

Metropolitan School District of Lawrence Township
Dr. Shawn A. Smith, Superintendent

**Procedure for Individuals Desiring to Address
the
Board of Education**

MEETINGS ARE HELD ON THE FOURTH MONDAY OF EACH MONTH AT 7:00 P.M.
EXCEPTION: May 19, 2014; July 14, 2014; November 17, 2014 and December 15, 2014.

The Board of Education recognizes and values public comments on educational issues and understands the importance of allowing members of the public to express themselves on school district matters. Indiana Code 5-14-1.5-3 (Open Door Law) provides that all meetings of the governing bodies of public agencies must be open at all times for the purposes of permitting members of the public to observe and record them. School Board meetings are held in public but are not public meetings or public forums. Community members are encouraged to handle individual concerns by first dealing directly with the school person or division closest to the situation. **This school board and administrative team will work diligently to provide appropriate input processes for the public via committee participation, open forums, special hearings, and other appropriate means.**

If an individual or group desires to formally present information, concerns, or proposals concerning a scheduled public agenda item, the following procedures shall be followed:

1. A person who desires to address the Board concerning an agenda item must sign in before the start of the meeting. A registration sheet will be available at least thirty (30) minutes prior to the start of the meeting. Required registration information will include the name and address of the person(s) providing the comments, and the topic to be addressed.
2. Comments will be offered during the discussion of the agenda item prior to any Board action. The order in which persons speak and the opportunity to speak are ultimately at the discretion of the Presiding Officer.
3. The Presiding Officer will read the names of the person wishing to address the Board. The person should move to the podium to make his/her statement. At the Presiding Officer's discretion, a person who did not sign in may be invited by the Presiding Officer to comment on a specific point being discussed.
4. Each person's statement may not exceed three (3) minutes. If several people have indicated their desire to speak, the time limit may be reduced in order to allow more people the opportunity to speak.
5. Comments will be directed to the Presiding Officer – not to an individual Board member. This is time reserved for Board input not for questions and answers.
6. Comments should not reference specific employees, patrons, or students in the corporation.
7. Statements will not be abusive or argumentative. Persons making comments will not debate statements made by other persons.
8. Public participation shall be permitted only as indicated on the order of business or at the discretion of the Presiding Officer. If an agenda item is added after the official posting of the agenda, a patron may be recognized by the Presiding Officer during the meeting to speak to the new agenda item.
9. The Presiding Officer may:
 - a) Interrupt, warn, or close a person's statement when the statement is too lengthy, personally directed, abusive, obscene or irrelevant.
 - b) Call for a recess when public decorum interferes with the orderly conduct of the meeting.
10. The Board encourages thoughtful, contributory statements. Public participation, attendance at Board meetings, and involvement in school activities, all serve to build positive relationships with the educational community.