

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT BOARD MEETINGS

The Board of Education encourages public participation on school related matters at Board meetings, as outlined in this policy. To allow for public participation, a period not to exceed 30 minutes be set aside during the first part of each Board meeting for public comment, with priority given to comments on items on the meeting's agenda. A second 30-minute time period will be set aside at the end of each Board meeting for public comment on matters pertaining to the district but not on the agenda. These periods may be extended by a majority vote of the Board.

Persons wishing to address the Board shall advise Superintendent of Schools within a reasonable time prior to the start of the public comment period of the meeting. The request shall be made in writing on a form provided by the district. To maintain a first come, first served process, the district may request the name of the speaker. For purposes of following up with speakers later, the district may request the speaker's address, telephone number, or email address. 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 three minutes. Speakers may comment on matters related to agenda items specifically or district matters generally, depending on the public participation section.

The Board will not permit in public session discussion involving individual district personnel 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.

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 questions or 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.

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

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)

Adoption date: February 14, 2006

Revised date: November 10, 2015

Revised date: September 12, 2017