



## Activity: Make a Public Comment (School Board/School Board Committee)

**Objective:** Use persuasive arguments to impact policymakers for your municipal school board.

**Leader Prep:** Identify the school board that oversees your school system. That board may also use a committee system to review policies and make suggestions to the full board. If your school board has a committee that is applicable to your issue, it may be valuable to follow the directions in the “Make a Public Comment (City/County Committee)” activity.

**Supplies:**

- Agenda
- Proposal for new policy
- Petitions or other supportive documents
- Elevator Pitch
- Prepared comment
- Safety ratios for travel
- Permission slips

1. This process is very similar to the guidelines for making a public comment to a city or county legislative meeting.
2. Obtain a copy of the agenda for the convening of your school board. You may also wish to look at the “minutes” or previous meeting agendas to see what has been happening within the school district. By knowing what was said and voted on, you’ll have more information about the comments you should make. Try to answer the following questions about the school board based on what information they provide online or at the local district building:
  - a. Who are the members of the group? Who do they represent? Do they sit on any committees?
  - b. What are the current issues they’re discussing?
  - c. What did they do at their last meeting? What did they talk about? Who made comments?
3. Now that you have more information about the legislative agenda, you are ready to draft your comment. Similar to a letter to the editor or your elevator pitch, a public comment is just a couple of key points about your issue. It should only take a couple of minutes to say. Practice several times with friends, your guardian or parent, your troop leader or someone else to help you stay calm and remember what you want to say.
4. Reach out to the school board or their district coordinator or assistant to be added to the agenda. You may or may not be asked to fill out a speaker card.
5. You will need to attend the meeting in person to share your comment. Remember to wear your Girl Scout uniform and insignia.
6. When you get up to speak, share your name, where you go to school within the district, and your troop information, if you like. Then, state the comments you’ve prepared. It’s okay to be nervous! Remember to speak clearly and confidently.
7. At the end of your comment, say thank you to the board for listening.
8. You may stay for the remainder of the meeting, or if you need to leave, you may do so. When you return home, you may share additional information like photos, graphs, media you’ve produced, your petition or action day, or anything else via email or by mail. Be prompt in these submissions so that if a decision is being made, they have all of the information needed.

