

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS**

Members of the community are invited and encouraged to attend meetings of the Albemarle County School Board (“Board”) to observe its deliberations. Any member of the community may address the Board on matters related to Albemarle County Public Schools at any regular meeting as provided in the accompanying regulation.

The Chair is responsible for the orderly conduct of the meeting and shall rule on such matters as the appropriateness of the subject being presented and length of the time for such presentation. The Board as a whole shall have the final decision in determining the appropriateness of all such rulings.

A reasonable period of time, as determined by the School Board, will be allocated at each regular meeting for community members to present matters of concern.

Public participation at any special called meeting of the School Board shall be determined by the School Board Chair.

Adopted: July 1, 1993

Amended: September 26, 1994; March 24, 1997; June 12, 2000, August 26, 2004;  
October 22, 2009; October 23, 2014; April 23, 2015; September 8, 2016;  
September 12, 2019

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Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§22.1-78, 22.1-253.13:7.

Cross Ref.: Policy KD, *Public Participation at School Board Meetings*

## **Administrative Procedures for Public Comment**

### Regular Meetings

Any member of the general public or group may appear in person at any regular meeting of the Board with any Division related question, request, or item he/she may wish to discuss. Citizens or organizations may present matters of concern within a time not to exceed three minutes. The Chair is responsible for the orderly conduct of the meeting and shall rule on such matters as the appropriateness of the subject being presented and suitability of the time for such presentation.

### Special Meetings

The purpose of special meetings is to give the Board the opportunity to carry on discussions or to work through problems that take a great deal of time. Public participation at any specially called meetings of the Board shall be noticed on the meeting agenda.

### Citizen Participation in Board Meetings

#### A. Presentations to the Board

In lieu of having a large number of individual speakers, organized groups can request up to five minutes to speak during public comment, as long as the request is received two days prior to the scheduled meeting. The Chair will then either grant the request or deny the request, and the Clerk will notify the group.

Use of the projection system for presentations to the School Board is reserved for staff scheduled agenda items only.

#### B. Addressing the Board

Upon recognition by the Chair, the speaker should clearly state his/her name, his/her address or magisterial district and the subject of his/her remarks. The courtesy of the Board shall be extended to the speaker, and the speaker shall respect the privilege extended by the Board or be ruled out of order by the Chair.

#### C. Time Limitations

Three minutes will be allowed for each presenter to speak. However, the Chair may reduce the time allocated for all individuals to speak depending on the number of individuals signed up to speak.

## Public Comment Guidelines

The School Board invites and actively seeks the public's input in the matters relevant to School Board governance and provide for time in our business meetings to hear from our residents and community members. During public comment, we expect respectful and on-topic comments.

The School Board will first hear from students who have signed up for the Public Comment period on the agenda.

The School Board wishes to maintain appropriate meeting decorum so that persons in attendance have the opportunity to observe and hear the proceedings of the School Board and that attendees such as students (whether in person or via video) are not subject to inappropriate language and conduct. Disruptive behavior from speakers or from members of the public in attendance will not be tolerated. The Chair will ask anyone who willfully disrupts the meeting in a manner that prevents or interferes with the orderly conduct of such meeting to leave.

Individuals and/or organizations wishing to speak during Public Comment must sign up advance. The School Board is piloting a new public comment process beginning on September 26, 2019. Sign-up is available on-line beginning at 8 a.m. on the Monday of the week of the School Board meeting. On-line signup will be available until Noon on the day of the meeting. You may also call the School Board Clerk's Office at 434-972-4055 to sign-up for public comment until Noon on the day of the meeting. The pilot will be evaluated at the beginning of 2020. Members of the public who do not sign up to speak electronically or by telephone in advance of the meeting may sign-up in person with the School Board Clerk beginning at 6:00 p.m. In person sign-up will be available until the Public Comment period of the meeting.

Public testimony guidelines are as follows:

1. Speakers should adhere to the following protocol:
  - A. State name and address or magisterial district. Simply stating Albemarle County is not adequate.
  - B. Limit comments to those matters that are relevant to School Board governance or Division operations.
  - C. Give written statements and other supporting material to the Clerk. If you are unable to complete the presentation in the time allotted, a copy of supporting materials will be provided to School Board members.
2. Three minutes will be allowed for each presenter to speak. However, the Chair, with the consent of the Board, may reduce the time allocated for all individuals to speak to two (2) minutes depending on the number of individuals who sign up.

3. A color-coded light system is used to time presentations. The yellow light means the speaker is two (2) minutes (or one (1) minute if there are more than ten (10) speakers) into the presentation, and the red light means the speaker is at the time limit and must wrap up promptly.
4. In order to maintain respect for all points of view, the School Board requests no clapping, booing, or any other audible form of support or nonsupport be used. If members of the public wish to show their support for a speaker, they may stand or raise their hands.
5. The School Board does not respond to comments made during the Public Comment period. However, Board members may address comments at the end of the meeting agenda under Other Business.
6. Use of the projection system is reserved for staff scheduled agenda item presentations only.