



Guidelines for Public Comments at Board Meetings

The Tacoma Public School Board values public input. Thank you for coming to our meeting and providing comments. Please note that Board meetings are public, televised and recorded.

1. To address the Board at a public meeting, submit a "Citizens' Request to Speak" card prior to the start of the meeting.
2. The Superintendent will call your name when it is your turn to address the school board. Requests are generally taken on a first-come, first-served basis, although the Superintendent may group speakers based upon the subject matter.
3. The Board generally allows for up to thirty (30) minutes at a regular meeting for public comments.
 - You will have up to three (3) minutes to share your comments.
 - You will hear a tone when you have one (1) minute remaining.
 - In the event that there are more than ten (10) members of the public wishing to comment, the Board President has discretion to limit the time to two (2) minutes and up to fifteen (15) speakers.
 - Additional time may be granted as a reasonable accommodation for a disability or language interpretation.
4. The Board will not terminate comment based upon viewpoint. However, to maintain a respectful and efficient meeting, the Board President may interrupt or terminate comment if:
 - The speech becomes irrelevant;
 - The speech is repetitious;
 - The speech is unlawful (e.g. hate speech, obscenity or defamation);
 - The speaker exceeds the allotted time; or
 - The speech or number of speakers prevent the board from conducting the meeting in an orderly manner.
5. In keeping with state law, the Board may hear a complaint about an employee or one of the members of the board in executive session. We ask, however, that before you bring a complaint to us that you follow our policy by first raising the issue with the employee's supervisor. If that doesn't resolve the issue, then please take the matter to the superintendent.
6. The Board may not respond to your comments at the meeting. Most issues require that the Board review of all available information and have time to deliberate before making a decision. The Board may delegate the response to a Tacoma Public Schools staff member.

Tacoma Public Schools is committed to an environment where people feel safe, welcomed and respected. The Board respects our citizens' right to freedom of speech while balancing the Board's responsibilities. You may also address the school board by sending a letter or email to the Board or individual directors. Email addresses are available on the TPS website.