

As summer temperatures finally cool, we find ourselves at the beginning of another season - election season.

No, I'm not talking about the presidential and Congressional elections, I'm talking about the election of the American Mensa Committee, who serves as the national board of directors for American Mensa. There are 15 voting positions on the AMC. As members of this region, you are able to vote for 6 of them. If you renew your membership on time (before April 1), you will be able to cast your vote for the five national officers, Chair, First Vice Chair, Second Vice Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary, as well as the Regional Vice Chair of Region 6. Mechanics of voting will be explained closer to the election, but I want to talk a bit about how the ballot is created, as this has been changed significantly with our most recent bylaws amendments.

In previous elections, members who wished to seek election could choose to apply to the national Nominating Committee or gather a petition of at least 50 signatures from members in good standing. Some members chose to do both, and the route they chose was made clear by the letters "N," "P," or "N/P" next to each candidate's name on the ballot. Due to the length of the NomComm process, people often began talking about who would be running for office 10-11 months prior to the election.

Two significant changes were made in our most recent election. The first was the removal of the NomComm. All members wishing to run for office will now have to utilize the petition process. The second change is the number of signatures required to reach the ballot. Candidates for national office must now receive 250 signatures and candidates for RVC must receive 100 signatures.

These signature totals are higher than any received in recent elections, which does concern me a bit. It is entirely possible that in previous elections, people simply stopped signing once they saw that candidates had achieved the prerequisite number. It is also entirely possible that we may have vacancies on the ballot if candidates cannot secure enough signatures. That is my primary concern.

Candidates will be able to receive signatures both on paper and electronically. If a candidate asks you to sign their petition, I hope you will consider it. It should be noted that signing a candidate's petition does NOT commit your vote to that candidate. You are absolutely allowed to sign competing candidates' petitions as well. Your signature merely says that you believe the candidate should be placed on the ballot. You will have time to review candidate statements and positions before casting your vote in April or May.

If you have questions regarding the election process, you can reach the Election Committee Chair, Tabby Vos, at ElectionChair@us.mensa.org.

As always, I ask that if you have any questions, concerns, or general comments, please let me know. I have created a simple online form where members can offer feedback on any topic, both by name or anonymously. You can find this form at <http://tinyurl.com/AML-R6-Feedback>. Of course, if you prefer, you can always contact me via email at rvc6@us.mensa.org, phone at [512-779-3945](tel:512-779-3945), or snail mail at 10518 Horseshoe Bend Dr, Houston, TX 77064.

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