

Ordinance 2024/25-74

Section 10-5.1. Public Appearances before the School Board; time limits for public comments; public participation at special or call meetings. — A. Members of the community are invited and encouraged to attend meetings of the Suffolk City School Board to observe its deliberations. Any member of the community may appear in person at any regularly scheduled meeting of the School Board with any Suffolk Public Schools' related question, request or item he may wish to discuss. Persons wishing to appear before the School Board under the Agenda Topic "Early Appearances" must complete the online Request to Speak form and forward to the Clerk of the School Board after the release of the regular meeting agenda to the public, but no later than 12:00 noon on Wednesday preceding the day of the regular School Board meeting. Persons wishing to appear before the School Board to speak on non-agenda topics under the Agenda Topic "Late Appearances" must notify the Clerk of the Board no later than 12 noon on the day of the Board meeting. Speakers may provide copies of their remarks or other information for board members.

B. A maximum of forty-five (45) minutes will be allowed at the beginning of each regularly scheduled meeting for members of the community to present their concerns regarding agenda topics to the School Board. Each person will be allowed no more than five (5) minutes and no less than three (3) minutes to speak before the School Board. If more than fifteen (15) persons would like to address the School Board, the Clerk of the School Board will notify all who gave notice to speak at the Early Appearance that the first fifteen (15) persons who provided notice as required by subsection A, will be given three (3) minutes each to make their presentation. When fifteen (15) speakers have spoken or when the forty-five (45) minutes allotted for Early Appearances has expired, any remaining speakers who expressed an interest in speaking under the agenda item entitled "Early Appearances" will be allowed to speak under the agenda item entitled "Late Appearances" or given the opportunity to submit their comments in writing to the School Board to be read during Late Appearances.

The Chair is responsible for the orderly conduct of the meeting and rules on such matters as the appropriateness of the subject being presented and suitability of the time for such presentation. Upon recognition by the chair, the speaker shall address the Chair and if, at the conclusion of the speaker's remarks, any member of the School Board desires further information, the member addresses the speaker only with the permission of the Chair. The School Board as a whole will have the final decision in determining the appropriateness of all such rulings. Audio visual equipment used by the School Board during any public meeting of the School Board is not available for use by persons when appearing before the School Board under the Agenda topic of Early Appearances or Late Appearances.

C. Students enrolled in a public elementary or secondary school in the division are permitted to address the School Board during any public comment or citizen participation portion of a school board meeting. Such students must follow the same sign-up procedures and rules and restrictions relating to time, place, and manner of speaking that are adopted by the School Board and applicable to all public participants.

€ D. Public participation of any special call meeting of the School Board will be determined by the School Board upon recommendation of the Chair. (Adopted January 12, 1995; Ordinance 20/21-8; Revised: January 14, 2021; Ordinance 22/23, February 9, 2023; Ordinance 23/24-26, Revised/Effective: November 9, 2023)

Legal Authority - Virginia Code §§ 22.1-78, 22.1-79, and 22.1-253.13:7 (1950), as amended.