

# *City of Boston*

## *In School Committee*

February 1, 2012

### **RULES FOR PUBLIC COMMENT AND CONDUCT** **AT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

*ORDERED*, That the School Committee hereby sets forth the Rules of Conduct and Rules of Public Comment relating to the Boston School Committee meetings, as follows:

#### **I. Order of the Agenda & Public Comment**

- Each School Committee meeting will feature one (1) 60-minute public comment period beginning at 6:30 P.M. The Chair would have discretion as to the length of the period.
- The Chair has the discretion to allow for an additional comment period immediately following the report presentations. The length of the comment period will be determined by the Chair.
- Each speaker will have three (3) minutes to testify. The Executive Secretary will announce when one (1) minute remains, followed by a 30-second warning.
- If twenty (20) or more speakers sign up to testify, time is reduced to two (2) minutes per individual.
- Persons who require interpretation services will be allotted an additional two (2) minutes.
- Large groups addressing the same topic are encouraged to consolidate their remarks or select a spokesperson to provide testimony.
- Written testimony is appreciated and encouraged.
- Speakers may not reassign their time to others.
- Speakers must begin their remarks by stating their name and affiliation. TV cameras will only record speakers who face the committee.

#### **II. Rules of Conduct at Meetings Convened by the School Committee**

- All attendees must be seated. No one will be admitted to the Winter Chamber once capacity is reached. (Official capacity, per Fire Marshall, is 180).

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- Anyone who wishes to record or photograph the meeting must first notify the Chair, who will then inform the public (per Massachusetts Open Meeting Law, July 2010). Such audio or video recording may not interfere with the meeting.
- If a person continues to disrupt the meeting after a clear warning, the Chair has the authority to order that person to leave. If the person does not leave, authorities may be called (per Massachusetts Open Meeting Law, July 2010).
- Any signage present must not prohibit the participation of others. The Chair will use his/her discretion.

On roll call, the order was approved by the following vote:

YEAS – John F. Barros, Meg Campbell, Alfreda J. Harris, Claudio Martinez,  
Mary Tamer and Chairperson Gregory G. Groover - 6

NAYS – 0

ABSENT – Michael D. O'Neill - 1

Attest:



Elizabeth A. Sullivan  
Executive Secretary

# THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE OF THE CITY OF BOSTON



BSC 01FEB'12 PM 3:15

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** School Committee Chair and Members  
**FROM:** John Barros, School Committee Member *JB*  
Carlos Rojas, Student Representative  
**DATE:** February 1, 2012  
**SUBJECT:** Rules for Public Comment and Conduct at School Committee Meetings

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Over the past several months, we have worked with former School Committee member Marchelle Raynor to fine tune the School Committee's proposed rules for public comment and conduct and conduct additional community outreach.

Tonight, we are pleased to present a final proposal to the School Committee for your vote. If approved, these rules would go into effect immediately.

### **I. Order of the Agenda & Public Comment**

**Recommendation:** Each School Committee meeting will feature one (1) 60-minute public comment period beginning at 6:30 p.m. The Chair would have discretion as to the length of the period.

**Recommendation:** The Chair has discretion to allow for an additional comment period immediately following the report presentations. The length of the comment period will be determined by the Chair.

**Recommendation:** Each speaker will have three (3) minutes to testify. The Executive Secretary will announce when one minutes remains, followed by a 30-second warning.

**Recommendation:** If 20 or more speakers sign up to testify, time is reduced to 2 minutes per individual.

**Recommendation:** Persons who require interpretation services will be allotted an additional two (2) minutes for testimony.

**Recommendation:** Large groups addressing the same topic are encouraged to consolidate their remarks or select a spokesperson to provide testimony.

**Recommendation:** Written testimony is appreciated and encouraged.

**Recommendation:** Speakers may not reassign their time to others.

**Recommendation:** Speakers must begin their remarks by stating their name and affiliation. TV cameras will only record speakers who face the committee.

## **II. Rules of Conduct at meetings convened by the School Committee**

**Recommendation:** All attendees must be seated. No one will be admitted to the Winter Chamber once capacity is reached. (Official capacity, per Fire Marshall, is 180).

**Recommendation:** Anyone who wishes to record or photograph the meeting must first notify the Chair, who will then inform the public (per MA Open Meeting Law, July 2010). Such audio or video recording may not interfere with the meeting.

**Recommendation:** If a person continues to disrupt the meeting after a clear warning, the Chair has the authority to order that person to leave. If the person does not leave, authorities may be called (per MA Open Meeting Law, July 2010).

**Recommendation:** Any signage must not prohibit the participation of others. The Chair will use his/her discretion.

**Recommendation:** The Chair has the discretion to determine the appropriateness of sustained displays of approval or disapproval.