

Policy 213: Public Participation in Board Meetings**Status:** ADOPTED**Original Adopted Date:** 5/13/1985 | **Last Revised Date:** 8/14/2023 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 09/10/2018

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 superintendent by noon of the day of the meeting and needs to provide their name and topic they wish to speak on. The board president will recognize these individuals to make their comments during the "Receive Visitors" portion of the agenda. 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 five (5) minutes with a total allotted time for public participation of twenty (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.

NOTE: This policy must be displayed on the district's website to comply with the district's legal requirements on transparency.

NOTE: Boards need to make the determination how best, 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 §§ 21; 22; 279.8, 279.8B

I.C. Iowa Code

Iowa Code § 21

Description

[Open Meetings](#)

Iowa Code § 22

[Open Records](#)

Iowa Code § 279.8

[Directors - General Rules - Bonds of Employees](#)

Iowa Code § 279.8B

[Directors - Powers and Duties - Petition - Public Comment](#)

Cross References

Code

205

Description

[Board Member Liability](#)

210.08

[Board Meeting Agenda](#)

210.08-EH(1)

[Board Meeting Agenda - Example](#)

210.08-EH(2)

[Board Meeting Agenda - Example \(with closed session\)](#)

213.01

[Public Complaints](#)

214

[Public Hearings](#)

401.04

[Employee Complaints](#)

502.04

[Student Complaints and Grievances](#)

605.03

[Objection to Instructional and Library Materials](#)

605.03-R(1)

[Objection to Instructional and Library Materials -
Reconsideration of Instructional Materials Regulation](#)

605.03-E(1)

[Objection to Instructional and Library Materials - Instructions
to the Reconsideration Committee](#)

605.03-E(2)

[Objection to Instructional and Library Materials -
Reconsideration of Instructional and Library Materials
Request Form](#)

605.03-E(3)	<u>Objection to Instructional and Library Materials - Sample Letter to Individual Challenging Instructional Materials</u>
605.03-E(4)	<u>Objection to Instructional and Library Materials - Request to Prohibit a Student from Checking Out Specific Library Materials</u>
605.03-E(5)	<u>Objection to Instructional and Library Materials - Request to Prohibit a Student from Accessing Specific Instructional Material</u>