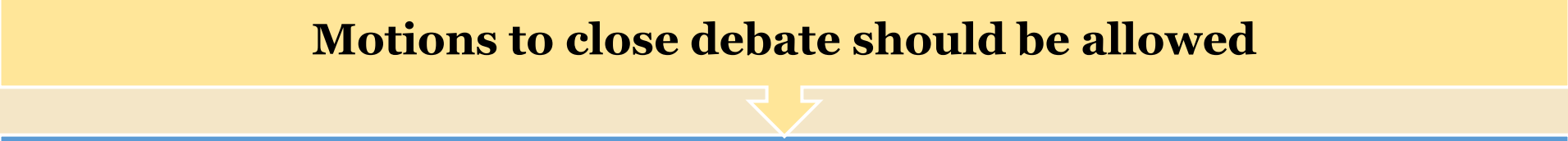
Begin the meeting on time



Members should speak only after being recognized



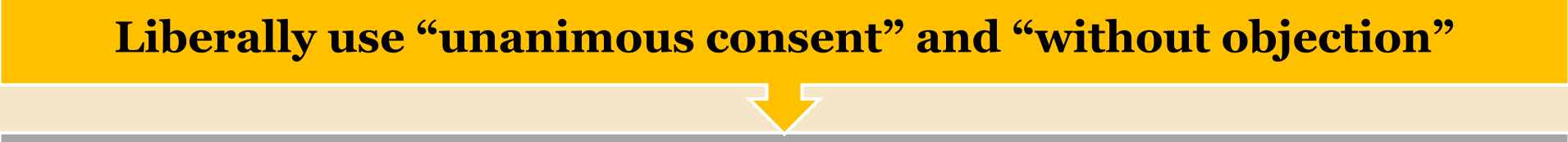
Motions to close debate should be allowed



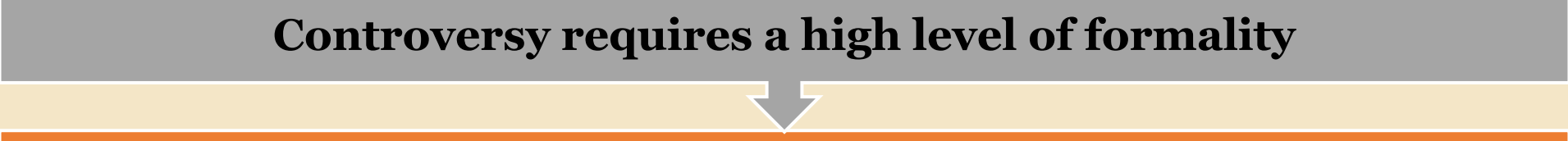
Keep discussions prior to a motion to a minimum



Liberal use “unanimous consent” and “without objection”



Controversy requires a high level of formality

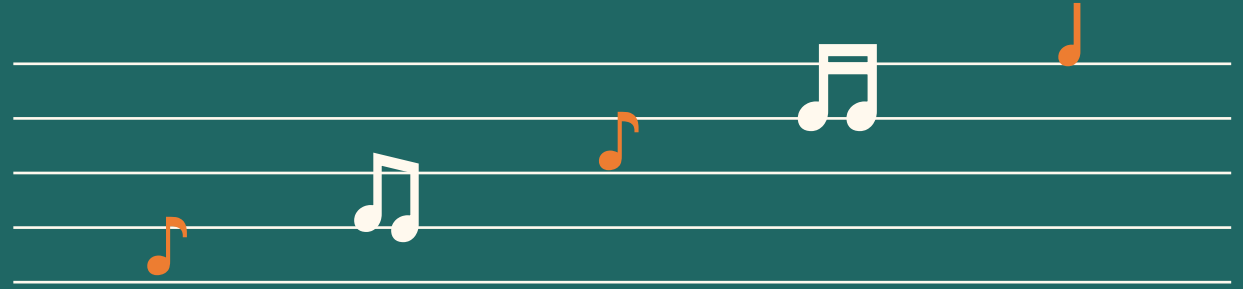


End meetings at a reasonable time





Key of Respect



Listen for every voice...and no one sings over another.

One Board, One Sound

Disagree with the position, not the person.

Respect is essential to effective governance, especially when Board members disagree.

Listen to understand—not simply to respond.

Assume good intentions and avoid questioning another member's motives.

Give every Board member the same courtesy and opportunity to be heard that you expect for yourself.

Once the Board has acted, respect the decision of the Board while retaining the right to disagree.

How Board members treat one another sets the tone for the administration, staff, students, and community.

Respect the role, voice, and perspective of every Board member.

Board unity does not require uniformity—it requires professionalism and respect.



LET'S KEEP THE CONVERSATION GOING

Questions or Training?

Dr. Tiffany N. Richardson

tiffanyrichardson2012@gmail.com

