REGULATIONS FOR PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE SCHOOL BOARD

Members of the community may present their views on issues of public concern which relate to the operation of Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS), either by submitting written or electronic comments to members of the Alexandria City School Board, or by addressing the Board during the time periods designated for public comments at Board meetings or during public hearings.

Written Comments

Comments may be presented to the Board at any time by emailing such material to: boardclerk@acps.k12.va.us. Comments may also be addressed to the entire Board at board@acps.k12.va.us, or to individual Board Members at their email addresses listed on the ACPS website. If comments are provided in a language other than English, they will be translated by ACPS and provided to the Board.

Public Comments at Board Meetings or Public Hearings

The purpose of Board meetings is to allow the Board to conduct public business in an orderly and constructive manner. With the exception of certain public hearings, the Board is not required to provide public comment time but does so in order to receive the viewpoints of the community on general issues of public concern related to the operation of the school division.

Individuals may speak at regular board meetings on agenda items or non-agenda subjects which relate to the operation of the school division. Comments during public hearings must be confined to the subject of the hearing. Public comments are typically not accepted at work sessions.

Generally, Board members do not respond to public comment during a meeting or hearing. If follow-up is required due to the nature of the comments, the Chair of the Board (Chair) will work with the Superintendent and School Board Clerk (Clerk) to respond accordingly following the Board meeting.

The following rules are intended to minimize or avoid disruption, confine speakers to topics related to the operation of the school division, and to balance the Board's informational needs with limited time and available resources.

Advance Request Procedures

Members of the public who wish to address the Board at a Board Meeting or Public Hearing may sign up in one of two ways:

• Those wishing to address the Board virtually should notify the Clerk by 12:00 noon on the day before the meeting. The clerk's contact information is available on the ACPS website and in the Contact Information section of this regulation.

 • Those wishing to address the Board in person may notify the Clerk by 12:00 noon on the day before the meeting or may sign up in person between 5:45 and 6:15 PM on the day of the meeting. The in-person sign up will be in the Board room. A minimum of five speaking slots will be reserved for in person sign up on the day of the meeting.

Only individuals who have signed up will be permitted to speak. The Chair may make exceptions

for individuals who have a valid reason for not being able to meet the established deadlines.

Requests for an exception should be provided to the Clerk.

All speakers must provide the Clerk with their name, available contact information including (email address, home address and phone number), any required accommodations, and the agenda item or other issue of public concern about which they will be speaking.

 Speakers who require accommodations such as translation services are requested to notify the Clerk 48 hours prior to the meeting so ACPS can arrange for a translator. Speakers may instead bring a translator or provide the comments in writing. Comments provided in English will be read by the Clerk or their designee during the public comment period. Comments provided in a language other than English will be translated by ACPS and provided to the Board after the meeting.

The Board encourages speakers to provide a written copy of their comments and supporting documentation. Speakers may email such material to the Clerk at boardclerk@acps.k12.va.us. If comments are provided in a language other than English, they will be translated by ACPS and provided to the Board.

Order of Speakers

All persons who have signed up to speak with the Clerk according to the established deadlines, and have been approved to speak, are permitted to speak during the Board meeting in the regular period designated for Communications and Addresses to the Board, or during the public comment portion of a public hearing.

Students are generally placed at the beginning of the speaker queue. Other speakers are placed on a list in the order in which they notify the Clerk or at the discretion of the Chair.

While the Board will do its best to accommodate all speakers who sign up, there is no guarantee that all such individuals will be able to speak at any given meeting. If the number of speakers is too large to be reasonably accommodated, the Chair may ask speakers to voluntarily combine their comments or submit them in writing to the School Board. Speakers are limited to one presentation per meeting.

Time Limitations

The Board allocates up to one hour for speakers at regular board meetings. The overall time allocation for Public Hearings is determined by the expected number of speakers and may be adjusted to ensure all speakers who sign up have the opportunity to be heard by the Board.

Speakers are typically allocated three minutes each to deliver their remarks. Speakers requiring accommodations including but not limited to, interpreters, speech & language difficulties, etc. where an interpreter is needed, will be allocated additional time necessary to support the accommodations. The Chair may adjust individual speaker time depending on how many individuals have signed up to speak at a particular meeting.

The Chair, with the assistance of the Clerk, monitors and enforces the time limitation and in doing so will promptly cut off speakers who have not concluded their remarks in the time allotted. A

speaker who does not need the full time allotted may not yield unused time to another speaker.

Addressing the School Board

Recognition is granted to one speaker at a time.

Speakers addressing the Board in person stand at a centrally located microphone and lectern and precede their remarks with their name and the topic on which they will be speaking. Speakers addressing the Board remotely via video conference use the "hand raise" function and wait to be recognized. Once recognized, speakers will precede their remarks with their name and the topic on which they will be speaking.

Comments should be addressed to the entire Board and not to individual Board Members, the Superintendent, or other members of the audience. Since cumulative comments tend to prevent other topics from being heard in a timely manner, speakers are encouraged to limit their comments when indicating support for or opposition to a previously stated position. The Chair may conclude comments from any speaker if the Chair determines the comments are cumulative or are concerning inappropriate topics.

Decorum

Speakers, whether in person or via videoconference, are considered visitors and must follow ACPS policy including Policy KK – School Visitors. As visitors, speakers are extended the courtesy of the School Board and, in turn, speakers must respect the privilege extended by the Board by not disrupting the orderly conduct of the Board Meeting and are requested to model the attributes of high-quality civic discourse. Speakers must use commonly accepted rules of courtesy, respect, decorum, dignity, and good taste. The use of obscenity, vulgarity, or patently offensive language will be ruled out of order, as will words or statements which, from their usual construction and common acceptance, incite violence or breach of the peace. Speakers who repeatedly fail to comply with these standards of civic discourse may be required to provide their comments in writing in lieu of the opportunity to present in person or via videoconference.

Inappropriate Topics

Public comment time at regular Board Meetings and public hearings are intended to allow the community to address the Board regarding topics or subjects which relate to the operation of the school division and are of public concern to the school community. For these reasons, and to ensure the privacy of individuals, during the period reserved for public participation at meetings, the Board does not allow public comments or complaints regarding individual students, individual student disciplinary matters that are the subject of due process proceedings, matters involving pending employee grievance proceedings or administrative hearings, or matters involving pending litigation. After litigation, public comments on the situation may be shared, however student information should still be confidential. These prohibitions are intended to protect student and staff privacy, however parents may reference their own ACPS student but they may not reference any student that is not under their own legal care.

Contact Information 137 Clerk of the Board 138 Alexandria City School Board 139 1340 Braddock Place, Suite 610 140 Alexandria, Virginia 22314 141 boardclerk@acps.k12.va.us 142 143 **ACPS School Board** 144 board@acps.k12.va.us

145146147

Meeting Types

The Board conducts its work through several types of meetings.

148149150

151

152

Meetings where public comment it taken:

- **Regular Board Meeting** Meetings where the Board deliberates and makes decisions on the operations of ACPS.
- **Public Hearings** Meetings where the Board takes public comment on specific topics.

153154155

156

157

158

Meetings open to the public where public comment is not taken:

- Work Sessions Meetings where the Board deliberates but does not make decisions on the operations of ACPS.
- **Subcommittee Meetings** Meetings of an appointed subset of Board members for the purposes of developing recommendations for Board deliberation.

159 160 161

162

163

164

165

Meetings not open to the public:

- **Retreats** Meetings where the Board participates in professional learning and collaboration activities.
- Closed Meetings Meetings where the Board deliberates and makes decisions on matters
 that are protected under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act such as personnel actions
 and contract related matters.

166 167

Established: September 24, 2009 168 December 4, 2014 Revised: 169 Revised: April 6, 2017 170 Revised: March 22, 2018 171 May 9, 2019 Revised: 172 Revised: October 21, 2021 173

174

176

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

2016 Op. Va. Att'y Gen. 15-020.

Baca v. Moreno Valley Unified Sch. District, 936 F. Supp. 719 (C.D. Cal. 1996).
 Leventhal v. Vista Unified School District, 973 F. Supp. 951 (S.D. Cal. 1997).
 Bach v. School Board of the City of Virginia Beach, 139 F. Supp. 2d. 738, 743

(E.D. Va. 2001).

180 181

182 Cross Refs.: BDDE Rules of Order

183	BDDH	Public Participation at School Board Meetings
184	KK	School Visitor
185	KL	Public Complaints

REGULATIONS FOR PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE SCHOOL BOARD

Members of the community may present their views on issues of public concern which relate to the operation of Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS), either by submitting written or electronic comments to members of the Alexandria City School Board, or by addressing the Board during the time periods designated for public comments at Board meetings or during public hearings.

Written Comments

Comments may be presented to the Board at any time by emailing such material to: boardclerk@acps.k12.va.us. Comments may also be addressed to the entire Board at board@acps.k12.va.us, or to individual Board Members at their email addresses listed on the ACPS website. If comments are provided in a language other than English, they will be translated by ACPS and provided to the Board.

<u>Public</u> Members of the community may present their views on issues of public concern which relate to the operation of Alexandria City Public Schools, either by submitting written or electronic comments to members of the School Board, or by addressing the Board during the time periods designated for public comments at School Board meetings or during public hearings. These opportunities for community input do not require Board Members or the Division Superintendent to discuss or respond to the speaker's views nor act on a request or proposalC.

21
22 I.Procedures for Written or Electronic Communications to the School Board

The Alexandria City School Board welcomes communications from the community regarding matters of general importance to the operation of the school division. Written comments may be presented to the Board at any time by mailing or delivering thirteen copies of such material to:

Clerk of the Board

Alexandria City School Board 1340 Braddock Place, Suite 610

Alexandria, Virginia 22314

• or to:

boardelerk@aeps.k12.va.us.

Electronic communications may also be addressed to the entire Board at board@acps.k12.va.us, or to individual School Board Members at theiremail addresses listed on the School Board website at www.acps.k12.va.us/board.

40 H.Procedures for Addressing the Alexandria City School Board during Public Comment
41 Timeomments at Board Meetings or Public Hearings

The purpose of School Board meetings is to allow the School Board to conduct public business in an orderly and constructive manner. With the exception of certain public hearings, the School Board is not required to provide public comment time, but does so in order to receive the viewpoints of the community on general issues of public concern related to the operation of the

Commented [1]: Belief statement relocated to the policy.

Commented [2]: Belief statement relocated to the policy.

Commented [3]: Removed specific reference as URLs may change.

47 scho o			

The purpose of Board meetings is to allow the Board to conduct public business in an orderly and constructive manner. With the exception of certain public hearings, the Board is not required to provide public comment time but does so in order to receive the viewpoints of the community on general issues of public concern related to the operation of the school division.

Individuals may speak at regular board meetings on agenda items or non-agenda subjects which relate to the operation of the school division. Comments during public hearings must be confined to the subject of the hearing. Public comments are typically not accepted at work sessions.

The following rules are intended to minimize or avoid disruption, confine speakers to topics related to the operation of the school division, and to balance the School Board's informational needs with limited time and available resources.

Generally, Board members do not respond to public comment during a meeting or hearing. If follow-up is required due to the nature of the comments, the Chair of the Board (Chair) will work with the Superintendent and School Board Clerk (Clerk) to respond accordingly following the Board meeting.

The following rules are intended to minimize or avoid disruption, confine speakers to topics related to the operation of the school division, and to balance the Board's informational needs with limited time and available resources.

A. Advance Request Procedures

Members of the public who wish to address the Alexandria City School Board at a Board Meeting or Public Hearing may sign up in one of two ways:

• Those wishing to address the Board -virtually should notify the Clerk of the Board in writing or by electronic communications (703-619-8316 or boardelerk@aeps.k12.va.us) by 12:00 noon... on the day before the prior to the meeting. date to be placed on the list of speakers during the "Communications and Addresses to the Board" agenda item. The Celerk's contact information is available on the ACPS website and in the Contact Information section of this regulation...

 • Those wishing to address the Board in person may notify the Clerk by 12:00 noon on the day before the meeting or may sign up in person between 5:45 and 6:15 PM on the day of the meeting. The in-person sign up will be in the Board room. A minimum of five speaking slots will be reserved for in person sign up on the day of the meeting.

Only individuals who have signed up will be permitted to speak. The Chair may make exceptions for individuals who have a valid reason for not being able to meet the established deadlines. Requests for an exception should be provided to the Clerk., unless otherwise requested by the Cehair.

Speakers addressing the Board in person may sign up to speak until the start of the meeting. Speakers addressing the Board remotely via video conference must sign up by 12:00 pm on the

Commented [MS4]: Revised to improve clarity on when public comments are accepted.

day before the meeting.

All speakers must provide the <u>C</u>Clerk_with their name, <u>available contact information including</u> (email address, home address and phone number), <u>any required accommodations</u>, <u>and in order to permit the Celerk to contact them if necessary.</u> <u>Speakers must also identify the agenda item or other</u> issue of public concern about which they will be speaking.

Speakers who require accommodations such as translation services are requested to notify the Clerk 48 hours prior to the meeting so ACPS can arrange for a translator. Speakers may instead bring a translator or provide the comments in writing. Comments provided in English will be read by the Clerk of the Board or their designee during the public comment period. Comments provided in a language other than English will be translated by ACPS and provided to the Board after the meeting

The Board encourages speakers to provide a written copy of their comments and supporting documentation. Anyone who wishes to provide documentary support for the comments they intend to present at the School Board meeting Speakers may should provide thirteen copies of such documents to the Clerk of the Board email such material to the Clerk at boardclerk@acps.k12.va.us. If comments are provided in a language other than English, they will be translated by ACPS and provided to the Board.

B. Number and Order of Speakers

All persons who have signed up to speak with the Clerk according to the established deadlines, and have been approved to speak, are permitted to speak during the Board meeting in the regular period designated for Communications and Addresses to the Board, or during the public comment portion of a public hearing.

Students are generally placed at the beginning of the speaker queue. Other s_Speakers are placed on a list in the order in which they notify the Clerk or at the discretion of the Chair. Students are generally placed at the beginning of the queue.

While the Board will do its best to accommodate all speakers who sign up, there is no guarantee that all such individuals will be able to speak at any given meeting. If the number of speakers is too large to be reasonably accommodated, the Chair may ask speakers to voluntarily combine their comments or submit them in writing to the School Board. Speakers are limited to one presentation per meeting.

Time Limitations

The Board allocates up at one hour for speakers at regular board meetings. The overall time allocation for Public Hearings is determined by the expected number of speakers and may be adjusted to ensure all speakers who sign up have the opportunity to be heard by the Board.

Speakers are typically allocated three minutes each to deliver their remarks. Speakers requiring accommodations including but not limited to, interpreters, speech & language difficulties, etc.

Commented [MS5]: Added to clarify process around accommodations

Commented [6]: This provides the flexibility to combine speakers or set maximum time limits. As written you could get 500 speakers.

Commented [7R6]: approval process?

Commented [MS8]: Added to allow the Board to set a different time allocation for Public Hearings.

Commented [MS9]: Added to improve equity of the process.

where an interpreter is needed, will be allocated additional time necessary to support the accommodations. The total time for public comments and public hearings and the time per speaker are determined by the can may be adjusted depending on how many individuals have signed up to speak at a particular meeting or based on any accommodations needed including but not limited to, interpreters, speech & language difficulties, etc.. While the School Board will do its best to accommodate all speakers who sign up, there is no guarantee that all such individuals will be able to speak at any given meeting. The Chair may adjust individual speaker time depending on how many individuals have signed up to speak at a particular meeting.

Commented [MS10]: Added to improve equity of the process.

The Chair, with the assistance of the Clerk of the Board, monitors and enforces the time limitation and in doing so will promptly cut off speakers who have not concluded their remarks in the time allotted. A speaker who does not need the full time allotted may not yield unused time to another speaker.

Commented [11]: For equity reasons, all speakers should be treated equally. Allowing some speakers additional time could result in bias.

C. Public Comments on Agenda and Non-Agenda Items

All individuals may speak on agenda items or non-agenda subjects which relate to the operation of the school division. Comments during public hearings shall be confined to the subject of the hearing.

Commented [MS12]: Relocated to improve readability.

D. Addressing the Alexandria City School Board

Recognition by the Chair is granted to one speaker at a time.

Speakers addressing the Board in person stand at a centrally located microphone and lectern and precede their remarks with their name and the topic on which they will be speaking. Speakers addressing the Board remotely via video conference use the "hand raise" function and wait to be recognized by the Chair. Once recognized, speakers will precede their remarks with their name and the topic on which they will be speaking.

Comments <u>are should be</u> addressed to the entire <u>School</u>-Board and not to individual Board Members, the Superintendent, or other members of the audience. Since cumulative comments tend to prevent other topics from being heard in a timely manner, <u>—speakers are encouraged to limit their comments when indicating support <u>for</u> or <u>—opposition for to a previously stated position. The <u>Ce</u>Chair may conclude comments from any speaker if the <u>CCe</u>hair determines the comments are cumulative or are <u>_concerning inappropriate topics</u>.</u></u>

Decorum

Speakers, whether in person or via videoconference, are considered visitors and must follow ACPS policy including Policy KK – School Visitors. As visitors, speakers, shall beare extended the courtesy of the School Board and, in turn, speakers shall must respect the privilege extended by the School Board by not disrupting the orderly conduct of the Board Meeting and are requested to model the attributes of high-quality civic discourse. Speakers must use using commonly

accepted rules of courtesy, respect, decorum, dignity, and good taste. The use of -obscenity, vulgarity, or patently offensive language shall will be ruled out of order, as will words or statements which, from their usual construction and common ——acceptance, incite violence or breach of the peace. Speakers who repeatedly fail to comply with these standards of civic discourse may be required to provide their comments in writing in lieu of the opportunity to present in person or via videoconference.

Commented [MS13]: Revised to establish a process for speakers who repeatedly do not exhibit decorum norms.

School Board Mmembers listen to public comment—and public hearing presentations, but do not comment, deliberate or take action on them. Speakers may follow up with individual Board Members on the topic of their comments at a later date.

Commented [MS14]: Moved up to improve readability.

E. Time Limitations

Speakers are typically allocated three minutes each to deliver their remarks. In cases where an interpreter is needed, speakers receive an additional 3 minutes to support the translation.

However, in all instances, the allocation of time for speakers is at the Cehair's discretion. The Cehair, with the assistance of the Clerk of the Board, shall monitor and enforce the time limitation and in doing so may cut off speakers who have not concluded their remarks in a timely manner. A speaker who does not need the full time allotted may not yield unused time to another speaker.

All persons who have signed up to speak with the Clerk of the School Board prior to the start of the meeting are permitted to speak during the School Board meeting in the regular period designated for Communications and Addresses to the Board, subject to the limitations in Part B of this regulation.

Commented [MS15]: Moved up and revised.

F. Inappropriate Topics

Public comment time at regular Board Meetings and public hearings are intended to allow the community to address the School Board regarding topics or subjects which relate to the operation of the school division and are of public concern to the school community.— For these reasons, and to ensure the privacy of individuals, Therefore, during the period reserved for public participation at meetings, the School Board does not allow public comments or complaints regarding individual students, individual student disciplinary matters that are the subject of due process—— proceedings, matters involving pending employee grievance proceedings or administrative hearings, or matters involving pending litigation. After litigation, public comments on the situation may be shared, however student information should still be confidential. These prohibitions are intended to protect student and staff privacy, however they do not prevent Parents may reference parents from referencing-parents may reference their own ACPS student but they may not reference any students that is are not under their own legal care.

Commented [MS16]: Revised to make it clear that people may speak about topics that have been resolved while still protecting privacy and ensuring that parents may speak about their own children.

Contact Information

Clerk of the Board

Alexandria City School Board

231	1340	1340 Braddock Place, Suite 610					
232	Alexa	Alexandria, Virginia 22314					
233		boardclerk@acps.k12.va.us					
234							
235	ACPS	School Board					
236		@acps.k12.va.us					
237	<u>oouru</u>	(ш, шсрэ.К12. үш. шэ					
238	Meeting Typ	106					
239			n several types of meetings.				
	The Board Co	maucis its work unrougi	i several types of meetings.				
240	M4:1-		1				
241		ere public comment it to					
242			feetings where the Board deliberates and makes decisions on				
243		erations of ACPS.					
244	Publi	<u>c Hearings – Meetings</u>	where the Board takes public comment on specific topics.				
245							
246	Meetings ope	n to the public where p	ublic comment is not taken:				
247	Work	Sessions – Meetings	where the Board deliberates but does not make decisions on				
248		the operations of ACPS.					
249			Meetings of an appointed subset of Board members for the				
250	nurno	ses of developing recor	nmendations for Board deliberation.				
251	purpo	ses of actorphic feet.	The state of the s				
252	Meetings not	open to the public:					
253			re the Board participates in professional learning and				
254			te the board participates in professional learning and				
	collaboration activities.						
255	• Close	<u>u wieetings – wieetings</u>	where the Board deliberates and makes decisions on matters				
256		that are protected under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act such as personnel action					
257	and co	ontract related matters.					
258							
259	Established:	September 24, 2009					
260	Revised:	December 4, 2014					
261	Revised:	April 6, 2017					
262	Revised:	March 22, 2018					
263	Revised:	May 9, 2019					
264	Revised:	October 21, 2021					
265							
266	Legal Refs.:	Code of Virginia, 195	0, as amended, §§ 22.1-78, 22.1-253.13:7.				
267	C	2016 Op. Va. Att'y Gen. 15-020.					
268			y Unified Sch. District, 936 F. Supp. 719 (C.D. Cal. 1996).				
269			ified School District, 973 F. Supp. 951 (S.D. Cal. 1997).				
270			of the City of Virginia Beach, 139 F. Supp. 2d. 738, 743				
271		(E.D. Va. 2001).	of the Chy of the Shun Deuch, 1371. Supp. 20. 130, 143				
271		(L.D. va. 2001).					
272	Cross Refs.:	BDDE	Rules of Order				
	CIUSS KEIS.:						
274		BDDH	Public Participation at School Board Meetings				
275		KK	School Visitor				
276		KL	Public Complaints				

Commented [17]: update language re: board discussion

277