

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 administrative procedure.

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; May 13, 2021; April 25, 2024

Equity Review: May 13, 2021

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

Cross Ref.: BDDE, *Rules of Order*
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 to present any Division related question, request, or item. Citizens or organizations may present matters of concern within a time limit that will depend on the number of people who wish to speak at a particular meeting. 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 matters 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 their name, address or magisterial district and the subject of the remarks. The courtesy of the Board shall be extended to the speaker, and the speaker shall provide comments that adhere to these administrative procedures or be ruled out of order by the Chair.

C. Time Limitations

The total time for public comment shall not exceed 40 minutes unless the School Board decides to grant more time. When there are 13 or fewer speakers, each speaker will be allotted three minutes. If there are 14 or more speakers, each speaker will be allotted two minutes.

D. For Speakers of Languages Other than English

Speakers who wish to submit a written remark may request translation support services through ESOLInterpretation@k12albemarle.org or call the International and ESOL Welcome Center at 434-296-6517.

Public Comment Guidelines

The School Board invites and actively seeks the public's input in the matters relevant to School Board governance and provides 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 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 may sign up in advance. Signup is available online beginning at 8:30 a.m. on the Monday of the week of the School Board meeting. Online signup will be available until 2:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting. Speakers may also call the School Board Clerk's Office at 434-972-4055 to sign up for public comment until 2:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting. 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 at the meeting 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 for meetings that are held in-person. The maximum number of people or groups that may speak at a meeting is 20, and the total time to be devoted to public comment per meeting will be capped at 40 minutes, unless the School Board decides to grant more time. In the event that there are more than 20 people or groups who wish to speak at a particular meeting, each speaker will be assigned a number, and numbers will be drawn to determine which people or groups will have the opportunity to speak. Those who do not have the opportunity to speak at a particular meeting may sign up to speak at a subsequent meeting and/or may submit written comments for the School Board's consideration.

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 unable to complete the presentation in the time allotted, a copy of supporting materials will be provided to School Board members.
2. The total time for public comment shall not exceed 40 minutes unless the School Board decides to grant more time. When there are 13 or fewer speakers, each speaker will be allotted three minutes. If there are 14 or more speakers, each speaker will be allotted two minutes.
3. The School Board will use a device or timer to keep track of the time for each speaker. Once a speaker's time has expired, the speaker will be so advised 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.