

PURE TIP SHEET Public Participation

LSCs are required to make time for public participation during their meetings at least twice a year. Most LSCs include public participation on every agenda. Some even allow members of the public to comment on each motion prior to a vote.

LSCs need to hear from the public and can learn a lot from their concerns and ideas. However, some LSCs find it challenging to manage public testimony, especially if there is disagreement. Often problems arise because the public is not clear about what the LSC's role is, or what rules the LSC operates under.

Sample public participation policy

It may be useful to adopt a policy such as the one below and include it at the bottom of every meeting agenda to provide a common understanding of the ground rules for the meeting.

This statement could have an asterisk referring back to the public comment agenda item/s.

“Welcome to the Garden School Local School Council (LSC) regular monthly business meeting. The members of the Garden LSC are the elected representatives of our school. The LSC is responsible for setting the school's direction and policies and for monitoring its financial and educational programs. Like all public bodies in Illinois, our meetings are open to the public.

The public participation policy of the Garden LSC is to provide two opportunities during each regular business meeting for public comment. Speakers will have two minutes each. We request that you not name individuals in your comments. Comments may also be submitted in writing to the chair.

This policy does not prohibit the Garden LSC from deciding to hear additional public comments when the LSC decides such participation is necessary to its operations. For the LSC to expedite business, it is important for the public to respect this policy. The LSC also encourages non-LSC members to join LSC committees. Thank you for your interest!