**Example of Communications Procedures and Policy**

**with Charter School Board**

**Public Participation Policy for School Board Meetings**

**Purpose Statement**
The School Board values the input of parents, students, staff, and community members in the decision-making process. This policy establishes guidelines for public participation during school board meetings to ensure that the process is orderly, respectful, and productive.

**Meeting Schedule and Agenda**

* **Public Notice**: The schedule of regular school board meetings shall be posted on the district's website and at the district office at least one week in advance. Agendas for each meeting will be made available to the public 48 hours prior to the meeting.
* **Special Meetings**: In the case of special meetings, notice shall be provided as soon as possible but no less than 24 hours in advance.

**Public Comment Period**

* **Time Allocation**: A specific period for public comment will be included in each regular meeting agenda. This period typically occurs at the beginning of the meeting and lasts for a maximum of 30 minutes.
* **Speaking Time**: Each speaker is allocated up to 3 minutes to present their comments. Depending on the number of speakers, the Board President may adjust the time to allow more participants within the allotted time.
* **Sign-Up Process**: Individuals wishing to speak must sign up before the meeting begins. A sign-up sheet will be available at the entrance of the meeting room. Speakers will be called in the order in which they signed up.
* **Respectful Conduct**: All speakers are expected to conduct themselves respectfully. Personal attacks, slander, or inappropriate language will not be tolerated**.**

**Response to Public Comments**

* **Acknowledgment**: The School Board may acknowledge public comments but is not obligated to respond during the meeting. Board members may ask clarifying questions or direct staff to follow up on specific issues raised.
* **Further Action**: If a public comment requires further action, the Board may direct the matter to the appropriate committee, place it on a future agenda, or refer it to the superintendent for review.

**Verbal or Written Complaints to Board Members**

Avoid falling into a conversation.  Hear them, thank them, and remind them that as a board member, you are not able to act alone or discuss.  Share that their item can be addressed through these progressive steps:

* Discuss complaints with school staff.  Ask if they’ve done this yet, if not encourage them to do so (ask them to cc you so that you can stay in the loop and ensure their needs are addressed).
* Use of the formal grievance process where they share a problem and their proposed solution with the board (this assumes they’ve tried with school staff and feel their need was not met).  Encourage them to use the official grievance form. Remind them that the process may take 30 days once the grievance has been received.
* Submit a comment, celebration, or general concern they don’t necessarily want addressed but want to be heard by the school, through the Comments form on the homepage of our website.
* Share that having things in writing helps us all track concerns and grievances.

**Email or Written Complaints Sent to the Board (not been submitted as a formal grievance).**

The Board Chair and school leader check the shared board email a minimum of weekly and within 24 hours and the day of a regular board meeting. The board agrees to have the Board Chair respond with a form response acknowledging receipt of the communication and asking the following:

Is this communication intended as a formal grievance to the Board as outlined in the school’s Grievance policy?

-If it is a Grievance, ask them to clarify their concern in a statement sharing the problem and proposed solution (or use an official grievance form).

Have you tried to resolve this concern with the school staff?

-If they have, ask for clarity on why the concern was not resolved for them.

-If they have not shared with school staff (in 99% of instances) encourage them to first reach out to school staff to resolve the issue (ask for them to cc: or keep you posted so that you know whether it's been resolved).

*Note: This sample policy can be customized based on the specific needs and legal requirements of the school district.*