

Administrative Procedures for Board of Education Meetings

(Attachment for Policy No. 005)

Purpose:

The Board reaffirms the right of the public to be present at all public regularly scheduled and special meetings of the Board. The Board also reaffirms the right of the public to have a reasonable opportunity to comment on matters of concern, matters being considered for official action of the Board, and matters that are or may come before the Board.

The Board encourages the public to attend Board meetings and to participate in public comment opportunities, and believes the public's involvement in education issues is critical to the academic success of the District's students.

Procedures:

Written Comment

The public may submit comments to the Board in writing by emailing the Board at schoolboard@philasd.org. The public may submit comments to the Board in writing and deliver them to the Board Office located at 440 N. Broad Street, Suite 101, Philadelphia, PA 19130.

Comments should include the subject line "Board Comments," the name of the individual submitting the comments, and the individual's home address.

All written testimony must be received 24 hours in advance of the action meeting or committee meeting at which it will be discussed. The Board will accept unlimited written testimony that has been timely-submitted and will include it in full in the record of the meeting and read a summary of the testimony during the meeting.

Speaker Comment and Registration

Action or Committee Meetings

The public may share spoken comments with the Board by registering to address the Board at any regularly scheduled Action Meetings and Committee Meetings. The procedures for addressing the Board are as follows:

1. Individuals must register by submitting the speaker request form (for the meeting at which they wish to address the board) available on the [Board's website](#) or by calling 215-400-5959 to register with Board staff.
2. Speaker registration will open at 5:00 p.m. on the Monday (or the first business day) of the week in which the meeting will be held.

3. Individuals must register no later than 5:00 p.m. on the business day immediately preceding the meeting at which they would like to speak.
4. Individuals will be registered on a first come first served basis, subject to the following exceptions, with a limit of thirty (30) speakers per meeting. Each speaker will be given two (2) minutes to address the Board.
5. In order to prioritize new voices, speakers who did not speak at the immediately prior public action meeting will be given the opportunity to address the Board before speakers who spoke at the Board's last public action meeting. Accordingly, speakers who spoke at the prior meeting will speak after those who did not.
6. No individual may register to speak more than once during a meeting.
7. All speakers are asked to remember that Board meetings are opportunities to engage in civil discourse. Individuals may be ruled out of order if:
 - a. They make any disparaging remarks of a personal nature regarding any individual, whether or not that person is present; in which case they will be directed to address their comments to the appropriate District administrator; or
 - b. Use any vulgar, profane, or physically threatening language.
8. The presiding officer may:
 - a. Interrupt or terminate a participant's statement when the statement is too lengthy, personally directed, abusive, obscene, or irrelevant.
 - b. Request any individual to leave the physical meeting or disconnect electronic access when that person does not observe reasonable decorum.
 - c. Call a recess or adjourn to another time when the lack of public decorum interferes with the orderly conduct of the meeting.
 - d. Suspend or alter any of the procedures related to addressing the Board.

Student Speakers

Current students of Philadelphia District or charter-operated schools in Philadelphia may share spoken comments with the Board by registering to address the Board at any regularly scheduled Action Meetings and Committee Meetings. The procedures for addressing the board are as follows:

1. Students must register by submitting the student speaker request form (for the meeting at which they wish to address the Board) available on the [Board's website](#) or by calling 215-400-5959 to register with Board staff.
2. Student registration will open at 5:00 p.m. on the Monday (or the first business day) of the week in which the meeting will be held.
3. Students must register no later than 5:00 p.m. on the business day immediately preceding the meeting at which they would like to speak.
4. Students will be registered on a first come first served basis, with a limit of fifteen (15) speakers per meeting. Each speaker will be given three (3) minutes to address the Board.

5. In order to prioritize new voices, student speakers who did not speak at the immediately prior public action meeting will be given the opportunity to address the Board before speakers who spoke at the Board's last public action meeting. Accordingly, speakers who spoke at the prior meeting will speak after those who did not.
6. No individual may register to speak more than once during a meeting.
7. All student speakers are asked to remember that Board meetings are opportunities to engage in civil discourse. Individuals may be ruled out of order if:
 - a. They make any disparaging remarks of a personal nature regarding any individual, whether or not that person is present; in which case they will be directed to address their comments to the appropriate District administrator; or
 - b. Use any vulgar, profane, or physically threatening language.
8. The presiding officer may:
 - a. Interrupt or terminate a participant's statement when the statement is too lengthy, personally directed, abusive, obscene, or irrelevant.
 - b. Request any individual to leave the physical meeting or disconnect electronic access when that person does not observe reasonable decorum.
 - c. Call a recess or adjourn to another time when the lack of public decorum interferes with the orderly conduct of the meeting.
 - d. Suspend or alter any of the procedures related to addressing the Board.

Special Meetings & Board Public Hearings

At Special Meetings and Board Public Hearings¹, the Board of Education reserves the right to modify the speaker procedures and will make announcements about the speakers procedures for these meetings at the time of the meeting's publication.

Audience Protocols

To ensure that all individuals attending public meetings of the Board have the opportunity to observe the meeting and hear those individuals who have registered to address the Board, all members of the public attending all meetings shall be expected to:

1. Turn off or silence all cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices.
2. Limit the displaying of signs, posters, or placards inside the room where the meeting is being held to appropriate locations.
3. Know that it is unlawful to disrupt public meetings and that individuals who do so may be prosecuted. [3]
4. Understand that the presiding officer may instruct that an individual be removed if s/he determines that they are disrupting the meeting. Electronic recording devices and cameras, in addition to those used as official recording devices, shall be permitted at public meetings under guidelines established by the Board.

¹ Public Hearings are meetings held pursuant to the requirement set forth in [section 12-1310](#) of the Philadelphia Home Rule Charter

Public Notice

1. Notice of regular meetings shall be given by publication and posting of a schedule showing the date, place and time of all regular meetings for the calendar year at least three (3) days prior to the time of the first regular meeting.
2. Notice of all special meetings shall be given by publication and posting of notice at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the time of the meeting, except that such notice shall be waived when a special meeting is called to deal with an actual emergency involving a clear and present danger to life or property.
3. Notice of all rescheduled meetings shall be given by publication and posting of notice at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the time of the meeting.
4. Notice of all recessed or reconvened meetings shall be given by posting a notice of the place, date and time of meeting.
5. Notice of all public meetings shall be given to any newspaper circulating in Philadelphia County and a radio or television station which so requests.
6. Notice of all public meetings shall be given to any individual who so requests and provides a stamped, addressed envelope for such notification.