

Ruthie Knowles
Candidate
Cherry Creek School Board, District B

a. Why are you seeking an appointment to the CCSD Board of Education, and what policies will you prioritize if elected?

I am seeking to be a member of the Board of Education in service to my community and to elevate the voices of my community. I have been an active parent and advocate, and this is a logical next step.

My top priority is to expand educational excellence in an environment that ensures the physical and mental safety of all students. I will prioritize policies that support this vision.

b. What experiences and qualifications do you have that uniquely prepare you to be a CCSD Board of Education member?

My previous Board member experience includes a 3-year Director term on my neighborhood HOA Board and as a member of the National Jewish Health Institutional Review Board. My career in research has taught me the importance of tracking and analyzing data to assess the effectiveness of methods and outcomes, and I will bring that lens with me. I also have a master's in Social Work and understand that the whole wellbeing of a child is critical to their academic success.

Additionally, I have a passion for helping other parents navigate systems and structures within CCSD outside of my involvement in any specific school or district organization.

For my specific experience in CCSD, see below.

c. In which school or district organizations are you, or have you been active? PTCOs, PASS, IPAC, DAC, SEAC, GTPC, Leadership Cherry Creek, etc.?

I've been engaged in school and district organizations the entire time my kids have been in Cherry Creek Schools. Most recently, I've been involved with the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) and District Accountability Committee (DAC) and have been the Chair of Overland Accountability for 3+ years. I was also on the School Based Health Centers Steering Committee and presently serve as a member of the SEAC Steering Committee.

d. Explain in what areas you believe the Cherry Creek School District excels.

I believe CCSD excels in creating pathways unique to each individual student. Some examples include Innovation, Concurrent Enrollment classes, Advanced Placement classes, and Career &

Technical Education. Through these, CCSD prepares students to be successful, whatever their post-secondary goals are.

I also believe CCSD excels in recruiting and compensating teachers within the confines of the limited resources provided by the state. I am proud of the adoption of the new teacher salary structure this past year that puts CCSD teachers as the highest paid in the region, and that we are the #1 district for teacher satisfaction because of our high pay and low turnover.

e. Cherry Creek School District believes in equity for all. As a CCSD Board of Education candidate, what have you done to increase your knowledge regarding equity, including racial, gender, gender identity, and academic needs (Special Education, Gifted and Talented, English Learners)?

As part of my service to the Cherry Creek School District community, I've advocated for better language accessibility for parent meetings and communications, and for more equitable identification of and services to GT and SpEd students. I spend time reading and researching to learn more about the people I'm serving and the disparities in educational access. I also learn by showing up and listening to the many voices of the community where I live and serve.

f. What are your beliefs about the school district's responsibility to keep students safe, and does that include public health?

I believe it's the school district's responsibility to keep our students physically and psychologically safe while they're in school. I also want kids to show up healthy to school, and I support the partnership with STRIDE Community Health Center, particularly for locations that are in medical deserts.

When it comes to public health, I think It's important for district leaders to seek and listen to local public health leaders, in addition to guidance from our district's Medical Advisory Board. I promote decisions that are based in science and current best practices.