

Colorado Springs Charter Academy Election Policy

Parents and guardians of CSCA students will elect Directors on an annual basis, either to replace those elected Board Directors whose terms have expired or to further build the size of the board. The Board will have the power to carry out the annual and any special elections, create the forms of ballots, rule on any election dispute, designate Directors or employees to carry out tasks necessary to conducting the election, and adopt any other resolution that may be necessary or appropriate to assure that the voters have an appropriate opportunity to elect Directors.

In accordance with Article III Section 3 (B) of the Colorado Springs Charter Academy Bylaws,

During August of each year, eligible voters will be notified of the date of the next Board election, the number of positions open, the eligibility requirements and the application procedure.

Whenever notice to eligible voters is given, such notice shall be sufficient if given by CSCA's normal means of communicating with parents and CSCA shall have no obligation to notify parents separately parents who, through no action of CSCA, lack access to or fail to receive such communications.

The ultimate goal is the development of a Board that addresses the needs of the school and is also representative of the school's diversity. The Board will appoint an election committee made up of Board members and CSCA parents. No election committee members shall be board candidates, spouses or relatives of board candidates, or current Directors running for re-election. The Election Committee will conduct a pre-ballot interview process that will allow for the development of a Board with balanced capacity, which also preserves a parent voice.

Board Election Procedure

August Notice. Each August a notice shall be sent home via the weekly folders to parents/guardians of current CSCA students informing them the number of seats that are up for election, the date of the election, the application process, the deadline for submission of the Declaration of Candidacy Forms and the eligibility requirements. The notice shall provide a brief description of the requirements for membership on the Board as set forth in the Bylaws and Election Policy.

Directors shall not be paid employees or family members of paid employees of CSCA.

Declaration of Candidacy Form Submittal. Candidacy shall be made by self-nomination and the completion of the Declaration of Candidacy Form. Four weeks prior to the election, candidates shall submit their Declaration of Candidacy Form. Prior to submitting such form, all candidates shall have read the CSCA Board Bylaws and the Charter contract and be prepared to sign the Board Member Code of Conduct agreement if they are elected. The Declaration of Candidacy Form shall require that candidates sign a commitment to uphold CSCA's mission and charter.

Candidates may pick up the Declaration of Candidacy from the CSCA front office, and they may view the CSCA Bylaws and the charter by visiting the CSCA website at www.cscharter.org. If you do not have access to the internet, Bylaws and Charter can be provided electronically as an email attachment.

Candidates will communicate their qualifications to the voting constituency primarily through written formats, most notably the Declaration of Candidacy information that will be included with the election ballots. Candidates will be limited to discussion of their own qualifications and issues facing CSCA. No negative campaigning directed at other candidates or specific individuals will be allowed. The Board must approve campaign documents prior to distribution or posting. Candidates will not be allowed to do any campaigning to the children in any format. School database, mailing lists, and/or directories will not be used for campaigning. Failure to comply with any of these provisions will result in disqualification of the candidate from the election.

Election Committee Interview Process. Once all of the Candidates have completed their forms they will be forwarded directly to the Election Committee for review. The Election Committee will conduct interviews with each of the candidates. Based on these interviews and an assessment of the needs of the Board, the Election Committee will select candidates for inclusion on the official Ballot for the election based on the strength of the candidates and the needs of the Board.

Nomination by Petition. Candidates may petition themselves on the ballot for a specified seat by gathering signatures of 20% of eligible voters within the time frame and process set by the Election Committee.

Election Voting. In accordance with the CSCA Bylaws, Section III

(A) If the Board of Directors consists of 5 members, at least four of the Directors shall be elected by parents of the children enrolled at Colorado Springs Charter Academy. The other Director may be appointed by the elected Directors. If the Board of Directors consists of 7 members, at least five of the Directors shall be elected by parents of the children enrolled at Colorado Springs Charter Academy. The other two Directors may be appointed by the elected Directors.

(B) Each CSCA family will have one vote for each vacant Board seat. In the case of divorced parents, the parent with whom the child resides during the majority of the school year, or the parent with parental decision making authority over educational matters will vote, unless the parents submit a written agreement stating otherwise. If parents enjoy shared parental decision making authority over educational matters each parent will have ½ vote unless the parents submit a written agreement stating otherwise. All said voting agreement shall be provided to the Board no later than 5 business days prior to any election..... Those candidates receiving the most votes will fill the available seats on the Academy Board of Directors. In the event of a tie vote for a position, a second ballot will be cast for that position only, with only the tied candidates participating. Should a second tie occur, a result will be obtained by flipping a coin.

Voting Information Distribution. Two weeks prior to the election, information regarding voting shall be distributed in accordance with Article III Section (A) and (B) above. The information shall include: (a) information about each candidate from their Declaration of Candidacy Forms; (b) information on who is eligible to vote; (c) an official ballot; (d) a second envelope marked "Ballot Enclosed".

In order to be counted, ballots must be signed and returned to the CSCA front office no later than 3:30pm Mountain time on the second Friday in October.

Voting Process

1. In order to maintain confidentiality of student information, the School office staff shall be responsible for compiling the list of eligible voters.
2. Ballots will be cast anonymously.
3. Ballots will contain written instructions for casting a vote. Instructions will include: “Cast one vote for each open position, with only one vote per candidate. Casting a vote for more candidates than there are openings or casting more than one vote per candidate will invalidate the ballot and it will not be counted. Print and sign your name. Fold the top of the ballot down to the dotted line and staple or tape the ballot closed. In order to maintain anonymity, the signature portion will be torn off before the ballots are counted. Place the ballot in the envelope marked “Ballot Enclosed” and seal the envelope. Return the ballot to the school no later than 3:30 p.m. on <date>, (the date being the second Friday of October.) Unsigned ballots will not be counted.”
4. No voting by proxy is allowed.
5. Ballots will be counted at an open meeting on the Monday following the ballot due date.
6. The “Election Ballot” envelopes will be opened and the ballots will be removed. For each ballot, the signature will be checked against a roster of eligible voters. If the signature is valid, the signature section will be removed and the ballot and signature portion placed in separate piles. If the ballot is from a family with joint custody, the ballot will be marked as ½ vote and placed in a pile of ½ vote ballots for counting. Once all signatures have been removed, the ballots will be opened and the votes will be tallied.
7. Election officials shall count the ballots. Two officials shall tally the ballots; a third election official shall verify the tally, which shall be tallied according to candidate. The election officials shall then compare the number of votes tallied against the number of voters checked off on the eligibility list.
8. In the event that a voter has made a change on the ballot and it is not clear whether or not a mark has been made for a particular candidate or deleted from a particular candidate, the election officials shall make every effort to discern the intended vote. There shall be complete consensus among the election officials in order to tally the result of the ballot. If consensus cannot be reached, the ballot shall be considered invalid.
9. The election results will be posted in writing in the Thursday Folders the week the ballots are counted. Only the names of the elected Council members will be posted. The number of votes per candidate will not be posted, but will be available by written request.
10. The President of the Board shall notify each candidate of the election results by e-mail or by telephone, before publishing the results in the next issued school newsletter or by other medium as is the custom for communication to the school community.
11. Newly elected directors shall be expected to attend the next regular board meeting at which time their three-year term shall begin. Upon commencement of their term and annually thereafter, all directors shall sign the Colorado Springs Charter Academy Board Code of Conduct.
12. The ballots and tallies shall be sealed in an envelope and stored in the School office for 60 days and then destroyed.

**Colorado Springs Charter Academy
Election Ballot**

Vote for _____

_____ Name

_____ Name

_____ Name

_____ Name

Instructions

1. Cast one vote fore each open position, with only one vote per candidate. Casting a vote for more candidates than there are openings or casting more than one vote per candidate will invalidate your ballot and it will not be counted.
2. Print and sign your name below to allow for voter eligibility.
3. Fold the top of the ballot down to the dotted line and staple or tape the ballot closed. In order to maintain anonymity, the signature portion will be torn off before the ballots are counted.
4. Place the ballot in the envelope marked "Election Ballot" and seal the envelope.
5. Return the ballot to the school no later than 3:30 p.m. on _____.
6. Unsigned ballots will not be counted.

Fold top down to this dotted line and staple or tape closed

Printed Name _____

Signature _____