

BOARD-STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

The Albemarle County School Board supports the concept of two-way communication between the School Board and employees of the School Board. The Superintendent is the official representative of the School Board as its Chief Administrative Officer in its relations and communications with its employees. All reports and recommendations to the School Board from any officer or employee under the direction and supervision of the Superintendent shall be made through the office of the Superintendent except when otherwise specifically directed by the School Board. All School Board directives requiring or authorizing an action by an officer or employee or requiring any report shall be directed to the Superintendent.

In all interactions with staff and between and among members, the School Board shall follow its established protocols.

Adopted: July 1, 1993
Amended: March 24, 1997; December 11, 2003, August 16, 2004; March 9, 2006

Legal Ref.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, Section 22.1-253.13:7.C.1

**ALBEMARLE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD
AGREEMENT OF PROTOCOL**

1. The Chairman/designee of the School Board speaks for the Board.
2. The Superintendent speaks for the school division on operational matters.
3. The Superintendent/designee will communicate in a timely fashion with School Board members on matters that are legal, controversial, or involve public safety.
4. Supportive information about agenda items must be available to School Board members at least five calendar days before School Board meetings.
5. School Board members may contact individual staff members for general information. Such information will be distributed to all members of the School Board. Should the information request require significant time or generation of new information on the part of the staff, approval of the Superintendent and/or the School Board shall be required.
6. At School Board meetings, members may make informational requests requiring more than 30 minutes of time to the administrative staff with consensus of the School Board.

School Board Guidelines

Adoption of Code of Conduct

Each January the School Board will review, approve, sign, and post a Code of Conduct that identifies appropriate behaviors for individuals serving on the School Board.

Meeting Types

The School Board will transact all public business at official School Board meetings conducted in accordance with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act. All meetings of the School Board are open to the public except as provided by law.

School Board meeting dates, times and locations for the calendar year are set during the School Board's organizational meeting held the first meeting in January. The School Board holds at least two meetings a month, a business meeting and a work session, except as otherwise approved at the organizational meeting. Additional meetings may be scheduled for joint meetings with the Board of Supervisors and budget work sessions.

Agenda Preparation Process

The following procedures have been developed to ensure that Board agendas will be completed and published to School Board members in a timely manner and to ensure all agenda items will have sufficient review by the Superintendent. The deadline for submitting agenda items is ten calendar days before the School Board meeting. The Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Clerk, Executive Cabinet members, and the Superintendent will meet in pre-agenda meetings to discuss items that will appear on the School Board agenda. In general:

1. Items requested to be placed on the agenda will be submitted to the Superintendent/designee, appropriate Assistant Superintendent or Executive Cabinet member and/or the Chairman (or delegated to the Clerk) to be discussed for short- and long-range planning.
2. Guidelines for developing the agenda:
 - A. All action items should be scheduled on the School Board's business meeting agenda, however, there may be exceptions if the action required is deemed time sensitive by the Chair in consultation with the Superintendent. The sequence of agenda items will be determined by the Chairman of the School Board in consultation with the Vice-Chairman and Superintendent.
 - B. If at all possible, items should be presented to the School Board for information prior to being placed on the agenda for approval. If the item is deemed time-sensitive by the Chairman then exceptions will be made.
 - C. Closed Meetings, whenever possible, will be scheduled immediately prior to the start of the School Board meeting.

3. School Board members may ask that an item be placed on the agenda at any School Board meeting. Inclusion of the item requires School Board consensus.
4. Staff will adhere to the timeline provided by the Clerk of the School Board when submitting items for inclusion on the agenda. Items not submitted by the due date will be postponed to a future meeting unless the item is a time-sensitive issue and the Chair and Superintendent have approved adding the item to the agenda.

Public Participation

The public is encouraged to address the School Board under Public Comment.

Individuals and organizations wishing to speak during Public Comment are encouraged to sign in with the Clerk. During the time set aside for public comment on the agenda, the Chairman will call forth individuals who signed up. Public testimony guidelines are as follows:

1. Thirty minutes before the start of the meeting there will be a sign-up sheet for members of the public to sign up if they wish to speak before the School Board. After all individuals who signed up for Public Comment have spoken, the Chairman may ask if there are additional individuals who would like to speak.
2. Speakers should adhere to the following protocol:
 - A. Sign in with the Clerk before the meeting.
 - B. At the speakers' podium, please state name and address.
 - C. Address comments to the School Board as a whole.
 - D. Give written statements and other supporting material to the Clerk. Please note that written statements are made a part of the permanent records of the School Board. In addition, the speaker is unable to complete the presentation in the time allotted, a copy of supporting materials will be provided to School Board members.
3. Three minutes will be allowed for each presenter to speak. A color-coded light/card system will be used to time presentations. However, the Chairman may, with the consensus of the School Board, reduce the time allocated for all individuals to speak.

The yellow light/card means the speaker is 2 minutes into the presentation, and the red light/card means the speaker is at the three-minute limit of the presentation and must wrap up.

4. If a speaker represents a group, he/she may want to have others in agreement stand while he/she speaks, rather than having all speak on the same issue.

5. In order to maintain respect for all points of view, the School Board requests no clapping, booing or any other form of support or nonsupport be used.
6. When multiple comments on the same topic have been presented, the Chair may request additional comments on the topic be limited to those who have new information to present.
7. Debate and dialogue with the School Board is not allowed during public comment.
8. Use of the projection system is reserved for staff scheduled agenda item presentations only.

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.

When an individual and/or community organization would like to be formally scheduled on the School Board agenda, the individual and/or organization must submit the request in writing to the Superintendent or Chairman. The Superintendent and Chairman will determine if the request should be granted and determine placement on an agenda. The individual and/or community organization will be notified of the decision.

Closed Meeting Packets for Student Behavior Management Cases

The School Board Discipline Committee holds meetings on the fourth Monday of each month or on other dates as advertised. Meetings of the discipline committee typically begin at 5:30 p.m. Discipline meeting materials are provided to School Board Discipline Committee members on the Friday before the Monday meeting or at least three calendar days in advance of the meeting. The materials provided in the packet include:

- Superintendent's Memo to the School Board
- Current School Records for the Student
- Prior School Records
- Incident information for which the student was referred to the School Board
- Related correspondence

Students and/or individuals representing a student must submit any information they wish the School Board to review by the Board Packet publishing date. Any material received after the Board Packet is published will not be accepted.

Superintendent's Letter

Superintendent's Letter is distributed to the School Board on the Thursday following the School Board meeting. This communication contains documents, emails from parents and/or community members, articles of interest from online and print magazines, a calendar of upcoming events, and other pieces of information that the Superintendent and Executive Cabinet members would like to share with the School Board.

Letters Received by the Clerk's Office or Copied to the Albemarle County School Board Are Managed Through the Following Process:

1. The School Board Clerk will notify and provide a copy of the letter to the Chairman/Superintendent.
2. The Chairman reviews the letter to determine if the School Board or staff should respond.
3. If the School Board should respond to the letter, the Chairman or designee will respond and provide a copy to School Board members.
4. If staff should respond to the letter, the Chairman will notify the author of the letter that the issue has been delegated to the Superintendent. The individual's letter and staff's response will be provided to School Board members.
5. If a letter is addressed to the Superintendent or to a staff member and the School Board is copied, the School Board will receive a copy of the letter and the response from staff.
6. If an individual School Board member receives a letter that he/she determines a staff response is needed, then the School Board member is requested to provide a copy of the letter to the Clerk. Both the letter and a copy of the response will be provided to School Board members.

Handling of Electronic Mail

Protocol for responding to emails sent directly to the entire School Board

1. Individual School Board members, the Clerk and the Superintendent are recipients of emails sent to schoolboard@k12albemarle.org.
2. The Chair will respond to all emails to the School Board and copy the School Board on any response. The Chair's response does not preclude an individual School Board member from responding to the email.
3. For multiple emails regarding the same topic, the Chairman may determine a single prepared response is appropriate.
4. Each School Board member is responsible for archiving his/her applicable inbound and outbound email for FOIA compliance.

Protocol for responding to emails sent directly to individual School Board Members.

1. An individual School Board Member may reply to emails expressing his/her individual opinions so long as it is clear that the member is not speaking on behalf of the entire School Board.
2. Each School Board Member is responsible for archiving their applicable inbound and outbound email for FOIA compliance. To ensure FOIA compliance, School Board members are encouraged to copy the School Board Clerk on his/her email replies to these communications.

School Board General Protocols

1. The Chairman/designee of the School Board speaks for the Board. This does not preclude an individual School Board member from expressing an “individual opinion”.
2. The Superintendent/designee represents and speaks for the school division on operational matters.
3. The Superintendent/designee will communicate in a timely fashion with School Board members on matters that are legal, controversial, or involve public safety.
4. Supportive information about agenda items must be available to School Board members at least five calendar days before School Board meetings.
5. School Board members may contact individual staff members for general information. Such information will be distributed to all members of the School Board. Should the information request require significant time or generation of new information on the part of the staff, approval of the Superintendent and/or School Board shall be required.
6. At School Board meetings, members may make informational requests requiring more than 30 minutes of time to the administrative staff with consensus of the School Board.

Allocating Staff Time to Address School Board Member Requests for Information

Responses to requests for information requiring 30 minutes or less of staff time for preparation (information which is already assembled and available) should be handled in a timely fashion by the office receiving the request. Any request for information that requires more than 30 minutes of staff time to prepare must have approval of the Superintendent or School Board consensus for the information to be prepared.

Approved: August 1995

Revised: February 1998, February 1999, February 2000; June 19, 2000; April 14, 2005; March 9, 2006

