

# Hermiston School District 8R

Code: **BDDH**  
Adopted: 7/1/92, 12/6/94  
Revised/Readopted: 7/6/04  
Orig. Code(s): BDDH

## Public Participation in Board Meetings

The Board recognizes the value to school governance of public comment on educational issues and the importance of allowing members of the public to express themselves on school matters of community interest.

The Board, therefore, shall provide a period for communication from the public at each regular Board meeting and may afford this opportunity at special Board meetings. The public comments section of the agenda will generally be kept to 5-10 minutes. If public participation appears extensive, the Board chairperson may want to establish a time limit.

It is the intent of the Board to ensure communications with individuals with disabilities are as effective as communications with others. Individuals with hearing, vision or speech impairments will be given an equal opportunity to participate in Board meetings. Primary consideration will be given to requests of qualified individuals with disabilities in selecting appropriate auxiliary aids<sup>1</sup> and services.

Auxiliary aids and services for persons with disabilities will be available at no charge to the individual.

All auxiliary aids and/or service requests must be made with appropriate advance notice. Should the Board demonstrate such requests would result in a fundamental alteration in the service, program or activity or in undue financial and administrative burdens, alternative, equally effective means of communication will be used.

### Delegation of Authority

The presiding officer of each Board meeting at which public participation is permitted shall administer the rules of the Board for its conduct. Public participation shall be permitted at the discretion of the presiding officer.

### Participants

The Board requires that public participants be residents of the Hermiston School District or:

1. Any employee;
2. Any representative of a firm eligible to bid on materials or services solicited by the Board;
3. Any legal or official representative of a group in the community or district or a student of the district.

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<sup>1</sup>Auxiliary aids include, but are not limited to, such services and devices as qualified interpreters, assistive listening systems, note takers, readers, taped texts, Brailled materials and large print.

## **Direction of Comments**

No participant may speak more than once on the same topic unless all others who wish to speak on that topic have been heard. All statements shall be directed to the presiding officer; no participant may address or question Board members individually.

## **Restraints**

The presiding officer may:

1. Interrupt, warn or terminate a participant's statement when the statement is too lengthy, personally directed, abusive, obscene or irrelevant;
2. Request any individual to leave the meeting when that person does not observe reasonable decorum;
3. Call for a recess or an adjournment to another time when lack of public decorum interferes with orderly conduct so as to warrant such action.

## **Registration**

All persons wishing to participate in a public Board meeting shall register their intent with the district clerk or deputy clerk a week in advance of said Board meeting. Such a request shall include the name and address of the participant, group affiliation, if appropriate, and topic to be addressed.

If the topic is so timely that it is not possible to give a week's notice, the superintendent/clerk may be so notified and if appropriate, said superintendent/clerk may introduce the topic to the Board. If participation is deemed appropriate by the presiding officer, he/she may recognize the participation.

Brief comments or discussions may also be introduced during the communication part of the Board agenda but shall be limited to not more than two minutes; and unless the Board response is obvious, any action in regard to the topic shall be appropriately referred by the presiding officer.

END OF POLICY

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

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

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 U.S.C. Sections 12101-12213; 29 CFR Part 1630 (2000) 28 CFR Part 35 (2000).