

## Senate Election Policy

### Senate Election Philosophy

*In accordance with the Cherry Creek Academy bylaws, the Cherry Creek Academy Senate shall consist of between five (5) to nine (9) total Senators. The Number and Qualification of Senators is outlined in Article II of the May 14, 2013 Amended and Restated Bylaws of the Cherry Creek Academy, Inc. The goal of the CCA Election Policy is to give ample opportunity for a variety of parents to serve, and to provide a healthy balance in oversight.*

### Senate Election Policy

#### I. Senate Elections

(a) **Election Committee:** Each December for the following school year, the CCA Senate shall convene an (ad hoc) Election Committee to solicit nominations from the school membership for candidates for the CCA Senate. This Committee shall be responsible for all stages of the election including, but not limited to, notification, distribution and collection of forms, "Meet the Candidates" forum(s), ballot management, ballot security, and ballot tally. This Committee shall be appointed and convened by the Senate President and will report to the Governance Chair. This committee shall be comprised of three (3) or five (5) members as follows:

- (i) At least one (1) but no more than two (2) CCA staff members,
- (ii) At least one (1) but no more than two (2) CCA SAC members,
- (iii) At least one (1) but no more than two (2) CCA Parents who is/are not on the Senate or related to someone up for election.

In the event the Governance Chair is a current candidate, the committee will report to the Senate President. The Governance Chair shall serve in an advisory role and shall not be considered a voting member of the committee. The Committee will provide regular reports to the Governance Chair.

(b) **Notices.** In January, an Initial Notice of Election will be distributed to CCA parents. During February of each year, an Official Notice of Election will be distributed to CCA parents. Notices may be posted on the school's website and/or in the regular e-newsletter, and may be included in the students' regular weekly folders as well as via any other communication method deemed helpful or necessary.

(c) **Nomination Packet Submittal.** Starting at least six weeks prior to the election, the Candidate Nomination Form, the Parent Senate Candidate Information Sheet, and the Parent Senate Candidate Biography Form will be made available on the school's website. At least four weeks prior to the election, candidates shall submit their completed forms to the Election Committee. Candidates will communicate

their qualifications to the voting constituency through the Parent Senate Candidate Biography Form. At least two weeks prior to the election, the candidates' Parent Senate Candidate Biography Form will be posted on the school's website.

**(d) Parent Senate Candidate Biography Forms.** Parent Senate Candidate Biography Forms must be submitted in 12 Times New Roman font. Parent Senate Candidate Biography Forms will be limited to one single-spaced page with one inch margins. There is no word limit but candidates must adhere to the font and spacing requirements. The content of the Parent Senate Candidate Biography Form shall be limited to a discussion of the candidate's own qualifications and any issues facing CCA. The Election Committee will not alter, amend or edit the submissions of any candidate.

**(e) Candidate Information/Voting Information Distribution.** At least two weeks prior to the election, information regarding voting shall be distributed via the regular e-newsletter as well as via any other communication method deemed helpful or necessary. The information shall include a letter from the Senate setting forth the dates and procedures for voting.

**(f) Campaigning Restrictions.** No negative campaigning directed at other candidates or specific individuals will be allowed. Mass campaigning to CCA families, defined as campaigning through mass distribution methods using contact information obtained through any school database, mailing list, and/or school directory, or other school source, is not permitted. Failure to comply with any of these provisions will result in disqualification of the candidate from the election.

**(g) Ballots.** An electronic voting system shall be used to cast and tabulate votes and eligible voters shall cast their votes according to the parameters of the electronic voting system employed. If an eligible voter cannot vote electronically for any reason, he or she will be provided access to a school computer for voting purposes. Those candidates receiving the most votes will fill the available seats on the CCA Senate. 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.

**(h) Timing.** Unless extraordinary circumstances exist, the annual CCA Senate election should take place in May of each year, with the election window closing after the May meeting of the Parent Senate. The election should allow for at least 5 days of ballot casting. Election results will be tallied and presented to the CCA school population by the Election Committee within two business days after ballot casting closes. The Election Committee will attempt to notify candidates prior to posting the election results.

## **II. Candidate Eligibility Requirements**

It is important for all candidates to truly understand the role and responsibility of the Senate. Prior to considering a Senate position:

- (a) Potential candidates must attend a minimum of two (2) regular CCA Senate meetings during the nine (9) months prior to the April Senate meeting. The March Senate meeting is an eligible meeting for this requirement.
- (b) Potential candidates must interview with at least one (1) current Senate member prior to the nomination form submittal deadline.
- (c) Potential candidates must agree to complete all required "Senate modules" if elected. They must also agree to abide by the Code of Conduct, Duty of Care and Loyalty and Conflict of Interests policies.
- (d) Potential candidates must agree to abide by the CCA "Non-Negotiables."
- (e) CCA staff members and spouses of CCA staff members are not allowed to run for the CCA Senate.
- (f) Only one parent or legal guardian per family may serve on the CCA Senate at the same time.
- (g) In order to be eligible to run for the CCA Senate, candidates must have at least one student who is returning to CCA for the upcoming school year.
- (h) In order to be eligible to run for the CCA Senate, candidates must have completed and have documented (under their own unique volunteer account through the current CCA volunteer hours database) at least 50% of their annual volunteer hours (20 of 40 hours per family, or 10 of 20 hours per single parent) by the time of nomination.

## **III. Voter Eligibility Requirements**

- (a) Only parents or legal guardians of students at CCA shall be allowed to vote for members of the Senate.
- (b) Each family is allowed two (2) votes for each vacant Senate seat (1 vote for single parents).
- (c) In order to be eligible to vote, families must have at least one student who is returning to CCA for the upcoming year
- (d) Current employees of the school have one (1) vote for each vacant Senate seat.
- (e) In the case of a staff member who is also a CCA parent, that staff member is allowed two (2) total votes.
- (f) In order to be eligible to vote, a staff member must have formally indicated he/she is returning to CCA for the upcoming year.

## **IV. Election Results**

- (a) The Election Committee (members only) will review the results of the election in a closed-door meeting.

- (b) The Election Committee will attempt to notify all candidates of the election results prior to releasing the results to parents and staff.
- (c) The Election results will remain confidential until the Election Committee makes an official announcement.

## **V. Appointments, Resignations, and Vacancies**

Appointments, Resignations, and Vacancies to the CCA Senate are outlined in Article II of the May 14, 2013 Amended and Restated Bylaws of the Cherry Creek Academy, Inc.

## **VI. Term Limits.**

Senators shall serve a term of three (3) years from the date of their election. After election, the term of a Senator may not be reduced, except for cause as specified in the school's Bylaws. Senators shall take seats at the conclusion of the meeting at which their election is announced, which is typically in June of any given year. Any and all Senate Members shall be limited to two (2) consecutive or non-consecutive three (3) year terms, with the exception of a Senator who was appointed by the Parent Senate to fill a Senate vacancy with less than 547 days remaining in the vacated term, in which case the Senator will be eligible to serve two full three (3) year terms in addition to the vacancy appointment term.