

TEPA Suggestions: Hearings, Presentations and Exhibits

The following are suggestions from the membership of Texas Education Publisher's Association. The focus is on maximum effectiveness of district adoption hearings, presentations, and exhibits. These suggestions are shared in a spirit of goodwill to help districts maximize and streamline these proceedings for attendees charged with the important task of choosing curriculum materials.

In Preparation of a Hearing:

- Notify publishers well in advance of hearing dates with a minimum of three weeks.
- Inform publishers of the number of attendees expected to attend and the time frame for each presentation.
- Provide clear directions to the location, a building map, and unloading instructions.
- For districts with large geographical areas, find a central location.
- In situations where multiple adoptions are occurring at the same time, use multiple days to separate the subjects if possible.
- Be sure publishers are informed of district guidelines regarding adoption process: open/closed regulations on teachers attending events outside of school, email, materials being sent in, etc.
- Provide complete information in terms of sampling—what district prefers be sampled, to whom, shipped to what location, by what date.
- Partnering with neighboring districts for presentations is helpful to publishers, and many times truly appreciated by districts.
- If requesting donations for food from publishers, please consider the number of programs bid by each publisher. A publisher bidding only one program should not be asked to contribute the same amount as those bidding multiple programs. If donations for food are requested, attendance by those voting should be mandatory.

Scheduling/Planning a Hearing:

- Allow adequate time for presentations (*minimum* 30 minutes each – 45 mins. or more preferable).
- Allow enough time for teachers to rotate from one presentation to the next. 10 minutes is optimum if the schedule allows. Having publishers in different rooms, with participants rotating, shortens the time needed between presentations.
- Consider the start time of sessions. Schedule publishers' arrival/set up time at a time other than the start of dismissal of school.
- Take into account the time it takes publishers to unload and set up and allow for that. An hour before the first presentation is optimum.
- Avoid scheduling simultaneous presentations on the same subject at the same time. Committee members should not have to choose between two or more presentations for a subject in which they are responsible for a decision. In doing so, teachers leave better prepared to make informed decisions, having heard the spectrum of presentations.
- If presentations are after school and teachers are traveling, allow enough time for the teachers farthest from the presentation site to arrive prior to the first presentation.

Helpful Hints for Hearing Planning:

- If there are not enough rooms to have one assigned for each publisher, have at least two rooms – ‘swing rooms’ in which an active presentation is being delivered, while tear down/set up is taking place in the alternate room.
- Arrange to have all presentations in separate private areas (enclosed if possible) and on the ground floor.
- As a professional courtesy, settings should be such that publishers do not attend or hear presentations other than their own.
- As mentioned in the previous section, rotation of participants is preferable to rotation of presenters. It eliminates participants from having to wait while publishers move and reset between presentations.
- Air conditioning (or heating) should remain on if a facility is being used outside of regular school hours if possible. Please notify appropriate department well in advance to assure centrally controlled systems are set to stay on.
- Outlets, extension cords, projectors, screen/blank wall, computers for flash drive use, whiteboards, internet passwords, etc. should be easily accessible whenever possible. Please notify publishers of availability in advance.
- 1 or 2 display tables should be available in each presentation area.
- Multiple accessible unloading/loading areas close to presentation areas are beneficial for shortening set up and tear down time. When raining, a covered unloading/loading area is appreciated.
- Student helpers available to assist with unloading and set up are always appreciated to shorten time needed before presentations start. Allowing publishers to tip or pay for that help might be used as a school or organizational fund-raiser.
- Please ensure that all presentation spaces are equitable between publishers of the same content area.
- Consider requiring attendance by anyone that has a part or vote in the decision-making process. Attendance will work toward a more informed decision.
- If publishers are using the district technology system, a tech support person should be on hand if possible.
- Participants should be expected to arrive for and stay for all of the presentations. Seeing every program will ensure an informed decision.
- If requesting refreshments from publishers, be specific about the quantity. Mandatory attendance or registration helpful in determining quantity, and/or cost.
- Ask attendees to make arrangements for children, so that the important business at hand can be addressed without distracting the parent and others in the presentations.
- Saturday hearings could be utilized to avoid traffic problems and other conflicts.
- Drawing to determine order of presentations is optimum and notice of scheduled presentation time slot(s) in advance is helpful for scheduling presenters.
- If a district is holding presentations for more than one committee in the same time frame, avoid an overlapping schedule for any publisher that may need to present to multiple committees. Schedule so that the representative and all other essential company staff can be in all presentations where they are needed.

Helpful Hints for Planning a Vendor Exhibit:

- Have a good idea of the number of attendees and share this information with publishers ahead of time, so publishers bring in an appropriate quantity of material.
- If needing a presentation, be specific to the target audience and requested topic.
- Access to electricity for each display table is needed for the exhibitors.
- Rectangular tables vs. round and standard width tables vs. narrow width are best for displays.
- Easy (and possibly covered) access for unloading is helpful.
- Provide clear directions to the location and to rooms within the building. Signage is helpful for exhibitors and attendees.
- Allow plenty of time for exhibitors to arrive and set up (preferably not during dismissal) and to break down the exhibit—1 hour or more is optimum.
- If exhibit space is limited, base the amount of exhibit space allowed each vendor upon the number of programs bid.
- Pre-assign publishers' tables and mark them clearly.
- Table space for all exhibitors should be easily visible to attendees.
- Exhibit area should be easily accessible. If an elevator must be used (to be avoided if possible for exhibit to be on ground floor), make sure it is working. If it requires a key, an elevator attendant should be available both before and after exhibit hours to keep elevator traffic moving.