

Subject: Re: Public Comment
From: Kelli MacMillan <macmillank@mokena159.org>
Date: 2/15/2024, 10:41 PM
To: Eric Bush <bushe@mokena159.org>

Mr. Bush,

As stated in my email on Monday, I would like this subject to be added to our agenda next week. The BOE should have a discussion on the topic before we make any changes to our agenda.

I would like our BOE to address with Dr. Cohen his role in this and how it was inappropriate for him to be communicating changes to our BOE meeting agenda to the public BEFORE the Board of Education came to an agreement. Especially considering he was privy to at least two BOE members requesting it be added for discussion. Did you direct Dr. Cohen to take that liberty or was this an overstep by Dr. Cohen?

I suggest we add it to the agenda for next week. If the Board is not afforded the time to discuss this on Wednesday I will request it be added to the agenda for March which will be untimely.

I have some concerns about taking time away from our unions and parent groups and BOE without conversation and transparency. I believe our public will view this negatively and step in the opposite direction of open communication. We should be working to expand our discussions, not remove the short time we have to conduct those discussions.

Either way, this needs to be discussed and voted on by the BOE, not unilaterally decided by Dr. Cohen and yourself.

Thanks,
Kelli MacMillan

On Thu, Feb 15, 2024 at 9:47 PM Eric Bush <bushe@mokena159.org> wrote:

Board - Dr. Cohen noted in last week's weekly update comments made by Dr. Natalie Williams during the pre-workshop call addressing the addition of groups/organizations on the Board agenda under Public Comment. Unfortunately, the workshop ran over and we didn't get a chance to discuss. Based on Dr. William's comments, Dr. Cohen and I removed the additional groups from Public Comment on the agenda. We asked Dr. Williams to provide her thoughts so we could share with the Board. Below are her thoughts.

For best practices, these groups are also from the public, therefore, you all may allow them their 3-5 min of time (according to your agreements & protocols, regarding public comment). It's best that you all DO NOT respond, especially if it is on the agenda under public comment and it is NOT Board related business. This will allow you all to be consistent with all constituents that speak during public comment, with no expectations that the board will respond during public comment. In addition, you all may note, write, and have visuals to let the public know that you will not respond to anyone or group giving information during public comment.

I also wanted to add that, because you all are non-partisan, and you all do not want represent favor for any person or group, it is a best practice that you all do not allow groups to be added to your agenda(s), therefore allowing them to speak during public comment is ok, but NOT giving time to a specific person/group on your agenda. This helps you all legally as well, keeping the public body or any person in your district from wanting to FOIA your emails/messages (etc.), accusing you all of playing favoritism, etc.

As it currently stands, the additional groups aren't on the February agenda. If the Board's Will is to add the groups back, we will add them back to the agenda. The agenda will be published late Friday afternoon. Please let us know if you think the groups should be added back to the agenda so that we can determine the Board's Will on this matter.

Regards,

Eric