

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Series 200

Policy Title: **Community Participation / Public Comment Procedures**

Code Number: **204.15**

The Board recognizes the importance of citizen participation in 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 at its regular meetings for public comment.

Citizens wishing to address the Board during regular Board meetings must notify the Board Secretary by completing the sign-up form provided by the District and submitting to the Board Secretary prior to the beginning of the meeting. Citizens wishing to address the Board must provide their name and address, the agenda item or other topic they wish to address, and note whether they are representing themselves or a group. If representing a group, individuals must still list their name and address, unless the group is a legal entity.

At the appropriate time during the meeting, the Board President will recognize for comment those individuals who have properly complied with the above notice procedure, subject, however, to the following limitations:

- If there are several speakers on the same topic, the Board President may limit the number of presenters or length of time devoted to that topic. If several individuals are concerned about the same issue and share the same opinion, they may select a spokesperson to represent the group.
- Except for scheduled hearings and/or agenda items, individuals may not address the Board on the same issue more than once in a three-month period, unless requested by the Board.
- Additional supporting material(s) may be submitted to the Board in writing as a part of an individual's input, but the technological delivery system will not be made available for citizen input.
- The Board recognizes that an individual may have a specific complaint or concern, as opposed to a policy concern. For specific complaints or concerns, including complaints about District personnel, a communication should be sent in writing to the Board, rather than addressing the issue during the public comment segment of a Board meeting. Such communications should be sent to the attention of the Board of Education, Sioux City Community School District, 627 4th Street, Sioux City, Iowa, 51101.

First Adoption: July 12, 1983
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 October 13, 2014/June 22, 2015/November 26, 2018/February 10, 2020
Legal Reference: Iowa Code §§ 21; 22; 279.8

Board Policy Document

- The Board believes that specific concerns should be addressed at the lowest organizational level and will refer concerns to the administration for resolution. In addition, there may be existing District procedures in place to address certain concerns.

Citizens wishing to present petitions to the Board may do so during the public comment period at the regular meeting provided they have completed and timely submitted the sign-up form indicating their intentions to do so. The Board, however, will only receive the petitions and not act upon them or their contents at the meeting.

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. The Board Secretary will serve as the official timekeeper for each speaker. 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 due to the Iowa open meetings law. It is the prerogative of Board members to ask speakers questions as necessary to clarify the speaker's input. In appropriate situations, the Board President may direct a speaker to follow up with the Superintendent or his/her designee. The Board President may also ask the speaker to submit their concern in writing to the Board. If the Board decides that discussion is appropriate at the Board level, the matter would be placed on the agenda of a future meeting to satisfy the notice requirements of the open meetings law.

Public comment shall generally be limited to regular meetings of the Board and will not be routinely held during special meetings of the Board.

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. The Board President will be responsible for the orderly conduct of the meeting in accordance with this policy including termination of presentations that are disruptive. Only individuals recognized by the Board President will be allowed to speak. Comments by others are out of order. Any individual causing disruption may be asked to leave the Board meeting. The Board President has the authority to declare a recess at any time for the purpose of restoring the decorum to any meeting. Defamatory comments may be subject to legal action.

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