



Guidelines for Public Participation at Chicago Board of Education Meetings

These Guidelines are designed to ensure a fair and organized process for public participation at Board of Education meetings. Below you'll find details on how to register to speak, observe meetings, and other important information. 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 and replace the Guidelines that were in effect September 19, 2024.

General Information

Observing the Meeting

Watching Online

- Members of the public, employees of the District, Local School Council members and members of other groups may view the meeting live by selecting "Watch live" on the Board's website at www.cpsboe.org.

In-Person Observer Attendance

- To attend in person, you must register in advance to assure your seat. Registration opens 48 hours before a meeting.
- There are 100 observer slots available for advance observer registration.
- If advance registration is full or has closed, same-day, in-person observer registration is also available. You can still register on the day of the meeting in person, starting at 10:15 a.m. on a first-come, first-serve basis.
- Same-day, in-person registration begins at 10:15 a.m. the day of the Committee meeting and Board meeting in the lobby at 42 W. Madison (unless the location or time is otherwise indicated). Please be aware that same-day, in-person observer registration is taken on a first-come, first-serve basis, and registrations will be taken as open seats are available.

How to Register

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

Accommodations - Accessibility

All meeting locations are ADA and generally accessible in consideration of those with disabilities:

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.

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.

Speaker Registration and Participation



Advanced Speaker Registration Open Period

- Unless otherwise noted in the notice for the Board meeting, Advance Speaker Registration Open Period opens 48 hours before the meeting. This usually means registration opens at 10:30 a.m. on the Monday before a Wednesday Committee meeting and on the Tuesday before a Thursday Regular Board meeting.
- The Advance Registration Open Period will remain open for a 24 hour period.

How to Register

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

Randomized Lottery for Speaker Selection

In order to provide more equity of voice during the public participation segment, a randomized lottery will be conducted to select speakers for any meeting where the number of registered speakers exceeds the number of slots available.

- Randomized Selection: During a 24 hour registration period, anyone interested in speaking can sign up. After this time, a lottery will randomly select a set number of speakers from those who registered. For example, if 100 people register, the lottery might select 30 of them to speak. This process gives everyone a fair chance to address the Board.
- Number of Speakers: The Board will allocate no more than 30 speaking slots to members of the general public to speak to the Board.
- Notifications: After the lottery, you'll receive an email confirming whether or not you've been selected to speak. Instructions for participating in the meeting will also be provided.
- Applicability: The Randomized Lottery applies to all Board Meetings where advanced registration is available. This system will not only apply to Board Meetings but also to other meetings where advanced registration is available, such as Committee meetings and Hearings.

Participation

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.

Limitations on Speaking

To maintain a fair chance for speakers to address the Board, you may not speak at back-to-back meetings and you may not speak at more than one meeting per month.

- If you register for back-to-back meetings and more than one meeting per month, you will not be included for that meeting lottery. This ensures more opportunities for the public to address the Board.
- Speakers may not cede their time to another person.

Speaker Remarks and Submissions

- Each speaker is given .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, unrelated to the operations of Board or CPS, 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.
- All speakers must adhere to the Behavior Expectations in the following section.

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.

Special Considerations



Union Representatives and Public Officials

- Union representatives that are elected officers may address the Board.
- City, state, and federal officials may request to speak by contacting the Department of Intergovernmental Affairs at IGA@cps.edu.
- Each union representative or public official is given five (5) minutes to present their remarks.
- Union representatives and public officials may not cede their time to another person.
- 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, and Spanish-language interpreters are available. If you need an interpreter for a different language, please notify the Board Office at least two (2) business days before the meeting.
- While speakers may choose to address the Board in Spanish, they will need to provide a written version of their statement the day prior to the meeting if they wish to have it translated into English during the meeting. Speakers who do not provide their statement in advance may still address the Board, but their statement will be translated and shared with Board Members at a later time.

Behavior Expectations

- 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. 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, the individual may forfeit their right of reentry to future Board meetings.

Written Comments and Other Participation

Submitting Written Comments

- Even if you are not selected to speak during Public Participation, you can submit written comments. Complete the Written Comments Form on the Board's website or send your comments by 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.

Media and 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.
- An area of the Board Room will be designated for members of the media who wish to cover the Board meeting. This number may 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.

These guidelines have been developed to ensure that everyone has a fair chance to participate in Board meetings. Thank you for your cooperation and commitment to fostering a respectful and inclusive environment.