

<b>Section B:</b>  <b>School Board Operations</b>	<b>Knox County Board of Education Policy</b>		
	Descriptor Term:  <b>Public Forum</b>	Descriptor Code:	Issued:
		<b>B-180</b>	<b>3/16</b>
		Reviewed:	Revised:
		<b>8/25</b>	<b>5/24</b>

The Board of Education desires to hear from individuals and/or groups on matters important to education. Time is set aside at each Board meeting for Public Forum, during which individuals or groups may request to speak to the Board. The purpose of Public Forum is to provide the public with the opportunity to comment on matters that are germane to the items on the agenda for the meeting.<sup>1</sup>

Public comment at work sessions, called meetings, and other special meetings will be limited to items on the agenda. As a rule, Public Forum at regular session voting Board meetings is open to any topic related to education, except for personnel matters which are handled according to Board Policy B-171.

Individuals or groups seeking to address the Board during Public Forum should register by contacting the Board of Education office via telephone (865-594-1623) or e-mail ([board.office@knoxschools.org](mailto:board.office@knoxschools.org)) no later than 4:00 p.m. on the day prior to the scheduled meeting or by registering in person prior to the start of the meeting. Information required for registration will include name, contact information, county of residence, and topic. Groups seeking to address the Board may be asked to select one or more delegates to speak on their behalf unless determined otherwise by the Board. Those registered to speak will be called upon in the order that they are received.

At voting meetings, speakers will be granted time to speak when their topic of interest is addressed on the agenda, otherwise, Public Forum speakers will be recognized as indicated on the meeting agenda. The Chair may also recognize individuals who have not arranged to speak beforehand if the Chair determines that such is in the public interest. A majority vote of members present can overrule the decision of the Chair.

Recognition of individuals who are not Knox County residents is to be determined by a majority vote of the Board.

The Board requests Public Forum speakers address remarks to the entire Board and not individual members. Each person speaking shall state his or her name and county of residence and have up to three (3) minutes to make remarks unless time is extended by a majority vote of the Board. Members of the Board and the Director of Schools may have the privilege of asking questions of any person who addresses the Board.

The Board respects and appreciates the good intentions that bring citizens to speak at Public Forum. The Board asks that speakers show their respect for the Board, the staff and other citizens by speaking in a manner that is civil and courteous. The Chair or Vice Chair shall have the authority to terminate the remarks of any individual whose remarks are frivolous, repetitive, and/or harassing or who does not adhere to Public Forum rules.

Individuals seeking additional information about Public Forum or any item on a meeting agenda shall direct inquiries to the office of the Board of Education or the Director of Schools.

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Legal References:

1. T.C.A. § 8-44-112.
2. T.C.A. § 8-44-101 (in general).

Approved as to Legal Form  
By the Knox County Law Director 3/18/2024  
*/Gary T. Dupler/Deputy Law Director*