PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN BOARD MEETINGS

The Pleasant Valley Board of Education invites members of the community to attend its meetings and to fully understand its work. However, it is to be remembered at all times that the school board is a statutorily constituted body engaged in the authority and responsibility vested in it by law on behalf of the citizens not present at the meeting as well as those who are present.

Public Comment During Communications, Concerns and Constructive Ideas for the District

The business of the board must be conducted by the board and visitors will participate only at the invitation of the board. Citizens attending board meetings will be provided an agenda as they enter the board meeting. The board president will invite visitors to make comments at the appropriate point in the meeting.

Citizens of the district who wish to address the board during public comment will approach the podium and state their name, address and association with the school district. Speakers will be asked to keep their remarks within 3 (three) minutes. Public comment is a time set aside for community input, and the board will not discuss or take action on any matter during public comment.

Citizens who wish to present a petition to the board may do so at this time. The board, however, will only receive the petition and not act upon the petition or its contents.

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

Public Comment During Other Board Meeting Agenda Items

Citizens of the district attending board meetings will be provided an agenda as they enter the board meeting. A visitor wishing to make a comment at the board meeting should arrive early enough to review the agenda. The board president will invite visitors to make comments at the appropriate point in the meeting. A visitor may at any time during a regular meeting raise their hand and when recognized by the president approach the podium, state their name, address and association with the school district, and ask a question relative to the subject currently under discussion by the board. Speakers will be asked to keep their remarks within 3 (three) minutes.

Petitions to Place a Topic on the Agenda

Individuals of the district who wish for an item to be placed on the board agenda may submit a valid petition to the board. A valid petition must be signed by at least 500 eligible electors of the district or ten percent of the individuals who voted in the last school election, whichever number is smaller. That number can be obtained from the board secretary or the county auditor.
Upon receipt of a valid petition to place a topic on the board agenda, the topic must appear on the agenda of a regular meeting held within 30 days or a special meeting held within 30 days of receipt of the petition. Individuals wishing to speak on the topic will be invited to approach the podium and state their name, address and association with the school district. Speakers will be asked to keep their remarks within 3 (three) minutes. The same time limit will apply to all speakers. Each individual will be limited to one opportunity to speak. The board maintains absolute discretion as to whether or not to discuss or act on the topic or public comments made on the topic. If a petition is related to curriculum, the district maintains discretion to determine whether to stop teaching that curriculum until the board holds the public hearing to discuss the curriculum.

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.

Legal Reference:     Iowa Code §§ 21; 22; 279.8, 279.8B

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