

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN BOARD MEETINGS

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to describe the procedures regarding the participation of the public during Board meetings.

Citizens are encouraged to attend meetings of the Board of Education and are allowed to address the Board and to comment concerning the Board's deliberations or on other relevant issues of interest/concern at regular meetings. Public comment will not be permitted at special meetings or emergency meetings of the Board of Education unless the meeting is declared to be a public hearing for that purpose.

Public Comment Guidelines

School Board policies, state law, and federal law establish separate and distinct procedures and forums for the resolution of employee grievances, employee complaints, employee suspensions and terminations, complaints against individual employees, student suspensions and appeals, political campaigns and litigation.

To avoid circumvention of these separate proceedings and to assure fairness to all parties concerned, no person will be allowed to speak regarding the following:

1. An issue in a pending lawsuit, complaint, or investigation filed with an outside agency, wherein the District, employee(s) or the Board is a party;
2. A pending grievance;
3. A pending employee complaint filed with the District or an outside agency;
4. An employee disciplinary action including suspension or termination;
5. A pending student disciplinary action including suspension or appeal that may reach the Board.

Should a member of the public wish to lodge a complaint or resolve a particular issue of concern, he or she may be directed to the District's policy regarding complaint resolution procedures. The individual dignity of Board members, District employees, students and members of the public must be respected by all speakers. No board members, employees, students, nor members of the public will be subjected to verbal abuse.

The Board of Education will not hear from any School District employee who has not taken his or her employment-related concern through the appropriate chain of command in an effort to resolve the matter at the lowest possible level. Employees are required to take their concerns to their immediate supervisor, the building principal, the Superintendent and only then to the Board of Education.

Public comment may take one of two forms: comment concerning items that are on the current agenda or comment concerning issues not on the current agenda.

Agenda Items: Such request must be made by the person wanting to address the Board on any agenda item for the scheduled meeting by filling out and submitting FORM A at least fifteen (15) minutes prior to the beginning of the meeting to the minutes clerk. A maximum time limit will be

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allotted to each individual speaker per meeting – a total of three (3) minutes for speaking to items on the business meeting agenda. The total time allotted to the public comment at Board meetings will not exceed (15) minutes. Citizen comments will be considered on a first-come, first-served basis. Public comment is not required under the Open Meetings Act and is only permitted when it is appropriately listed as a board meeting agenda item. Because the Board can only take official action on items posted on the agenda per state law and when the specific agenda item is called, board members will not respond to public comment and/or answer questions posed during public comment. The Board may also limit the number of speakers at any meeting.

Non-agenda Items: A request to address the Board on any non-agenda item must be received by the board minutes clerk in writing seven (7) calendar days prior to the Board's next regular meeting date. Topics for discussion must be specific in nature, as required by law for school board meetings. FORM B is available from the Minute Clerk. Each individual requesting to speak must complete FORM B listing his or her name, contact information, and relationship to the Collinsville Public School District (parent, staff, vendor, etc.). Each individual must sign verifying they have read the instructions regarding citizens' comments. The board minutes clerk will contact citizens if the topic must be worded more specifically. A maximum time limit will be allotted to each individual speaker per meeting – a total of three (3) minutes for speaking. The total time allotted to public comment at Board meetings will not exceed fifteen (15) minutes. Citizen comments will be considered on a first-come, first-served basis.