

Louisiana Believes

Charter School Performance Compact: Open Meetings Laws

Charter school boards must adhere to La. R.S. 17:3996 and La. R.S. 42:11, which require that every meeting of a public body shall be open to the public, except when closed according to law.

Open Meetings Requirements

Open Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Board meetings must be open to the public• Deliberations at these meetings must happen aloud• Matters not on the agenda can only be discussed upon unanimous approval• Agendas cannot be altered within 24 hours of the meeting• Boards must allow public comment prior to taking any vote on an agenda item. The comment period shall be for each agenda item and shall precede each agenda item.
Public Notice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Written public notice of meetings must be available in the board's principal's office or the meeting location, or published in any official school journal, & mailed to any news media that requests notification.• Public notice must be made available on the school's website if the school has one.• At the beginning of each calendar year, school boards must provide written public notice of their regular meetings, including dates, times, & locations.• Written public notice of any regular, special, or rescheduled meeting must be given no later than 24 hours before the meeting, and include the agenda, date, time, & place of the meeting

Executive Session Requirements

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Executive Session can only be held for the following reasons:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ To discuss the character, professional competence, physical or mental health of a person, provided that person is notified in writing at least 24 hours prior to the meeting and allowed to request that such discussion be held at an open meeting○ Strategy sessions/negotiations about collective bargaining, or prospective litigation after formal written demand○ Discussion related to security personnel, plans, or devices○ Investigative proceedings regarding allegations of misconduct○ Discussions with individual students or their parents regarding problems of that student or their parents; provided that the student or parent may request that such discussions be held in an open meeting• The vote of each board member requesting an executive session and reasons for requesting must be recorded• Two-thirds of the board must vote to hold an executive session at an open meeting• There can be no final or binding action taken during executive sessions.• Executive sessions cannot be used as a "stall tactic" to prevent the public from gaining access to meetings.
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Consequence of Non-Compliance

Charter school board members can individually be subject to fines for violating open meeting and public records laws. Additionally, violation of these laws may impact extension or renewal of the charter contract.

This informational document is a general guide to inform schools of basic requirements. It is NOT a substitute for federal, state guidelines and/or the appropriate state and local policies. Please visit the websites above for more information or contact the Office of Portfolio with questions.