

Billings School District 2

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Audience Participation

The Board recognizes the value of public comment on educational issues and the importance of listening to members of the public in its meetings. The Board also recognizes the statutory and constitutional right of the public to participate in governmental operations. The Board encourages members of the public to participate in and express opinions about issues important to the District. The Board requests before the beginning of every Board meeting or before speaking, persons wishing to address the Board shall complete form 1441-F1 which shall be collected by the Clerk and delivered to the Board Chair. This form shall also be available on the District website and may be delivered to the Clerk by e-mail or other methods of delivery.

The agenda for each Board meeting and each Board committee meeting will include an item at the beginning of the meeting allowing public comment on any public matter that is not on the agenda of the meeting and is within the jurisdiction of the Board. In addition to general public comment item on each agenda, the Board will allow and encourages members of the public to comment on particular agenda items before Board action. Montana law does not ordinarily permit the Board to discuss or take action on a matter not on the meeting agenda. Because the contents of public comments cannot be placed on the meeting agenda, the Board, therefore, avoids giving substantive responses to comments made by the public. However, the Board Chair may, in response to public comments provide information about when the matter is scheduled for discussion or action by the Board and may refer persons making public comments to a Board committee or District staff member to respond or provide information about the matter.

The Chair may control public commentary to ensure an orderly progression of the meeting and may interrupt or terminate an individual's statements when appropriate, including statements that are out of order, too lengthy, personally directed, abusive, obscene, or irrelevant. Public comment shall be limited to three (3) minutes per person unless additional time is requested and/or granted by the Board Chair. The Board Chair may reduce the three (3) minute limit and set a limit on the total time available for public comment on a particular item if necessary for the orderly progression of the meeting. The Board Chair shall announce any limitations to be placed on public comment at the beginning of the meeting. The Board as a whole shall have the final decision in determining the appropriateness of all such rulings by the Chair. The Clerk shall keep and enforce public comment time limits.

Cross References: 1420 Board Agendas, etc

Legal References: Article II, Section 8, Montana Constitution – Right of participation
§§ 2-3-101, et seq., MCA Right of participation

Policy History:

First Reading: January 19, 2004 – Board of Trustees
Second Reading: February 16, 2004 – Board of Trustees
Third Reading: March 15, 2004 – Board of Trustees
Adopted on: March 15, 2004
Effective on: March 15, 2004
Revised on: February 15, 2010
Reviewed on: December 17, 2018 – Board of Trustees