

Section 1000 – Board Bylaws

1370 Public Participation (Cf. 1320, 1320-R)

1370

At each meeting of the Board, the President or the presiding Board officer shall welcome all visitors to the Board meeting.

The Board President shall ask, at the appropriate time as specified on the agenda, those members of the public attending the Board meeting if any of them have something to bring to the attention of the Board. All those wishing to address the Board shall be subject to the following procedural regulations:

- The Board President or Vice-President shall conduct Board meetings in an orderly manner. Members of the Board and others in attendance shall comply with the directions and requests of the presiding officer.
- Citizens attending Board or Committee meetings may have one opportunity per meeting to address the Board or Committee. Speakers are requested to complete a card prepared by the Board to assist in the accuracy of meeting minutes.
- The purpose of public comment is to discuss the business of the school Board and the District and not to discuss individual personalities.
- The public participation portion of the meeting shall be limited to one-half hour normally. An exception will be made so that no one's right to address the Board will be denied.
- Each person shall be allowed to speak for up to three minutes, except where the number of speakers exceeds the time limit. In those instances, either the Board President may reduce the three-minute limit to a two-minute limit for each speaker or will waive the one-half hour time limit and establish a longer period.

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Opportunities to address the Board are through:

- *Public hearings.* Scheduled public hearings may be held on specified topics under consideration by the Board. A three-minute time limit is imposed per speaker.
- *Comment on scheduled agenda items.* The Board will designate a time for public comment on scheduled agenda items at each meeting of the Board or a standing committee. During this time, community members may speak on any agenda items for up to three minutes total. The presiding officer may rule any speaker out of order for failing to speak on agenda item(s) or exceeding the time limit. Speakers must complete a card and state which agenda item(s) they wish to address. Cut off for submission of all cards will be at that point in the agenda.
- *Comment on other matters.* Community members may also speak on matters not on the agenda, but related to the business of the school District. Each speaker is limited to three minutes total. Such citizens must complete a card prepared by the Board, state the matter they wish to address, and whether they have utilized the District's administrative or complaint process to resolve the matter. The presiding officer may rule out of order any speaker who does not speak about the business of the Board or does not comply with these requirements.
- The Public Comment on general matters section of the agenda shall include comments by the Presidents of employee bargaining units, subject to the three-minute limitation. Comments from Presidents of employee bargaining units shall precede comments from the general public.

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Presidents of employee groups shall provide advance notification to the Assistant to the Board by 4:30 p.m. the day of the Board meeting.

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- No person may yield or donate his/her public comment time to any other person.
- Conduct contrary to the normal presentation of business during a school Board or Board Committee meeting or which interrupts the orderly process of the proceeding is a disturbance. No speaker shall make any slanderous or profane remark which disturbs, disrupts, or otherwise impedes the orderly conduct of any Board meeting.
- No person shall make any personally abusive attacks on a Board member, employee, volunteer, or contractor unrelated to the performance of their official duties and responsibilities. A personally abusive attack includes, but is not limited to insults, discourteous comments, or defamatory statements.
- No person in attendance at a Board meeting shall engage in disorderly conduct, including the utterance of threatening or abusive language, carrying of signs, whistling or stomping of feet or pounding of hands on furniture, or any other act which disturbs, disrupts, or otherwise impedes the orderly conduct of any Board meeting or the presentation of any speaker. Speakers who speak too long, are unduly repetitious, or engage in an extended discussion of irrelevancies are out of order and disruptive. Speakers may be asked to leave the meeting at the discretion of the presiding officer.
- Nothing in these rules is intended to limit or restrain negative, positive, or neutral comment about the manner in which an individual employee, contractor, volunteer, officer, official, or Board member carries out his or her duties in public office or employment.

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Handling of Complaints (Cf. 9450)

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Speakers are encouraged to present complaints about a specific employee, Board member, or student through proper channels established under Board policy before requesting Board consideration.

Approved: June 29, 2009; Revised June 20, 2011

LEGAL REF: MCL 15.263(1); 15.268; 380.11a; 380.1808; *Gault v Battle Creek*, 73 F Supp 2d 811 (WD Mich, 1999); *Lysogorski v Bridgeport Charter Twp.*, 662 N.W. 2d 108 (2003)