Washougal School Board Meetings

Public Meeting Guidelines

The structure and content of school board meetings is outlined in board policy 1400. There is a structure for citizen public comment at our school board business meetings. The board recognizes the value of public comment on educational issues and the importance of involving the public in board meetings. Although the School Board and the administration encourage the community to contact them directly with questions and/or concerns, the following information can support community members in sharing their perspective at the board meeting.

Meeting Structure

- The board president or presiding officer runs the meeting
- The board will follow an agenda, which is published to the website before the meeting, and can be revised per the board process
- Comments or behavior not allowed: Name-calling, personal attacks, indecent or obscene remarks, derogatory comments, comments that are libelous or slanderous
- Comment periods are provided at the beginning of the board meeting, and additional comment periods may be added prior to board action on agenda items

Public Comment Guidelines

- Attendees who wish to speak will sign up before the meeting starts (*please note, this requirement applies to only those who wish to speak, not all attendees*)
- Speakers will state their name
- Address comments to the board as a whole; not individual members, staff, or other audience members
- Keep comments to 3 minutes, and state what you support, oppose, suggest, or are calling attention to
- Comment time may not be added to/donated to other speakers
- If a response is requested, state this during your comment
- Per board policy 1400, the board is not obligated to respond to questions or challenges made during public comments, and the board's silence does not signal agreement or disagreement. If a response is warranted, the superintendent will follow up as directed by the board
- The board chair may terminate an individual's comments when the time has passed, and may interrupt a speaker to remind the speaker about the civility standards for comments. The board chair may also opt to end public comment opportunities based on disruptions
- Written comments may be submitted using the process identified on the school board meeting page: http://www.washougal.k12.wa.us/meeting-dates/

Suggestions on Preparing for Public Comment

- Before bringing your issues to the public meeting, consider contacting the district office staff, first. If the issue is not resolved, contact a board member directly
- Comments for a public hearing should be made during that portion of the agenda
- Comments specific to quasi-judicial proceedings should be directed to the avenue provided in those proceedings
- For well organized comments, it is recommended to prepare them in writing:
  - I am here to support/oppose/call attention to…
  - State why you are making the point, so the board is aware of why you are sharing the concern
  - State what will be changed or improved if your viewpoint is considered
  - State what you would like the board to consider doing in response to your viewpoint