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5 Audience Participation

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7 The Board recognizes the value of public comment on educational issues and the importance of
8 involving members of the public in its meetings. The Board also recognizes the statutory and
9 constitutional rights of the public to participate in governmental operations. To allow fair and
10 orderly expression of public comments, the Board will permit public participation through oral or
11 written comments during the “public comment” section of the Board agenda and prior to a final
12 decision on a matter of significant interest to the public. The Chairperson may control such
13 comment to ensure an orderly progression of the meeting.

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15 Individuals wishing to be heard by the Chairperson shall first be recognized by the Chairperson.
16 Individuals, after identifying themselves, will proceed to make comments as briefly as the
17 subject permits. The Chairperson may interrupt or terminate an individual’s statement when
18 appropriate, including when statements are out of order, too lengthy, personally directed,
19 abusive, obscene, or irrelevant. The Board as a whole shall have the final decision in
20 determining the appropriateness of all such rulings. **It is important for all participants to**
21 **remember that Board meetings are held in public but are not public meetings. Members of**
22 **the public shall be recognized and allowed input during the meeting, at the discretion of the**
23 **Chairperson.**

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27 Cross Reference: 1420 School Board Meeting Procedure

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29 Legal Reference: Article II, Section 8, Montana Constitution – Right of participation
30 Article II, Section 10, Montana Constitution – Right of privacy
31 §§ 2-3-101, et seq., MCA Notice and Opportunity to Be Heard

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33 Policy History:

34 Adopted on:

35 Reviewed on: 2/25/08

36 Revised on: Fall 2003