PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN MEETINGS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

The Board of Education recognizes the importance of public participation in the school district. Accordingly, opportunities for citizen input shall be made available to school district patrons in conjunction with regular meetings of the Board.

Public Comment During Board Meetings

Citizens wishing to address the Board during public comment are strongly encouraged to notify the Board Secretary prior to the Board meeting. The Board President will recognize these individuals to make their comments at the appropriate time during public comment. Citizens wishing to present petitions to the Board may also do so at this time. The Board however, will only receive the petitions and not act upon them or their contents.

The Board has the discretion to limit the amount of time set aside for public participation. Normally, speakers will be limited to three minutes. However, the Board President may modify this time limit, if deemed appropriate or necessary. Public comment is a time set aside for community input, but the Board will not discuss or take any action on any matter during public comment.

Public comment shall be limited to regular Board meetings and will not be routinely held during special Board meetings.

At no time will the board allow public criticism of the job performance of specific District employees during the public comments portion of the board meeting.

The Board also recognizes that public participation at a meeting of the Board is a privilege, not a right. Therefore, the Board may, by a majority vote of its members, determine if public participation will not be a part of a Board meeting agenda or be offered to citizens in an open forum held in conjunction with the meeting.

Notice of the date, time and location of board meetings shall be given at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting in accordance with policy 210.2 (Meeting Notice). A copy of the Board Meeting table of contents will be available for review on the District website, or the full agenda will be available by contacting the Board Secretary.

Although Board retreats and work sessions will be open meetings in accordance with the Iowa Code, generally, an invitation for public comment will not be extended to citizens in attendance. Also, an invitation for public comment normally will not be extended at special meetings of the Board.

No person shall be excluded from attending any open meeting of the Board of Education, except for a breach of the peace actually committed at a meeting or during closed sessions called by the Board under the provisions of the Iowa Open Meetings Law.

Individuals who have a complaint about employees may bring their complaint to the Board only after they have followed board policy addressing citizens' complaints. Students who have a complaint may only bring their complaint to the Board after they have followed board policy addressing students' complaints.

Petitions to Place a Topic on the Agenda

Individuals who wish for an item to be placed on the Board agenda may submit a valid petition to the Board. For a petition to be valid, it must be signed by at least 500 eligible electors of the district, or ten percent of the individuals who voted in the last school election, whichever number is lower. For current minimum required signatures, contact the Board Secretary.

Upon receiving a valid petition to the Board to place a proposal on the next Board agenda for public hearing, the Board will place the proposal identified in the petition on the agenda of the next regular meeting, or a special meeting held within 30 days of receipt of the petition. The Board will provide a sign-up sheet for all individuals who wish to speak on the proposal, and individuals will be called to speak in order of sign-up. The sign-up sheet will require each individual to list their legal name and mailing address. Each speaker will be limited to an amount of time established by the Board President that is reasonable and necessary based on the number of speakers signed up. The same time limit will apply to all speakers on the proposal. Each individual will be limited to one opportunity to speak. The Board maintains absolute discretion on whether or not to discuss or act on the public comments made on the proposal. If a petition is related to curriculum, the district maintains discretion to determine whether to stop teaching that curriculum until the Board holds the public hearing to discuss the curriculum.

Legal Ref.: Iowa Code §§ 21; 22; 279.8, 279.8B

Cross Ref.:
- 101.0 The People and Their School District
- 109.0 Complaints by Citizens
- 210.0 Meetings of the Board of Education
- 210.5 Rules of Order
- 403.51 Resolution of Employee Complaints
- 503.3 Student Grievance Policy

ADOPTED: 9/19/83
2/12/90
4/26/93
12/9/02
10/26/09
1/27/14
4/9/18
2/14/22

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