

Policy 7.1

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT BOARD MEETINGS

The Board welcomes and provides for public participation by members of the community. The Board believes this is essential for improving decision-making and creating more inclusive, effective, and sustainable outcomes. Public participation may be through presentations by a delegation, question period during the regular open meetings or in the form of written communications. Such opportunities shall not be used to address matters which must be dealt with in in-camera meetings as noted elsewhere in this policy.

1. Conduct of Board Meeting Attendees

- 1.1 The Board expects all persons attending its meetings to conduct themselves in a respectful manner.
- 1.2 A person of the public who engages in improper conduct at an in-person or remote board meeting may be expelled from the meeting by the Board Chair (Chair) or other member presiding the meeting.

2. Delegations

- 2.1 The Chair shall rule on the propriety of all presentations and may decline to have a matter heard from a delegation or terminate any presentation or refer it to an "in camera" meeting of the Board if that is deemed to be appropriate by the Chair.
- 2.2 When delegations request to speak to the Board regarding a concern/conflict, the Superintendent of Schools shall ensure that all avenues for resolution of conflict have been exhausted prior to requesting an opportunity to appear before the Board.
- 2.3 A person or group wishing to address the Board shall provide written notification and a written outline of the presentation and all presentation materials to the Secretary-Treasurer by end of business on the last day of the month prior to the regular Board meeting. The presentation will be listed as a "Delegation" on the agenda of the Regular Board meeting, providing the matter is deemed by the Board Chair to be appropriately considered in a public meeting.
- 2.4 Delegations, regardless of size, shall appoint not more than two spokespersons and will have no more than 10 minutes to present to the Board.
- 2.5 Trustee questions will be for clarification only. The Board will not enter into debate with a delegation regarding the matters in the presentation.
- 2.6 The Board will generally reserve decision on a response to the matter raised by a delegation, until the next Board meeting. If action results, the delegation will be advised when the matter is to be dealt with by the Board.

3. Question period during the Regular open board meeting

- 3.1 Members of the public may submit questions to the Board of Education (boardofeducation@sd40.bc.ca) regarding items within the upcoming board agenda package until 12 P.M. (noon) on the day of the regular board meeting. Presenters will endeavor to incorporate the answers to the questions within their presentations.
- 3.2 There shall be a Question Period of up to 15 minutes at the end of every regularly scheduled Board meeting where members of the public may ask a question and seek clarity on matters that arose during that Board meeting. Questions will be directed to the Chair who will respond on behalf of the Board. The Chair may refer the question to staff for an immediate response or a response may be provided at the next regular board meeting.
- 3.3 The time limit for such comments/questions shall be three minutes excluding any responses to questions from Trustees.
- 3.4 Individuals in their role as employees of the school district shall channel their questions through an executive member of the employee group to which they belong.

4. Correspondence to the Board

Correspondence may be sent to the Board as a whole or to individual trustees. Even when correspondence is addressed to an individual trustee the contents may be more appropriately addressed by the corporate Board. Where correspondence is addressed to the Board, or its contents are more appropriately addressed by the corporate Board the following processes shall be adhered to. The intended outcomes of these processes are: to ensure Board correspondence is acknowledged in a timely fashion, the corporate Board is aware of the public input provided and where required, a corporate response is provided in a timely manner.

- 4.1 Where correspondence is received that appears to require a formal Board response, that correspondence will be referred to the Board for corporate discussion and decision. Should correspondence, received by noon on the Monday of the week preceding the date of the regular Board meeting and specifically relate to an agenda item, it will be considered on the agenda under "Correspondence." Correspondence that does not meet the above will be circulated to Trustees.
- 4.2 Consistent with Policy 3, should a trustee receive a complaint or an inquiry from a parent, staff member or community member about an operational matter, they will refer the parent, staff member or community member back to the teacher, Principal or District Office personnel and will inform the Superintendent or designate of this action.
- 4.3 Where non-routine correspondence is received that does not appear to require a formal Board response, that correspondence, together with any response issued by the Superintendent, shall be circulated to the Trustees.

- 4.4 Where an individual trustee receives correspondence that in the trustee's judgement is more appropriately a corporate Board matter, the correspondence will be directed to the Superintendent who will acknowledge the correspondence, and act in accordance with 3.1 or 3.2 above.

SD No. 40 (New Westminster)

Adopted: January 28, 2025