

# Board Policy

Code No. 213

## CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

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.

Citizens wishing to address the board during public comment must notify the board secretary prior to the board meeting. The board president will recognize these individuals to make their comments at the appropriate time during public comment. 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 3 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.

A public comment shall be limited to regular board meetings and will not be routinely held during special board meetings.

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.

Individuals who have a complaint about employees may bring their complaint to the board only after they have followed board policy addressing citizens' complaints. Students who have a complaint may only bring their complaint to the board after they have followed board policy addressing students' complaints.

***NOTE: Members of the public do not have a legal right to participate in board meetings. Boards need to make the determination how best, if at all, 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

Cross Reference: 205 Board Member Liability  
210.8 Board Meeting Agenda  
214 Public Hearings  
307 Communication Channels  
401.4 Employee Complaints  
402.5 Public Complaints About Employees  
502.4 Student Complaints and Grievances

*Approved: August 14, 1967*

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November 3, 1980  
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