

A. BOARD EXPECTATION

Mohammed Schools of Atlanta Consultative Board (Board) will hear public commentary from any interested student, parent/guardian of a student; and/or employee of the School pursuant to the guidelines outlined in this Policy. Students under the age of 18 must be accompanied by the student's parent/guardian.

B. BOARD PRACTICE

1. **Public Comment Session:** The Board provides a 30-minute public comment session at the **first regular Board meeting of each month** to allow individuals, as identified in Section A of this Policy, an opportunity to address the Board. This public comment session shall be held:
 - a. Immediately following the Board Recognition's portion of the agenda; or
 - b. Prior to the beginning of the meeting when no recognitions are scheduled.

2. **Procedures for Speaking During the Public Comment Session:**
 - a. Before addressing the Board, individuals are urged to seek a solution to their concerns through the proper staff and administrative channels.
 - b. Individuals desiring to appear before the Board are requested to first submit a request form to address the board in order to be placed on the agenda, **24 hours before** speaking during the public comment session.
 - c. Individuals should bring a copy of their request form to the meeting.
 - d. The day of the meeting, individuals must complete a sign-in sheet prior to the convening of the Board meeting or public presentation session, whichever occurs first.
 - e. Speakers must present any materials brought for the Board, i.e., letters, photos, petitions, written comments or other documentation, etc. Speakers are asked to provide 10 copies of these materials for each of the Board members. If 10 copies are not available, the individual shall deliver the material to the Board Chair for distribution.
 - f. Speakers will have an allotted amount of time, with a maximum of five minutes to speak before the Board, with the time for speaker being determined by the Chair, depending on the number of speakers, with a maximum of 10 speakers.
 - g. Speakers will be scheduled on a first come, first served basis of when their request forms were submitted. However, the Chair may give priority to those discussing Board agenda items being considered during the Board meeting.
 - h. Individuals will not be denied the opportunity to address the Board on the basis of their viewpoint. The Board requests that speakers maintain appropriate decorum and that comments remain focused and respectful. Speakers may comment on issues scheduled for consideration at the Board meeting or other concerns pertinent to the operation of the School. In addition to the guidelines in this Policy, public commentary will not be permitted if:
 - i. The topic is excluded by the Open Meetings Act (O.C.G.A. §§ 50-14-1 et seq.); (This includes, but may **not** be limited to, certain land, legal or personnel items);
 - ii. The speaker makes obscene, profane, vulgar, defamatory, slanderous, or threatening gestures/remarks during his/her public commentary;
 - iii. The speaker discusses a student by name, or shares other information that could lead to the personal identification of a student (See, for example, Family and Educational Rights Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1232g);
 - iv. The speaker makes untrue, slanderous or defamatory comments or other unsubstantiated claims about an identified or identifiable employee (While general comments are appropriate for the public comment session, concerns about specific individuals should be addressed privately with the appropriate administrator.); or
 - v. The speaker disrupts or attempts to disrupt the Board meeting (See, for example, O.C.G.A. § 16-11-34).

- i. Speakers may not gain an additional opportunity to speak by reserving or dividing their allotted time for another speaking occasion, and may not pass their allotted time to other speakers.
- j. **Speakers must:**
 - i. State their name to the Board prior to beginning public commentary;
 - ii. End their remarks when their allotted time expires;
 - iii. Direct public commentary to the Board as a body and not to an individual Board Member.
- k. Speakers should be aware that their public commentary may be broadcast live, filmed, photographed or recorded.
- l. Any person who willfully violates these guidelines may forfeit the remainder of their speaking time and the Board may, in consultation with the Board Attorney, issue a written notice prohibiting the speaker from appearing before the Board for up to sixty (60) days.
- m. Board Members may ask questions for clarification.
- n. If requested during his/her remarks, a speaker will receive a written response via email and/or postal mail from the Board within thirty (30) calendar days.

Approved: 10/31/2019

Revised:

Confirmed:

Legal Reference

O.C.G.A. 16-11-0034

O.C.G.A. 16-11-0035

O.C.G.A. 50-14-0001

Preventing or disrupting a meeting of General Assembly or other meetings of members

Removal from campus or facility of unit of university system or school; failure to leave

Open Meetings Law