



Suggested Meeting Management Language for Board Chairs

Suggested Language for Pre-Public Comment Period:

Community members, we are about to enter the citizen comment period of our meeting. My fellow board members and I recognize the importance of hearing from you on topics the board is considering. As a reminder, the citizen comment period is not designed to be a discussion, but rather an opportunity for board members to listen to constituents.

Citizens have two options for sharing comments during this meeting--either virtually via our meeting platform or in-person at _____ (insert physical meeting location) in accordance with state requirements. Each individual speaker is allotted ____ minutes, and individual time limits will be strictly observed so that as many citizens who wish to speak may be allowed to do so. Please speak only when I recognize you, identify yourself by stating your name and place of residence and direct all comments to the board. Ceding time to another speaker will not be allowed. Groups are encouraged to identify a single spokesperson. Please sign in on the speaker's list and identify the topic of your comments.

Alternatively, you may choose to submit written comments to the board in lieu of speaking during the public comment period. Your written comments will be read by all board members.

One additional reminder: I know we can all agree that the children and youth in our community must always be at the center of everything we do as a school system. They are watching and they look to all of us for models of how we should engage with one another. To that end, it is our responsibility--as members of the _____ (insert school district or supervisory union) community--to discuss deeply meaningful topics in a manner that demonstrates civil discourse and mutual respect for one another, especially on topics where we may disagree. We will not tolerate profanity or shouting. Remember to keep our students in mind when you share your comments with the board today, since what you say and how you say it matters.

The board will now entertain public comments for ____ minutes.

[Sources of Authority: 1 VSA Sections 310-312 (Open Meeting Law); 16 VSA Section 554(b); Board Policy on Public Participation at Board Meetings]

Suggested Language for Extreme Emergency (fire, riot or other safety-related emergency):

"Due to safety concerns, I declare the meeting adjourned until the next meeting of the board."

[Source of Authority: Robert's Rules of Order Section 8:10]

Effect: Ends the meeting

Suggested Language for Less Extreme Emergency:

"Due to the level of incivility in the room, is there a board member who wishes to move that the board recess this meeting until called to order by the chair?"

Form in which motion may be made: "I move to recess this meeting until called to order by the chair."

[Source of Authority: Robert Rules of Order Sections 20:5 -10]

This motion must be seconded, is not debatable, requires a majority vote and cannot be reconsidered.

Effect: Allows for a break in the meeting until the Chair calls the meeting back to order