

**Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School**  
**Policy B3: Public Comments at Board meetings**  
**Adopted: October 22, 2020**  
**Amended: October 21, 2021**

Citizens of the community have the expressed right and are encouraged to attend meetings of the Board to listen to and observe the deliberations of its members. The following regulations are adopted to preserve the orderly pursuit of business of the Board and to provide proper opportunities for legitimate and objective discussion and analysis of the issues presented. Board meetings are public meetings and not meetings of the public; however, any citizen may request the opportunity to communicate with the Board and be recognized to speak regarding appropriate issues.

Matters concerning an individual student shall be discussed first with the school leader.

If the problem cannot be resolved at the school, it shall then be brought to the Superintendent of Schools. If the problem cannot be resolved with the Superintendent of Schools, it may then be brought to the Board. Personal complaints of school employees should follow the Complaints and Grievances procedures established by the Board. Board Members shall refrain from offering public comments on matters relating to personnel, members of the Board, and other items which the law deems inappropriate for discussion in open session must be submitted in writing and will be reviewed by the Board in Executive Session.

Persons desiring to communicate with the Board shall submit a written request to the School leader stating their name, home address, and the topic about which they wish to speak and the group they represent, if applicable, no later than 36 hours prior to a scheduled Board meeting.

- A. Persons who have applied to speak will be recognized by the chairperson at the appropriate time during the meeting. Speakers will be limited to three minutes. If there are numerous requests to address the Board on the same topic, the chairperson may limit the number of speakers based on the date the request was submitted. The Board also vests in its chairperson or other presiding officer authority to terminate the remarks of any individual who does not adhere to the guidelines established by the Board.
- B. Individuals who have not submitted an application to speak may also speak for three minutes, but their remarks shall be limited to comments on agenda items.
- C. The speaker's comments shall be directed to the Board as a body and not to an individual Board member. The Board members or Superintendent may ask questions for clarification but will not necessarily engage in discussion with the speaker. The Board will take all comments and questions under advisement. When appropriate, the comments and questions shall be referred to the School leader for consideration and a later response.
- D. Supporting documents or information to be shared with the Board must be provided in hard copy. Eight copies should be provided and should be presented to the

Superintendent for distribution to the Board members. Audiovisual presentations are discouraged and may not be accommodated due to time and technical considerations.

- E. All meetings of the Board shall be open to the public and shall be conducted in compliance with the Georgia Open Meetings Act O.C.G.A. 50-18. All meetings shall be held in person unless the Chair determines that public health, safety, environmental, or other emergency conditions exist for virtual meetings with simultaneous public access.