

A **PURE** Guide to LSC Elections 2008

When are the LSC elections?

Date: **April 16** at HIGH SCHOOLS, **April 17** at ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Time: 6:00 am to 7:00 pm each day.

- ▶ This is a **change** from prior years when high schools voted the day after elementary schools.
- ▶ Year round schools set their own date; check with your school office.

LSC elections take place every two years on spring report card pick-up days.

Who votes?

School parents and neighbors vote for parent and community representatives.

School staff are polled to select their teacher representatives.

High school students are polled to select their student representatives.

Who can run for the LSC?

The Local School Council consists of **11** voting members at elementary schools

12 voting members at high schools.

- **6 parents/guardians** of students currently enrolled at the school; parent members cannot be relatives of the principal or Board of Education employees (after June 30, 2008).
- **2 community residents** 18 years of age or older who live in the attendance area of the school but will not have any children enrolled at the school as of June 30, 2008; community representatives cannot be relatives of the principal or Board of Education employees (after June 30, 2008).
- **2 certified teachers** who work more than half their time at the school; and
- **1 full-time student** at each high school.
- **The principal** of the school is automatically seated as a member.

YES!! Non-citizens MAY run as candidates and vote.

LSC Nomination Procedures

Nomination Forms

You must fill out a candidate nomination form (available at schools, CPS offices, and at the PURE office) which asks for the following information:

- ✓ **Candidate Name, address, type of candidacy and proof of eligibility;** you must show 2 forms of ID.
 - ▶ Parents must be listed in school enrollment records or bring other evidence of eligibility as a parent candidate such as a tax return or birth certificate.
 - ▶ Community residents must provide proof that they live in the school voting area.
- ✓ **Statement of Economic Interest:** Asks you to declare any economic interests you may have at the school.
- ✓ **Criminal Conviction Disclosure:** Asks you to disclose convictions for certain sex and drug crimes.
- ✓ **Telephone Number Disclosure:** Asks for your phone number to be used by the BOE and otherwise kept confidential.
- ✓ Teacher or Student Information form for teacher and student candidates only.

✓ **Candidate Statement**

You may also file a Candidate Statement, a one-page statement that you write describing your qualifications and reasons for wanting to be a local school council member. You may add your picture to this page and present your statement in languages other than English. This is an important first step in your campaign!

Note: The school is not allowed to create or copy flyers for any candidate or slate.

✓ **Watch the deadline!**

New this year, different deadline for forms filed at the Central Office

- ▶ Nominations must be filed between Nov. 19 and 3 pm on **March 12** at the school (no faxes).
- ▶ You may choose to file your forms at the central office, Department of Local School Relations, 5th floor, 125 S. Clark Street, but **the deadline to file at the central office is earlier, 3 pm on March 5**. No faxes will be accepted

**Make a copy of all your forms or ask the school to make a copy for you
and be sure to get a signed, dated receipt!**

Candidate Literature Distribution Day is April 14.

Parent and community candidates may prepare one 8x11 page campaign flyer for distribution at the school. You must:

- ▶ bring enough copies of this flyer for every child in the school;
- ▶ divide the copies into piles of 35;
- ▶ have your flyers in the school no later than 3:00 pm on April 10.

Election Procedures for Parent and Community Representatives

✓ VOTE AT EACH SCHOOL WHERE YOU ARE ELIGIBLE.

- ▶ You do **not** need to be a U.S. citizen to vote.
- ▶ Schools which are not accessible must provide curbside voting for persons with disabilities.
- ▶ If you are over age 18 you may vote at all schools in whose election boundaries you live. This usually includes at least one elementary school and a high school. You may also live in the area of a middle school or a multi-area school. Call the LSC Election Hotline at 773/553-1400 to find out where you can vote.
- ▶ Parents may vote at all schools where they have a child enrolled.
- ▶ You need 2 forms of ID including one from the following list which includes your address:

Driver's License	Employer ID	State of Illinois ID	Current lease
Court document	Library card	Social Security card	Current utility bill
Student ID	IDPA Card	Credit Card	Voter Reg. Card
Other gov't ID	Student birth certificate		MediPlan/Medicaid card

✓ VOTE IN PERSON BY SECRET BALLOT

- ▶ Schools will provide voting booths and ballots.
- ▶ No proxy or absentee votes are allowed (you may **not** vote on behalf of a spouse, parent, etc.)

✓ VOTE FOR UP TO 5 CANDIDATES

- ▶ You may vote for any combination of parent and community candidates.
- ▶ You may not vote more than once for any one candidate.
- ▶ **Do not vote for more than five** candidates: if you do, your ballot will be discarded.

Polls will be open from **6 am- 7 pm** April 16 at high schools and April 17 at elementary schools

- ✓ **Special dates** at year-round schools (call your school office)

Selection of Teacher and Student Representatives

The 2 teacher representatives and 1 student representative are appointed by the Board after non-binding advisory polls.

✓ Teachers

- ▶ The teacher non-binding advisory poll is conducted on the same day and in the same place and manner as the parent and community election.
- ▶ **All** staff who work at the school the majority of their time may vote in that school's teacher poll **except** that, according to CPS, neither the principal nor the assistant principal may vote.
- ▶ Voting is done by secret ballot; there will be no proxy or absentee voting.
- ▶ The principal will submit the top four vote-getters' names to the Board of Education.

✓ Students

- ▶ Each high school LSC shall develop election procedures, ballots, and a summary report form for results of the student non-binding advisory poll.
- ▶ Between **April 14- 15**, the high school principal will conduct a student non-binding advisory poll.
- ▶ The principal will submit the top two vote-getters' names to the Board of Education.

Appointment by the Board: At the **June 25, 2008**, Board of Education meeting, the Board shall appoint all teachers to two-year terms and all students to one-year terms beginning July 1, 2008.

Use of school resources for LSC candidates forbidden

It is expressly forbidden for anyone to use resources of the school to endorse or promote any candidate or group of candidates (slate). This includes both **people and material resources** such as paper, staff time during working hours, copying machines, telephones, or space for meetings for particular candidates or slates. This also means that **staff may not recommend or endorse candidates inside of the school during report card pick-up parent conferences on the day of the election.** Staff who either use school resources or allow school resources to be used in this manner may be subject to discipline including suspension of up to 30 days without pay. If you believe that this rule is being violated at your school, call the CPS Law Department at 773/ 553-1700.

Election Responsibilities of Current LSC

Prepare for a fair, inclusive, successful LSC election!

- ✓ Establish LSC Election Judge Recruitment Committee: The current LSC may appoint an Election Judge Recruitment Committee for the purpose of recruiting election judges. No member of this committee can be a candidate or an announced supporter of a candidate at the school. If the LSC does not form a recruitment committee, the principal and LSC Chair may appoint such a committee. Judge applications will be collected by the school and forwarded to the Area Office.
 - Election judges will receive \$100 for the day of service. All judges must receive training.
 - ▶ Election judges may not be under age 18, a student at that school, a Board employee working at that school, an LSC candidate at that school, a candidate's immediate family member or reside in the same house as any LSC candidate or the principal at that school.
 - ▶ The deadline for applying to be an election judge is **March 14**.
 - ▶ All election judges must be selected by **April 4**.

- ✓ **By January 18:**
 - Develop plan to publicize election,
 - Set date for Candidates' Forum (which must be held between **March 26-April 1**), and
 - Set date for post-election LSC meeting to certify election results (which must be held after the election but no later than **8pm on April 28**).
 - Notify the Area officer of these dates.

- ✓ Hold a Candidates' Forum: The current LSC sets the time, place, and agenda for a candidates' forum to be held between **March 26-April 1**.
 - The place of the forum must be accessible to persons with disabilities.
 - **All** candidates must be notified of the forum and invited to participate.
 - A lottery for ballot position must be held at the forum; it is suggested that this lottery take place first on the agenda and that the list be recorded and used as the order of speakers.

- ✓ Coordinate with Report Card Pick-Up: Develop a plan to welcome and guide to the polling place all parents entering the school for Report Card Pick-up. It is recommended that parents vote before picking up report cards.

- ✓ Assure removal of all campaign materials the day before the election:
Develop a plan to remove all campaign materials from inside the school no later than 3 pm the day before the election, and also before student election day in the high schools.

- ✓ Certify Election Results: Hold a meeting by **8 pm on April 28** to certify election results and hold a lottery to break any ties.

Principal's Election Responsibilities

It's a big job!! Principals have many specific election duties.

✓ Public Information

- Post information about nomination and challenge procedures, election time line, and candidate eligibility.
- Post a map showing school attendance/voting boundaries.
- Send two letters home to all parents.
 - **First letter** (sent between **November 19- 26**) includes LSC nomination and challenge procedures, election timeline, and candidate eligibility requirements.
 - **Second letter** (sent **March 13**) includes list of all candidates, date of Candidates' Forum and election, voting hours and location, and forms of ID needed to vote.
- Within 24 hours of the first candidate filing, post in a public place a list of candidates and the original copies of candidate statements.
- Update public candidate list daily.
- Assist the LSC in presenting a Candidates' Forum.
- Prepare Literature Distribution Day on **April 14**.
- By **noon on April 4**, post candidate ballot list in lottery order; candidates inspect list and notify principal of any errors by **3 pm on April 9**.
- By **9 am on April 14** (after any challenges are decided) post revised candidate ballot list with names in lottery order; candidates have until 3 pm that same day to notify principal of errors.
- Post corrected list by **April 15**.
- Post election results as soon as the count is complete.

✓ Election procedures

- Assure that no school resources are used to promote any candidate or slate.
- Provide and collect nomination papers; forward originals to the Law Department and photocopies to the Area Office no later than **noon on March 14**.
- Accept applications for election judges, forward names to the Area Office by **March 14**.
- Distribute 6 pollwatcher credentials to each candidate at the Candidates' Forum.
- Prepare for the election judges a complete list of all staff eligible to vote for teacher representative (this includes only staff who work at least a majority of their time at the school excluding the principal and assistant principal).
- Provide a list of all students enrolled in the school.
- Conduct student non-binding advisory poll between **April 14-15** (all student campaign material must be removed the day before the student poll).
- Receive all ballots and place in security envelopes in the school safe.
- Forward security envelopes to Area Office.

Limitation of Principal's role on election day

During the election, the principal's role is limited to that of resource person; election judges and monitors make all determinations about the election.

Pollwatchers

- Pollwatchers holding valid credentials are able to witness all phases of the LSC election.
- Candidates may serve as their own pollwatchers.
- Each candidate is given six pollwatcher credentials.
- Civic non-profit groups are allowed 1 credential for every school in its service area and every multi-area school.
- Each candidate or group may have one pollwatcher in the polling place at any given time.
- Pollwatchers may observe the process of voter identification, inspect the voting stations when not in use, and observe set up, counting, and recording procedures.

Electioneering

Electioneering may take place outside of the school, at least 100 feet from any school entrance. No electioneering is to occur anywhere inside the school. This means that staff may not promote any candidate or give advice on what candidates to choose. Clear signs stating these policies should be posted in several locations in every school. Because this election is on report-card pick-up day, it is particularly important to make it clear that no electioneering is to occur inside of the school at all on election day.

Pre-election Challenges to Candidate Eligibility

Anyone can file a pre-election challenge.

- Pre-election challenge forms are available at the school office, the Area Offices, the CPS central office, and from PURE and other community groups.
- Challenges must include specific charges which, if true, would make the candidate ineligible to run for the office he/she is seeking.
- Challenges must be filed no later than **5:00 pm on March 29** with the CPS Law Department (fax **773-553-1769** or **1702**; you must keep fax receipt)

✓ Hearings

- Hearings on pre-election challenges will be held between **March 31-April 8** for nominees whose eligibility has been challenged.
- Candidates challenged must be notified no later than 24 hours after the challenge has been filed, and provided with a copy of the challenge form and any evidence attached, and the date, time, and place of the hearing. Challengers must also be notified of the hearing date, time, and place.
- The candidate may make arrangements for an alternate hearing date; the challenger will then be informed of the new date.
- The Board will assign hearing officers to all hearings. The Area Officer shall make a determination of candidate eligibility, taking into consideration the recommendation of the hearing officer.

- Decisions shall be issued within two day school days of the decision by telephone or fax and also by mail to the challenged candidate and challenger.
- ✓ Remedies: Decisions may include the following remedies: placing the person's name on the ballot at a school where he/she is eligible, changing the person's category, or removing the person from the ballot.

Post-Election Challenges

A post-election challenge requires the signatures of at least five people eligible to vote at the school.

- Challenges to election results must be filed no later than **5 pm April 28** with the CPS Law Department (fax **773-553-1769** or **1702**; you must keep fax receipt).
- Challenge forms are available at the school office, the Area Offices, the CPS central office, and from PURE and other community groups.
- Challenges must include specific charges which, if true, would change the election results.
- Winning candidates who have been challenged shall be eligible to sit on the LSC as of July 1 unless and until they are ruled ineligible following the hearing procedure.
- ✓ Hearings
 - Post-election challenge hearings will be held between **May 5 - 28**.
 - Candidates challenged must be notified no later than 24 hours after the challenge has been filed, and provided with a copy of the challenge form and any evidence attached, and the date, time, and place of the hearing. Challengers must also be notified of the hearing date, time, and place.
 - The candidate may make arrangements for an alternate hearing date; the challenger will then be informed of the new date.
 - The Board will assign hearing officers to all hearings. The Area Officer shall make a determination of candidate eligibility, taking into consideration the recommendation of the hearing officer.
 - Decisions shall be made no later than 3 pm on June 4. Notification of the decision shall be issued within two day school days of the decision by telephone or fax and also by mail to the challenged candidate and challenger.
- ✓ Remedies: Remedies may include declaring a member ineligible and allowing the newly-seated LSC to fill the vacancy, calling for a recount, or ordering a new election.

LSC Election Results

Election results will be posted in the school after the count is final on election night.

- Parent and community candidates receiving the highest number of votes will be declared elected members of the LSC.
- The sitting LSC must certify the election results at a meeting to be held no later than **8 pm on April 28**; in cases of a tie, the LSC shall determine the winner by lottery. At this meeting the LSC should remind the public of post-election challenge procedures. LSC must file a Certification of Results with Area Office by **May 1**.
- The Area Office shall resolve any disputes concerning election procedures or results. If the LSC does not hold a meeting or has no quorum to certify results by **April 28**, the Area Office shall break any ties and certify the results.
- The names of the four teachers and the two students receiving the highest number of votes will be forwarded to the Board which will appoint all teacher and student members by **June 25, 2008**.

New LSC Organizational Meeting

Each LSC must hold its organizational meeting between July 1 and July 14, 2008.

The organizational meeting can be called by four or more newly elected LSC members. However, a quorum of 6 members for an elementary school LSC and 7 members for a high school LSC must be present to conduct business. The purpose of this meeting is to:

- **set the time and place of any regular LSC meetings for the year**
special meetings may be called by the chairperson or by any four members who must post written notice of the purpose of the meeting 48 hours in advance
- **select a parent member as chairperson for the year**
- **select a secretary for the year**

If less than the minimum number of persons eligible, but at least a quorum, are elected, the LSC shall appoint eligible persons to fill vacancies in parent, community or student positions. Teacher vacancies are to be filled through a teacher non-binding poll and Board appointment, and candidates for teacher positions may not vote until the Board has acted on their appointment. If less than the number required for a quorum is elected, call the Office of School and Community Relations (773/553-1400).

✓ Removal by the LSC

An LSC member may be removed from the LSC by a majority vote if the member has missed **three consecutive regular meetings or five regular meetings within a twelve-month period.**

Due process requirements: An LSC member must be notified of the LSC's intent to remove them from the LSC at least 7 days prior to the vote to remove. Notification must be either in person or by certified mail sent to the person's last known address. The LSC member shall have the right to explain the reasons for his or her absence or failure to attend and may vote on the question of his or her removal.

✓ Removal by the Board of Education

LSC members may also be challenged for failure to comply with rules for eligibility as a parent or community representative, or for violations of mandated training, criminal background and disclosure, economic interest disclosure, and ethics requirements. LSC members have a right to due process including notification and Board of Education hearing procedures — please check your LSC manual for details.

Parents United for Responsible Education is a parent-based non-profit organization working to improve the quality of education in the Chicago Public Schools.

PURE provides information, training and advocacy for parents and LSC members.

Questions? Call PURE at 312/491-9101 or e-mail us: pure@pureparents.org

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