



Observer Corps Report

Observer: Linda Gass

Meeting Observed: Knox County Board of Education – Regular Session

Meeting Date: April 9, 2026

[Agenda](#)

[Video Recording](#)

Three Main Observations:

1. The meeting was short (35 min, including- four public forum speakers). All items were quickly approved, with no discussion or nay votes, except first policy item.

2. Only one agenda item (Policy item 6A) prompted board discussion. Three board members (Ms. Templeton, Mr. Triplett, and Ms. Bike) asked questions about how procedural changes, especially those related to disciplinary matters, are communicated. These board members' questions led to a line being added to ensure the board is notified changes, but only for this specific procedure. This discussion highlighted the importance of transparency and communication between administration and the board.

3. Four speakers addressed the board during public forum, each raising specific concerns. A common theme across their remarks was the need for greater district accountability and more responsive leadership.

Feature Evaluated	Yes	No	Comments
Meeting started on time?	X		Ended at 5:35pm (35 minutes)
All members present?	X		
Members attentive?	X		
Did members come prepared to discuss agenda items?			
Agenda posted 72 hours prior to meeting?	X		
Agenda items clearly	X		

described what was to be discussed?			
Adequate opportunity given for public input?	X		Four public forum speakers (see notes below)
Was there an appearance that some action items were discussed in closed rather than open session?	X		
Was background information available to the public?	X		
Facilities adequate (room size, lighting, ventilation, speakers, audible, ADA accessible?)	X		

Were there any issues on the agenda relevant to LWV positions or programs? View the League's [National](#), [State](#), and [LWVKKC](#) policy positions.

LWVKKC Policy Positions: Childcare, Land Use, Health, Homeless/Mentally Ill Persons, Urban Forestry, Use of School Facilities by Communities, Teacher Recruitment & Retention

League Position	Issue

Do you recommend League action on any of these issues?

Other notes/concerns?

35 min including- four public forum speakers. 15 seated including red shirt employees and Supt Rysewyck. About 22 others including employees assisting meeting and audience. Also, five uniformed police officers.

All items quickly approved, no discussion or nay votes, except first item.

Discussion for ten minutes on the first board policy item (Board Policies. "6 A. Policy J-190 Code of Behavior and Discipline as amended discussed at Policy Review")

Board member Templeton requested if board can be notified when there are changes in disciplinary procedures to ensure transparency to the community concern when changes in disciplinary action.

Dr. Brown responded I don't disagree with you, we can make you aware. We try to be as transparent as possible. We are one of the few districts that publishes policies. Ms. Lautner reiterated Dr. Brown's points on transparency.

Board member Triplett stated there might be other procedures that we'd like to be notified about. He asked if adding a line in procedures that the board doesn't vote on, should it live in policy to be enforceable. Ms. Lautner responded policies are not as granular as procedures. When procedure is being amended, you are seeing the amendment. If administration failed to follow the procedure, the board can hold administration accountable.

(Procedure Manual is lengthy. After the meeting I asked employee Terri Coatney if I might see the Manual. She said, yes. It's on website. I can also see the paper copy at another time but it's too long to print for an individual. I also asked when was the Policy Review meeting. It was a Friday 10:00 in March. There will be another one May 15. It's bimonthly.)

Board member Bike expressed concern that this line lives in this procedure but not all of them. How will future board members know it exists here and not in all of them? Ms. Lautner responded the notification request was specific to this procedure. We are not going to commit to notifying BOE Board of Education of EVERY change in Procedures. How often do procedures get changed? Peaks and valleys. We anticipate board received questions about this procedure. We see an uptick when it's necessary to interpret new laws (TN General Assembly).

Four public forum speakers.

1) Gavin Gamboza. Strident shaming of BOE for fifty years of silence regarding Gibson girl who never came home. He is asking a second time for an apology. Compassion would mean liability. But there's a duty to God.

Kristi Kristy BOE replied. Said normally we don't respond. Soft tone, said thanks for bringing it to our attention.

2) Buck Fleming. District four. Teacher is bullying students at West Valley Middle School. In violation of Policy J211. Teacher has the class point to student and say Shame Shame Shame. Also, there's a Wheel of Shame and someone spins it. For example, a student missed a quiz, the class booed the student. The names of students being bullied were given to the school, but the school won't notify their parents.

3) Candace Banister. Farragut High School suicides. System promoted a bully to a high position and would not hear what eleven people wanted to say. Called out Supt because in meeting with her he couldn't recall something but could easily recall something else. No response but after meeting adjourned I saw that employee in red shirt stopped on his way out and said to her, I'm sorry.

4) Sherry Garret. Nurse. Chair of Moms for Liberty. AI is here now and we need guardrails, to adopt policies.