



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

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The Arlington School Board welcomes public comment during most regular meetings and during public hearings. Generally, School Board members do not respond to public comment during the meeting or hearing. School Board members are available to meet with members of the public during “Open Office Hours,” which are held weekly when school is in session, and by appointment. In addition, the Board reviews letters and emails sent to the School Board.

**Time** – **Each speaker may speak for up to three minutes.** A timer is visible to speakers from the podium 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. For agenda items and public hearings, if there are a large number of speakers, 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 School Board agenda as that item is heard during a meeting, or may address an item not on the agenda during a portion of the meeting that may be provided for 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 a complaint about an individual staff member, a personnel action, a student disciplinary matter, a complaint about an individual student, or pending litigation.

**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, to a staff member, nor to the audience. Speakers will not engage in personal attacks. Speakers will present their comments from the podium provided for them.

**Signing up to Speak** – Electronic speaker requests may be submitted at [www.apsva.us/page/3069](http://www.apsva.us/page/3069) after the meeting agenda has been posted on the APS website and up until 4:00 p.m. the day before the meeting. Speakers also may sign up at a School Board meeting or Public Hearing 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 speak 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, seven copies should be provided to the School Board clerk as the speaker approaches the podium to speak.