

Guidelines for Public Participation at Meetings of the Chicago Board of Education

The following Guidelines for Public Participation are issued by the President of the Board of Education of the City of Chicago (“Board President” and “Board”) in accordance with Board Rule 2-4.1. These Guidelines replace the Interim Guidelines that were effective July 26, 2021.

Speaker Sign Up and Equity of Voice

Members of the public, employees of the District, Local School Council members and members of other groups wishing to speak must register in advance of the day of the meeting or by such other time noted in the meeting agenda published by the Board. Unless otherwise noted in the notice for the Board meeting, Advance Speaker Registration will open the Monday preceding the Board meeting at 10:30 a.m. and close Tuesday at 5:00 p.m., or until all slots are filled. Advance registration during this period is available by the following methods:

- Online: www.cpsboe.org (recommended)
- Phone: (773) 553-1600

To ensure equity of access to address the Board, an individual may not speak at two (2) consecutive Board meetings. In the event an individual registers to speak at a consecutive Board meeting, the individual will not be called to address the Board. Speakers called by the Board Secretary may not cede their time to another person. We thank you for your cooperation in helping to ensure all voices are heard at Board meetings. This requirement does not apply to Public Hearing conducted by the Board.

Number of Speakers

The Board will allocate no more than 20 speaking slots to members of the general public to speak to the Board. Speakers who registered via the Advance Registration process will have the option to attend in person at the location of the Board meeting or via electronic/telephonic means. Registered speakers will receive instructions for Board meeting participation. Each speaker will be allocated up to two (2) minutes to speak.

Observing the Board Meeting

Members of the public, employees of the District, Local School Council members and members of other groups may view the Board meeting via live stream by selecting “Watch live” on the Board’s website at www.cpsboe.org, or by registering in advance to observe in person to assure their seat. Advance registration will open the Monday preceding the Board meeting at 10:30 a.m. and close Tuesday at 5:00 p.m., or until all advance slots are filled. Advanced registration is available online at www.cpsboe.org, by calling 773-553-1600, or in person at 1 North Dearborn, Suite 950.

There are 100 observer slots available for advance registration. If advance observer registration has filled or has closed, same-day, in-person observer registration is also available. Same-day, in-person registration begins at 10:15 a.m. the day of the Board meeting in the lobby at 42 W. Madison (unless otherwise indicated). Please be aware that same-day, in-person observer registration is taken on a first come first served basis, and registrations will be taken as open seats are available.

Public Officials

City, State and Federal public officials may request speaker time by contacting the Department of Intergovernmental Affairs at 773-553-2655. The Board Secretary at the discretion of the President may call City, State and Federal officials to speak at any time as appropriate.

Interpreters

An interpreter will be provided for those speakers who wish to make their remarks in Spanish. Speakers who wish to make their remarks in a language other than English or Spanish must notify the Board Office at least two (2) business days prior to the Board meeting to request an interpreter.

Accommodations

Individuals with a physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity who require an accommodation, auxiliary aid and/or other services to participate in a Board meeting must notify the Board Office at (773) 553-1600 at least two (2) business days prior to the meeting to request the accommodation, auxiliary aid and/or other service. Sign language interpretation is available upon request without prior notice.

Order of Speakers

The Board Secretary may group speakers according to a particular topic and may call certain speakers out of numerical order so that all comments regarding a particular topic may be heard together. Speakers called by the Board Secretary may not cede their time to another person. We thank you for your cooperation in helping to ensure all voices are heard at Board meetings.

Speaker Remarks and Submissions

When called by the Board Secretary, speakers will have two (2) minutes to present their remarks and materials to the Board. Speakers must end their presentation upon the request of the Board Secretary when their time is up to allow the next speaker to begin. All public presentations must be limited to issues of concern before the Board and/or related to the Chicago Public Schools. Comments of a personal nature directed towards individual Board members, employees of the Board or any other individual are not permitted. It is the meeting chair's prerogative to limit the discussion of any speaker to allow for broad and diverse public participation.

Written Comments

Registered speakers and any member of the general public may submit written comments by completing the Written Comments Form on the Board's website at www.cpsboe.org or US Mail to 1 N. Dearborn, Suite 950, Chicago IL 60602. Unless otherwise noted in the public notice for the Board meeting, written comments must be submitted between the posting of the Board meeting agenda and 5 p.m. the day after the Board meeting for consideration by Board members and inclusion in the meeting proceedings.

Behavior

The Board values and welcomes courteous, respectful, and civil behavior from all speakers and all persons attending a Board meeting. The Board expects speakers to limit statements to those relating to the operations of the Board or CPS and refrain from comments of a personal nature, unrelated to the operations of the Board and CPS, directed towards individual Board members, employees of the Board or any other individual. It is the meeting chair's prerogative to limit the discussion of any speaker to allow for broad and diverse public participation. Profane language, unsolicited comments, and disruptive behavior are prohibited. Individuals who are disruptive may be given a warning and may also be removed from the meeting, if necessary. If any individual is removed from a meeting as a result of disruptive behavior, then the individual may forfeit their right of reentry to future Board meetings.

Restrictions

Current or prospective vendors wishing to present products or services for purchase should not use the public participation portion of a Board meeting for this purpose. Hand-held posters and placards are not allowed in the Board Room.

Recordings

The Board records the public participation portion of each Board meeting. The Board reserves the right to edit any and all portions of the recording from each monthly meeting. These recordings are aired on local cable channels for the convenience of the public. Members of the public can copy any portion of the public participation or business portion of the meeting from the televised broadcast or from www.cpsboe.org.

Media

An area of the Board Room will be designated for members of the media who wish to cover the Board meeting. This number will be limited in order to accommodate as many public participants as possible. Guidelines and requirements for media access to Board meetings are issued by the Office of Communications.