

School and College Legal Services of California

Board Bylaw

Meeting Conduct

BB 9323

Board Bylaws

The Joint Powers Authority (“JPA”) Board of School and College Legal Services of California (“SCLS”) endeavors to conduct business efficiently and in a manner that promotes full and fair consideration of the issues and allows for meaningful participation of members of the public.

Meeting Procedures

All SCLS JPA Board meetings shall begin on time and shall be guided by an agenda prepared in accordance with law and posted and distributed in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act (open meeting requirements) and other applicable laws.

The SCLS JPA Board president shall conduct meetings in accordance with Robert’s Rules of Order.

The SCLS JPA Board believes that late night meetings discourage public participation, can affect the Board's decision-making ability, and can be an unnecessary burden on Board members, the General Counsel, and staff. Regular Board meetings shall be adjourned at the time, if any, set by the Board at the annual organizational meeting.

Quorum and Abstentions

A majority of the members of the SCLS JPA Board shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

On a call by any SCLS JPA Board member, a voice vote shall be taken upon any proposition and the vote shall be recorded in the minutes.

Unless otherwise provided by law, an affirmative vote by a majority of all the membership of the SCLS JPA Board is required to approve any action under consideration, regardless of the number of members present.

The SCLS JPA Board believes that when no conflict of interest requires abstention, its members have a duty to vote on issues before them. When a member abstains, the abstention shall not be counted as an affirmative vote for purposes of determining whether a majority of the membership of the Board has taken action.

Public Participation

Members of the public are encouraged to attend SCLS JPA Board meetings and to address the Board concerning any item on the agenda or within the Board's jurisdiction. Although they may voluntarily do so, members of the public attending a SCLS JPA Board meeting shall not be required to sign in, complete a questionnaire, or otherwise provide their name or other information as a condition of attending the meeting.

In order to conduct business in an orderly and efficient manner, the SCLS JPA Board requires public presentations to the County Board to comply with the following procedures:

1. The SCLS JPA Board shall give members of the public an opportunity to address the Board on any item of interest to the public that is within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Board, either before or during the Board's consideration of the item. (Government Code 54954.3)
 2. At a time so designated on the agenda at a regular meeting, members of the public may bring before the SCLS JPA Board matters that are not listed on the agenda. The SCLS JPA Board shall undertake no action or discussion on any item not appearing on the posted agenda, except as authorized by law. (Government Code 54954.2)
 3. Without taking action, SCLS JPA Board members or SCLS staff members may briefly respond to statements made or questions posed by the public about items not appearing on the agenda. Additionally, on their own initiative or in response to questions posed by the public, Board members or SCLS staff may ask a question for clarification, make a brief announcement, or make a brief report on their own activities. (Government Code 54954.2)
- Furthermore, the SCLS JPA Board may provide a reference to SCLS staff or other resources for factual information, ask SCLS staff to report back to the Board at a subsequent meeting concerning any matter, or take action to direct that a matter of business be placed on a future agenda. (Government Code 54954.2)
4. The SCLS JPA Board need not allow members of the public to speak on any item that has already been considered by a committee composed exclusively of Board members at a public meeting where the public had the opportunity to address the committee on that item. However, if the SCLS JPA Board determines that the item has been substantially changed since the committee heard the item, the Board shall provide an opportunity for the public to speak. (Government Code 54954.3)
 5. A person wishing to be heard by the SCLS JPA Board shall first be recognized by the president.

In general, individual speakers will be allowed three minutes to address the SCLS JPA Board on each agenda or nonagenda item, and the total time for public input on each item will be limited to 20 minutes. In exceptional circumstances, however, the SCLS JPA Board president may, with Board consent, adjust the amount of time allowed for public input and/or the time

allotted for each speaker, when such adjustment is necessary to ensure full opportunity for public input. Any such adjustment shall be done equitably so as to allow a diversity of viewpoints. The president may also ask members of the public with the same viewpoint to select a few individuals to address the SCLS JPA Board on behalf of that viewpoint.

In order to ensure that non-English speakers receive the same opportunity to directly address the SCLS JPA Board, any member of the public who utilizes a translator shall be provided at least twice the allotted time to address the Board, unless simultaneous translation equipment is used to allow the Board to hear the translated public testimony simultaneously. (Government Code 54954.3)

6. The SCLS JPA Board president may rule on the appropriateness of a topic, subject to the following conditions:

a. If the topic would be more suitably addressed at a later time, the SCLS JPA Board president may indicate the time and place when it should be presented.

b. The SCLS JPA Board shall not prohibit public criticism of its policies, procedures, programs, services, acts, or omissions. (Government Code 54954.3)

c. The SCLS JPA Board shall not prohibit public criticism of the members of the Board. However, whenever a member of the public initiates specific complaints or charges against an individual SCLS employee, the SCLS JPA Board president shall inform the complainant that employment matters are the subject of the Sonoma County Superintendent and General Counsel and shall advise the complainant to address the complaint to the Sonoma County Superintendent and General Counsel using the appropriate complaint procedure.

7. The SCLS JPA Board president shall not permit any disturbance or willful interruption of meetings. Persistent disruption by an individual or group or any conduct or statements that threaten the safety of any person(s) at the meeting shall be grounds for the president to terminate the privilege of addressing the SCLS JPA Board.

The SCLS JPA Board may remove disruptive individuals and order the room cleared if necessary. In this case, members of the media not participating in the disturbance shall be allowed to remain, and individuals not participating in such disturbances may be allowed to remain at the discretion of the SCLS JPA Board. When the room is ordered cleared due to a disturbance, further proceedings shall concern only matters appearing on the agenda. (Government Code 54957.9)

When such disruptive conduct occurs, the General Counsel shall contact local law enforcement as necessary.

Recording by the Public

Members of the public may record an open SCLS JPA Board meeting using an audio or video recorder, still or motion picture camera, cell phone, or other device, provided that the noise,

illumination, or obstruction of view does not persistently disrupt the meeting. The SCLS JPA Board may designate locations from which members of the public may make such recordings without causing a distraction.

If the SCLS JPA Board finds that noise, illumination, or obstruction of view related to these activities would persistently disrupt the proceedings, these activities shall be discontinued or restricted as determined by the JPA Board. (Government Code 54953.5, 54953.6)

Bylaw SCHOOL AND COLLEGE LEGAL SERVICES OF CALIFORNIA
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