



## PUBLIC COMMENT POLICY

*Approved: 3.21.24*

The Rhode Island Open Meetings Act recognizes a public body's ability to hold an optional open forum/public comment portion of a meeting. The Act defines this open forum as "the designated portion of an open meeting, if any, on a properly posted notice reserved for citizens to address comments to a public body relating to matters affecting the public business." R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-46-2(6). In light of this, the Excel Academy Rhode Island Board of Trustees may, from time to time, devote a portion of its open meeting to open forum/public comment. In such instances, the Excel Academy Rhode Island Board of Trustees will adhere to the following protocols:

- The purpose of Public Comment is to enable members of the public to express their thoughts and concerns. The public should be aware that Board members are not permitted by law to engage in substantive discussion with members of the public about issues that have not been posted in advance of the meeting. In these instances, the Board members may ask for clarification or additional information in order to take the issue or issues presented under advisement.
- Each Board meeting shall have up to three, three-minute time slots available for Public Comment. Commenters must sign up at least 48 hours in advance of a Board meeting by submitting a response to the electronic submission form published on the Excel Academy Charter Schools website. Time slots are assigned on a first come, first served basis. You will receive an email confirmation letting you know if a time slot is available.
- Generally, members of the public will address the Board in the order of sign-up, unless the Board Chair, in the interest of addressing Board business, determines an alternative order is necessary.
- Additional written information may be presented to and considered by the Board by Commenters via the sign-up form or via a letter to the Board.
- In an effort to allow the Board to conduct its business within a reasonable time period, Public Comment, in its entirety, shall be limited to ten (10) minutes.
- The Board has discretion, based on a majority vote, to increase the length of Public Comment during a particular meeting, but the Board may consider many factors in deciding whether to lengthen a particular Public Comment period such as the Board's agenda, the business it must attend to during that meeting, time, efficiencies, and redundancy or duplicative comments.
- Commenters not adhering to the following guidelines may be asked by the Board to end their comments and leave the premises:
  - Model appropriate behavior and be good examples to our school community.
  - Be respectful to staff, students, and other members of our school community.
  - Handle complaints in a positive and professional manner.