

<b>Board of Education Meetings – Public Participation</b>	<b>B.20</b>
<i>Adopted: July 23, 2013</i>	

All Regular, Special and Emergency Meetings of the Hilldale Board of Education shall be open to the public.

The Board of Education desires to hear the viewpoints of citizens throughout the District and considers the responsible presentation of these viewpoints vital to the efficient operation of the school system. The Board also recognizes its responsibility for the proper governance of the schools and the need to conduct its business in an orderly and efficient manner. Patrons are encouraged to attend Board Meetings so that they may become better acquainted with the operation and programs of the District, and that the Board may have an opportunity to hear the wishes and ideas of the public.

The Board will have a “Comments from the Public” item on every Regular Board Meeting Agenda that affords citizens the right to speak on any action item on the Agenda for that Meeting. Matters not on the Agenda are not proper subjects for discussion. Members of the public shall not be recognized or allowed to be heard or participate at any other time during the Meeting or while the Board is conducting its official business. Orderly conduct of a Board Meeting does not permit spontaneous discussion from the audience.

As the purpose of this section is to hear the comments, concerns and opinions of patrons, Board Members and administrative staff shall not respond to questions from the public. The Oklahoma Open Meeting Act prevents the discussion or action by the Board on any item presented under the “Comments from the Public” Agenda topic. The Board Meetings are not public hearings, but are meetings held open to the public.

In order to assure that persons who wish to appear before the Board of Education may be heard and, at the same time, conduct its meetings properly and efficiently, the Board adopts, as policy, the following procedures and rules pertaining to public participation at Board Meetings:

1. Anyone desiring to address the Board shall register with the Board Clerk or designated Board Member, not less than fifteen (15) minutes before the Meeting is called to order and shall provide, in writing, the following information:
  - name and address of each person to address the Board;
  - the Agenda action item(s) they wish to address; and
  - if applicable, the organization for which they are appearing or with whom they are affiliated.
  
2. At the beginning of the Meeting, the Board Clerk or designated Board Member presents to the Board President, or presiding Board Member, the completed sign-in registration(s).

3. The time allotted for any one issue will be divided among the people who sign up to speak on such issue. If an excessive number of speakers have registered, the Board President, or presiding Board Member, shall determine the number, order and time allowed for those desiring to address the Board. A single spokesperson may be selected by groups or organizations to address the Board on an Agenda item.
4. Speakers are limited to three (3) minutes speaking time and may offer objective comments on school operations and programs that concern them and which are listed on the Agenda, although the Board may, at its sole discretion, extend that time. In addition, the "Comments from the Public" item shall not exceed fifteen (15) minutes unless extended by the Board.
5. The Board President, or presiding Board Member, is required to advise speakers that no response of any kind will be made by any Board Member or the administration during, or at the conclusion of, the speaker's remarks. Board Members and the Superintendent have the privilege of asking questions of any person who addresses the Board. Board action with regard to Agenda items addressed by a speaker may only occur pursuant to proper Agenda items allowing such actions. Proper questions from members of the public may be referred to the Superintendent for later report to the Board.
6. No comments, whether positive or negative, regarding any employee of the District, students, or Board Members will be allowed. Persons who cause a disruption or disturbance of a Board Meeting shall be warned once by the Board President, or presiding Board Member, that such disruption or disturbance may result in eviction from the Board Meeting. If the persons continue such disruption or disturbance, the Board President, or presiding Board Member, shall request that the person be removed from the Board Meeting and not return for six (6) months. The Board President, or presiding Board Member, may also contact the appropriate law enforcement agency. In addition, the persons may be charged with any possible criminal violations for the disruption or disturbance if the District decides to pursue such charges.
7. The "Comments from the Public" portion of the Board Meeting cannot be used as a forum for campaigning for or against a candidate for public office.
8. The majority of the Board of Education reserves the right to discontinue any presentation which violates any of these public participation guidelines. The Board majority, at its sole discretion, may dispense with this segment of the Board Meeting when it deems necessary or appropriate and proceed directly to the official business of the Board without public participation.

There will be no public participation at Special or Emergency Meetings of the Board.