School Board Office
8115 Gatehouse Road
Falls Church, VA 22042
October 28, 2026

Standard Operating Procedure
Motions and Motion Timeline

PURPOSE:

To develop a process for creation of motion language and a timeline for motions to be delivered to the Clerk's Office and Chair.

SCOPE:

The Fairfax County Public Schools uses Robert's Rules of Parliamentary Procedure for most of the governance of regular meetings, work sessions, and Committee meetings.

In addition, the Board has agreed to a 48 hour rule for new motions, including certain amendments, brought before a regular meeting. This motion states, "I move to adopt a special rule of order, requiring School Board Members to submit final language for non-agendized motions to the board Clerk and all other board members at least 48-hours in advance of the Regular Meeting in which it is to be considered.

Non-agendized motions requiring the 48-hour notice include:

- Any main motion that is not already on the agenda.
- Follow-on motions for main motions already on the agenda.
- Amendments for main motions already on the agenda.
- Substitute motions for main motions already on the agenda.

Motions allowed within the 48-hour notice window or from the dais:

- Any motion with a 2/3 vote of the board to suspend these rules.
- Follow-on motions for board member-submitted main motions.
- Amendments for board member-submitted motions.

• Substitute motions for board member-submitted motions.
• Any motion that is not a non-agendized motion, as defined above, including any motion designed to end debate, table, or postpone consideration of a motion.

Lastly, the timing of motions is also determined by SB 699 which amended the *Virginia Freedom of Information Act* to require "public bodies subject to the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) to post the proposed agenda on the public body's official government website, if any, prior to the meeting. The bill provides that no final action may be taken on any items added to an agenda after a meeting commences unless the matter is time-sensitive or is the subject of a closed meeting properly identified in a motion in accordance with FOIA requirements and defines 'final action.'"

ROLES:

School Board Members: School Board Members submit motions for consideration before the full Board and Standing Committees. These motions shall follow the timelines and guidelines outlined in this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP). School Board Members should be prepared to find a second for their motion, if the motion does not come from the Superintendent's Office. The School Board Member bringing the motion shall send their proposed motion to the Clerk team and the Chair.

School Board Chair and Committee Chairs: The School Board Chair is responsible for meeting agendas for the regular meeting and work session. Committee Chairs set the agenda for their respective meetings. The Chairs are responsible for working with the Clerk team to put the member-brought motions on the upcoming agenda in a timely manner.

Clerk Team: The Clerk team is responsible for the intake of member-brought motions, maintenance of meeting management software for the agenda, and support in crafting language for member-brought motions. Upon request, the Clerk team will also work with the School Board Member to craft motions before they submit them to ensure accurate language, format, and structure.

Parliamentarian: The Parliamentarian supports the School Board to ensure compliance with Robert's Rules, School Board Governance rules, and state and local laws. They attend regular meetings of the School Board and are available to support questions as needed.

TIMELINE:

For New Business: New member-brought motions should be placed on New Business of a regular meeting before moving to a vote through the Action or Consent portion of the agenda. Items to be placed on New Business can be placed on the agenda at any time as long as they

are not being brought forward for final action at that regular meeting. If a School Board Member anticipates suspending the rules to have new business considered at a regular meeting, the item must be submitted to the Clerk team and posted on the regular meeting agenda before the regular meeting begins.

For Consent: Items for the Consent agenda shall have the final motion language to the Clerk and School Board Chair within the 48 hours prior to the meeting (typically by 7:00 p.m. on the Tuesday before a regular meeting).

For Action: New member-brought motions that are considered timely or are addendums or follow-on motions to agendized motions shall be brought to the Clerk and School Board Chair within the 48 hours prior to the meeting (typically by 7:00 p.m. on the Tuesday before a regular meeting).

GUIDELINES:

- Motion language should clearly state the proposal, who is being directed, and (if applicable) a time certain for completion of the action.

- When amending another Member's motion, the Member bringing the amendment should have clear motion language outlining the proposed changes. If the member would like to provide a redlined version of the amended motion, it should be combined with a clear direction that steps out the changes in a motion.

- If motions are sent to the School Board Chair and Clerk outside the timelines above, the Chair can offer to place the motion on the agenda for the next regular meeting.

- The School Board Chair also has the discretion to delay a member-brought motion for one meeting in accordance with the Strategic Governance Manual.

- Changes to the 48-hour rule requires a suspension of the rules, which is a two-thirds vote. A suspension of the rules requires a second.