

Public Comment Procedures and Policy Revisions

The proposed revisions to Policy BDDH, the accompanying administrative procedures, the Public Comment Guidelines, and the Chair's script are intended to make the School Board's public comment rules clearer, more consistent, and easier to administer.

The revisions would:

- Clarify that public comment must relate to School Board governance or School Division operations.
- Confirm that speakers may refer to individual Board members, Division leaders, or staff when discussing official actions, decisions, or matters within the Board's authority.
- Clarify that public comment is not a forum for debate or questions directed to individual Board members or staff.
- Establish consistent language regarding threats, profanity, obscenity, confidential student information, private personal matters, and disruptive conduct.
- Align the speaking limits across the policy and supporting documents:
 - Three minutes for 13 or fewer speakers
 - Two minutes for 14 or more speakers
 - A maximum of 20 speakers; and
 - A 40-minute total public comment period, unless extended by the Board.
- Clarify the random selection process when more than 20 individuals or groups sign up.
- Confirm that public comment at special meetings will occur only when it is included on the meeting agenda.
- Provide consistent direction regarding audience decorum, written materials, use of the timer, and the Board's practice of not responding during public comment.

These revisions do not substantially change the Board's existing public comment structure. Rather, they consolidate and clarify the current practices and provide consistent language for the policy, administrative procedures, public-facing guidelines, and Chair's meeting script.

Recommended Action

Staff recommends that the School Board review the proposed revisions and provide direction regarding any additional changes before the policy is returned for approval.