

BETHEL SCHOOL DISTRICT #52  
BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY STATEMENT

Subject: **Public Comment at Board Meetings**

Policy Number: **BDDH** Effective Date: **9/2023**

Date of Original Policy and Revisions: **N/A**

Cancels Policy No.: **KLD** Dated: **6/90, 6/92, 9/95, 5/00, 10/08, 4/14, 1/18, 9/20, 12/21**

Date of Next Review: **9/2026**

**POLICY**

All Board meetings, with the exception of executive sessions, will be open to the public. The Board invites the District's community members to attend Board meetings to become acquainted with the program and operation of the District. The public has a right to attend public meetings held in open session, and may be invited to share comments, ideas and opinions with the Board during designated times on the agenda. The Board may conduct a meeting without public comment.

Individuals with hearing, vision or speech impairments will be given an equal opportunity to participate in Board meetings and submit written comments to the Board. Individuals requesting assistance, aids or accommodations are encouraged to notify the District at least 48 hours prior to the Board meeting with the request.

**Procedures for Oral Public Comment**

The Board establishes the following procedures for public comment at Board meetings held in open session. The information will be accessible and available to all patrons accessing or attending such a Board meeting.

1. Public comment is limited to its designated place on the agenda and while time allows.
2. A person wishing to provide public comment in-person, if an opportunity is provided by the Board during a meeting open to the public, will complete and submit the Intent to Speak card prior to the Board meeting, or if a person wishes to provide comment virtually, they need to complete [this form](#) prior to the start of the Board meeting.<sup>1</sup> A request to give public comment in-person or virtually does not guarantee time will be available.
3. A person speaking during the public comment portion of the meeting may comment on a topic not on the published agenda.
4. A person speaking during the public comment portion of the meeting should state their name, whether they are a Bethel community member, and, if speaking for an organization, the name of the organization. A spokesperson should be designated to represent a group with a common purpose.
5. A person giving public comment is limited to an established time limit of three minutes, or six minutes if an interpreter is needed. Statements should be brief and concise. If a person has more comments than time allows or is unable to comment due to time constraints, the person is encouraged to submit additional written comments to the Board through the district office as

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<sup>1</sup> When in-person attendees are allowed to provide oral comment, virtual attendees will be afforded the same opportunity.

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directed. The Board chair may use discretion to establish a total time limit on all public discussion or oral presentation by visitors.

6. Inquiries from the public during the designated portion of the agenda will not generally be responded to immediately by the Board chair, and may be referred to the superintendent for reply at a later date. The Board will not respond to inquiries that are expected to be addressed during another designated portion of the agenda.

Topics raised during the public comment portion may be considered for inclusion as agenda items at future Board meetings.

### **Procedures for Written Comment**

Members of the public may submit written comments or materials to the Board at any time at the district office, by mail or by email to [publiccomment@bethel.k12.or.us](mailto:publiccomment@bethel.k12.or.us). Materials or comments submitted by noon the day of the Board meeting will be provided to the Board before the Board meeting. Written materials or comments submitted may not warrant action by the Board.

### **Comments Regarding Staff Members**

A person speaking during the designated portion of the agenda for public comment may offer objective criticism of district operations and programs. The Board will not hear comments regarding any individual district staff member. The Board chair will direct the visitor to the procedures in Board policy KL - Public Complaints for consideration of a legitimate complaint involving a staff member. A commendation involving a staff member should be sent to the Superintendent.

### **REPORTS**

None.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

None.

### **END OF POLICY**

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#### **Legal Reference(s):**

[ORS 165.535](#)  
[ORS 165.540](#)  
[ORS 192.610 to -192.690](#)  
[ORS 332.057](#)  
[ORS 332.107](#)

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 U.S.C. §§ 12101-12213 (2018); 29 C.F.R. Part 1630 (2020); 28 C.F.R. Part 35 (2020).

Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008, 42 U.S.C. §§ 12101-12133 (2018).

*Baca v. Moreno Valley Unified Sch. Dist.*, 936 F. Supp. 719 (C.D. Cal. 1996).

*Leventhal v. Vista Unified Sch. Dist.*, 973 F. Supp. 951 (S.D. Cal. 1997).

Oregon House Bill 2560 (2021).