

**Board Operating Guidelines for
Board of Education Meetings**
(Attachment for Policy No. 006)

Purpose

The purpose of the Board Operating Guidelines is to effectuate Policy 006: Meetings, which reaffirms the right of the public to be present at all public regularly scheduled and special meetings of the Board of Education (“Board”) and the Board’s commitment to welcoming and encouraging parents and guardians to be partners in their child’s school community. The Board also reaffirms the right of the public to have a reasonable opportunity to comment on matters of concern, matters being considered for official action of the Board, and matters that are or may come before the Board.

Committee Procedures

The Board President shall appoint Committee Members at the Board’s organization meeting or when committees are revised, where they shall serve until the next organization meeting of the Board.

The members of each Board committee shall consist of at least four (4) Board Members, including a Chairperson or two (2) co-Chairpersons appointed by the Board President. While appointing members to each committee, the Board President must ensure at least one (1) current committee member is re-appointed to that committee, unless no current committee members are seated on the Board.

Current standing Board committees include:

- I. Policy Committee
 - Meets at least twice during the year in April and November
 - Discusses and recommends the development and review of all Board policies
- II. Goals and Guardrails Committee, a Committee of the Whole
 - Meets regularly throughout the school year
 - Conducts monitoring of progress toward achievement of the Goals and Guardrails, interim targets, and interim indicators

Public Participation Procedures

The Board believes the public’s involvement in education issues is critical to the academic success of The School District of Philadelphia (“District”) students and encourages the public to attend Board meetings and to participate in public comment opportunities in accordance with these procedures.

As a general rule, during all public meetings, all Board Members should refrain from engaging with the general public through social media, text message, and other electronic communications out of respect for the established means by which the public can engage with the Board.

Should a member of the public wish to attend a meeting and require translation services, they should call the Board of Education office at 215-400-4010 no later than 4:00 p.m. on the business day immediately preceding the meeting they would like to attend.

Meeting locations will always be physically accessible spaces to ensure that members of the public of all abilities are able to access and attend the Board's public meetings.

The Board's website also allows the public to review and submit questions on specific Action Items leading up to each Action Meeting. The form to review Action Items and submit questions can be found on the [Board's website](#).

Written Comment

Action Meetings, Committee Meetings, Special Meetings, and Board Public Hearings

Written comments must be received no later than 4:00 p.m. on the business day immediately preceding the meeting or public hearing. A copy of properly submitted and timely received written comment will be provided to all Board Members, included in full in the record of the meeting or public hearing, and a summary of the comment will be read during the meeting or public hearing.

An exception to the above deadline will be made for members of the public who complete the speaker registration form by no later than 4:00 p.m. on the business day immediately preceding the meeting or public hearing but do not receive an email from the Office of the Board of Education confirming their registration as a speaker. These individuals will receive an email from Board staff indicating they have been placed on the waitlist and giving them until 9:00 am of the day of the meeting or public hearing to submit written comment should they choose. Such written comment will be provided to all Board Members, included in full in the record of the meeting or public hearing, and a summary of the comment will be read during the meeting or public hearing.

Instructions to submit written comment can also be translated into non-English languages on the District's website, as needed.

Written comments may be submitted in the following ways:

1. completing the Board's ["Contact Us" form](#) on the Board website, including:
 - a. the subject line "Board Comments"; and
 - b. the name of the individual submitting the comments.
2. delivering the written comment to the Board Office located at 440 N. Broad Street, Suite 101, Philadelphia, PA 19130, including:
 - a. a clear indication that the writing is intended to be a written comment; and
 - b. the name of the individual submitting the comments.

In the instance that a written comment is submitted in a non-English language, Board staff will have the comment/s translated into English and the comment will be included in the record of the meeting in English.

Note: Individuals who do not wish to share public comment, but wish to raise a concern to be addressed by the District's administration are encouraged to submit their concern to the Administration in accordance with Board Policy 906, *Addressing Student and Constituent Concerns* and its administrative procedures available on the Board's [Policy Manual webpage](#) on its website.

Speaker Comment and Registration

Action and Committee Meetings

The public may share spoken comments with the Board by registering to address the Board at any regularly scheduled Action Meeting or Committee Meeting as follows:

1. Speaker registration will open at 4:00 p.m. on the Monday (or the first business day) of the week in which the meeting will be held.
2. Individuals must register no later than 4:00 p.m. on the business day immediately preceding the meeting at which they would like to speak.
3. Elected Official Speakers:
 - When an elected official indicates their interest in speaking at a public meeting of the Board, their name will be added to a standalone "Elected Official" speaker list and they will be provided time to speak at the meeting for which they indicated interest in speaking.
4. Non-Student Speakers:
 - Individuals must register by submitting the speaker request form (for the meeting at which they wish to address the Board) available on the [Board's website](#) or by calling 215-400-5959 to register with Board staff.
 - Non-English speakers can translate these instructions to their native language on the Board's website.
 - Individuals will be registered on a first come first served basis, subject to the following exceptions, with a limit of thirty (30) non-student speakers per meeting. Each speaker will be given two (2) minutes to address the Board.
5. Student Speakers:
 - Students must register by submitting the student speaker request form (for the meeting at which they wish to address the Board) available on the [Board's website](#) or by calling 215-400-5959 to register with Board staff.
 - Non-English speakers can translate these instructions to their native language on the Board's website.

- Students will be registered on a first come first served basis, with a limit of fifteen (15) student speakers per meeting. Each speaker will be given three (3) minutes to address the Board.
6. Individuals will be registered on a first come, first served basis, subject to the following: In order to prioritize new voices, speakers who did not speak at the most recent public Action Meeting will be given the opportunity to address the Board before speakers who spoke at the most recent public Action Meeting. Accordingly, speakers who spoke at the most recent Action Meeting will be registered after those who did not, subject to the maximum speaker limit.
 7. No individual may register to speak more than once during a meeting, but may speak on multiple topics within the time limit.
 8. Speakers will receive an email from the Office of the Board of Education confirming their registration. If a speaker does not receive a confirmation email, they will be placed on a primary waitlist to speak and may provide written comment as set forth above.
 - In the event a confirmed registered non-student or student speaker does not appear at the meeting for which they are confirmed to speak, speakers on the respective primary waitlist who are present in-person or virtually will be invited to fill the registered speaker vacancy in accordance with the above procedures.
 - A primary waitlisted non-student speaker will only be called if a confirmed non-student speaker does not appear.
 - A primary waitlisted student speaker will only be called if a confirmed student speaker does not appear.
 - The Board will not know if or how many names will be called from the primary waitlist until it gets to the end of the registered speaker portion of the meeting.
 - A paper sign-up sheet will also be available in the back of the meeting room for in-person secondary waitlist registration up until the commencement of the student participation portion of the meeting. The secondary waitlist will apply only to the respective speaker category (non-student or student speaker) and will be utilized only if a confirmed registered speaker is a no-show and is not replaced by an individual from the respective primary waitlist (non-student vs student).
 9. All speakers are asked to remember that Board meetings are opportunities to engage in civil discourse. Individuals may be ruled out of order if they: use vulgar, obscene, or physically threatening language.
 10. The presiding officer may:
 - Interrupt or terminate a participant's statement or disconnect electronic access when the statement exceeds the time period allotted under these procedures or is not related to the District, a matter being considered for official action by the Board, or a matter that may come before the Board.
 - Request any individual to leave the physical meeting or disconnect electronic access when that person does not observe reasonable decorum.
 - Call a recess or adjourn to another time when the lack of public decorum interferes with the orderly conduct of the meeting.
 - Suspend or alter any of the procedures related to addressing the Board.

If a speaker indicates when registering they speak a non-English language, a translator will be provided for confirmed speakers and speakers on the primary waitlist and the speaker's time will be doubled to allow for live translation to occur.

Special Meetings & Board Public Hearings

At Special Meetings and Board Public Hearings, the Board reserves the right to modify the speaker procedures and will make announcements about the speakers procedures for these meetings at the time of the meeting's publication.

Revisions or Additions to Agenda Items

If a motion is made to amend, revise or edit an action item or resolution on the agenda, or to propose a substitute for it, and the public has had a reasonable opportunity to comment on the original action item or resolution, then the Board may proceed to vote on the amended or substituted action item or resolution without further public comment, if the amendment, revision, edit, or substitute resolution pertains to the same subject which is addressed in the original action item or resolution.

When a resolution or action item is added to the agenda during the meeting or within 24 hours of the meeting, in accordance with the Sunshine Act and this policy, the Board will offer a further public comment opportunity limited to the added agenda item for up to four (4) members of the public who are physically present at the meeting. If no speakers request to be heard, then the Board may proceed to vote.

Meeting Procedures

Voting

All motions require for adoption a majority vote of those Board Members present and voting, except as provided by statute or the below special voting requirements.

Special Voting Requirements

1. Actions requiring the affirmative votes of two-thirds of the full membership of the Board:
 - a. Transferring, during the first three (3) months of the fiscal year, budgeted funds set apart or appropriated to a particular item of expenditure.[1]
 - b. Appoint to a teaching position a person who has served as a Board member and who has resigned.[2][3]
 - c. Conveying land or buildings to certain charities or other public agencies without following prescribed valuation procedures or with more favorable financing.[3][4]
 - d. Incurring temporary debt (non-emergency).[5][6]
 - e. Dismissing a tenured professional employee after a hearing.[3][7]

- f. Borrowing in anticipation of current revenue.[3][8]
2. Actions requiring the affirmative votes of a majority of the full membership of the Board:
- a. Fixing the length of the school term.[3]
 - b. Adopting textbooks.[3][9]
 - c. Appointing the district Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent(s).[3][10][11]
 - d. Appointing teachers and principals.[3]
 - e. Adopting the annual budget.[3][6][12]
 - f. Appointing tax collectors and other appointees.[3]
 - g. Levying and assessing taxes.[3][13][14]
 - h. Purchasing, selling, or condemning land.[3][15]
 - i. Locating new buildings or changing the location of old ones.[3]
 - j. Creating or increasing any indebtedness.[3][16]
 - k. Adding or increasing appropriations to meet an emergency or catastrophe.[3][6]
 - l. Incurring temporary debt to meet an emergency or catastrophe.[3][6]
 - m. Adopting planned instruction.[3][17]
 - n. Establishing additional schools or departments.[3]
 - o. Designating depositories for school funds.[3][18][19]
 - p. Authorizing the transfer of any unencumbered balance, or portion thereof, from one appropriation to another, or from one spending agency to another.[6]
 - q. Entering into contracts of any kind, including contracts for the purchase of fuel or any supplies where the amount involved exceeds \$100 (including items subject to bid requirements).[3][20]
 - r. Fixing salaries or compensation of officers, teachers, or other appointees of the Board.[3]
 - s. Entering into contracts with and making appropriations to the intermediate unit for the district's proportionate share of the cost of services provided or to be provided by the intermediate unit.[3]

- t. Dismissing, after a hearing, a Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent or non-tenured teacher.[3][21][22]
- u. Determining the location and amount of any real estate required by the school district for school purposes.[3][23][24]
- v. Vacating and abandoning property to which the Board has title.[3][25]
- w. Calling a special meeting when the President has failed to do so after written request of three (3) members of the Board.[26]
- x. Adopting, amending or repealing Board procedures and policy.[27]
- y. Combining or reorganizing into a larger school district.[28]

Audience Protocols

To maximize the ability for attendees to observe and hear the meeting, all members of the public attending the meeting shall be expected to follow the below audience protocols:

1. Electronic recording devices and cameras, in addition to those used as official recording devices, are permitted; however, all such devices, including cell phones and pagers, must be in silent mode and not be disruptive to others.
2. Limit the displaying of signs, posters, or placards inside the room where the meeting is being held to appropriate locations.
3. Know that it is unlawful to disrupt public meetings and that individuals who do so may be prosecuted.
4. Understand that the presiding officer may instruct that an individual be removed if the presiding officer determines the individual is disrupting the meeting.

Action Meeting Agenda

Action Meetings will follow the below agenda, as applicable, unless altered by the Board President or appropriate parliamentary procedure:

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of Minutes
4. Celebrating Success
5. Committee Reports
6. Registered Student Speakers
7. Superintendent Remarks
8. Presentations
9. Written Comment
10. Registered Speakers on General Topics
11. Action Items & Votes
12. Adjournment

Legal References:

1. 24 P.S. §6-609
2. 24 P.S. §3-324
3. 24 P.S. §5-508
4. 24 P.S. §7-707
5. 24 P.S. §6-634
6. HRC §12-303
7. 24 P.S. §11-1129
8. 24 P.S. §6-640
9. Board Policy 108
10. 24 P.S. §10-1076
11. HRC §12-301
12. Board Policy 604
13. Board Policy 605
14. HRC §12-305
15. Board Policy 706
16. HRC §12-306
17. Board Policy 107
18. 24 P.S. §6-621
19. Board Policy 608
20. Board Policy 610
21. 24 P.S. §10-1080
22. 24 P.S. §5-514
23. 24 P.S. §7-702
24. Board Policy 706
25. 24 P.S. §7-708
26. 24 P.S. §4-426
27. HRC §12-209
28. 24 P.S. §2-224