

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT BOARD MEETINGS**

The Board of Education encourages public participation on District related matters at Board meetings, as outlined in this policy. To allow for public participation, a period not to exceed 30 minutes shall be set aside during the first part of each meeting.

This period may be extended by a majority vote of the Board.

Persons wishing to address the Board shall advise District Clerk prior to the start of the Board meeting. The request shall be made in writing on a form provided by the district. The district shall request the name of the speaker, the speaker's address, telephone number, or email address. Only speakers with fully completed speaker forms submitted to the District Clerk prior to the start of the Board meeting may be permitted to speak. To limit comments to matters which may be properly discussed in public session, the district shall request a brief description of the topic to be addressed. Any group or organization wishing to address the Board must identify a single spokesperson.

Presentation should be as brief as possible. No speaker will be permitted to speak for longer than 3 minutes. Speakers may comment on: (1) any matter related to district business; (2) any agenda item; or (3) matters related to agenda items specifically or district matters generally.

The Board will not permit in public session discussion involving individual district personnel, any Board agent, or students. Persons wishing to discuss matters involving individual district personnel or students should present their comments and/or concerns to the Superintendent during regular business hours. The Superintendent shall therefore immediately forward a copy thereof to the Board President, who may, in turn, cause copies thereof to be distributed to the members of the Board of Education.

All speakers are to conduct themselves in a civil manner. Obscene language, libelous statements, threats of violence, statements advocating racial, religious, or other forms of prejudice will not be tolerated.

Persons making presentations at a Board meeting will address remarks to the President and may direct comments to Board members or other district officials only upon the approval of the President. Board members and the Superintendent shall have the privilege of asking questions of any person who addresses the Board.

Questions and comments from the public concerning matters which are not on the agenda will be taken under consideration and referred to the Superintendent for appropriate action. Persons wishing to have matters included on the agenda shall contact the Superintendent in accordance with Policy 2342, Agenda Preparation and Dissemination.

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The President shall be responsible for the orderly conduct of the meeting and shall rule on such matters as the time to be allowed for public discussion and the appropriateness of the subject being presented, as outlined in this policy and applicable provisions of law and regulation, and subject to the Board's parliamentary procedure. The President shall have the right to discontinue any presentation which violates this policy.

Cross-ref: 2342, Agenda Preparation and Dissemination  
2135, Civility and Decorum

Ref: *Appeal of Kushner*, 49 EDR 263 (2010) (boards not required to allow the public to speak)  
*Matter of Martin*, 32 EDR 381 (1992) (boards need not permit nonresidents to speak)  
*Appeal of Wittneben*, 31 EDR 375 (1992) (boards encouraged to permit citizens to speak)  
*Matter of Kramer*, 72 St. Dept. Rep. 114 (1951) (boards may put time limits on public speaking)  
NYS Department of State, Committee on Open Government, Advisory Opinions OML-AO-#2696 (Jan. 8, 1997), OML-AO-#2717 (Feb. 27, 1997), OML-AO-#3295 (Apr. 16, 2001), OML-AO-#3518 (Aug. 30, 2002), OML-AO-#4141 (Feb. 24, 2006), OML-AO-#4044 (Sept. 30, 2005), OML-AO-#4292 (Dec. 6, 2006)

Adopted: 03-03-20