

Communicating with Our School Board

School board members are elected officials who represent the collective voice and interests of the local community. Whether we are students, parents, or community members, our voices matters. It is up to us to make our views known to our elected officials to assist them in their duties to set policies, make budget decisions, adopt curricula, and ensure educators have the necessary tools and training to provide all students the education required to be successful in college and the workforce.

The Fluvanna County School Board holds regular School Board meetings on the second Wednesday of each month at the Fluvanna County School Board Office auditorium at 14455 James Madison Highway, Palmyra, VA. More information can be found here: <https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/fluco/Board.nsf/Public>.

It's always a good idea to attend meetings. If you attend a meeting and want to speak, you can sign up to make a comment during the portion of the meeting in which the community is invited to express concerns. School Board Members do not respond to concerns raised during the time allocated for public comment. However, written correspondence with members of the board may elicit a written response or acknowledgment.

Writing a letter is an effective way to communicate your perspective to school board members. You can write to the entire board or a specific person. Consider these practical suggestions for writing an effective letter.

Introduce Yourself

Begin the letter by introducing yourself and identifying whether you are a parent, teacher, or another member of the community. Use a positive tone by commending them for their service. Include a statement that indicates you are confident they will hear and address your concerns.

State Your Purpose

Use a voice of respect and authority as you state the letter's purpose. Write with confidence, showing that you understand the topic you are discussing. When organizing your thoughts, consider the following:

- Why are you writing?
- What are your concerns or questions?
- What actions do you wish to see?
- How will your specific concerns impact student learning?

Present Your Concerns

Start by explaining the situation. Keep the letter short, ideally no more than a page, but include pertinent information. Add names, times, and dates if you are writing about an

incident. Maintain a positive and respectful tone when detailing the situation. Describe the steps you have taken to resolve the matter. This may include detailing conversations with teachers, parents, or other school officials. Attach any relevant supporting documentation. Identify how you would like the problem resolved.

Closing

Conclude the letter on a friendly note. Express your appreciation in advance for the board members' time and attention. Be kind and respectful.

Provide **your contact information**, including your email address and phone number, to ensure they have everything they need to respond. Keep a copy of all correspondence for your records as a reference for future communication.

When citizens engage with our elected officials, we can help policy makers make decisions that reflect the needs and visions of our community.