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 aside a specific time for public comment.

Public Comment During Board Meetings

Citizens wishing to address the board during public comment must 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 5 minutes with a total allotted time for public participation of 20 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.

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.

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.

The board has a significant interest in maintaining the decorum of its meetings, and it is expected that members of the public and the board will address each other with civility. The orderly process of the board meeting will not be interfered with or disrupted by public comment. Only individuals 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. Defamatory comments may be subject to legal action.

Legal Reference: Iowa Code §§ 21; 22; 279.8

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

Adopted: 11/16/2020
Modified: 08/16/2021
Reviewed: 11/18/2024