

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

The following Guidelines are issued by the Board President in accordance with Board Rule 2-4.1 effective August 2013 and have been updated as of September 26, 2018.

The Chicago Board of Education allocates no more than 60 speaking slots for up to two hours of public participation during each Board meeting. The following Guidelines shall govern public participation at a Board meeting, by speakers, observers, public officials and the media and are subject to change at the Board President's discretion.

Speaker Sign Up

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.

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 Speaker Registration is available online at www.cpsboe.org, by calling 773-553-1600, or in person at 1 North Dearborn, Suite 950.

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.

Observer Sign Up

Members of the public, employees of the district, Local School Council members and members of other groups wishing to observe a Board of Education Meeting may advance register 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 Observer Registration is recommended to assure your seat. 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 or an observer seat by contacting the Board Secretary.

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 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. The Board Secretary at the discretion of the President may call City, State and Federal officials to speak at any time as appropriate. In the event a registered speaker addressed the Board at the previous 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.

Speaker Groups

The Board Secretary may place speakers in groups who are addressing a single issue to permit sufficient time for the Board to hear from both sides of the same issue. Groups of individuals may appear in support or opposition to a particular topic; however a maximum of two representatives will be called to speak from those who have signed up on the topic. Speaker support groups are limited to 15 persons in the microphone area. An individual may not appear in the microphone area more than once during a meeting as either a speaker or as part of a speaker support group.

Speaker Remarks and Submissions

When called by the Board Secretary, a speaker shall proceed promptly to the microphone area where s/he will have two minutes to present their remarks and materials to the Board. Speakers shall 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. Speakers may submit materials, written testimony, pictures, posters etc., to the Board Secretary for the Board members consideration.

Behavior

Courteous, respectful and civil behavior is expected from all speakers and all persons attending a Board meeting. Unsolicited comments and disruptive behavior are prohibited. Individuals who are disruptive may be given a warning and also, may, if necessary, be removed from the meeting. 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 Chicago Board of Education meetings.

Written Testimony

Any person who is unable, for any reason, to speak at a Board meeting may submit written testimony to the Board Secretary for the Board members. Written testimony must be submitted by the close of the Board meeting for consideration by Board members and inclusion in the meeting proceedings.

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. Guidelines and requirements for media access to Board meetings are issued by the Office of Communications.

Effective Date: August 28, 2013

(Updated September 26, 2018)