

**SCHEDULING PERIODS OF PUBLIC COMMENT**

During their regular monthly meetings, the School Board shall include a period of public comment on the meeting agenda. Public comment may be either agenda-related or non-agenda-related. Public comment shall be limited to 30 minutes, unless the majority of the Board votes otherwise.

- Regular Meetings. A public comment period shall be scheduled and publicly noticed in connection with the regular meeting of the Board that is held each month.
- Regular or Special School Board Meetings for which All Substantive Items of Business are Noticed for Closed Session. If all of the substantive items of business for any regular Board meeting are to be noticed as topics of a proposed closed session, the meeting shall not include a noticed period of public comment unless the Board expressly directs the noticing of such a public comment period as part of the agenda for the meeting.
- Special Meetings. In the absence of more specific direction provided by the Board, the Board President may exercise his/her discretion to determine the inclusion and scope of any noticed period of public comment during a special Board meeting. The scope of any public comments made during a comment period at any such special meeting shall be limited to comments that are germane to one or more of the substantive items of business that were expressly included in the public notice of the special meeting, and the period of public comment that occurs during a special meeting shall be conducted in accordance with this policy and with related procedures.

**REGISTRANT (SPEAKER) RESPONSIBILITIES**

Any person who wishes to address the Board during a noticed period of public comment at a Board meeting shall register to speak prior to the start of the meeting in accordance with specified pre-registration procedures.

The Board does not intend any period of public comment at its meetings to be either an appropriate or effective means of investigating or attempting to resolve any complaint or grievance that involves allegations against any individual District employee or individual student(s). Similarly, the Board does not intend any period of public comment at its meetings to be an appropriate or effective means of investigating or attempting to resolve an appeal of any individualized adverse action that may have been taken by the District against a particular student or employee. If the presiding officer of any meeting determines (on his/her own initiative or upon an appeal to the chair) that any registrant's comments are an attempt to present allegations, evidence, or other information that the registrant wishes the Board to accept as facts or as conclusions related to any such complaint, grievance or appeal, the presiding officer will:

1. Interrupt the registrant's remarks and refer to this portion of this policy;
2. Attempt to redirect the registrant to an alternative process that can more appropriately be used to investigate and attempt to resolve his/her complaint, grievance or appeal (e.g., by expressly requesting that he/she choose to use such an alternative process in lieu of persisting with his/her public comments); and
3. Provide such other direction to the registrant, Board members, or other meeting attendees as may be appropriate.

Each registrant shall adhere to established procedures for the public comment period and he/she shall:

1. Retain all liability for his/her comments and conduct (i.e., the public comment period does not offer any speaker any exemption from legal liability or from other lawful consequences that may result from the speaker's comments or conduct).
2. Wait to speak until he/she has been recognized by the presiding officer.
3. Limit the substance of his/her comments to topic(s) that are within the scope of the public comment period (e.g., when the period is offered only for comments that relate to agenda items, the registrant shall not address the Board on other items/issues).
4. Limit the duration of his/her comments to three minutes.
5. Avoid engaging in conduct or making comments that are obscene,

threatening, harassing, aggressive, defamatory or disorderly.

6. Avoid making repetitive appearances before the Board in which the same registrant, or persons acting in concert, present substantially the same information.
7. Avoid engaging in political advocacy with respect to candidates for any elective office.
8. Present their remarks verbally without the use of supporting material that requires any set-up/take-down time or any advance coordination with District multi-media systems (the registrant may provide copies of supplemental written materials to the Board/District).
9. Except where a person registers under established procedures as the spokesperson for a group or where it is permitted as a reasonable accommodation for an individual with special needs, no individual may present his/her public comments by proxy.

#### **AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PRESIDING OFFICER**

To promote the lawful, orderly and efficient progress of each meeting, the presiding officer of the meeting shall have the authority to enforce the requirements of this policy and he/she shall conduct any period of public comment according to established procedures. The presiding officer may call any registrant (or other attendee) to order and direct the individual to cease conduct which violates any applicable law, policy, or procedure. If necessary, the presiding officer may terminate a registrant's comments and/or contact law enforcement for assistance in maintaining order or safety. In particularly egregious situations, the presiding officer or any Board member may propose a sanction that extends beyond the current meeting, and the sanction (if any) shall be determined by a vote of the Board.

#### **OTHER PROVISIONS**

This policy and its related procedures do not apply to any public hearing that is conducted by the Board/District pursuant to any legal requirement or pursuant to any local policy requirement, unless the Board/District expressly chooses to apply some or all of this policy and/or the related procedures to the public hearing.

## **ALTERNATIVES TO PUBLIC COMMENT**

Stakeholders who wish to communicate to the Board using a non-public venue may do so using:

- 1) An email or letter to the Board Secretary, who will forward the comments to the full Board.
- 2) Personal correspondence to one or more Board members (phone call, letter, or email).

Contact information for members of the Board of Education will be maintained on the District website or can be obtained through the Executive Assistant.

### **Legal References:**

#### **Wisconsin Statutes**

- [Section 19.81](#) [state policy on open meetings]
- [Section 19.83\(2\)](#) [discussion during period of public comment]
- [Section 19.84\(2\)](#) [public notice of board meetings, including public comment period]
- [Section 19.85](#) [exemptions to open meetings]

**Adopted:**               **06/21/82**  
**Amended:**           **12/03/12**  
                                  **06/21/21**