



NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

TO: Roger Breed, Ed.D.
Commissioner of Education

FROM: MARGARET WORTH, GENERAL COUNSEL

SUBJECT: POLICY REVIEW INFORMATION ITEM

Proposed Board Action:

STATE BOARD POLICY, B12, "Public Participation at Board Meetings."

Background Information:

Pursuant to the four-year review schedule implemented by the State Board's Policy Committee, State Board Policy B12 is submitted for review.
Pursuant to Bylaws B8 and B5, this policy may be revised, rescinded or referred to the State Board Policy Committee for review. If the Committee, the Board President or any Board member believes that action is necessary in connection with this Policy, an appropriate motion may be placed on the Agenda for a future Board meeting.
B12 will remain in effect indefinitely until revised or rescinded.

Estimated Cost:

N/A

Supporting Documentation Included:

State Board Policy Statement B12, "Public Participation at Board Meetings."

For Additional Information on this item:

Contact Margaret Worth, (402) 471-0312 or margaret.worth@nebraska.gov

Public Participation at Board Meetings

The State Board of Education recognizes its obligation to help citizens of the state understand the operation of the Department of Education. The Board is also aware of the need for communication with citizens to permit the public to make its wishes known and to permit the Board to explain general policies governing the operation of the schools in the state. Therefore, in an effort to provide a procedure by which matters of statewide interest concerning the schools may be brought before the Board and to permit the Board to conduct its meetings in an orderly and efficient manner, the State Board of Education establishes the following procedures with regard to citizen participation in the meetings of the Board.

Any citizen or spokesperson for a group of citizens may request an appearance before the State Board of Education at any regular meeting or work session of the Board except when the Board declares itself to be in executive session, and may address the Board, provided a request for such address has been made to the Commissioner of Education or Board members in writing at least ten days in advance of the meeting in order to permit such appearance to be placed on the published agenda. Such appearance, if granted by the Board President, may be limited to ten minutes unless an extension is granted by the President or a vote by the majority of the Board.

In addition, the published agenda of every regular meeting of the State Board shall contain an item identified as Public Comment Period. This period, which may be fifteen minutes in duration, may be available to any person who wishes to address the State Board on any subject within its authority that is not on the agenda. The order of appearance during the Public Comment Period may be determined by the President from among those who indicate their presence and their desire to speak at the beginning of each such period. If more than three people wish to appear at any Public Comment Period, the President may select which three persons may appear. No appearance during any Public Comment Period may exceed five minutes unless an extension is granted by the President.

The Board President may designate agenda items where public comment may be taken on that agenda item. Fifteen minutes may be allowed for such comment on each designated item.

The Board President may also choose to allow public comment at any time during a meeting. A majority of members present and voting may also choose to allow public comment at any time. The President or majority of members present and voting may terminate or reduce the time for public comment at any time.

Board Action History

- 11/15/81 – Prior BCBI
(No copies of prior version.)
- 12/7/84 – Prior 9322 BOP
(Same text as BCBI, except for deletion of statute references.)
- 12/8/95 – Prior B12
(Similar text in first 3 paragraphs, but appearance extensions may also be granted by majority, public comment period reduced from 30 to 15 minutes for items not on agenda (and from 6 to 3 persons), added agenda item public comment designations, and option for allowing additional public comment during meetings.)
- 9/7/06 – B12
(Added majority vote option for extending public comment period.)

Cross-References

- 84-1412 – Public participation.
- 79-317(2) – Public participation.