

Parkrose Board of Education - Board Operations

BOARD MEETINGS

The board meets twice a month:

- **Work session** (held on 2nd Monday) is a more informal meeting, usually with time for the board to work on some of our goals or have longer discussions
- **Business meeting** (held on 4th Monday) is a more formal meeting; usually the bulk of our action items are here; formal resolutions (monthly celebrations), presentations from staff, and board reports from our attendance at committees, OSBA, etc.

BOARD MEETING AGENDAS

The Board Secretary manages [a document in google docs](#) that the Chair and Superintendent use to track agenda items. **The Board Chair, Vice Chair and Superintendent meet monthly to review the items needed and plan out the next few meetings.**

The agenda includes some routine items required for the operation of the district. Some of them are based on legal or state requirements, some are more flexible. Examples include: restraint & seclusion report, budget vacancy announcement & calendar, triannual wellness report and MESD service plan menu. The Chair and Board Secretary review the agenda to make sure there is enough time to discuss all the items listed. For very full agendas, the Board Secretary lists an approximate time for each section (15 minutes, etc.).

The Board Secretary emails the agenda on Thursday or Friday before the Monday meeting. **Each board member is responsible for reviewing the agenda, reading any included presentations or reports, and coming to the meeting prepared to ask questions.**

If a board member wishes to suggest an item for inclusion in a future agenda, the member should raise it for board discussion during the portion of the meeting for “Future Agenda Items.” Members are always welcome to contact the Chair and Superintendent between meetings if they have questions or concerns about the board agenda.

HOW WE CONDUCT THE MEETING

The Chair conducts the meeting, moving through the published agenda. **The Chair is responsible for starting and ending the meeting on time.** The Board Secretary times presentations and displays a clock for those speaking.

We use [Robert’s Rules of Order](#) to coordinate our meetings. While this limits how we speak, it also provides protocols that can help ensure that a single voice(s) don’t dominate the meeting.

The Chair speaks and invites others to speak. **Before you can speak, you need to be recognized by the Chair. We usually do this informally, often using non-verbal communication to check in with the Chair.**

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After a presentation by staff or a board member, the Chair opens discussion and gives each board member the chance to speak. Per our group agreements, we do this in round robin format, so that we speak in a different order.

Each board member is encouraged to limit their remarks to 1 or 2 questions or comments so that there is enough time for everyone to speak. Members can ask the Chair for a second round of comment/discussion, and the Chair will respond based on how much time is available in the agenda.

In the less formal work session, the board benefits from back and forth discussions. In the business meeting, board members should generally refrain from asking questions of other members and instead affirm what they agree or disagree with in another member's comment.

HOW WE VOTE

The Board can only make decisions by a formal vote. Under Robert's Rules this requires a motion by a board member, a second (to affirm that the board wants to discuss it), discussion and then a call for ayes, nays, and abstentions. As a best practice, the Chair usually refrains from making motions. The Chair says "Do I hear a motion to...?"

If you make a motion, you are saying you want the board to take an action. A motion requires a second member to affirm it, saying that they agree.

After the motion is seconded, the chair calls for discussion. This is a chance to say how you plan to vote and why. Neither the person who made a motion nor the person who seconds the motion is under any obligation to vote in favor of the matter. Discussion isn't necessary, but is sometimes a good place to go "on record" with why you think this action is important.

If you will vote no (you disagree) or will abstain (because you have a conflict of interest or there's some barrier why you don't feel able to vote), you should say why during discussion. Other members can then engage with your viewpoint and discuss the motion further.

If during discussion, the board comes to realize that it wants to modify the original motion, the members should all vote no. Someone can then propose a modified motion for discussion and vote. (There is a process for amending a motion but it is a bit complicated, so it's easier just to make a new one.)

When discussion is finished (or when it's been enough time), the chair calls for a vote. The Board Secretary records who voted in the minutes.

Student Representatives aren't legally permitted to vote on board decisions, so the Chair can ask for a formal recommendation to be shared and then included in the minutes.