

Public Participation at HCS Board Meetings

The Board of Education recognizes the value of public comment on educational issues and the importance of allowing members of the public to express themselves on District matters.

Any person or group wishing to place an item on the agenda shall register their intent with the Superintendent no later than fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting and include name and address of the participant; group affiliation, if and when appropriate; and topic to be addressed.

Such requests shall be subject to the approval of the Superintendent and the Board President.

Denial of the opportunity to have an item placed on the agenda will not preclude an individual or group from the opportunity to speak during the public participation portion of the meeting.

To permit fair and orderly public expression, the Board shall provide a period for public participation at public meetings of the Board and publish rules to govern such participation in Board meetings and in Board committee meetings.

The presiding officer of each Board meeting at which public participation is permitted shall administer the rules of the Board for its conduct.

The presiding officer shall be guided by the following rules:

- A. Public participation shall be permitted as indicated on the order of business and/or at a time as determined by the presiding officer.
- B. Anyone with concerns related to the operation of the schools or to matters within the authority of the Board may participate during the public portion of a meeting.
- C. Attendees must register their intention to participate in the public portion of the meeting upon their arrival at the meeting.
- D. Participants must be recognized by the presiding officer and will be requested to preface their comments by an announcement of their name; group affiliation, if and when appropriate.
- E. Each statement made by a participant shall be limited to five (5) minutes duration.
- F. No participant may speak more than once on the same topic unless all others who wish to speak on that topic have been heard.
- G. Participants shall direct all comments to the Board and not to staff or other participants.
- H. All statements shall be directed to the presiding officer; no person may address or question Board members individually.
- I. The presiding officer may:
 1. Prohibit public comments which are frivolous, repetitive, or harassing;
 2. interrupt, warn, or terminate a participant's statement when the statement is too lengthy, personally directed, abusive, obscene, or irrelevant;

3. request any individual to leave the meeting when that person behaves in a manner that is disruptive of the orderly conduct of the meeting;
4. request the assistance of law enforcement officers in the removal of a disorderly person when that person's conduct interferes with the orderly progress of the meeting;
5. call for a recess or an adjournment to another time when the lack of public decorum so interferes with the orderly conduct of the meeting as to warrant such action;
6. waive these rules.

J. The portion of the meeting during which the participation of the public is invited shall be limited to thirty (30) minutes, unless extended by a vote of the Board.

If the number of speakers desiring to speak is so extensive that the half-hour (1/2) time limit for the public comment portion of the meeting would be inadequate, the president may shorten the time limit allowed each speaker but the limit shall not be less than three (3) minutes or the Board, by majority vote, may extend the public comment portion of the meeting.

K. Tape or video recordings are permitted subject to the following conditions:

1. No obstructions are created between the Board and the audience.
2. No interviews are conducted in the meeting room while the Board is in session.
3. No commentary, adjustment of equipment, or positioning of operators is made that would distract either the Board or members of the audience while the Board is in session.

The person operating the recorder should contact the Superintendent prior to the Board meeting to review possible placement of the equipment.