

SAMPLE CONSTITUTION

(This is a sample constitution only. Clubs/organizations will need to design a constitution to meet their specific needs)

ARTICLE I – Name

Section 1 – The name of this club or organization shall be \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ High School.

ARTICLE II – Objectives and Activities

Section 1 – General objectives of this club shall be:

- a.
- b.
- c.

Section 2 – The activities of the club shall be in accord with its objectives. General activities shall include the following:

- a.
- b.

ARTICLE III – Officers

Section 1 – Officers shall be \_\_\_\_\_

Section 2 - The duties of the officers are as follows: \_\_\_\_\_

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Section 3 – Each officer shall serve for one year and may be re-elected.

ARTICLE IV – Elections

Section 1 – Officers shall be elected each spring at a regular meeting with due announcement of \_\_\_\_\_ days given.

ARTICLE V – Meetings

Section 1 – The club shall hold \_\_\_\_\_ meetings a month at such time and place as shall be determined by the club officers and sponsor.

Section 2 - Meetings shall be conducted according to Robert’s Rule of Order.

ARTICLE VI – Ratification and Amendments

Section 1 – This constitution must be ratified by 2/3 or the club membership present at a duly announced meeting.

Section 2 – Amendments may be made to this constitution with a 2/3 vote of the club membership present at a duly announced meeting.

ARTICLE VII – Membership

Section 1 - \_\_\_\_\_

Additional articles as desired

## The Constitution

Every student organization needs a constitution to give it a sense of order and purpose. A constitution functions as a set of rules used to govern the group.

The constitution should be stated in simple, easily understood terms. It should include only essential items, and be developed in cooperation with the school staff and student body. Amendments should be simple and direct. The constitution must be studied regularly and changed to stay vital, meaningful, and real. The vice-president of the organization is often put in charge of these changes. He or she may chair a committee, which routinely examines the constitution, proposes amendments, and oversees the ratification process.

### SAMPLE CONSTITUTION

\_\_\_\_\_ Organization

#### 1. Name and Purpose

The name of this organization shall be

\_\_\_\_\_

The purpose of this organization shall be to

#### 2. Officers

2.1 This organization shall have a president, a vice president, a secretary and a treasurer.

2.2 The president shall be the chief executive officer of the organization and shall preside at all meetings and direct the activities of the organization.

2.3 The vice-president shall assist the president the president and assume his duties in his absence.

2.4 The secretary shall keep the minutes of all meetings, correspondence for the organization, and keep all records of the organization, including a roster of members.

2.5 The treasurer shall collect and disperse all funds of the organization and shall keep written accounts thereof, and shall maintain a list of the physical assets, if any, of the organization.

2.6 The election of officers shall be by a majority vote of the members. The president shall be elected first, followed by the vice-president, the secretary, and the treasurer, in that order. Each officer shall hold office for one year. The election, if possible, shall be held for the forthcoming year at the last meeting of the preceding year.

2.7 An officer can be impeached (tried) for cause, upon written request signed by ten (10) members or one-third of the members, whichever is fewer. The president shall preside at any impeachment, unless he is impeached, in which case the vice-president will preside. It shall take a two-thirds vote at a regular meeting to remove an officer.

2.8 If the president resigns or is removed, the vice-president will become the president and a new vice-president will be elected.

3. Faculty Advisor

3.1 The members shall select faculty advisor to be approved by the principal.

3.2 The faculty advisor shall interpret the school rules and regulations to the organization and shall be the principal's representative to the organization.

3.3 The faculty advisor shall have veto power over actions of the organization. If the officers of the organization disagree with the veto they can appeal in writing to the Assistant Principal for instruction furnishing a copy of the appeal to the faculty advisor.

4. Membership

4.1 Membership in this organization is restricted to those students who meet the following criteria:

(A) \_\_\_\_\_

(B) \_\_\_\_\_

4.2 Students are selected for membership annually at try-outs to be held in the month of

\_\_\_\_\_.

4.3 At these try-outs each perspective member will be asked to \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

4.4 Selection among perspective members shall be based on the following criteria:

(A) \_\_\_\_\_

(B) \_\_\_\_\_

4.5 The selection will be made \_\_\_\_\_ judges. The judges shall be

selected by \_\_\_\_\_ (state for whom and how).

5. Committees

5.1 The president shall appoint such standing committees and such special-purpose ("AD HOC") committees as he deems necessary.

5.2 The standing committees are:

(A) \_\_\_\_\_ whose duties are

\_\_\_\_\_.

(B) \_\_\_\_\_ whose duties are

\_\_\_\_\_.

6. Dues and Other Expenses

6.1 Dues in this organization shall be \_\_\_\_\_ and xx/100Dollars (\$\_\_\_\_\_) per year/semester.

6.2 Members will be expected to provide, at their own expense, the following items of equipment and/or uniforms:

(A) \_\_\_\_\_

(B) \_\_\_\_\_

(C) \_\_\_\_\_

OR

6.1 There shall be no dues in this organization.

OR

6.1 Dues shall be specified in the laws of this organization.

7. Quorum

7.1 A quorum shall be a majority of members present, in person, or by proxy, at a meeting.

7. Ratification and Amendment

8.1 This constitution shall be valid and operative when approved by two-thirds of the members, the faculty, advisor, and the principal or his designated representative.

8.2 This constitution shall be valid and operative from year to year.

8.3 Any amendment to this constitution must be proposed, in writing, at a regular meeting or a special meeting called for that purpose, at least one week before any vote thereon.

8.4 This constitution can be amended by a two-thirds vote at any regular business meeting. Any amendment so made shall become effective when approved by the faculty advisor and the principal or his designated representative.

8. Miscellaneous

9.1 Tie masculine (he, him, his) shall also mean the feminine (she, her, hers) and vice versa.

9.2 All business meetings shall be conducted by Robert's Rules of Order.

9.3 The organization may, by majority vote, enact bylaws from time to time. These bylaws must neither be inconsistent with this constitution nor be inconsistent with the responsibilities and rights of secondary school students of Fairfax County.

## A CLUB AS A PERSONNEL SYSTEM WITH UNIFORM TITLES

All programs benefit from a personnel system used to manage the students. Personnel management is a function of any organization whether it is a class of students, corporation of employees or an association of volunteers. Most personnel systems differ as to the titles of each position in the system. Using related titles in the personnel system will both manage the club, as well as give students experience with group organization.

Officers in a democratic organization are best selected by the members of the group. Thus, the sponsor may ask the class to nominate persons for election as key management officers. Sponsors using any of the titles on the left are encouraged to utilize the uniform title in the right column.

Current title	-----	Should Have This Uniform Title
General Manager Lab Supervisor Superintendent Project Director	-----	PRESIDENT
Manager's Assistant Assistant Supervisor Co-Director Production Manager	-----	VICE PRESIDENT
Roll Keeper Record Keeper Letter Writer	-----	SECRETARY
Accountant Purchasing Agent Supply Clerk Bookkeeper	-----	TREASURER
Safety Director Attorney or Lawyer Contract Officer Permission Coordinator Inspector	-----	PARLIAMENTARIAN
Clean-up Supervisor	-----	SERGEANT-AT-ARMS
Public Relations Director Advertising Agent Publicity Director	-----	REPORTER
Education Director Final Report Writer Scrapbook Manager Librarian	-----	HISTORIAN

## **The Roles and Duties of Club Officers**

### **President**

The president presides over and conducts all meetings in accordance with parliamentary procedure; keeps the members' discussion to the subject at hand and within time limits; appoints committee chairs and serves on committees except the nominating committee as an ex officio member; represents the organization of special school events and out-of-school functions; coordinates the activities of the organization by keeping in touch with the other officers, the membership, and the advisor; and, keeps himself or herself informed to ensure that the organization is moving according to its established goals.

#### **The Presiding Officer should:**

1. Begin the meeting on time and proceed in a manner established by the order of business. (Members will be there if they know that the meeting is begun).
2. Be sure a quorum is present before the business portion of the meeting is begun.
3. Keep the meeting under control always. Limit debate on the part of any one individual to specified times or turns. (Ample, but not excessive time should be allowed for debate).
4. Use the gavel with discretion.
5. Conduct the meeting in accordance with parliamentary procedure.
6. Refer to himself or herself as "the Chair."
7. Be impartial at all times.
8. Stand while presenting business or directing the assembly. (It is permissible to sit while business is being transacted or matters are under discussion on the floor.)
9. Turn over the chair to the Vice-President or other designated member when he or she wants to enter into debate. Information, but not opinions, may be given from the chair. If the presiding officer wants to make or discuss a motion personally, he or she must leave the chair and do so from the floor.
10. Allow a member to suspend the regular order of business ONLY by a formal motion, which is carried by a two-thirds vote.

### **Vice President**

The Vice-President assists the President in the discharge of his/her duties. The Vice-President presides at meetings and other functions in the absence of the President and must be prepared to assume the office of the President if necessary. The Vice-President is in charge of all committee work and the management of committee assignments. He/she works closely with all committees, keeping well informed on all of their activities.

#### **The Vice-President should:**

1. Assist the President.
2. Preside in the absence of the President.

3. Have charge of setting up and carrying out the chapter program of activities.
4. Assist with the preparation of the meeting agenda.
5. Be responsible for a report on the status of the program of activities at each meeting.
6. Submit a report on chapter accomplishments at the end of the year.
7. Keep an accurate list of committee members and manage committee assignments using committee report forms.

### **Secretary**

The Secretary prepares and reads the minutes of meetings; sends out and posts meeting notices; has the agenda for each meeting available for the President; reads communications at meetings; counts and records votes when taken; attends to official correspondence; keeps permanent records of the organization; and maintains and has on hand for each meeting a Secretary's Record Book, which includes pertinent documents concerning past business decisions.

#### **The Secretary should:**

1. Record the minutes of all meetings—formal, informal, and called.
2. Record in the minutes what is DECIDED UPON and DONE.
3. Record, whether carried or lost, the exact wording of motions and amendments and the name of the member who made the motion (amendment).
4. Stop the proceedings, if necessary, to get the exact wording of a motion. The Secretary may request that a motion be submitted in writing by the member presenting it.
5. Record in the minutes the names of members who have been appointed to committees as well as the persons serving as chairs of those committees.
6. Include a copy of the Treasurer's report in the minutes.
7. Maintain a Secretary's Book.

#### **The Secretary's Book**

The Secretary's Book is generally a three-ring binder, which is used to keep important documents concerning the business of the chapter. The book usually contains:

1. A copy of all approved minutes;
2. A list of all chapter members
3. A list of all standing and special committees, committee members, and chairpersons;
4. A copy of all committee reports;
5. A copy of the local, state, and national program of activities; and
6. The constitution and bylaws of the organization.

### **Treasurer**

The Treasurer administers and is responsible for the organization's money. He/she collects all state and national dues, if required; is responsible for ensuring payments by the appropriate deadlines; keeps financial records in order and up to date; devises fund raising activities with the cooperation of the appropriate committee and the approval of the membership and advisor; assists in preparing an annual budget; serves on any Finance Committee's as the ex officio member; and protects the financial reputation of the organization.

#### **The Treasurer should:**

1. Keep a permanent, up-to-the-minute record of all financial transactions. The entries should be recorded in ink and in a Treasurer's ledger (book).
2. Keep a record of all incoming money noting the date and from whom the money was received. (turn over to the organization sponsor.)
3. Record all expenses noting the date and to whom the money was paid.
4. Obtain and keep a copy of all receipts in the permanent records.

5. Be prepared to report the financial status of the organization at any regular meeting.
6. Obtain and present ideas and suggestions to the membership for increasing the treasury and financing different activities.

### **Historian**

It shall be the duty of the historian to serve in any capacity as directed by the president to keep all past financial and membership records as necessary, and to promote the general welfare of the association.

#### **The Historian should:**

1. Keep a record book (scrapbook) of all activities and events. Include in the book the names of members and leaders, copies of the calendar, news clippings, and pictures of special events.
2. Work closely with the secretary and the reporter in keeping a complete record of activities.
3. Develop a theme for the record book (scrapbook) that will carry through the year. (Somewhat like school yearbooks use.)

The Historian is usually the club photographer. Taking good pictures is not difficult; neither is it dependent on the camera. Rather, good pictures are taken by the photographer—not the camera.

There are, however, several practices, which will aid in the taking of good pictures. They are listed below.

### **PHOTO HINTS**

1. Include people in the picture. A first-place float with its builders will be a first-class picture; the float alone won't have any class.
2. Get action pictures when possible.
3. Get in close! A common error with new photographers in trying to get too much in the picture.
4. Hold the camera steady and level.
5. Use flash where light is limited.
6. Take front-lighted subjects when there is no flash.
7. Be patient. Wait until you have the epicure you want before you shoot.
8. Join the "One More Club." Shoot every important picture two or three times.

### **Reporter**

The reporter gathers club news; prepares news releases and articles for publication in school and local newspapers; acquaints local newspaper editors with information about the club exhibits; and collects and prepares news and feature stories of club activities for state and national publications.

#### **The Reporter should:**

1. Gather and classify all news.
2. Prepare articles and news releases.



3. Develop a working relationship with local media personnel and keep them informed of club news.
4. Send club news and photographs to the school newspaper for publication.
5. Work closely with the secretary and the historian in the preparation of the record book.

### **Parliamentarian**

The Parliamentarian assists the chapter members in understanding the basic purpose of parliamentary procedure. This person advises the presiding officer and the members on parliamentary procedure has reference materials on hand (Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised) pertaining to parliamentary procedure; observes progress of meetings; and calls any significant irregularities to the attention of the chair (point of...); is prepared to explain any deviation from procedure and its effect on the rights of all club members.

#### **The Parliamentarian should:**

1. Make sure that club meetings are conducted in an orderly manner in accordance with established parliamentary procedure.
2. Enable the assembly to conduct business in a quick and efficient manner.
3. Protect the rights of each individual.
4. Make sure that the will of the majority is carried out and the rights of the minority are preserved.
5. Render only opinions, never decisions concerning parliamentary procedure.

### **Sergeant At Arms**

The Sergeant at Arms is responsible for the physical setup of meetings, banquets, and gatherings. He or she secures the use of any meeting room and facility, assists in seating arrangements, and ensures that all necessary equipment is at hand and operating.

#### **The Sergeant at Arms should:**

1. Arrange the meeting room and care for additional requirements.
2. Be responsible for the comfort of those present at the meeting.
3. Attend the door during meetings and welcome all guests.
4. Assist with entertainment, refreshments, and other details connected with the program.
5. Serve as an ex officio member of any committee, which deals with these areas.

**Twenty Steps to a Better Meeting**  
How to Make Club Meetings Effective

Before the Meeting:

1. Decide what kind of meeting will reach your goals.
2. Plan the meeting carefully: Who? What? When? Where? How many?
3. Prepare the agenda in advance

**Agenda Planning**

An agenda is a specific list of items to be addressed at a meeting. A draft of the agenda should be prepared by the president and the executive committee a few days in advance of the meeting. It's helpful to deliver copies of the agenda in advance to everyone expected to attend the meeting. They, in turn, should have an opportunity to add to the agenda at the beginning of the meeting.

Each member should receive a working copy of the agenda at the meeting. This copy provides space for additional items and notes.

4. Come early and set up the meeting room.

At the Beginning of the Meeting:

5. Start on time.
6. Make sure everyone knows each other. Make introductions.
7. Clearly define what you want to accomplish.
8. Review, re-arrange the agenda.
9. Set clear time limits for each part of the meeting.
10. Review items to address from earlier meetings.

During the Meeting:

11. Focus on the same problem, in the same way, at the same time for everyone.
12. Use butcher paper on the wall with marking pens. Write down everything.

At the End of the Meeting:

13. Make assignments-who, what when (deadlines).
14. Review the butcher paper notes.
15. Set the date, time, and place of the next meeting.
16. Measure the meeting to see if it did what it should
17. Close the meeting on a positive note.

After the meeting:

18. Clean up and put the room back in order.
19. Prepare the minutes
20. Follow up on “action items” and plan for the next meeting.

## **PARTS OF A MEETING**

It is customary for every group to adopt a standard order business for the meeting. When the organization’s by-laws do not provide for or require a specific order, the following is in order.

1. **Call to Order**

“Will the meeting please come to order?”

2. **Roll Call**

“Will the secretary please call the roll?”

3. **Reading and Approval of Minutes**

“Will the secretary please read the minutes of the last meeting?” The minutes are read and the chairman asks:

“Are there any corrections to the minutes?” The chair pauses to hear any corrections offered. If there are none, the chair says, “There being no corrections, the minutes will stand approved as read.”

If there are corrections, the chair recognizes the correction(s) and asks, “Are there further corrections to the minutes?” If there are none, the chair states, “They’re being no further corrections, the minutes will stand approved as corrected.”

4. **Adoption of Agenda**

This step is provided to insure that (1) all persons are aware of what has been proposed for discussion at the meeting (2) that all persons are given the opportunity to have whatever matter(s) they fee is (are) important to the organization placed on the agenda for discussion; and (3) to provide a limit to and order for the matters to be discussed at the meeting.

To achieve this, the president officer states, “The following items are proposed for discussion at this meeting.” After reading the list of proposed agenda items, the presiding officer asks, “Are there other matters that should be discussed at this meeting?” If there are additional matters requiring discussion, the chair places them in their proper positions on the agenda.

The chair, after insuring that all pertinent matters will come before the meeting, reads the entire agenda and states, “There being no other matters that should come before the meeting, the agenda for this meeting will stand as read.”

5. **Report of Officers and Standing Committees**

Officers, boards, or standing committee should be called upon to report in the order in which they are mentioned in the constitution or bylaws of the organization.

6. **Report of Special Committees**

7. **Unfinished Business**

“We have now come to unfinished business. Our agenda lists the following matters as unfinished business.” The chair reads from the agenda and states, “We will hear these matters in the order in which they have been mentioned.”

8. **New Business**

“We have now come to new business. Our agenda lists the following items as new business...”  
(Chair reads from the agenda). He states, “We will hear them in the order in which they were mentioned.”

**9. Program**

Program such as exhibitions, demonstrations, etc., which are incidental to the business meeting, will be scheduled for presentation at this time.

**10. Adjournment**

Unqualified form:

Proposer moves for adjournment; motion is seconded; chairperson calls for a vote, action depends upon majority vote. The motion cannot be discussed.

**Qualified Form:**

Proposer moves for adjournment within a definite time or adjournment to meet again at a specified time; motion is seconded; the chair calls for discussion; a vote is taken; action depends upon majority vote; can allow for legal continuation of the meeting.