



Maynard Public Schools

3R Tiger Drive, Maynard MA 01754

File: BEDH

Public Comment at School Committee Meetings

A School Committee Meeting is a business meeting of a government body at which members of the body deliberate over public business. All regular and special meetings of the Maynard School Committee shall be open to the public. Executive sessions will be held only as prescribed by the Statutes of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The School Committee desires individuals to attend its meetings so that they may become better acquainted with the operations and the programs of our local public schools. In addition, the Committee would like the opportunity to hear public comments. Therefore, the Committee will generally put aside a period of time at each regular School Committee meeting to hear from the public. In addition, if the Committee believes that an issue requires further participation from the school district community, the Committee may schedule a separate public hearing on that issue.

Public comment is not a discussion, debate, or dialogue between individuals and the School Committee. It is an individual's opportunity to express an opinion on issues within the School Committee's authority.

Massachusetts General Laws Chapter [30A Section 20](#)(g) governs public participation at open meetings covering all public bodies.

Chapter 30A:20 [Notice, Remote Participation, Public Participation, Certification]

(g) No person shall address a meeting of a public body without permission of the chair, and all persons shall, at the request of the chair, be silent. No person shall disrupt the proceedings of a meeting of a public body. If, after clear warning from the chair, a person continues to disrupt the proceedings, the chair may order the person to withdraw from the meeting and if the person does not withdraw, the chair may authorize a constable or other officer to remove the person from the meeting.

Those who wish to make a presentation to the School Committee on an item that is of interest to them and within the scope of the Committee's responsibilities may request to be placed on the agenda for a particular meeting. Such a request should be in writing and should be received by the Superintendent of Schools at least one week prior to the date of the meeting. Such a request should contain background statements that explain the scope and intent of the agenda item. The Chair of the Committee works with the Superintendent to formulate meeting agendas and will review the request.

To ensure the ability of the School Committee to conduct the District's business in an orderly manner, the following rules and procedures are adopted:

1. Public Comment shall be for a period of up to 15 minutes and shall generally follow the opening of the meeting. The Committee reserves the right to rearrange its agenda to accommodate scheduled presenters.
2. Community members wishing to speak before the Committee shall identify themselves by name and town of residence and shall speak for no longer than three (3) minutes or three hundred (300) written words. The presiding Chair may permit an extension of this time limit in extenuating circumstances. No one may speak more than once without permission of the Chair and all should speak to the full Committee through the Chair and shall not address individual members or administrators. All speakers are encouraged to present their remarks in a respectful manner.
3. Written comments longer than three (3) minutes or three hundred (300) words may be presented to the presiding Chair before or after the meeting.
4. Topics for discussion should be limited to those items within the School Committee's scope of authority. The authority of the School Committee primarily concerns the review and approval of the budget of the district's public schools, the performance of the Superintendent, and the educational goals and policies of the district's public schools. Comments and complaints regarding school personnel (apart from the Superintendent) or students are generally prohibited unless those comments and complaints concern matters within the scope of School Committee authority. Under most circumstances, administrative channels are the proper and most efficient means for disposition of issues involving school personnel.
5. The Chair of the meeting, after a warning, reserves the right to terminate speech that is not constitutionally protected because it constitutes true threats that are likely to provoke a violent reaction and cause a breach of the peace, or incitement to imminent lawless conduct, or contains obscenities.
6. A committee member is encouraged to call a "point of order" should a member believe the public meeting rules are not being followed.
7. Comments made during the public comment portion of the meeting do not necessarily reflect the views or positions of the Maynard School Committee.
8. Sign-up instructions will be provided for those who wish to participate in Public Comment.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. c. 30A: 18-25

CROSS REFS: BE, SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

BEC, EXECUTIVE SESSIONS

BEDA, NOTIFICATION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Replaces former MPS procedures 215 & 215.1, BEDH-E

SOURCE: MASC Revised January 2020

Adopted: 5/21/2020

Revised: 12/15/2022