

HOPKINTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE POLICY

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

All regular and special meetings of the School Committee are open to the public. These meetings are business meetings held in public settings, conducted under a prepared and limited agenda distributed to the committee ahead of time. Agendas are available in the Superintendent's office and on the district website prior to meetings. These meetings are not considered public hearings, although public hearings may be scheduled during regular meetings as necessary and as prescribed by the Statutes of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Executive sessions will be held as necessary and as prescribed by the Statutes of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

I. Making Public Comments at School Committee Meeting

The School Committee welcomes Hopkinton citizens or employees to attend its meetings. If citizens or employees would like to comment to the School Committee, they may do so by mail, email or phone at any time. Contact information is available through the Superintendent's Office or the district website.

The Committee also welcomes comments from the public at regular meetings on both agenda and non-agenda items during a public comment period specifically set on the agenda. If a citizen or employee wishes to speak during this period, the following rules and procedures apply:

1. The speaker must first be recognized by the chair and will be allowed three minutes to speak from the area designated by the chair.
2. Comments longer than three minutes may be presented to the Committee in written format before or after the meeting for the Committee members' review and consideration at an appropriate time.
3. The chair shall have the authority to change the length and time of the public comment portion of the agenda as needed.
4. The School Committee generally will not respond to comments at the time they are made.
5. All remarks from the public or School Committee members will be addressed through the chair of the meeting.
6. Defamatory, abusive remarks, or improper conduct are always out of order. The chair may terminate an individual address to the committee if such behavior is exhibited.
7. Speakers may offer suggestions or criticisms of school operations and programs, but may not offer personal complaints about, or breach privacy or other rights of, any member of the school community. (For legitimate complaints about school communities, see the policy KE- School Related Problems and Concerns.)

II. Requesting to Be Placed on a School Committee Agenda

Citizens or employees who wish to appear before the School Committee must submit, in writing or in an email message to the chair, a request to be placed on the agenda at least two weeks prior to the next regularly scheduled School Committee meeting. (This does not include working sessions.) The request should include reasons for the requested appearance and any actions that they have taken in regard to the matter they wish to discuss. The chair may choose to immediately place the item on the agenda or may request further explanation before adding it to the agenda.

First Reading	March 18, 2010
Second Reading	April 1, 2010
Third Reading	
Adopted	April 1, 2010
Policy Amended	
Legal References	MGL 39:23A, 39:23B
Policy Cross Reference	BE, KE
Procedure Reference	