

PUBLIC COMMENT AT BOARD MEETINGS

The Board of Education encourages public comment on school related matters at Board meetings, as outlined in this policy. To allow members of the public to address the Board, a period not to exceed 30 minutes will be set aside during the first part of each Board meeting for public comment. Comment at the end of the meeting may be made available for 10 minutes with priority given to comments on items on the meeting's agenda. The 10 minutes may be reduced or extended by a majority vote of the Board.

Persons wishing to address the Board will advise the Board President by signing in within a reasonable time prior to the start of the public comment period of the meeting. The request will be made in writing on a form provided by the district. To maintain a first come, first served process, the district will call speakers in order in which they signed up. For purposes of following up with speakers later, the district will request the speaker's preferred contact information such as home address, telephone number, or email address. To limit comments to matters which may be properly discussed in public session, the board will request a brief description of the topic to be addressed. Any group or organization wishing to address the Board must identify a single spokesperson. The Board President may limit the number of repetitive comments to keep within time limit for the public comment period.

Presentation should be as brief as possible. No speaker will be permitted to speak for longer than two minutes. Speakers may not give unused time to other speakers. Speakers may comment on matters related to agenda items specifically or district matters generally, depending on the public comment section.

The Board will not permit in public session discussion involving individual district personnel or students. Persons wishing to discuss matters involving individual district personnel or students should present their comments and/or concerns to the staff member most directly involved with the issue - teacher/coach, then principal, director, other district administration, following the Ichabod Crane CSD Contact Guide.

All speakers and observers are to conduct themselves in a civil manner. Obscene language, defamatory statements, threats of violence, statements advocating racial, religious, or other forms of prejudice will not be tolerated.

Board members and the Superintendent have the privilege of asking questions of any person who addresses the Board, but commenters should not expect to engage in discussion with the Board.

Persons wishing to have matters included on the agenda will contact the Superintendent in accordance with Policy 2342, Agenda Preparation and Dissemination.

The President will be responsible for the orderly conduct of the meeting and will rule on such matters as the time to be allowed for public discussion and the appropriateness of the subject being presented, as outlined in this policy and applicable provisions of law and regulation, and subject to the Board's parliamentary procedure. If there is disagreement about whether a speaker's topic falls within the topics permitted for public comment, the President shall have the right to discontinue any presentation which violates this policy.

The President will remind speakers whose presentations are inconsistent with this policy of the rules for public comment. For speakers that continue to violate this policy, the President may discontinue the presentation or call for a brief recess of the meeting. The President may order the removal of speakers from the speakers' area, or from the meeting in general, or may close the public comment period.

For members of the public who are unwilling or unable to speak during public comment periods, including when these periods are closed, they may submit comments to the Board in writing, to the following address: BoardOfEducation@IchabodCrane.Org. Complaints from the public are addressed in Board policy 1400.

All individuals at Board meetings are expected to abide by the rules for Public Conduct on School Property as set forth in the district's Code of Conduct. At board meetings, speakers and observers may not engage in behavior that disrupts the meeting, such as shouting, interrupting others, blocking the free movement of others, or obstructing the views of others. In the event of such disruption, the President will remind those in attendance of the rules under this policy. Any Board member may request a brief recess of the meeting. The President may order the removal of those who are a threat to the safety of others or who disrupt the orderly conduct of the meeting. If appropriate, law enforcement may be called to remove disruptive individuals.

Cross-ref: 1400, Complaints from the Public
2342, Agenda Preparation and Dissemination
5310, Code of Conduct

Ref:

Appeal of Kushner, 49 EDR 263 (2010) (boards not required to allow the public to speak)

Matter of Martin, 32 EDR 381 (1992) (boards need not permit nonresidents to speak)

Appeal of Wittneben, 31 EDR 375 (1992) (boards encouraged to permit citizens to speak)

Effective Date: March 5, 2024

PUBLIC COMMENT AT BOARD MEETINGS EXHIBIT

*Pre-Public Comment Period Script
Suggested Language for Board Presidents*

Members of the public may address the Board on school related matters, other than matters involving personnel. Under state and federal privacy laws we are unable to entertain any comments about school personnel. We take personnel concerns very seriously and on these matters, we ask that you go through the appropriate administrative channels.

The public comment period is not designed to be a discussion and, in general, the Board does not respond during the public comment period. We take your comments seriously and want to have sufficient time to process and research issues if need be. We will, however, respond to your questions and concerns at a future meeting, or have the proper staff member get back to you at the appropriate time.

In keeping with the Ichabod Crane Central School District mission, we want our school Board meetings to serve as an example of civil discourse and mutual respect. We ask that speakers address their comments to the Board directly, rather than the audience. The Board, at any time, can recess or end the meeting, if deemed necessary. Finally, I want to remind everyone that you may submit written comments to the Board in lieu of speaking during the public comment period, if you so choose.

The Board will now entertain public comments for up to thirty minutes. Each individual speaker is allotted two minutes.

Effective Date: March 5, 2025