

# HB 253

## Student Participation in Public Comment at School Board Meetings



Bill Patron: Delegate Joshua Cole

### WHAT THE BILL DOES:

Requires school boards to permit any student enrolled in a public elementary or secondary school in the local school division to submit oral comments during the public comment portion of the school board meetings.

### HOW DOES THIS IMPACT SCHOOL DIVISIONS?

Local school boards will need to adjust their policies related to participation in a public meeting if their current policies do not currently align with this legislation.

Students seeking to make public comment must provide acceptable proof of identification (if requested), follow sign-up procedures, and abide by the same restrictions on expression applicable to all other citizen participants in school board meetings.

### WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE?

- [Further information regarding public meetings](#) as noted in the *Code of Virginia* is available.

### WHAT ADDITIONAL ITEMS WILL BE RELEASED?

- No additional resources are slated for release.

### SCHOOL DIVISION NEXT STEPS:

1. Review the school division's current policy related to public participation in school board meetings and determine if revisions need to be made to current policy to align with the law.
2. If revisions need to be made, follow the school division's established practices for revising the local school board's policy. Consult with the school division's legal counsel if needed.
3. After making policy revisions to align with HB253, communicate proposed revisions and final board actions per local school division practices. Divisions may choose to communicate this action specifically to students through student communication options, including, but not limited to, the local student council/government, as well.
4. Following approval, establish processes to comply with the law and local school board policy in preparation for the enactment of the new policy. Processes may include checking student identification if that requirement is included in the local school board's policy.

### WHO IS THE VDOE CONTACT:

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