

Board Policy 216

Adopted: December 8, 2011

Amended: November 8th, 2012, March 12, 2015

Board Director Election Policy

Parents and legal guardians of Cannon River STEM School (CRSS) 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 3.4 of the CRSS bylaws, eligible voters will be notified at least 30 days prior to 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 CRSS' normal means of communicating with parents and CRSS shall have no obligation to notify parents separately who, through no action of CRSS, 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 Directors and may include CRSS 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

At the November Board of Directors meeting the number of positions open and the timeline changes will be made to the Election Information Letter.

An Election Information Letter will be sent to parents and legal guardians of current CRSS students informing them of 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.

Declaration of Candidacy Submittal.

Candidacy shall be made by self-nomination and the completion of a Declaration of Candidacy to the school to include (1) Current resume or vita (2) Written statement outlining the reasons for the interest in serving on the Board and the specific experience, qualities and qualifications that the individual might contribute to the Board of Directors and to the Cannon River STEM School

Prior to the election, candidates shall submit their Declaration of Candidacy. Prior to submitting such information, all candidates shall have read the CRSS Bylaws and the Charter contract and be prepared to sign the Board Director Code of Conduct agreement if they are elected. The Declaration of Candidacy shall require that candidates sign a commitment to uphold CRSS' mission and charter.

Candidates may view the CRSS Bylaws and the charter by visiting the CRSS website at www.cannonriverstemschool.org.

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 CRSS. 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.

Approval Ballot Option

In the event that no candidates decide to run for a Board seat, the current CRSS Board will appoint individuals to the Board. If the number of candidates running for election is equal or less than the number of open board positions, an approval ballot will be developed and distributed via CRSS's normal means of communicating with parents. This ballot may be in the form of an electronic survey and will request the slate of candidates be voted for or against. No write-in options will be available on an approval ballot.

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.

Each parent or legal guardian of a student attending CRSS will each 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 1 vote each. All said voting agreements 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 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.

If the number of candidates running for election is equal or less than the number of open board positions, an approval ballot will be developed and distributed as described above.

Voting Information Distribution.

Prior to the election, information regarding voting shall be distributed in accordance with the Board Election Procedure 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. In

order to be counted, ballots must be signed and returned to the CRSS by the date and time specified in the Election Information Letter.

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. List your student(s) names, 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. Return the ballot to the school by the date and time specified in the Election Information Letter. Unsigned or illegible ballots will not be counted.”
4. No voting by proxy is allowed.
5. Ballots will be counted at an open meeting following the ballot due date.
6. For each ballot, the signature will be checked against a roster of eligible voters. If the signature matches a name on the roster of eligible voters, the signature section will be removed and the ballot and signature portion placed in separate piles. 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 validity and 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 electronically on the CRSS Website and in writing in February newsletter.. Only the names of the elected Board Directors 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 via email 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, all Directors shall sign the CRSS 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.

All elections shall comply with MS Chapter 12D Subd 4c.