

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN BOARD MEETINGS

The board recognizes the importance of citizen participation in school district matters. In order to assure citizens are heard and board meetings are conducted efficiently and in an organized manner, the board will set time aside for citizen participation, either at a specific time during the meeting or during the discussion of agenda items. Citizens wishing to address the board on a certain agenda item must notify the superintendent prior to the board meeting. Citizens wishing to present petitions to the board may 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.

If the pressure of business or other circumstances dictate, the board president may decide to eliminate this practice. The board president will recognize these individuals to make their comments at the appropriate time. The orderly process of the board meeting will not be interfered with or disrupted. Only those speakers recognized by the board president will be allowed to speak. Comments by others are out of order. If disruptive, the individual causing disruption may be asked to leave the board meeting.

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.

To speak on any issue at a regularly scheduled Board meeting, member of the public will either:

1. Participate during the Open Forum portion of each regularly scheduled Board meeting in accordance with the following:
 - a. An Open Forum will be placed at or near the beginning of the agenda for each regularly scheduled Board meeting. A person may speak to any topic when recognized by the Board President during Open Forum.
 - b. Any person addressing the Board during Open Forum will state his or her name and address. He or she may speak for up to three (3) minutes, unless additional time is authorized by the Board President, subject to appeal by the Board.
 - c. Any person addressing the Board during Open Forum will conduct himself/herself with respect and decorum.
 - d. If the pressure of business or other circumstances dictate, the board president may decide to curtail this policy and limit the number of times a person speaks. The Board reserves the right to limit the time allotted to the Open Forum portion of each regular Board meeting's agenda to a total of 30 minutes. Additional time may be authorized by the Board as it deems appropriate.
 - e. The Board may ask questions and engage in discussion on the item (topic raised during the Open Forum). The Board will generally take a subject raised during the Open Forum under advisement and will respond if appropriate, as soon as possible.
2. Citizen who have a place on the agenda (in accordance with the provisions of Board Policy No. 210.10 may address the board on the issue of their concern during the discussion of that issue. The presiding officer will recognize these individuals to make their comments when the item of their concern is addressed during the meeting.
3. Citizens may respond with board president acknowledgement to an agenda item when such is being discussed by the school board. Such comments must be directed to the school board within a three (3) minute time limit. The board has the discretion to limit the amount of time set aside for public participation.

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The Board reserves the right to limit the number of persons who attend Board meetings, should the safety or health of those present be in danger. The Board recognizes the rights of all members of the public to be a part of the democratic processes involved in administering the public schools and will do all that is reasonably possible to encourage such participation.

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.

NOTE: Members of the public do not have a legal right to participate in board meetings. Boards need to make the determination how best, if at all, to involve the public in their board meetings. Boards that follow other practices for allowing the public to participate in board meetings should amend this policy to reflect their practice.

Legal Reference: Iowa Code 11 21; 279.8 (2003).

Cross Reference:

- 205 Board Member Liability
- 210.8 Board Meeting Agenda
- 214 Public Hearings
- 307 Communication Channels
- 401.4 Employee Complaints
- 402.5 Public Complaints About Employees
- 502.4 Student Complaints and Grievances

Approved: January 8, 1973

Reviewed: August 1, 1977; December 8, 1986; January 10, 1994; August 14, 1995; February 10, 2014

Revised: October 19, 1998; May 13, 2002, September 9, 2002; July 14, 2003; September 18, 2006; June 9, 2008; March 9, 2009