

SCHOOL BOARD BYLAWS

Open Meetings and Closed Meetings

A. Open Meetings

Meetings of the School Board shall be open to the public except those meetings when the School Board adjourns to a closed meeting by a majority vote of the School Board. Such meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the legal references to this Bylaw.

B. Closed Meetings

1. Authority/Attendees

The Code of Virginia permits closed meetings in order to discuss specific topics in private. Closed meetings must be convened by polled vote of the majority of the Members in attendance in public session. No action may be taken in closed meetings. In open session immediately following any closed meeting, the School Board Members must certify by a polled vote that no matter was discussed in closed meeting that was not encompassed in the topics authorized in the motion to convene in closed meeting: Any School Board Member who believes that there was a departure from the requirements for closed session set forth in Virginia Code § 2.2-3712, as amended, shall so state prior to the vote, indicating the substance of the departure that, in the School Board Member's judgment, has taken place. The statement shall be recorded in the minutes of the public body.

Closed meetings are attended by School Board Members. The School Board may invite persons to attend closed meetings to provide necessary information.

2. Minutes

The School Board Clerk or designee shall attend closed meetings (unless expressly excused) for the purpose of taking brief minutes.

These minutes which shall be part of the School Board's official minutes shall include:

- a. Date, time and place of meeting;
- b. Record of all persons in attendance;
- c. Motion for Closed Meetings;
- d. Certification of Closed Meetings; and
- e. Any action taken.;

Closed meetings shall not be tape recorded with the exception of student discipline hearings which may be recorded by the School Board.

3. Confidentiality of Closed Meeting items

School Board Members who access or discuss information or materials in preparation for or during closed meetings will maintain all such information in a confidential manner. School Board Members will not record or copy such confidential information. Unauthorized persons may not be provided access to confidential information. Personal notes taken while preparing for or attending closed meeting should be destroyed as soon as the closed session matters are concluded or should be turned over to the School Board Clerk or School Board Legal Counsel to maintain in a confidential manner and in accordance with applicable record keeping requirements. Failure to protect the confidentiality of closed session material or information may constitute sufficient reason to restrict that School Board Member from participating in future closed sessions or serving on School Board Committees that handle confidential items.

C. Electronic communication meetings

The School Board may meet by electronic communication means without a quorum of the School Board physically assembled at one location when the Governor has declared a state of emergency and the following conditions are met:

- 1.) the catastrophic nature of the declared state of emergency makes it impracticable or unsafe to assemble a quorum in a single location; and

2.) the purpose of the meeting is to address the emergency;

3. under other conditions allowed by the Governor or the Virginia General Assembly and adopted by the School Board;

4. The School Board must give public notice using the best available method given the nature of the emergency, which notice shall be given contemporaneously with the notice provided to School Board Members;

5. Agenda packets and all nonexempt materials should be available electronically or at all locations where public access will be provided and at the same time as the meeting;

6. Arrangements must be made for the public to access the meeting;

7. The meeting minutes must state the nature of the emergency, the fact that the meeting was held by electronic communication means, and the type of electronic communication means by which the meeting was held.

8. Votes taken during any such meeting shall be recorded by the name in the roll-call fashion and included in the minutes;

9. School Board Committees may follow the same procedures for electronic meetings; and

10. The Clerk of the School Board or designee will make a written report of such meeting as required by the Virginia Freedom of Information Act.

D. Remote location participation

School Board Members may participate in School Board Meetings or School Board Committee Meetings through electronic communication means from a remote location that is not open to the public ~~only~~ under ~~the following~~ conditions set forth in this Bylaw.

1. Temporary or permanent disability or other medical condition that prevents physical attendance.

a. ~~On~~ or before the day of a meeting, a School Board Member must ~~(1)~~ notify the School Board Chair for School

Board Meetings or the School Board Committee Chair for Committee Meetings that the School Board Member is unable to attend the meeting due to a temporary or permanent disability or other medical condition that prevents the School Board Member's physical attendance.

b. The Chair or designee will note during the meeting that the School Board Member is remotely participating due to a temporary or permanent disability or other medical condition that prevents the School Board Member's physical attendance. The location from which the School Board Member participates will be included in the meeting minutes but the exact nature of the disability or medical condition does not need to be announced publicly or be included in the meeting minutes.~~Chairman that he or she is unable to attend the meeting due to an emergency or personal matter;~~

c. A School Board Member's ability to remotely participate due to a temporary or permanent disability or other medical condition will not be limited in number as long as such remote participation: does not create an unreasonable hardship for the School Board or the Committee to administer; does not unreasonably interfere with the School Board's or the Committee's ability to conduct its business; and/or the School Board Member can clearly be heard and/or seen through the method of remote participation throughout each meeting. Before limiting continued remote participation pursuant to this subsection, the School Board or the Committee members must vote to discontinue the remote participation.

2. Personal matter prevents physical attendance.

a. On or before the day of a meeting, a School Board Member must notify the School Board Chair for School Board Meetings or the School Board Committee Chair for Committee meetings that the School Board Member is

unable to attend the meeting due to a personal matter and must identify with specificity the nature of the personal matter;

b. ~~(2) identify, with specificity, the nature of the emergency or personal matter; and (3) The Chair will note during the meeting School Board records in its minutes~~ the specific nature of the ~~emergency or~~ personal matter and the remote location from which the School Board Member is participating;~~ed.~~

c. During a calendar year, a School Board Member will be limited to remote participation two times for School Board Meetings and two times each for every School Board Committee that the School Board Member is assigned to serve on. Once a School Board Member has participated remotely two times under this subsection, the Chair or designee will inform a School Board Member that no further remote participation will be allowed during the calendar year for personal reasons.

~~Each School Board Member's remote location participation shall be limited to two (2) meetings or twenty five percent (25%), whichever is fewer, each calendar year.~~

3. A School Board Members' remote location participation shall be counted separately for School Board Meetings and each School Board Committee meeting when considering limitations on use of remote location participation.

4. In any meeting at which one or more School Board Members participates from a remote location, ~~the following conditions must be met:~~ (1) a quorum of the School Board or the School Board Committee must physically assemble at the primary or central meeting location; and (2) the Chair or designee School Board must make arrangements for the voice of the remote participant(s) to be heard by all persons at the primary or central meeting location. The Chair or designee The Chair or designee will determine the appropriate method, if reasonably available, for the School Board Member to remotely participate in meeting.

5. School Board Members may not participate from a remote location in any closed session meeting.

6. Conditions regarding remote location participation may be suspended or modified in accordance with applicable School Board action or resolution, Governor's action, or Virginia General Assembly action.

Editor's Note

For requirements regarding meetings of Board committees see Bylaw 1-28.

Legal Reference

~~Virginia Freedom of Information Act~~, Code of Virginia § 2.2-3700, *et seq.*, as amended.

Virginia Freedom of Information Act.

Code of Virginia § 2.2-3708.2, as amended. Meetings held through electronic communications means.

Code of Virginia § 2.2-3712, as amended. Closed meeting procedures; certification of proceedings.

Related Links

School Board [Bylaw 1-28](#).

Adopted by School Board: July 21, 1992

Amended by School Board: September 5, 1995

Amended by School Board: August 17, 1999

Amended by School Board: February 20, 2001

Amended by School Board: May 14, 2002

Amended by School Board: December 2, 2008

Amended by School Board: September 1, 2015

Amended by School Board: August 2, 2016

Amended by School Board: February 23, 2021