

PROPOSED REVISION



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THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Audience Participation

Public Comment

The board recognizes the value of public comment on educational issues and the importance of involving members of the public in its meetings. To permit fair and orderly expression of public comment, **with the exception of emergency situations,** the board will provide a period of time at **the every regular meeting at which final action is to take place for public comment.** ~~d~~During which **the public comment period, visitors the public** may address the board on any topic **within the scope of the board's responsibility.** ~~The public may also provide input to the board or district administrators outside of meetings by means of written correspondence.~~ **Public comment may occur orally or through written comments submitted before the meeting. Written comments must adhere to the standards of civility discussed below and must be received 24 hours before the board meeting. All written public comments timely submitted will be distributed to each board member.**

The board will provide one (1) period during its regular meetings during which the public may comment. Any structure the board imposes will be content neutral. The president of the board may limit the total amount of time dedicated to public comment at any meeting. The board is not obligated to provide additional public comment time to accommodate everyone who wishes to speak.

Individuals wishing to be heard by the board shall complete, sign, and submit a public comment card. The board president may recognize individuals on a first come, first served basis determined by the order of public comment card submission to the board, and the president may determine another priority method that better meets the board's needs. The president will make an effort to order comments so that a variety of topics are heard, if there are a variety of topics included in the comment card submissions, especially if there are more comment cards than time permits in that meeting's published agenda. After being recognized by the board president, individuals will proceed to make comments, limiting themselves to three (3) minutes.

The board requires that those addressing the board be residents or employees of the district or the representative of such residents or employees, parents or guardians of students enrolled in district schools, or employees of businesses located within the district. Persons not meeting these requirements may request an exception to these requirements from the board president by prior application to the superintendent at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the start of the meeting. Any representative of a firm eligible to bid on materials or services solicited by the district shall also be entitled to comment.

The board president may terminate an individual's statement when time has passed and may interrupt a speaker to require the same standard of civility that the board imposes on itself ([Policy 5161](#), Civility in the Workplace). Examples of uncivil comments include comments that:

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- Are libelous or slanderous **by legal standards**;
- Are an unwarranted invasion of privacy;
- Are obscene or indecent pursuant to the Federal Communications Act or any rule or regulation of the Federal Communications Commission;
- Violate school district policy or procedure related to harassment, intimidation, bullying, or discrimination;
- Incite an unlawful act on school premises or violate a lawful school regulation; or
- Create a material and substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the board meeting.

The board as a whole shall have the final decision on the appropriateness of all such rulings and can maintain order by removing those who are disruptive. However, the board recognizes the distinction between uncivil discourse, which it will not tolerate, and comments about the board, district, and/or staff that are negative yet still civil in nature. **The board and** will exercise its authority to maintain order in a content neutral manner.

In addition to the public comment time, the board **will may** identify the agenda items that require or would benefit from opportunity for public comment and provide those opportunities as part of the meeting agenda before taking final action. Individuals or groups who wish to present to the board on an agenda item are encouraged to request and schedule such presentations in advance. Opportunity for public comment—both oral and written—is required before the board adopts or amends a policy that is not expressly or by implication authorized under state or federal law, but which will promote the education of K-12 students, or will promote the effective, efficient, or safe management and operation of the district.

Individuals with disabilities who may need an accommodation to participate in a meeting should contact the superintendent's office no later than three (3) working days before a regular meeting and as soon as possible in advance of a special meeting so that arrangements for an accommodation can be made.

Cross references:	Board Policy 1400	Meetings
	Board Policy 1440	Meeting Conduct, Order of Business and Quorum
	Procedure 1441P	Audience Participation

Legal references:	RCW 42.30.030	Meetings declared open and public
	RCW 42.30.050	Interruptions—Procedure
	42 U.S.C. 12101-12213	Americans with Disabilities Act

Adopted:	<u>November 21, 1980</u>	Revised:	<u>September 9, 2014</u>
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