



School Board Guidelines for Public Comment During School Board Meetings and Hearings

The Arlington School Board welcomes public comment during most regular meetings and at public hearings. Generally, School Board members do not respond to public comment during a meeting or hearing.

Time – Each speaker may speak for up to three minutes. A timer is employed and speakers should conclude their remarks when the buzzer sounds. The Board generally allows up to 30 minutes for Citizen Comment on Non-Agenda Items at the beginning of meetings. If there are a large number of speakers on a particular topic, the Board may limit the total time for comment and/or may reduce the time allotted for each speaker.

Topics – Speakers may address an item on a Board Meeting agenda when that item is heard, or may address an item not on the agenda during Citizen Comment on Non-Agenda Items. All comments should address a matter related to Arlington Public Schools. The School Board will not hear public comment that involves an individual student-related matter, the disclosure of which would violate applicable confidentiality requirements.

Decorum – The School Board expects that each speaker will be courteous, modeling for our students how one can respectfully disagree with others' views. Speakers will address their comments to the entire School Board and not to one individual Board member, nor to the Superintendent, a staff member, or the audience. Speakers are encouraged not to engage in personal attacks. Speakers will present their comments from the podium.

Signing up to Speak – Electronic speaker forms may be submitted after the meeting agenda has been posted publicly, and up until 4:00 p.m. the last business day before the meeting. Speaker forms can be found at <https://www.apsva.us/school-board-meetings/sign-up-to-speak/>

- Speakers may also sign up in person at School Board meetings or Public Hearings by submitting a speaker slip to the Clerk *before* the agenda item is called.
- Speakers are called in the order in which they sign up. Speakers may not speak more than once on a specific topic.
- Speakers who wish to comment on more than one topic must submit a separate request for each item.
- Any person who would like an interpreter to assist them in providing public comment and any person with a disability who needs accommodation to provide public comment should contact the School Board office at 703-228-6015 at least three business days in advance of a meeting to request assistance.

Written Comments – If a speaker would like to present written comments to the School Board, provide one copy may be provided to the School Board clerk and will be shared with Board members electronically.

School Board members are also available to meet with members of the public during “Open Office Hours,” which are held weekly when school is in session, or by appointment. In addition, the Board reviews letters and emails received.