PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS

Community Participation

Members of the community, including students enrolled in the division, are invited and encouraged to attend open meetings of the **Charlottesville City** School Board to observe its deliberations.

The School Board may provide an opportunity for public comment at open meetings. During this time, a~~A~~ny member of the community may address, the School Board on matters within the authority and responsibility of ~~related to~~ the ~~**[BLANK]** public schools~~Board. Public comments are subject to reasonable rules relating to time, place, and manner of speaking as established by the Board to ensure an orderly meeting and fair process for all participants. ~~at any regular meeting as follows:~~

~~Persons wishing to address the School Board are requested~~may be (change to will) required ~~to register in advance in accordance with division procedures to contact the superintendent, the School Board chair, or their designee for placement on the agenda.¶~~

[MAY INSERT DIVISION PROCEDURES FOR REGISTRATION HERE].~~_____~~.

~~1. The Clerk or Deputy Clerk will place a sign-up sheet at the podium prior to each regular meeting of the School Board.~~
~~2. Any member of the public wishing to speak will sign in on the sheet.~~
~~3. At the specified time on the agenda for "Comments from the Community", the Board Chairperson will call each person to the podium for comments.~~
~~4. The Chairperson will describe the procedure and the amount of time each member will have for comments.~~
~~5. Generally, each community member will have three (3) minutes for comments.~~
~~6. If the community member is still speaking at the end of the allotted time, the Chairperson will explain that the time is over and that the comment period will end.~~

Public Comment Sessions & Registration

- **Regular Meetings:** Two public comment sessions are offered during regular meetings:
  - **First Public Comment Session (Early in Meeting):** Offered early in the meeting for community participation. ~~Virtual comments are accepted exclusively during this first session.~~
    - **In-Person Attendees:** A sign-up sheet will be available at the podium prior to the meeting, and individuals may also register through the division's online sign-up portal. Individuals wishing to speak during public comment must provide their full name, topic, and contact information for follow-up, as applicable, prior to the meeting being called to order. ~~A~~

~~sign-up sheet is placed at the podium prior to the meeting Individuals wishing to speak must legibly record their full name and topic on the sign-up sheet before the meeting is called to order. Once the sign-up sheet is removed prior to the meeting start, no additional sign-ups or comments will be accepted for this session; unrecorded in-person speakers must wait for the second session.~~

- **Virtual Attendees:** Members of the public wishing to address the Board via Zoom ~~must~~ may register prior to the start of the meeting using the designated sign-up link—which includes the public comment sign-up feature—provided in the official meeting notice, on the division website, and on the school division's calendar (when remote participation is supported by meeting location and setup). ~~Unregistered virtual attendees will not be permitted to speak.~~

- **Second Public Comment Session (End of Meeting):** The second public comment session will be offered as the final agenda item for in-person and virtual participants who did not speak during the first public comment session or who wish to provide additional public comment. ~~Offered as the final agenda item for in-person and virtual participants who did not speak during the first session. Virtual comments are not permitted during the second session. In-person speakers must add their name to the second-session sign-up sheet at the podium prior to the last item for discussion.~~
- **Work Sessions:** Only one public comment session may be offered during work sessions. In-person and virtual attendees must follow the exact same registration and sign-in procedures outlined in the first public comment session above. Once the in-person sign-up sheet is removed and the Zoom registration closes prior to the start of the work session, no further comments will be accepted.

Speaking Time and Procedures

- **Individual Time Limit:** Each speaker is allotted up to three (3) minutes to address the Board. If there are greater than 20 public comment speakers, the time allotted to speak may be reduced to 2 minutes, this includes in-person and virtual participants. The reduction of time is at the discretion of the school board chair.
- **Speaker Identification:** Speakers must begin their remarks by clearly stating their full name and affiliation to Charlottesville City Schools (parent/family member, community member, etc). ~~locality place of residence (or business location if speaking on behalf of a business).~~
- **Time Monitoring:** The Chairperson or designated timekeeper will signal when thirty (30) seconds remain. At the expiration of the three-minute limit, the Chairperson will

announce that time has elapsed, and the speaker must conclude their remarks and yield the floor.

- **Sharing & Yielding Time:** Time is non-transferable. Speakers may not yield unused time to other individuals to extend another person's turn. The individual listed on the sign-up sheet must begin speaking, though others may join them at the podium to share their allotted time.
- **Order of Speakers:** No one is permitted to make a second presentation until everyone who wishes to speak has had an opportunity to make an initial presentation.

Content Boundaries and Decorum

- **Addressing the Board:** All remarks must be addressed directly to the School Board as a whole—not to individual staff members, the audience, or the media.
- **Scope of Remarks:** Comments must pertain directly to matters within the jurisdiction of the School Board or items published on the evening's meeting agenda.
- **Civil Decorum:** Speakers must maintain a respectful demeanor. Interruptions, shouting, obscenities, profanity, hate speech, defamatory statements, personal attacks directed at Board members, staff, or attendees, threats, campaigning for elected office, promoting private businesses, or other disruptive behaviors are strictly prohibited.
- **Privacy & Confidentiality:** In compliance with federal privacy laws (FERPA) and state personnel regulations, public comment may not address specific confidential personnel matters, employee grievances, or identifiable student disciplinary records.
- **Order and Enforcement:** The Chair maintains order and may rule out of order, suspend, or terminate any presentation that violates these rules or disrupts the meeting. Uncooperative speakers may be directed to exit the meeting room.

Board Engagement and Written Submissions

- **Listening Session:** Public comment is designed for the Board to hear from the community. Board members and the Superintendent will listen attentively but will not engage in dialogue, debate, or Q&A during this period. ~~If desired, the Chair may grant a Board member permission to ask a clarifying question at the conclusion of a speaker's remarks~~.
- **Handouts & Written Submissions:** Speakers wishing to distribute physical materials must provide eight (8) hard copies to the Clerk prior to speaking. Speakers may also submit written comments or supporting documents to the Clerk for inclusion in the official meeting record, or submit them electronically prior to the meeting. Live electronic presentations cannot be accommodated during public comment.

~~Persons wishing to address the School Board are requested to contact the superintendent, the School Board chair, or their designee for placement on the agenda.¶~~

The ~~c~~chair is responsible for the orderly conduct of the meeting and will enforce the Board's rules governing the time, place, and manner of public comment. ~~and rules on such matters as the appropriateness of the subject being presented and length of time for such presentation.~~ Upon recognition by the ~~c~~chair, the speaker ~~shall~~ will address the School Board as a body~~chair and if, at the conclusion of the speaker's remarks, any member of the School Board desires further information, the member addresses the speaker only with the permission of the chair~~.

~~Public comments are an opportunity to provide input to the Board on division matters and not intended to be a dialogue between the speaker and Board Members. The chair may permit Board Members to ask questions of a speaker.~~

At any time, the chair may rule a speaker out of order or terminate a presentation that violates the Board's adopted rules or otherwise materially disrupts the school board meeting.~~No one is allowed to make additional presentations until everyone who wishes to speak has an opportunity to make an initial presentation.~~

Nothing in this policy requires the School Board to respond to or take action on comments made by the community during the meeting.
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Student Participation

Students enrolled in a public elementary or secondary school in the division ~~are allowed~~may ~~to~~ address the School Board during any public comment or citizen participation portion of a School Board meeting. Such students must follow the same sign-up procedures and rules and restrictions relating to time, place, and manner of speaking that are adopted by the School Board and applicable to all public participants.

The School Board may require a student to provide identification in the form of a current student identification card or other school document, such as a report card or a personal school email address, before allowing the student to provide oral comments, in accordance with Virginia law.

Closed Meetings.

The Virginia Freedom of Information Act permits meetings to be closed to the public to discuss particular matters as designated by law. The Board may invite persons to attend closed meetings to provide information that is pertinent to the matter to be discussed.

Revised: December 20, 2007
Reviewed: June 25, 2013
Revised: June 26, 2014

Revised: June 27, 2016
Revised: June 17, 2021
Revised: August 1, 2024
Revised:

Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 2.2-3700 et seq., 22.1-78, 22.1-79(14), 22.1-253.13:7.