



Book	Board Policy Manual
Section	1. Governance & School Board Operations
Title	BC Board Meetings
Code	BC
Status	Active
Adopted	April 17, 1995
Last Revised	October 5, 2015

All meetings of the Atlanta Board of Education shall be open to the public. The public will be given limited time to voice opinions or describe problems, as provided herein. All actions of the board shall be taken in open session, and the deliberations leading to the board action shall likewise be conducted openly, except in those instances where closed sessions are authorized by law. Since the board exists as an entity, its business can be transacted only in regularly called "regular board meetings" and specially called "special board meetings." Meetings of the board shall be scheduled and conducted in accordance with the provisions herein.

### **Regular Meetings**

The regular monthly meetings of the board shall include a work session for presentations and discussion, a community meeting and a legislative meeting.

#### **A. Community Meetings**

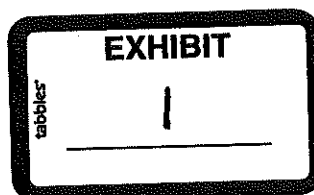
The monthly community meeting provides an opportunity for the board to receive input from community members regarding policy issues, the educational program, or any other aspect of APS business except confidential personnel issues. The community meeting or special meetings may also be used as a public forum to address controversial issues or matters of deep community concern. The chairperson may delegate the responsibility for chairing community meetings to other board members.

#### **C. Legislative Meetings**

During the monthly legislative meeting, the board may receive presentations by the superintendent and take action on any other recommendations made by the superintendent. The board may also take action on board-initiated resolutions and any other actions required by law.

Members of the general public will not be allowed to address the board during the regular monthly legislative meeting.

#### **D. Organizational Meeting**



At the first regular meeting of the board in January following each regular election, the board shall organize, take and subscribe before a judge of the Superior Court the oath prescribed in the charter. During the first regular meeting in January of even-numbered years, the board will hold an organizational meeting to elect its officers for a term of two years. The organizational meeting shall immediately precede the convening of the regular monthly board meeting.

The time and place of all board meetings will be announced to the public in accordance with the Georgia Open Meetings Act.

### **Special Meetings**

Special meetings of the board may be called by the chairperson whenever he/she deems it necessary or at the request of three (3) or more members. Only business specifically noticed shall be conducted at a special meeting.

Emergency meetings are special meetings and may be called when special circumstances occur in a manner consistent with the Georgia Open Meetings Act.

### **Operational Procedures**

#### **A. Conduct at Meetings**

Board members and members of the public will faithfully and impartially conduct themselves in ways that demonstrate mutual respect, fair play, and orderly decorum. In particular, they will treat each other, APS employees, and other citizens with respect and courtesy, even when expressing disagreement, concern, or criticism about any issue or incident. Board members will also refrain from making statements in public meetings that have the direct and intended effect of impugning another person's motives or intelligence, attacking others on a purely personal basis, or disparaging anyone's racial, sexual, social, or religious background.

#### **B. Executive Sessions**

All meetings of the board shall be open to the public. However, the board may hold executive sessions in accordance with state law. Executive sessions shall not exclude the superintendent unless a discussion of the superintendent is the subject of the executive session.

The board may enter into executive session upon a majority vote of the board present and voting for the following reasons:

1. To review an appeal from a Student Disciplinary Tribunal [Hearing Officer, Panel] (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-757);
2. To consider a matter involving the disclosure of personally identifiable information from a student's educational records (20 U.S.C. §1232g.);
3. To discuss the future acquisition of real estate (O.C.G.A. § 50-14-3(4));
4. To discuss or deliberate upon the appointment, employment, compensation, hiring, disciplinary action, dismissal, periodic evaluation, or rating of a public officer or employee (O.C.G.A. § 50-14-3(6));
5. To consult and meet with legal counsel pertaining to pending or potential litigation, settlement, claims, administrative proceedings, or other judicial actions brought, or to be brought, by or against the school district or an officer or employee, or in which an officer or employee may be directly involved (O.C.G.A. §50-14-2).

All official action of the board shall be taken at an open meeting.

Following any executive session, the chairperson or other presiding officer shall execute and file with the official minutes of the meeting a notarized affidavit stating under oath that the subject matter of the meeting of the closed portion thereof was devoted to matters within the exceptions provided by law and identifying the specific relevant exception.

### C. Minutes of Regular and Special Board Meetings

The board executive assistant shall keep, or cause to be kept, complete records of the actions of board meetings. The minutes of the board shall be kept in an official minute book, which may be maintained in electronic format and shall be a complete record of such minutes including resolutions and motions in full. Records that are not a part of a formal motion may be omitted if they are referred to and identified by some method.

Copies of the minutes of a meeting shall be sent to the members of the board before the meeting at which they are to be approved. Corrections in the minutes may be made at the meeting at which they are to be approved.

Permanent minutes, when placed in a permanent minute book after approval, shall be signed by the board executive assistant and the person presiding at the board meeting

No speeches or extracts or outlines of speeches of board members or others shall be entered upon the minutes, except that remarks explaining one's vote or remarks on a question of personal privilege shall be recorded in the minutes as may be directed by unanimous consent of the board.

Within 21 days of a regular or special meeting, the board shall post a preliminary report of the minutes and votes taken at regular and special meetings online and via any other reasonable method. The board shall post the final, approved minutes of regular and special meetings online within two (2) business days after the minutes are approved by the board.

### D. Notification of Meeting

Notice of each regular meeting of the board, with agenda, will be delivered to each board member at least three (3) business days prior to each meeting. Notice of all special meetings, except as provided below for an emergency meeting, shall be given to the members of the board at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the scheduled time of the meeting.

Notice of all regular and special meetings shall be in accordance with the Georgia Open Meetings Act.

### E. Preparation for Board Meetings

1. Regular Agenda - The superintendent and the board executive assistant in consultation with the board chairperson shall prepare the agenda for the regular monthly board meetings and special meetings in accordance with sections 2, 3 and 4 below. Any board member or the superintendent may submit suggested items for inclusion on the agenda. Board members who wish to suggest items for the board's consideration must do so to the board chairperson prior to the agenda setting meeting. Items not on the agenda may be presented from the floor for discussion and/or action during the meeting if approved by a majority of board members present.
2. Consent Agenda - A consent agenda shall be included as a part of the regular agenda.
3. Schedule for Board Members Receiving the Agenda - The superintendent shall provide the agenda including all action items and supporting documentation to all members of the board no later than three (3) business days prior to the meeting, except in the instance of a *bona fide* emergency.

4. Reports and Other Information - Before actions by the board are requested or recommended, the board shall be provided with adequate information to assist the board in reaching sound and objective decisions consistent with established goals. The superintendent shall provide reports and other requested data no later than one (1) business day prior to the board meeting at which action is requested.

#### F. Procedures for Hearing from Individuals and Delegations

The board requires that all meetings be formal enough to maintain orderly procedure. At the same time, it is the desire of the board that meetings be informal enough to encourage open discussion and to promote creative thinking and action. While striving always to be cognizant of the problems, requests, complaints, and suggestions of employees, individuals, and groups from the community, the board cannot allow excessive perusal of any issues to interfere with its continuous, diligent attention to those activities vital to the effective operation of the APS. The board chairperson shall control the tenor of all board meetings.

1. Input Regarding Policy Additions or Revisions - Interested persons may suggest additions to, or revisions of, policy by putting those in writing and presenting them to the board executive assistant or the superintendent at least one week prior to the regular meeting. Appropriate consideration will be given to these suggestions as the board develops the agenda for the respective board committees.
2. Monthly Community Meeting - Citizens and representatives from organizations are encouraged to appear before and address the board at its community meeting. To address the board, citizens and representatives from organizations should register at a designated place in the building where the meeting is being held. Community members will speak in order of registration.
3. Special Legislative Meetings - Citizens and representatives from organizations may sign up to speak on a specific agenda item noticed on the agenda for a specially called legislative meeting. To address the board, citizens and representatives must contact the board executive assistant at least one hour prior to the scheduled starting time of the meeting, and the comments must be limited to the specific agenda item designated.
4. Protocol for Community Comments - Any person who has registered to speak to the board shall first be recognized by the chairperson. He/she shall then identify himself/herself and proceed with his/her comments as briefly as the subject permits, but in any case, within a two-minute time period at the community meeting or a three-minute period at a specially called legislative meeting. Community members may defer their comment periods to other speakers, not to exceed a total of four minutes at a community meeting or six minutes at a specially called legislative meeting for any individual speaker addressing the board. Elected officials may be granted a six-minute time period for comments.

#### G. Quorum

Five members of the board shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. A majority of members present may vote to compel the attendance of its members, to adjourn, or to fix a time of meeting.

#### H. Rules of Order and Suspension of Rules

In all cases of deliberation and procedure, the board shall observe the rules of parliamentary procedure set forth in *Robert's Rules of Order, Revised*, except as otherwise provided by law or by board policy.

#### I. Voting Method

Board members, as required by law, shall publicly state their votes on each item considered by the board.

Last Revised: 10/5/2015

Revised: 8/8/2011, 3/4/2013, 8/12/2013, 8/11/2014

First Adopted: 4/17/1995

**See also:**

Board Policy AA School District Legal Status (the statutory charter of the Atlanta Public Schools)

**Legal citations:**

O.C.G.A. 50-14-0002 Privileges

O.C.G.A. 50-14-0003 Excluded proceedings

O.C.G.A. 50-14-0005 Jurisdiction to enforce Open Meetings Act

O.C.G.A. 50-14-0006 Penalty for violation of Open Meetings Act; defense

O.C.G.A. 50-14-0004 Closed meeting procedures

O.C.G.A. 20-02-0058 Regular monthly meetings; notice

O.C.G.A. 50-14-0001 Open Meetings Act; notice; minutes; telecommunication conferences

O.C.G.A. 20-02-0757 Applicability of public inspection and open meeting laws

20 USC 1232g Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)

**Keywords:**

regular meetings, community meetings, committee of the whole, legislative meetings, board, parliamentary procedure, public comments, address the board