

CHAPARRAL STAR ACADEMY BOARD MEETING

GUIDELINES

Chaparral Star Academy is a community of faculty, parents and students that uphold the vision of the school as stated in its charter documents. The governing board is the main governing entity that makes decisions for operations of the school. As stated in the charter,

“The responsibilities of the Governing Board include: setting school policies, adoption of text books, adoption of the annual budget, ratification of hiring decisions, appointment of the school superintendent and principal, approval of the school calendar, approval of salaries of staff/faculty, final voice in grievance proceedings, oversee performance of the business manager, principal, and superintendent, oversee compliance of the school with all state and federal regulations and terms of the school charter, establish yearly enrollment goals until the maximum enrollment is reached, acquisition of facilities to meet the needs of the expanding enrollment.”

The governing board conducts its regular monthly meeting at 6:30 p.m. on the first Wednesday of every month (except for July). An agenda for each meeting is posted at least 72 hours in advance of the scheduled meeting. It is posted at the front office of school, on the school’s website as well as on the school yahoo group website. Since it is a public meeting, the governing board encourages everyone to attend to stay updated with decisions being made for the school. However, if you wish to attend, there are some rules to be aware of in regard to meeting procedure. Overall, it’s important to remember that the audience is *witnessing board discussion*.

MAIN SECTIONS OF THE MEETING

A.) Public Comments: During this section of the meeting, the public is invited to speak to the board. This section occurs at the very beginning of every meeting. This is the **only time** during the meeting that the public can make a comment or speak to the board. The president of the board will ask the public if anyone in the audience would like to make a public comment, and the order of speakers will follow the list on the sign-in sheet. Each speaker is allowed 2 minutes to address the board, with a maximum of 20 minutes per meeting spent on public comments.¹ The board is not required to respond to anything stated in public comments. In fact, by state law, the board cannot discuss any issue brought up during public comments, unless it is on the approved agenda. According to the Attorney General’s publication, The 2006 Open Meetings Act Made Easy,

“Members of the governmental body may not deliberate or make any decision about an unposted issue at a meeting of the governmental body. If an unposted item is raised by members of the general public, the governing body has four options. First, an official may respond with a statement of specific factual information or recite the governmental body’s existing policy on that issue. Second, an official may direct the person making the inquiry to visit with staff about the issue. Third, the governing body may offer to place an item on the

¹ Based on procedure discussed at the May 7, 2008 Chaparral Star Academy Governing Board Meeting

agenda for discussion at a future open meeting. Finally, the governing body may offer to post the matter as an emergency item if it meets the criteria for an emergency posting.”²

If the board feels that any information stated in public comments is confidential, the board may convene in executive session to hear/discuss the comment.

B.) All Other Sections of the Meeting: During all other sections of the board meeting, the audience cannot address the board. If an audience member brought up an issue during public comments that is not on the agenda, the board cannot discuss that issue at the same meeting. However, the board may choose to place the issue on the agenda for discussion at the next board meeting. If the issue is already on the agenda, then the board will discuss it. However, it is important to realize that audience members cannot be part of the discussion. The board can address members of the audience throughout the meeting, though.

C.) Executive Session: During this section of a meeting, the public is asked to leave the meeting, leaving only the executive board (and any other invitees) to discuss issues not relevant to the public.³ During these times, the audience is to wait outside of the meeting until the meeting reconvenes in public session.

Please be aware of and follow the proper procedure for addressing the board. If you would like an item to be added to the agenda for discussion, please contact Kris Barnett. All items must be added to the agenda at least 72 hours before the meeting. If you have a grievance with a teacher or the administration that you would like to have the board discuss, please ensure that faculty due process has been followed. If an issue has not gone through faculty due process, the board secretary has discretionary power as to its addition to the agenda.

² Based on Texas Government Code §551.042

³ See Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code for the exceptions to requirement that meetings be open.