

How to make a public comment during a Manatee District School Board Meeting

Public comment is an opportunity to respectfully share with the School Board feedback, concerns, questions, and/or related data about education policies, approaches, programs in our school district.

Public comment is not an open forum to discuss matters unrelated to education, to support or oppose candidates for public office, or to engage in commercial speech attempting to sell a service or product to the School Board or public. Also, public comment is not a forum to attack individual school system employees or Board Members. Any such complaints should be submitted in writing to the Superintendent for appropriate handling. Finally, this is not a forum for addressing issues involving individual students. Because of privacy concerns, such issues should be submitted in writing to the Superintendent for appropriate handling.

	In person	Virtually	By Email
Step 1	Review the meeting agendas and materials and determine if your comment is related to an agenda item or if it is off topic. If it is off topic, you may make your comment during General Public Comment which is usually held toward the start of the meeting. However, the agenda will include the placement of General Public Comment. Agendas are available prior to the meeting at the following link: http://manateecountyschoolfl.iqm2.com/Citizens/Calendar.aspx		
Step 2	You will have up to 3 minutes to speak in person or over the phone. Prepare and practice what you would like to say about education. Direct your comments to the entire School Board and not to one individual Board member, the Superintendent, a staff member, or the audience. Time yourself to make sure you do not go over the 3-minute limit.		Written comments should be typed and include the agenda topic, name and address of the person making the comment.
Step 3	Sign up to speak prior to the start of the meeting. Click on this link to set up an account and follow sign-up instructions: http://manateecountyschoolfl.iqm2.com/Citizens/Default.aspx		Submit your Written Public Comments in advance of the meeting at the following address: public_comment@manateeschools.net . Written comments submitted after the start of the workshop or meeting will become part of the public record for the next workshop or meeting.
Step 4	Arrive at School Board Chambers located at 215 Manatee Avenue West, Bradenton. All persons	At the time of the meeting: Dial 1-407-502-8485 and enter the phone conference id number (followed by #).	

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	<p>attending the meeting will be required to pass a security checkpoint in accordance with School Board policy. Seating is on a first come, first served basis. Persons wishing to attend may be asked to wait outside or in an overflow room should all the seats inside the board room be filled.</p>	<p>You can find the id number at: http://manateecountyschoolfl.iqm2.com/Citizens/Default.aspx</p>	
<p>Step 5</p>	<p>Listen for your name to be called. You must be ready to speak at that time. If you are speaking to an agenda item, your name will be called when that agenda item comes up. If you did not indicate an agenda item when signing up, your name will be called in the order that you registered during General Public Comments.</p> <p>Be prepared to practice patience – public comments can be quick or very long depending on the issues going on in our community. And Remember, your input is appreciated and your voice is important!</p>		
<p>Step 6</p>	<p>Before you begin speaking, provide any handouts to the Agency Clerk. Then...</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify yourself only by your full name for the record. 2. You have no more than three minutes to speak. Stop speaking when the bell rings. 3. Florida Law requires all citizens to conduct themselves in an orderly fashion at public meetings. 		

Remember: This is a business meeting of the School Board and the public expects that it be conducted in an orderly, efficient, effective and dignified manner. Speakers must keep this in mind when making comments. The audience must not demonstrate approval or disapproval of what a speaker has said by clapping or booing. The Board appreciates the public's input and will listen attentively, consider each comment, and usually will not respond, enter into debate, or answer questions during comments on agenda items or during the public comments section.

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If you would like to watch the meeting remotely, you may tune in on Manatee Schools Television (MSTV) using the following link: <https://www.manateeschools.net/Page/3700> or MSTV is Spectrum channel 646 and Frontier channel 39 and live online at MSTV.US. (please note: There is usually a slight delay). Remember, if you are making a comment while listening remotely you must be dialed in to the number listed in Step 4 above.

If you wish to contact the Board, you can do so via email using their email addresses, or via phone at (941) 708-8770 extension 41155 or via Fax at (941) 708-8653. Link to email addresses: <https://www.manateeschools.net/Page/2184> Mailing address is 215 Manatee Avenue West, Bradenton, FL 34205.

WARNING: Any individual who interferes with the expeditious or orderly process of a School Board meeting, will be subject to removal from the meeting pursuant to Section 1001.372(3) Florida Statutes at the discretion of the Chair. Orderly fashion is deemed as, at a minimum (1) no profanity (2) no vulgar language (3) no discourteous, disrespectful, or disparaging conduct.