

# CUSD 101

## BOARD MEETINGS



**Everything You Always Wanted to Know  
about CUSD Board Meetings  
(but Didn't Know Whom to Ask)**

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## Overview

School Board meetings across California follow very similar formats because California law governs much of the way elected bodies must conduct business. The CUSD Board may hold 4 different kinds of meetings: Regular Meetings, Special Meetings, Workshops, and Emergency Meetings. All Board meetings, with the exception of Closed Sessions, are open to the public.

### Regular Meetings

### Special Meetings

### Workshops

### Emergency Meetings

## MEETING TYPES

**Regular Meetings** generally include both Closed Session and Open Session agendas. Most Regular Meetings are scheduled to begin at 7 pm on the third Wednesday of the month.

**Special Meetings** are called only when there is District business that must be completed prior to the next scheduled regular meeting.

**Workshops** are called a few times each year to allow the Board and staff to discuss one or two items in depth. Workshops are informal. Board members often engage directly with members of the public and staff during Workshops. Votes are never taken during a Workshop.

An **Emergency Meeting** may be called in rare emergency or threatened emergency situations such as natural disasters.

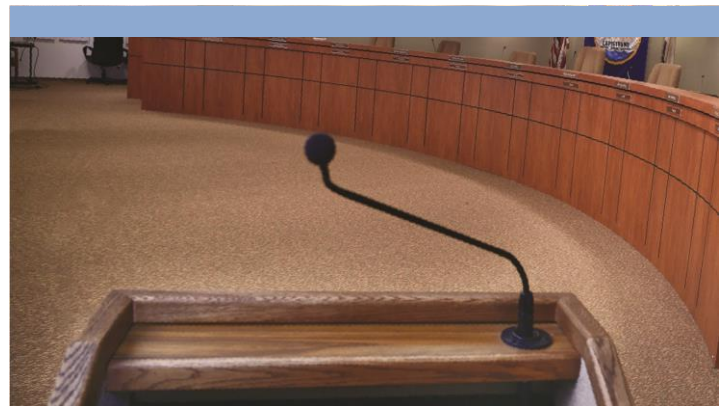
California law requires that Public Notice (including posting of the meeting agenda) be given at least 72 hours in advance of a Regular Meeting or Workshop, at least 24 hours in advance of a Special Meeting, and at least one hour in advance of an Emergency Meeting.

## PUBLIC COMMENT AND ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Members of the public who wish to make a Public Comment must fill out a blue Request to Address the Board of Trustees prior to the item being heard by the Board. During remote or telephonic meetings, speakers must complete an online comment request form prior to the beginning of Closed Session (for Closed Session comments) or Open Session (for Open Session comments). Requests will be accepted only until 30 minutes after the start of the Open Session.

CUSD Board Policy limits the time allotted for Public Comment to a total of 20 minutes per agenda item and 1-3 minutes per speaker per item. The Board will sometimes extend the total number of minutes per item or reduce the number of minutes per speaker.

Board members do not respond to Public Comments. However, Public Comment is not the only opportunity to communicate with Board members. Each Board member has an email address, listed on the Board of Trustees page of the CUSD web site, which the public can use to communicate with members of the Board.



**Closed Session Comments:** The public may comment on any Closed Session item prior to the beginning of a Closed Session.

**Open Session Comments:** There are four kinds of opportunities for the public to make comments during an Open Session.

## FOUR KINDS OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS

**1** An item titled “Oral Communications (Non-Agenda Items)” is listed near the beginning of each Open Session agenda. This is an opportunity for public the to comment about any pertinent issue that is not on the agenda.

**2** Open Session agendas may include one or more Public Hearings. After the President or presiding opens the Public Hearing, members of the public officer may make their comments.

**3** Before the Board votes to approve the Consent Calendar, there is an opportunity for the public to comment on any Consent Calendar item.

**4** The President or presiding officer announces each Discussion item and calls on the item’s originator to present the item. After the item has been presented, the presiding officer calls on those who have made speaker requests to make their comments.

**WORKSHOP COMMENTS:** Workshops are less formal than other meetings. Trustees and members of the public engage conversationally with each other in a manner similar to a classroom setting.

## CLOSED SESSION

Under California law, elected bodies may discuss only certain topics in Closed Session (sometimes called Executive Sessions). Each item to be discussed during the Closed Session must be listed on the Closed Session agenda. These items include matters concerning individual employees, collective bargaining, matters concerning individual students (such as expulsions), security issues, litigation, liability claims, and public health emergencies.

### Closed Session Format

Closed Session begins with a call to order, followed by comments from the public on Closed Session agenda items. After hearing all comments on the Closed Session agenda items, the Board adjourns to the Closed Session and leaves the dais.

### Closed Session Agendas

Closed Session agenda items are confidential in accordance with California law. However, in some instances, the public will be aware of the nature of a Closed Session item and may make comments.

### Closed Session Report

After the Board completes the Closed Session and returns to Open Session, a staff member will report the actions taken during Closed Session. In most cases, Closed Session actions remain confidential, so the report will provide only limited information such as “the Board gave direction to staff.”

***Individuals present during a Closed Session may not discuss Closed Session matters with anyone who was not present.***

## OPEN SESSIONS

### Open Session Format

Under California law, Board members may not discuss any matter that is not on the meeting agenda. The Board comment period at the beginning of a regular meeting is the only time during a Board meeting it is permissible for Board members to comment on non-agenda matters.

### Open Session Agendas

Please refer to “Public Comment and Oral Communications” regarding the opportunities for making Public Comments.



(Open Session agendas, continued on back page)



## Open Session Agendas, cont.

### Oral Communications (Non-Agenda Items)

#### Public Hearings

California law requires that Public Hearings be held on certain items, such as textbook adoptions. There is no staff presentation during the Public Hearing, as the appropriate presentation will be made during a Discussion item.

#### Consent Calendar

The Consent Calendar contains routine items that do not need discussion. It is voted upon with one motion and without discussion. If a Board member has questions about a Consent Calendar item, or wants it to be discussed, they may “pull” the item off the Consent Calendar. “Pulled” Consent Calendar items are generally heard at the end of the Board meeting, just prior to adjournment.

#### Discussion/Action Items

The Discussion/Action part of the meeting is when most presentations and Board discussions take place.



Each Discussion item is announced by the President or presiding officer, who calls on the originator (usually a CUSD staff member) to present the item. The staff member explains the item, and may display images, graphs, or tables as part of their presentation. There is no Board discussion during the staff presentation, though sometimes a Board member will briefly interrupt to ask for a clarification.

After the staff presentation, the presiding officer will call the names of those who have completed speaker requests for that item, to make their comments.

Subsequent to the staff presentation and public comments for a Discussion item, Board members may ask questions of the staff, and discuss the item among themselves. If a Board action on the item is required, there will generally be a staff recommendation for action. Board members may move to accept or reject the staff recommendation, or table the item, or amend the staff recommendation. Each motion is voted upon according to Robert’s Rules of Order.

## For More Information

California Education Laws (“Education Code”)  
[CAEdCodeCUSD](#)

California Open Meetings laws (“The Brown Act”)  
[Board101BrownAct](#)

Bylaws of the CUSD Board  
[CUSDBoardBylaws](#)

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