

OYSTER RIVER COOPERATIVE SCHOOL DISTRICT	BEDH-R
Policy Committee: September 9, 2021 School Board Public Hearing/First Read: October 6, 2021 School Board Second Read Adoption: October 20, 2021	

PUBLIC COMMENTS AT BOARD MEETINGS - PROCEDURE

The Oyster River Cooperative School Board values public input to the School Board through public comment time during School Board meetings as well as communications by email, letter, and other means.

In Public Comments, the School Board seeks to:

1. Include comments from as many Oyster River community members as possible in the time allotted for public comments (tuition student families may speak to issues related to the building in which their child attends).
2. Ensure multiple positions are reflected in public comments.
3. Maintain respectful deliberation of school district matters.

To facilitate these goals, the following procedure is established:

Public Comments are included in the agenda of the Regular School Board meetings. Public Comments will generally not be included in the agenda for Workshop meetings of the School Board, additional meetings of the School Board (meetings outside of the usual twice monthly business meetings), nor for subcommittee meetings of the School Board. This procedure does not apply to Annual Meetings of the District (which are the responsibility of the Moderator), nor to Public Hearings.

Public Comments are generally expected to be Individual comments. Group presentations will generally not be permitted outside of the time afforded to each individual speaker during Public Comments. Speakers are discouraged from consecutively reading verbatim a lengthy written statement.

Non-residents who wish to speak will be required to receive authorization from the Board Chair prior to the meeting.

Individuals who wish to speak at the School Board meeting may be required to indicate their interest in speaking by signing-in prior to the start of the meeting. Sign-in may require names, home address, and topic(s) for comments. Alternatively, the School Board Chair may solicit information in other ways based on attendance at the beginning of the meeting.

The School Board Chair is responsible for managing time during Public Comments. Public Comments will typically be limited to 3 minutes per person, though the Chair may reduce that time if the number of speakers is 10 or more. Generally, no more than 18 speakers will be accommodated in any 30-minute public comment period.

As an agenda item, Public Comments may be extended or restricted by action of the Board in the modification and approval of the meeting Agenda. Restricting Public Comment time at Regular meetings should only happen in unusual circumstances.

Individuals speaking during Public Comments may not delegate or assign their time to another individual.

Individuals preventing others from speaking or being heard or disrupting the School Board meeting outside of their designated public comment time may be directed by the Chair to leave the meeting.

Legal Reference:

RSA 91-A:2, Meetings Open to Public
RSA 91-A:3, Non-Public Sessions

Cross Reference:

BEDH – Public Participation at a Board Meeting
BEDH-R1
BEA – Regular Board Meetings
BEC – Non-Public Sessions
BEDB – Agenda Preparation and Format
KEB – Complaints about School Personnel